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BRIEF 1:

# Trends in Bilateral and Multilateral Funding

**awid** women's  
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## About the 2009-2010 FundHer brief series

*Trends in Bilateral and Multilateral Funding* is part of the 2009-2010 FundHer Research Update brief series, produced by AWID's "Where is the Money for Women's Rights" Action-Research Initiative. The purpose of the series is to provide up to date information on important trends in different funding sectors, including preliminary data on the impact of the financial crisis and economic recession and to explore the implications for resource mobilization for gender equality and women's organizing. The research presented in this brief series draws on interviews held with relevant actors from various donor sectors, desk research and comparative analysis from past AWID surveys of women's organizations regarding the funding landscape.



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# Introduction

*Where is the Money for Women's Rights* launched research in 2005 to understand the funding landscape for women's organizing ten years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. At that time, we saw significantly decreased resources for gender equality and women's organizations, and a widespread sense that women's rights had ceased being an area of interest for many funding agencies.

We are now in 2010 commemorating Beijing +15 and the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General has released a report reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).<sup>1</sup> This report recognizes what many women's rights activists have long said: there have been limited or uneven accomplishments (across regions and within countries) in advancing BPfA commitments and very limited state accountability to those commitments. Achievements have been mostly concentrated in the formal spheres (laws, policies, programs, mechanisms), and in many cases have not translated into significant sustained changes in the lives of women. The lack of funding and other resources to implement the BPfA, and even make adequate progress on the gender dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals, has been a consistent and significant obstacle.

Moreover, progress achieved in the last fifteen years is very fragile. In times of systemic crisis like the one faced today (economic, environmental, food, energy, social, work and care crises), progress made on gender equality and women's rights is among the first to be eroded. Already, we are seeing this erosion in many ways; for example: increased rates of women's unemployment in some sectors/countries, such as those working in export processing zones in the Philippines, India, Mexico; increased violence against women as a result of the financial crisis (a survey conducted in the United States showed women's shelters reporting a 75% increase in cases attended since the start of the financial crisis); and increased malnutrition and hunger among women and girls.<sup>2</sup>

Bilateral and multilateral development agencies are among the principle vehicles through which states make financial, and other resources, available to implement and fulfill their development commitments, including commitments on gender equality and women's rights.

1. *Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals.* See E/2010/4-E/CN.6/2010/2.

2. *The impact of the crisis on women's rights: A crossregional analysis*, available at [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)

Bilateral development agencies provide funding through “Official Development Assistance” (ODA) usually set at a percentage of the donor country’s gross national income (GNI). Funding may be disbursed to a multilateral agency, to the government of an aid-receiving country, or to a civil society organization (based either in the donor country or elsewhere). Multilateral agencies, including UN agencies such as UNIFEM, or other international development agencies such as the World Bank, are typically funded through a variety of sources that include bilateral ODA, as well as corporate, foundation, and other private funding sources. Multilateral agencies may also disburse to aid-receiving governments or to civil society or other private organizations.

In this brief, we present some key trends in funding for gender equality and for civil society organizations from bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as a more detailed look at some of the donors and specific funds that are providing significant support for women’s organizing. We also look at how the current financial crisis and economic recession seems to be impacting ODA levels and donor priorities, and what this context means in terms of available resources for women’s organizations.

In examining funding trends in this sector, we primarily address three key questions:

- What is happening to the overall level of ODA?
- What do we know about the share of ODA that is targeting gender equality objectives?
- What do we know about the share of ODA that is reaching civil society organizations (and women’s organizations in particular)?

While bilateral and multilateral funding agencies have been an important source of support for the advancement of gender equality and women’s organizing around the world, consistently accounting for close to 30% of the revenue of women’s organizations participating in AWID surveys,<sup>3</sup> the overall level of ODA for gender equality is clearly inadequate for reaching the commitments made in Beijing and at the Millennium Summit ten years ago. Assertions that there are ‘not enough’ resources to fund the advancement of gender equality ring hollow when the last two years have shown that where political will exists, governments and other relevant stakeholders can mobilize trillions of dollars to rescue finance and banking institutions. That same level of political commitment is required to invest the needed resources in gender equality and women’s rights.

3. See Clark, et al (2006); Kerr, Joanna (2007); Hopenhaym, et al (2008).



## Part 1. Trends in Official Development Assistance

Since 1970, the proposed target for ODA levels has been 0.7% of GNI.<sup>4</sup> This target has since been re-affirmed in various international processes, including the UN Social Summit of 1995 and the 2002 Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development. In 2005, in the context of the UN Millennium Project, 17 out of the 22 (at the time) high income member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and all of the original 15 EU member countries (the European Commission is also an OECD member), agreed to set 2015 as the target year by when they would meet the 0.7% commitment.<sup>5</sup>

In 2008, ODA from members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) rose by 10.2% in real terms to USD 119.8 billion, representing 0.3% of members' combined GNIs—the highest level of aid ever (though still short of the 0.7% target).<sup>6</sup>

However, few countries have met (or are on track to meet) the 0.7% target and prospects are further limited due to the impact of the financial crisis and economic recession. The following graphs illustrate net ODA levels in USD for 2008 as well as net ODA as a percent of GNI. Thus we can see that although the US appears as the largest donor in constant USD terms for 2008, it is also the donor country furthest from reaching the 0.7% target. Five countries had exceeded the target in 2008: Sweden, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Although in 2007, the OECD had projected that most members would meet their 2010 targets<sup>7</sup> (in other words, be on track for the 2015 target), other analyses also taking into consideration the impact of the crisis, suggest that this will be unlikely, with Greece, Portugal, Italy, Austria, the US and perhaps France, Germany and Belgium all missing their targets.<sup>8</sup> In fact, as the third graph below indicates, donor countries have actually moved further from the 0.7% target in recent decades.

