

The aid and development effectiveness process from a women's rights perspective: a snapshot¹

Background

The 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) took place from 29 November to 1 December 2011 in Busan, South Korea. It brought together approximately 3000 delegates, including ministers and heads of international organizations and resulted in the so called Busan Partnership Agreement².

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) participation... at the official HLF-4 was much higher (ca. 300 persons) than at HLF-3 in Accra in 2008 (80 persons). The participation of representatives from feminist organisations got ensured/supported by a quota set for them per region and globally as part of the own CSO selection requirements/process. Moreover, there was an overall requirement for gender balance in the CSO representation. For the first time the official negotiations of an HLF outcome document included also a CSO representative.

Women's rights groups... have been critical of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-led aid effectiveness process and have been engaging in it from that angle over the past years. This included also in 2011, next to the official process, participating in and organizing several meetings such as the International Consultation on Development Cooperation, Women's Rights and Gender Equality. One of the key outcomes of these engagements is the *Key Demands³ from Women's Rights Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates* document. It, among other, urged that HLF-4 produce an outcome document that provides the basis for a new development cooperation architecture that is inclusive and just and thus also responsive and sensitive to women's rights and gender equality and that it should be situated within the United Nations.

Concerning the official outcome document... from HLF-4, and as raised in the January AWID Friday File on it, the inclusion of a specific paragraph (§20) on gender equality and the empowerment of women is positive and important to note. However, while women's groups have generally welcomed the gender paragraph they had been working on improving and strengthening it. It does not go far enough and can only really stand with an integrated human rights based approach to development and development cooperation overall, and if there is actual implementation.

¹ Drafted by Anne Schoenstein/AWID.

² Full name: Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Available in: [Arabic](#); [English](#); [French](#); [Spanish](#)

³ Printed copies of the key demands are available as room document at the post-Busan break-out session (details on session on page two).

You can read more... in the above mentioned [Friday File](#) that presents an initial reflection from a feminist view of HLF-4⁴. Also now available is the [CSO Analysis of the Busan Partnership](#).

Directly prior to HLF-4... the Busan Global Civil Society [Forum](#) and a Global Women's Forum took place. Key documents that emerged include the:

- Busan Global Women's Forum Political [Statement](#)
- [Position](#) on the proposed Busan Joint Action Plan On Gender Equality And Development

Your potential questions and reflections on the development effectiveness agenda... can get addressed particularly at the break-out session on *Post-Busan: What are the priorities going forward for advancing women's rights in the context of development cooperation?* The session is organized by AWID and co-convened with Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Coordinadora de la Mujer, Bolivia and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET). It takes place on 21st April from 16.30-18.00 in room Haskoy.

Already on 19 & 20 April you can link into the agenda by participating in the in- depth session on *Changing World Geopolitics and Global Governance: Making sense of the trends, actors and their implications for women's rights*⁵. On both days the panels take place from 14.30-16.00 and 16.30-18.00 in the Fener Auditorium.

What next?

June 2012 marks an important point in the post-Busan process. It is then, when key decisions such as on the governance structure of the global partnership and on global monitoring are meant to finally get agreed upon. Women' rights organizations and other CSOs are part of the current official process leading towards this date.

One space for information sharing... about the aid and development effectiveness agenda and related processes, particularly from a gender equality and women's rights perspective, has been in the last years/is the google group listserv hosted by AWID:

the-road-to-accra-and-beyond@googlegroups.org. To join the listserv please contact: AAbelenda@awid.org

Further information... about HLF-4 and in relation to its follow up process, CSO positions and statements, CSO press releases etc can, among other, be found at: www.betteraid.org

From AWID... we are currently preparing a new primer as part of the AWID Women's Rights and Development Cooperation [Series](#) that will reflect on HLF-4 and its outcomes. The discussions with and among the participants at the AWID Forum will be very valuable and inform our further thinking of it. They will also inform our forthcoming AWID strategic planning period.

⁴ The Friday File is also available as room document at the post-Busan break-out session.

⁵ For more information and/or to indicate that you will be joining the in-depth session:

<http://www.forum.awid.org/forum12/programme/in-depth-sessions/>