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4. Pledged in UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 (xxv), October 24, 1970, para. 43. Available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/348/91/IMG/NR034891.pdf?OpenElement>

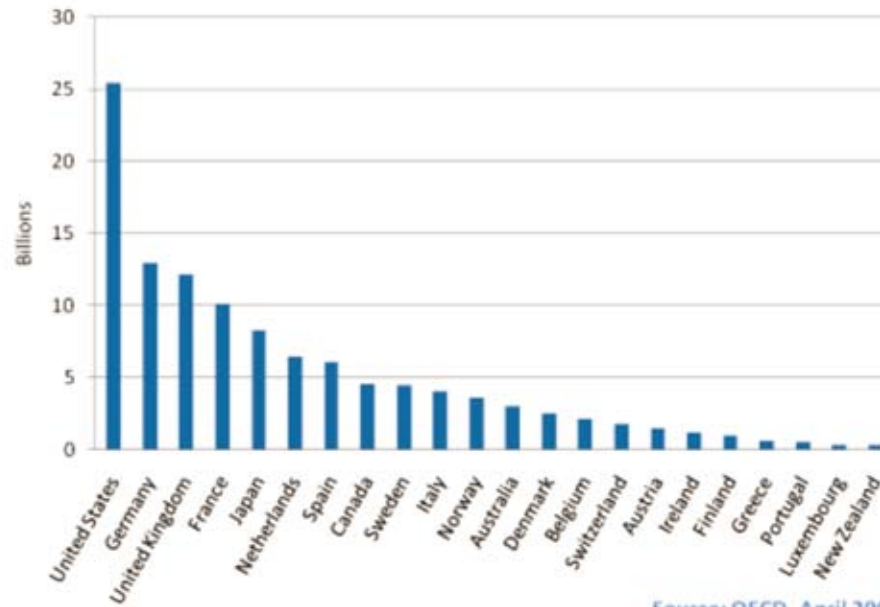
5. The Council of the European Union. 2005, "Council conclusion: Accelerating Progress Toward the Millennium Development Goals." <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/EUExternalRelations24May.pdf>.

6. OECD – DAC, Newsroom, Development aid at its highest level ever in 2008, Available at: [http://www.oecd.org/document/13/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34487\\_42458595\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/13/0,3343,en_2649_34487_42458595_1_1_1_1,00.html)

7. Aid targets slipping out of reach?, OECD, Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/25/41724314.pdf>

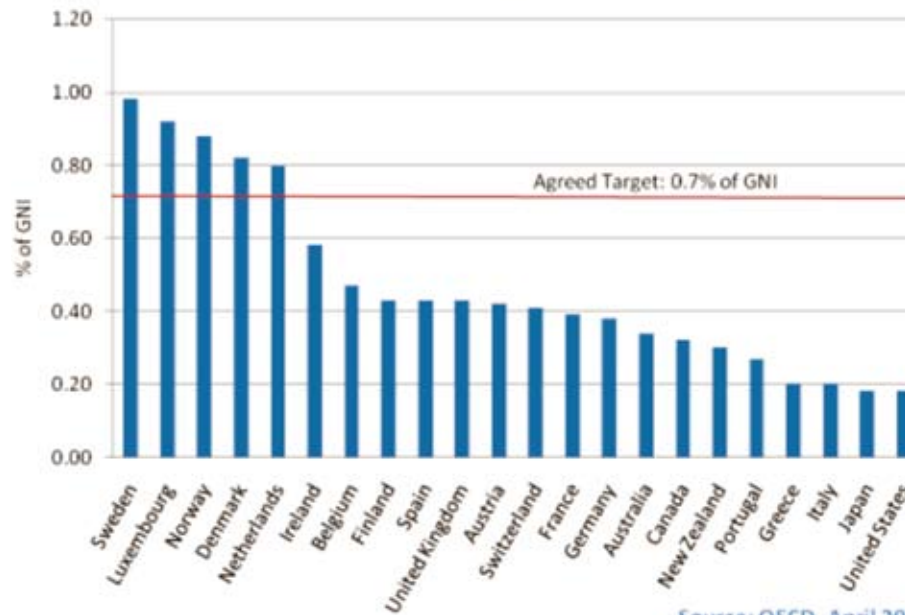
8. CONCORD, Aid Watch Analysis of ODA numbers 2008, <http://www.concordeurope.org/Public/Page.php?ID=25117>

### Net ODA 2008 at constant 2007 US dollars



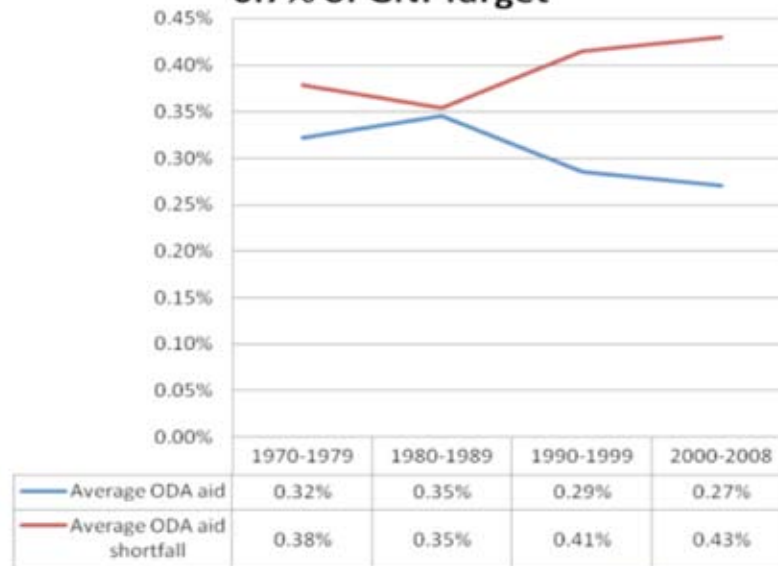
Source: OECD, April 2009

### Net ODA 2008 as percent of GNI



Source: OECD, April 2009

### Gap between ODA Aid Given and ODA Aid Shortfall as Percentage of 0.7% of GNI Target



Source: OECD, April 2009



## Box 1

### Influence of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda

The aid effectiveness agenda continues to play an important role in shaping bilateral and multi-lateral funding for development. Women's organizations and other civil society actors have been active in processes to address some of the most significant challenges and omissions from the principles set out in the Paris Declaration<sup>1</sup>, including the potential difficulties for civil society groups to access funding under the new schemes, and the impact on civil society autonomy and sustainability.<sup>2</sup>

Key concerns have been related to the principles of ownership and alignment with developing country priorities and strategies. For example, one report noted that “when donors channel resources through government systems, there is a risk that civil society organizations lose funding for their advocacy and service delivery roles. This can narrow the opportunity to address social goals.”<sup>3</sup> Women's organizations have echoed this concern as well as cautioned that national development priorities often overlook gender equality concerns. As one representative of a bilateral agency noted, “now if we are supposed to rely on ... government plans and government plans are generally gender blind, what do we do?”

However the alignment and ownership principles may also open opportunities. Northern civil society organizations (CSOs) may also be encouraged to ‘align’ to development cooperation priorities and ‘complement’ bilateral funding to partner countries through direct support for Southern CSOs (including women's organizations). And as donor countries increasingly apply the principle of ‘national ownership’, more funding will be channeled through embassies—potentially making

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1. To learn more about the Paris Declaration, its implementation and its impact on women's rights and gender equality see: Alemany et al (2008), *Implementing the Paris Declaration: Implications for the Promotion of Women's Rights and Gender Equality*, CCIC.

2. For more on the impact of the aid effectiveness agenda on funding for women's rights, see Kerr, Joanna (2007). *Financial Sustainability for Women's Movements Worldwide*, pp 53-57. See also Women's Working Group on Financing for Development, <http://www.ffdnngo.org/gender-financing-development>.

3. OECD- DAC, “Making Aid More Effective through Gender, Rights and Inclusion: Evidence from Implementing the Paris Declaration,” June 2008.

these resources directly available to local CSOs (however only where the political context makes this feasible). New funding mechanisms are also likely to be created, or existing mechanisms such as multi-donor funds (which themselves have had mixed results) may be used more frequently.

Important advances were made in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) which emerged from the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in September 2008. Following strong mobilizing and advocacy by women's groups from various regions, the AAA recognized: "Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impacts on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way".<sup>4</sup> While such achievements in the language are important, they are also undermined by the lack of new targets or measurable commitments towards gender equality and women's rights.

An important effort has been made by the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDER-NET) in producing 'DAC Guiding Principles for Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment'<sup>5</sup>, which suggests approaches and entry points for policy advisors and programme managers in both donor and partner countries to increase the prospects for achieving development results and impacts through work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The next step in this process will be the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul, Korea on November 29-December 1, 2011. Women's rights organizations are engaging in many venues to influence this process and pushing for an agenda that holds gender equality and women's rights as fundamental development goals.

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4. Accra Agenda for Action, available (with the Paris Declaration) at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/58/16/41202012.pdf>

5. OECD –DAC GENDERNET, DAC Guiding Principles for Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment', Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/27/42310124.pdf>

## The emergence of non-DAC donors (middle income donor countries)

While the statistics above account for the Official Development Assistance provided by OECD-DAC members, the data does not include the growing sector of non-DAC donors. The BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) figure prominently among emerging or middle-income donor countries, as do South Africa, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela and Colombia, with Mexico and Chile playing somewhat lesser roles. The strongest economies from the developing world are reinforcing their presence in their immediate neighborhoods as well as in other developing regions. Regional development cooperation mechanisms are not new, but are being strengthened as part of the consolidation of regional blocs as key spaces for policy and agenda-setting.

Increasingly, various forms of South-South Cooperation are emerging as an important trend and in some cases a strategy to limit the influence of northern donors and Bretton Woods Institutions on developing countries.<sup>9</sup> Some of these countries launched development cooperation in the 1960s, while others began at the end of the Cold War or with democratization processes in the 1980s and 1990s. Many emphasize their differences—in approach, principles and im-

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plementation mechanisms—to ‘traditional’ donors, with a focus on south-south solidarity, cooperation and mutual benefits, peer relationships among equal partners, as well as local stability and strategic and/or commercial interests. Preliminary research indicates that in fact aid from the BRICs comes with fewer conditionalities than those imposed by traditional donors.<sup>10</sup>

While we know that development assistance levels are on the rise among many of these donors, access to data on the precise levels of ODA from these countries and the sectors supported by these funds is very limited. This is in part due to poor tracking or accountability systems, as well as the fact that in many of these countries their development assistance is ‘decentralized’ under various ministries or other agencies.<sup>11</sup> A UN-commissioned study estimates that in 2006, Southern aid contributions amounted to between

9. Highlights from the Strategy Meeting: To Follow up efforts on Aid Effectiveness, gender equality, and the impact of the crisis on women, 6-7 August 2009, New York, Edited by Cecilia Alemany (AWID).

10. Rowlands, Dane (2008). *Emerging Donors in International Development Assistance: A Synthesis Report*, IDRC. Available at: [http://www.crdi.ca/uploads/user-S/12447280141Synthesis\\_Report.pdf](http://www.crdi.ca/uploads/user-S/12447280141Synthesis_Report.pdf).

11. Ibid.

USD 9.5 and 12.1 billion, or between 7.8% and 9.8% of total aid flows.<sup>12</sup> Available estimates for the BRICs in 2006 are as follows: China between USD 1 billion and USD 10 billion (if loans are included); India USD 1 billion; Brazil USD 85 million and South Africa USD 280 million.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of geographic and sector allocation of these funds, in the case of the BRICs most of their assistance is channeled to their regional spheres of influence and to Sub-Saharan Africa. Infrastructure, defense and security consume significant resources, with smaller levels of support targeting social development.<sup>14</sup>

## Part 2. Impact of the Financial Crisis on Official Development Assistance

Except for Norway, most OECD-DAC donor countries are experiencing drops in their GNIs as a result of the financial crisis. Therefore, even if they maintain the same proportional commitment of ODA, the net amounts will drop. The total GNI of OECD countries fell by 2.1% in the first quarter of 2009<sup>15</sup> and the impact of such decreases is expected to be felt in 2010 ODA levels and beyond.

### Examples of cuts to 2009 ODA as a result of the crisis<sup>16</sup>

Country	2009 ODA	Likely impact of crisis on 2010 ODA
The Netherlands	€ 4.5 billion	Decreases around € 550 million <sup>17</sup>
Ireland	€ 696 million	Decreases of € 255 million
Sweden	Approx. € 3.2 billion (33.9 million SEK)	Decreases
Norway	Approx. € 3.1 billion (26.2 billion NOK)	No Impact

12. Lama Hammand and Bill Morton, Non-DAC donors and reform of the international aid architecture, The North South Institute, Issues Brief: Development Cooperation Series, July 2009, p. 1.

13. Rowlands, Dane (2008). *Emerging Donors in International Development Assistance: A Synthesis Report*, IDRC. Available at: [http://www.crdi.ca/uploads/user-S/12447280141Synthesis\\_Report.pdf](http://www.crdi.ca/uploads/user-S/12447280141Synthesis_Report.pdf).

14. Ibid.

15. OECD Observer, News brief - June 2009, Available at <http://www.oecdobserver.org/m/fullstory.php/aid/2925>

16. Data presented in this chart are based on interviews with representatives from each donor agency.

17. Dutch MFA Press Release: Government to keep international agreements despite the crisis Available at [http://www.minbuza.nl/en/News/Newsflashes/2009/September/Government\\_to\\_keep\\_to\\_international\\_agreements\\_despite\\_the\\_economic\\_crisis](http://www.minbuza.nl/en/News/Newsflashes/2009/September/Government_to_keep_to_international_agreements_despite_the_economic_crisis)



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France, Italy and Germany have also announced intentions to cut their aid budgets due to domestic budget deficits. Italian aid is estimated to shrink from 0.22% of GNI in 2008 to between 0.15 – 0.17% in 2009, with a significant reduction (33%) further projected for 2011, unless new financial legislation is passed<sup>18</sup>. In France, an analysis by Oxfam France indicates that the increase in French ODA for 2009 is largely due to a massive increase of loans and debt cancellations, with aid authorisations decreasing by close to 50%, from 422 million Euros in 2008 to 214 million in 2009.<sup>19</sup> Recently, Germany's new Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development expressed that the €100 million Germany allocated as emergency aid for developing countries

would be better spent on getting teachers for German schools. His party has requested to cut 10% or € 531 million from the international development budget.<sup>20</sup>

Countering the trend toward ODA cuts, Korea, which became the 24<sup>th</sup> member of the OECD-DAC in November 2009<sup>21</sup>, recently announced that it will triple its development assistance by 2015.<sup>22</sup> Projections for the non-DAC donors are limited; however south-south cooperation is expected to continue to expand.

ODA commitments by donor countries are clearly located within the particular geopolitical and economic context of the moment. The OECD itself recognizes that donor aid allocations are driven by factors other than need and merit. One recent study found that almost 50% of the predicted value of aid is determined by donor-specific factors, 30% by needs, 20% by self interest and only 2% by performance.<sup>23</sup> In times of economic crisis, citizens of donor countries also tend to call for re-prioritization of spending and greater emphasis on domestic priorities. However, given the current financial crisis and economic slowdown, and the impact the crisis is having on women and women's rights<sup>24</sup>, it is crucial that donor countries continue to advance toward their longstanding aid commitments and increase their funding for gender equality.

18. Italian ODA in 2009 after the G8 Summit, Italian Aid at a glance, 8/05/2009, Available at <http://actionaiditaly.blogspot.com/2009/08/italian-oda-in-2009-after-g8-summit.html>

19. French ODA - Oxfam contradicts with A. Joyandey's statement on ODA 17/11/2008. <http://www.actionforglobalhealth.eu>

20. Germany: New Government May Neglect Development Aid, October, 29, 2009. Inter Press Service News Agency. Available at <http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=49059>

21. [http://www.oecd.org/document/50/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33721\\_44141618\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/50/0,3343,en_2649_33721_44141618_1_1_1_1,00.html)

22. *Korea to Treble Overseas Aid by 2015*, The Korean Times, October 28, 2009.

23. Rogerson Andrew and Suzanne Steensen *Aid Orphans: Whose Responsibility?* OECD, Development Brief, Issue 1 2009, October 2009.

24. See AWID's 2009-2010 Brief Series: *Impact of the Crisis on Women: Sub Regional Perspectives*. Available at <http://www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Brief-Series-Impact-of-the-crisis-on-women-sub-regional-perspectives>



## Part 3. How is funding for gender equality and women's organizing faring in this context?

Although ODA amounts are likely to decrease in the years ahead, direct cuts in ODA for gender equality are not yet apparent. Any cuts are likely to be part of the overall decreases in ODA, and not necessarily because donors are planning to scale-back their funding for gender equality specifically. In fact, several bilateral donors have reaffirmed their commitment to sustain or increase funding for gender equality and women's rights (see Part 4 for specific examples).

Many bilateral agencies—from Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, among others—are currently implementing - or recently carried out - comprehensive evaluations or internal assessments of the implementation of their gender equality policies or programs and their gender mainstreaming strategies. Several of these evaluations have produced relevant information on the limitations and in some cases negative impact of gender mainstreaming to advance gender equality and women's rights. As a result, they are contributing to changes within these agencies to develop new or revised policies and programs: a promising development for women's rights organizations and movements, who may be in a position to benefit from these revised policies.<sup>25</sup>

Related to this, the internal restructuring of some bilateral agencies has benefited their specific gender equality units or offices. In the case of Sida, for example, they have increased their staff size and capacity, which enables gender officers to be more proactive and strategic in how they promote fulfillment of the agency's gender equality commitments.<sup>26</sup>

Thus there are glimpses of positive signs in terms of, particularly bilateral, support for women's rights and gender equality. Still, when it comes to looking at funding levels for gender equality, the overall amounts allocated continue to be very limited and insufficient to achieve some of the more basic internationally agreed goals (such as MDG3 or MDG5), as well as other important goals set out in the Beijing Platform for Action. The greatest challenge to monitor ODA is finding the relevant information. How donor agencies understand gender, how it has been operationalized and/or mainstreamed through various programs, how transparent they are in providing information on who receives funding—all of these factors shape the very complex answer to a seemingly simple question. In this context, the OECD-DAC gender marker is one of the best tools available to track funding for gender equality. Although its use is limited to bilateral donor agencies, other donor sectors (international NGOs, private foundations) could greatly benefit from such a tool if they are serious about monitoring their support for gender equality.

25. Mentioned in interviews with representatives from different bilateral agencies, August – September 2009.

26. Based on interview with Sida representative, August 31, 2009.

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The data below pieces together the information available from the application of the gender equality marker (how much ODA targets gender equality as an objective), as well as other data tracing ODA that is allotted to women's equality organizations (governmental and non-governmental) and to national and international civil society organizations.

### **Overall ODA for gender equality as principal or significant objective**

Total bilateral ODA in 2006-2007 was USD 59.2 billion. Just a little over half, USD 31 billion, of this amount was screened with the Gender Equality Marker, of which USD 10.2 billion was focused on gender equality (either as a principal or significant objective, e.g.: legal literacy for women and girls; male networks against gender violence; capacity building of Ministries of Finance and Planning to

incorporate gender equality objectives in national poverty reduction strategies). Of the bilateral ODA focused on gender equality, the sectors where the greatest share of resources were allocated include Government and Civil Society (23%), Education (19%), and Health (11%).<sup>27</sup>

Another 28.2 billion of 2006-2007 bilateral ODA remained unscreened, due to countries that either do not report on the gender equality policy marker, or for which the marker coverage is too low, i.e. France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, and the United States. Currently 17 OECD DAC donors use and report with the gender marker.<sup>28</sup>

While the figure of 10.2 billion appears to represent an increase in ODA support for gender equality, (beyond the USD 8.9 billion that was reported for the 2004-2005 period as focusing on gender equality), it may simply be due to the fact that more donors are using the marker and are screening more of their aid with the marker (in 2003, the percentage of bilateral ODA screened with the marker was only 8%).<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the expectation is that underreporting is widespread, which could indicate that more ODA resources are targeting gender equality work than is currently reported.<sup>30</sup>

27. OECD-DAC Secretariat (2009). *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Statistics based on DAC Members' reporting on the Gender Equality Policy Marker, 2006 -2007*.

28. Ibid.

29. See Clark, et al (2006). *Assessing resources and the role of donors in the promotion of women's rights and the support of women's organizations*. AWID, p. 23.

30. Interview with representative of OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, September 8, 2009.

## About the Gender Equality Policy Marker

The Gender Equality Policy Marker was established by the OECD in 1999. The purpose was to have a tool that donors could use to track the quantity of aid flows that OECD-DAC members allocate to gender equality and women's empowerment. The first analysis of the marker was produced in 2005, over a five year average period. Now, thanks to more credible and reliable reporting from donors, OECD-DAC's Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) is able to publish the gender marker analysis every two years.<sup>1</sup>

GENDERNET is focusing on three priorities to continue to advance the gender equality marker as a key tool for tracking bilateral ODA and facilitating accountability to gender equality commitments by donor countries. Priorities include:

1. Getting more donors to use the marker and therefore expand the base of reliable information.
2. Increase the coverage or proportion of the aid that is screened with the marker.
3. Continue to publish reports (including comparative analyses) every two years, as a means to increase transparency and encourage donors to increase their funding for gender equality.

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1. Ibid.

## ODA for Women's Equality Organizations and Institutions and Civil Society

For the first time, we also have data from the 'sector code 15164' applied to ODA funding for "Women's equality organizations and institutions", which includes both governmental and non-governmental organizations. Between 2004 and 2008, there was a significant increase from USD 104 million to USD 373.32 million categorized under this code. Table 2 below indicates the giving over time from various OECD members. The largest donors to gender equality organizations and institutions in 2008 were Spain, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany and the US. Most donors presented in the table below have made steady increases in their support to women's equality organizations. During 2007 and 2008 Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain showed the most prominent increases in their allocations to the sector. On the other hand, Norway and Denmark saw a drop in their contributions in the same period, although they remain as important contributors to women's organizations. Notably, the US has consistently diminished its support to gender equality organizations and institutions since 2004.

**Table 2. ODA to Women's Equality Organizations<sup>31</sup>**

(in USD millions)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Donor(s)					
DAC Countries	87.85	104.03	113.87	313	373.32
Austria	0.72	0.86	1.36	2.17	2.58
Belgium	3.72	3.77	3.41	2.88	5.36
Canada	2.58	3.56	4.56	3.98	8.44
Denmark	1.59	2.12	2.09	13.97	10.48
France	0.28	..	..	1.41	..
Germany	11.23	9.42	..	13.14	17.7
Ireland	1.35	2.23	3.34	9.38	10.62
Italy	2.89	1.99	1.53	9.99	13.25
Netherlands	8.35	8.33	7.22	9.56	48.05
Norway	15.04	19.48	20.21	56.02	46.06
Spain	14.78	31.77	45.93	163.13	169.9
Sweden	..	..	..	2.08	3.49
United Kingdom	1.29	2.01	1.62	0.69	9.00
United States	20.39	17.12	18.22	17.14	16.22

31. Data provided by OECD - DAC Statistics Department on DAC Sector Code 15164: Women's equality organisations and institutions, 2004 – 2008.

For the above figures, data is not yet available that would enable us to distinguish between governmental and non-governmental recipients for every year. However, existing information for 2008 indicates that the top 5 donors for that year (Spain, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany and the US) distributed a total of USD 93 million to non-governmental organizations under this category of women's equality organizations and institutions.

For the first time, we also have data from the 'sector code 15164' applied to ODA funding for "Women's equality organizations and institutions", which includes both governmental and non-governmental organizations. Between 2004 and 2008, there was a significant increase from USD 104 million to USD 373.32 million categorized under this code.

### Top 5 contributors under DAC code 15164 -2008 (USD Million) \* 32

	Non-Gov	Gov	Total top 5
Spain	33.89	136.00	169.9
Netherlands	13.51	34.54	48.05
Norway	25.01	21.05	46.06
Germany	5.63	12.07	17.7
United States	15.57	0.66	16.22
Total	93.62	204.32	297.93
%	31.42	68.58	100%

\* Calculations based on 2008 disbursements

Civil society organizations have long been recognized as crucial partners in advancing development and human rights commitments. They play vital roles in community and national development, they reflect a diversity of voices and experiences, they produce research and data needed to understand the concrete impacts of public policies and institutions, they do important service provision in excluded areas, are sources of innovation and production of alternative approaches and they provide important watchdog functions to hold states and international institutions accountable to their commitments. Without active civil society participation, implementation of international agreements including the BPfA and the MDGs will remain incomplete. This is equally true for women's organizations and the unique role they can and do play in advancing gender equality and women's rights across all spheres of development. This is why it is important, not only to continue tracking allocations to non-governmental

32. The calculations presented here are estimates based on AWID's analysis of the existing data, as the way in which each country presents the information differs.

organizations under this category, but to consistently advocate for more resources that support women's organizations and the key work they are carrying out.

## Emerging donors and gender equality

Given the limited data available on funding from 'emerging donors,' even less is known in terms of their support for gender equality and women's rights. As their influence grows, however, it will be important to monitor their performance and potential role in supporting women's organizing and pay special attention to the impact of their cooperation initiatives on local communities. This includes monitoring whether these initiatives are strengthening the access of local communities and organizations to resources or undermining local livelihoods and rights.

South-South Cooperation has been institutionalized through bilateral relations, regional blocs and partnerships with some UN agencies (such as the South American cooperation initiative to support Haiti since 2004-2005 with the participation of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and UNDP among others). While the Group of 77 within the UN has played a central role, there is currently an explicit effort to also frame the trend of South-South Cooperation in the OECD. Many civil society organizations—women's groups included—are aiming to reinforce the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) at the UN as the most appropriate, inclusive multilateral space for such debates, and as a broad norm and agenda setting forum for development cooperation, including South-South initiatives.<sup>33</sup>

There is a further role for women's organizations and movements, together with other civil society organizations in these new donor countries, to seek out information on national development and aid priorities, to demand transparency, adequate tracking and accountability mechanisms as well as attention to women's rights and gender equality concerns. There's also a need for them to play a watch-dog role so that emerging donors do not use aid in the traditional ways, for example tied with policy conditionalities or to impose their own trade and economic interests (we are already seeing this behavior with China, for example). In that sense, it is important to question the language used in South-South relationships, which suggests that there are no donors, but partners; no aid, but development and economic cooperation; no policy conditionalities, but mutually agreed-on conditions. However, already we see many of the problematic dynamics of traditional aid relationships being reproduced, such as the absence of civil society in these "alternative" partnerships, or the implementation of cooperation programmes that are primarily focused on expanding markets, extracting natural resources or benefiting business interests.

33. Highlights from the Strategy Meeting: To Follow up efforts on Aid Effectiveness, gender equality, and the impact of the crisis on women, 6-7 August 2009, New York, Edited by Cecilia Alemany (AWID).

## What about the multilateral agencies?

The data above primarily relates to support from bilateral donor agencies, but tells us little about the significant resources managed by multilaterals. Total ODA in 2007 was USD 103.5 billion, of which about 70% (USD 72.9 billion) was bilateral aid, while the other 30% (USD 30.6 billion) went to multilateral institutions.<sup>34</sup> There is no equivalent of the gender policy marker applied by multilateral agencies, although some are beginning to explore adoption of such a marker. Each has its own method for monitoring (or not) its support of gender equality, and therefore there is no consistent means through which they can be held accountable on aid allocation for these issues.

Many women's, human rights and other civil society organizations are engaging in current international processes—the pending creation of a new gender entity within the UN and the Financing for Development process stand out as two key examples—with a strategy of supporting the repositioning of multilateral spaces, and the UN in particular, as preferable venues for key development decision-making and to help offset limited spaces such as the G8 or G20, where most of the world's countries are not represented (particularly the low-income ones). The potential role that the new UN gender entity can play as a key multilateral champion of women's rights holds enormous promise for advancing support for gender equality and mobilizing significant resources. But its capacity to contribute to significantly advance these agendas will depend on predictable funding, strong operational capacity at the country-level, a strong leader with proven commitment to women's rights and gender equality and also, with clear mechanisms to ensure the meaningful participation of civil society organizations, particularly women's groups.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, there are some new opportunities within the multilateral agencies, with the creation of new funds such as the Gender Equality Fund managed by UNIFEM, which opens spaces for women's organizations to access direct funding that supports their work.



The potential role that the new UN gender entity can play as a key multilateral champion of women's rights holds enormous promise for advancing support for gender equality and mobilizing significant resources.

34. OECD Statistics Available at <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=TABLE1>

35. For more information, see Alpizar, et al (2010). *Context and Trends Influencing the Funding Landscape for Gender Equality and Women's Organizations and Movements*; and the Gender Equality Architecture Reform Campaign at <http://gear.groupsite.com/main/summary>



## Part 4. Bi- and Multilateral Funds and Budget Lines that Support Gender Equality

Of particular interest to women's organizations are the special funds or budget lines dedicated to advancing women's rights and gender equality. Several bilateral and multilateral agencies in recent years have launched new funds or gender budget lines (or reaffirmed their commitment to such targeted funds). What has happened with these funds? Who have they supported? How can we ensure that they continue and most importantly, that they are reaching women's organizations<sup>36</sup> engaged in crucial work advancing women's rights?

Below we share data available on the Dutch MDG3 Fund, the Norwegian gender budget line (and other supports for women's organizations), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Fund for Gender Equality managed by UNIFEM. With each of these funds we tried to understand: the impetus for their creation, the amount of resources committed, and who has received funding (per region, issue), including the accessibility to women's organizations. These funds were selected both for their important level of support for women's rights and gender equality as well as for the relative accessibility of data (which, as indicated below, remains uneven).

### Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: MDG3 Fund 'Investing in Equality'

#### How the MDG3 Fund was created

The Netherlands has long been a supporter and champion of women's rights. In 2009, Dutch ODA totaled €4.5 billion. Aid to 'women's equality organizations' (governmental and non) in 2008 equaled € 46.06 million.<sup>37</sup> The aid strategy launched in 2007 included four policy priorities: a focus on fragile states, equal rights and opportunities for women, growth and equity to bridge gaps between the rich and poor, and environment and energy. In spite of the significant impact of the current economic recession, gender equality remains a priority.<sup>38</sup>

A number of factors led to the creation of the MDG3 Fund in 2008. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) sought to better align their aid policies with the Millennium Development Goals and noticed that research indicated there had been virtually no progress made on

36. To the extent that available data allowed, AWID analyzed the recipients of each of the funding streams described below in an effort to identify funding reaching non-governmental women's organizations. In categorizing "women's organizations" we included groups whose primary mission relates to women's rights concerns *and* where women occupy key staff and leadership positions.

37. Based on data provided by OECD - DAC Statistics Department on DAC Sector Code 15164: Women's equality organisations and institutions, 2004 – 2008.

38. Interview with representative from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2009.



MDG3 (ensuring equal rights for women) and MDG5 (reducing maternal mortality and increase access to sexual and reproductive health and rights).<sup>39</sup> The MFA also reports having been influenced by AWID's research indicated declining funds available to NGOs to advance women's rights.<sup>40</sup> In response, the Dutch Development Cooperation Minister, Bert Koenders, requested the development of a special fund to catalyze and support civil society in advancing gender equality, focusing specifically on the gender objectives in the third Millennium Development Goal; thus, the creation of the MDG3 Fund.

### Resources and Allocations for the MDG3 fund

The MDG3 Fund was launched with €50 million and one call for proposals open from March to May 2008. The call was met with 454 organizations applying, requesting €700 million in total. As architects of the fund noted, "The Fund's popularity reflects the fundamental need worldwide to take specific action to improve the position of women."<sup>41</sup> In response to the enormous demand, Minister Koenders announced in October 2008 an additional €20 million to be added to the MDG3 Fund for a total allocation of €70 million. It is the largest fund ever created with the goal of advancing women's rights and allocating resources through civil society organizations working to advance women's rights (particularly women's organizations).

Presently, the Dutch MFA is also reaching out to both bilateral donors and the private sector to explore possibilities to expand the fund and sustain it. Due to recent developments in Dutch politics however, where the government fell and with new elections to be held later in 2010, we will likely see a shift towards a more conservative government, without the Labour Party. A real danger is that development cooperation as well as gender equality will not have the same level of commitment from the Netherlands as a result. We will have to closely watch the results of the election and continue to monitor and engage with the Dutch MFA to ensure that they do not backslide on their commitments.

### Who are the MDG3 Fund Grantees?

The MDG3 Fund aimed to support work in the following areas:<sup>42</sup>

- Ending violence against women
- Enhancing gender equality in employment and forging equal opportunities in the labor market
- Increasing women's representation and participation in national politics
- Ensuring women's inheritance and property rights.

39. Dutch MFA (2007) "Our common concern. Investing in development in a changing world." Policy Note Dutch Development Cooperation 2007-2011.

40. Interview with representative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2009, referencing AWID's action-research and 2006 "Where is the Money for Women's Rights?" report.

41. Internal MDG3 Report on the Justification of the MDG3 Appraisal Process.

42. MDG3 Informational Flyer.

Only non-governmental organizations were eligible and international institutions (such as UN entities or the World Bank) were not eligible. Grant decisions were made in November 2008 and 45 grants were awarded, ranging from €750,000 to €5 million over a three or four year period (2008-2011 or 2009-2011).<sup>43</sup> Below is a breakdown and analysis of MDG3 fund grants.



### Dutch MFA: MDG3 Fund 'Investing in Equality'

Region	Grant in Euro	Number of grantees	Percent of Funding
Multi-regional Project	25,538,320	16	36.5%
Africa	26,310,901	15	37.6%
Asia	5,850,457	4	8.4%
Latin America	9,650,000	8	13.8%
Middle East & North Africa	2,605,000	2	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,954,678</b>	<b>45</b>	

Theme	Grant in Euro	Number of grantees	Percent of Funding
Employment	5,877,000	2	8.4%
Political Participation	13,845,673	8	19.8%
Violence against Women	19,646,257	13	28.1%
Property Rights and Inheritance	8,843,048	6	12.6%
3 priorities or more	21,742,700	16	31.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,954,678</b>	<b>45</b>	

As the numbers above indicate, relative to other regions Africa received the highest level of support (almost 38% of the total funding), closely followed by projects that were multi-regional in nature (and received about 37% of the total). Thematically, violence against women received the greatest support (28%) compared to the other areas, although projects touching on three or more priorities accounted for 31% of the funding allocated.

43. The full list of grantees is available at: [http://mdg3.nl/docs/Projects\\_Selected.pdf](http://mdg3.nl/docs/Projects_Selected.pdf)

Of the 45 total grantees, **29 are women's organizations** (including women's funds). These 29 received close to **€44 million**, or about **63% of the total**.<sup>44</sup> The remaining 16 organizations received 37% of the funds to be allocated to women's rights specific programming.

While the MDG3 Fund represents a significant support for women's organizing, one concern was that the minimum allowed grant amount was €750,000—preventing all but the largest women's organizations, or groups who could present joint proposals, from accessing the Fund. Many bilateral donors note that internal administrative and reporting barriers limit their capacity to disburse smaller grants. They will likely never be a primary direct donor for smaller or grassroots organizations. However, an interesting aspect of the MDG3 Fund was that it selected eleven proposals including re-granting support, and among those, six were from women's funds. Approximately €21.5 million went to these organizations, accounting for 31% of the total funds awarded.<sup>45</sup> This would suggest that the MDG3 Fund is reaching women's organizations of all shapes and sizes, and therefore, presents an important funding mechanism to facilitate access to resources for women's organizing done at different levels, through diverse strategies.

## Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

### About Norway's Support for Gender Equality

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) declared in 2008 that “The Government's aim is that Norway should be a fearless champion of women's rights and gender equality...[and further] to see a steady increase in the percentage of development funding that is allocated to women's rights and gender equality efforts.” They also recognize the importance of women's organizing, noting “In order to fully utilise women's resources to effect change, we must also focus on women's own efforts to organise and mobilise.”<sup>46</sup>

The overall funding panorama looks positive for 2010, as the Norwegian government recently proposed that NOK 27.4 billion (€3.4 billion) be allocated to development assistance for 2010—an increase of NOK 1.2 billion from 2009. In a late 2009 press release, the MFA underscored women rights and gender equality as a priority area.<sup>47</sup>

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While the MDG3 Fund represents a significant support for women's organizing, one concern was that the minimum allowed grant amount was €750,000—preventing all but the largest women's organizations, or groups who could present joint proposals, from accessing the Fund.

44. Based on AWID's analysis of the MDG3 Fund list of grantees.

45. Based on AWID's analysis of the MDG3 Fund list of grantees.

46. Report No. 11 to the Norwegian Parliament, Stortinget 2007- 2008. *On Equal Terms: Women's Rights and Gender Equality in International Development Policy*, pp. 6-8. Available at [http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/2156814/PDFS/STM200720080011000EN\\_PDFS.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/2156814/PDFS/STM200720080011000EN_PDFS.pdf)

47. Norway MFA Press Release on 13.10.2009 see <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/press/News/2009/aidbudget09.html?id=581355>

The MFA has a gender budget line dedicated to promote women's rights and gender equality. Approximately 60 million NOK (€7.5 million) from the gender budget line is managed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and allocated to relevant regional (trans-national) and international NGOs and Research & Development. The majority of funds, approximately 180 million NOK in 2010 is channeled through Norwegian embassies and benefits actors at the country level. Women's organisations can access funds from the embassies or from Norad (only regional or international NGOs).

This funding is guided by the:

Action Plan for Women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation (2007-2009)

Thematic priorities of the "Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation"<sup>48</sup> (for which a mid-term review was released in early 2009) include women's political empowerment, women's economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and violence against women. In addition, there is a focus on "mainstreaming the gender perspective into all development cooperation" including peace building, good governance, the environment, oil and energy, and education and health.

### Resources and Allocations for Gender Equality

It is difficult to put a precise quantity on Norwegian support for gender equality because, as in many bilateral agencies, this support takes many shapes and is further complicated by the challenges of tracking mainstreamed funds. Two dimensions of analysis are of particular interest however: the gender budget line and the aid marked for the OECD DAC "sector code" of women's equality organizations and institutions. The gender budget line of the MFA, launched in 2007, disbursed close to NOK 196 million (€24 million). In 2008 this amount increased slightly to NOK 207 million (€26 million) and in 2009, it experienced a significant jump to NOK 300 million (€37 million).<sup>49</sup>

The following data reflect Norwegian aid marked with the DAC "sector code" for aid to women's equality organizations and institutions. In theory, this could mean both governmental and non-governmental organizations, however an analysis by NORAD indicates that these figures "will mainly capture projects and support to 'pure' women's groups."<sup>50</sup>

48. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/38/57/38830980.pdf>

49. Based on interview with and data provided by a representative of the interview with and data provided by representative of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2009 and January 2010.

50. NORAD (2009), *Mid –Term Review of the Norwegian Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2007 – 2009)*, p. 62.



**Norwegian Aid marked with the DAC Sector Code,  
"support to women's equality organizations and institutions"<sup>51</sup>**

2005	2006	2007	2008
125.3 million NOK (€15.65 million)*	129.2 million NOK (€16.07 million)	328.2million NOK (€40.87 million)	262.9 million NOK (€32.74 million)

**Who receives Norway's gender equality funding?**

The Norwegian MFA has been tracking data on grantees of the gender budget line in 2007 and 2008. The accessibility of this data is rare in bilateral agencies and is of great use in understanding who is receiving funding. The table below indicates the kinds of organizations (as classified by the MFA) that received support under the gender budget line in those two years. Multilateral organizations received the greatest share of support—close to 48%<sup>52</sup>, followed by “local NGOs” (those working in a single country), with almost 16%. Based on AWID’s analysis of the organizations listed for the period 2007-2008, 24 women’s organizations were included among the recipients, receiving over NOK 69 million (€8.69 million), or close to 18% of the total allocation.<sup>53</sup> Of the total 24, 11 were local women’s organizations, 9 international organizations, 3 regional and one Norwegian.

<b>Analysis of Norwegian bilateral assistance for "Women and Gender Equality"<sup>54</sup></b>	<b>2007-2008 (NOK 1000)</b>	<b>Equivalent in € (Million)</b>	<b>%</b>
Multilateral Institutions	191,517	23,8	47.5%
Local NGOs	63,409	7,9	15.7%
International NGOs	57,080	7,1	14.2%
Norwegian public institutions	13,561	1,7	3.3%
Norwegian NGOs	25,524	3,2	6.3%

51. Ibid.

52. These include thematic funds that finance NGOs and INGOs activities in relevant thematic fields such as Violence Against Women (VAW) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

53. Based on data provided by representative of Norwegian MFA, “Bilateral assistance through Chapter/post 168.70 ‘Women and gender equality’ by Group of Agreement Partner, Agreement partner and agreement title 2007-2008”.

54. Based on AWID analysis of data provided.

Analysis of Norwegian bilateral assistance for “Women and Gender Equality”	2007-2008 (NOK 1000)	Equivalent in € (Million)	%
Public institutions in recipient/ other countries	10,698	1,3	2.6%
Regional NGOs	24,115	3,0	6.0%
Other: Consultants, governments/ ministries in recipient countries/ Norwegian private sector/ public sector other donor countries/ unknown (undefined)	16,830	2,1	4.2%
TOTAL	402,734	50,1	100%
Total given to women’s organizations (civil society) <sup>55</sup>	69,729	8,7	17.3%

For the period 2007-2008, 24 women’s organizations were included among the recipients, receiving over NOK 69 million (€8.69 million), or close to 18% of the total allocation.

While the increasing resources for the Norwegian gender budget line are a promising sign, concerns with impact remain. The mid-term review suggested that systems are lacking to track results achieved. Such tracking systems could also provide greater clarity as to whether there has been an effective increase in relative funding for women’s rights and gender equality. Further, in examining whether Norway has increased its relative funding for women’s rights and gender equality, the same review notes that while there does appear to be an increase, more attention is needed. Gender focused aid is being monitored in the MFA’s annual budget proposition using the OECD DAC gender policy marker. This has shown an increase from 21% of all bilateral aid in 2005 to 30% in 2008. Finally, the gender budget line will go through a full-scale evaluation in 2012 which will provide more elements to measure its impact at the end of this implementation period.<sup>56</sup>

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55. Based on AWID analysis of data provided.

56. Based on delante de information provided by representative of Norwegian MFA.

57 Ibid.



## The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

### About Sweden's Support for Gender Equality

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is an authority of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs that is responsible for almost half of Sweden's development aid budget. As of 2008, Sweden's government identified three thematic priorities in which Sida was to produce results: Democracy and human rights, environment and climate change and **gender equality and the role of women in development**. These priorities thus shape programming by the MFA and Sida. The gender equality priority has four sub-areas, which include women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender based violence and women's security. In spite of a likely drop in Sweden's total ODA for 2010 (probably a result of the economic recession), the government has committed to increasing aid for gender equality in 2010 and holding steady in future years.<sup>58</sup>


Sida is working on a new gender equality policy that for the first time will align all of Sweden's institutions in their women's rights and gender equality support. This policy is expected to be completed in 2010.<sup>59</sup>

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### Resources and Allocations for Gender Equality

The 2009 budget for Sida was 16.8 billion SEK (around 1.7 billion Euros). Sida found that 80% of their aid tracked against the gender marker had gender equality as an objective; however data from internal Sida gender staff indicate that this is likely an over-representation of their actual support for gender equality.<sup>60</sup>

The global programmes for Gender Equality is one area of Sida funding for gender that is somewhat easier to track. It falls under the new Team for Global Programmes within Sida. Since the creation of this Team, Sida's funding for gender equality has increased significantly. Available data on past and future expected funding for the global programmes for Gender Equality, which is expected to more than quadruple between 2008 and 2011, are as follows:

 <b>Global programmes for Gender Equality<sup>61</sup></b>			
2008	2009	2010	2011
20 mill SEK	40 million SEK	70 million SEK	90 million SEK
(€1.94 million)	(€3.9 million)	(€6.78 million)	(€8.7 million)

58. Interview with Sida representative, September 2009.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Data provided by Sida representative, September 2009.

## Who receives Sweden's gender equality funding?

Under the global programmes for Gender Equality Sida supports women's funds, women's organizations, INGOs, research institutions and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank's Adolescent Girls Initiative and the UN Action Initiative against Sexual Violence in Conflict.

If we look at the organizations working on gender equality that Sida supports at the global level, in addition to the direct recipients which are large international organizations, around 40 other smaller women's rights organizations will be benefiting from these resources. This is a result of the commitments from some grantees (women's funds and INGO's) to re-grant part of the funds allocated for their organizations.

## The Fund for Gender Equality

### How the Fund for Gender Equality was Created

The Fund for Gender Equality is among the most recently established funds—launched in December 2008 as a “multi-donor initiative” with initial funding from the Spanish government and managed by UNIFEM. Several factors gave rise to the fund: the proximity of the deadline for achieving the MDGs (and limited progress towards MDG3 and 5), the global financial crisis and economic recession, which further threaten women's livelihoods and rights, as well as the ambiguous impact of the aid effectiveness agenda and its blurring of accountabilities for gender equality. The Fund for Gender Equality also aimed to complement other donor efforts to allocate significant resources to bridging the gaps in implementation of commitments on gender equality, for example: the Spanish MDG Achievement Fund; the Danish MDG3 Torch; the Dutch MDG3 Fund; Novo Foundation & Nike Foundation's collaboration on 'The Girl Effect'; and Goldman Sachs' \$100 million for women's entrepreneurship training, among others.<sup>62</sup>

The Fund supports what it considers the drivers of gender equality – national mechanisms for women, women's NGOs and community-based organizations, women's academic and advocacy groups – in their efforts to catalyze and implement national commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. It does this through supporting “high-impact gender equality programmes that focus on women's economic and/or political empowerment at local and national levels.”<sup>63</sup> The Fund for Gender Equality responds to a mandate established by a Steering Committee comprising donor, NGO and government representatives, women's rights activists, as well as members of multilateral agencies and the private sector. A Technical Committee made up of thematic experts from all regions covered by the Fund's mandate - Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Commonwealth of Independent States - was established to support the review and selection of proposals.

62. “The Fund for Gender Equality: A Multi-donor Initiative to Intensify Country-level Action to Advance Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment”, presentation by UNIFEM, June 25, 2009.

63. For more information on UNIFEM's Fund for Gender Equality see: [http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund\\_for\\_gender\\_equality/](http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/)



The Fund offers two types of grants: implementation and catalytic. The catalytic grants—for which the first round of awards was announced in January 2010<sup>64</sup>—aim to “support the establishment of strategic coalitions or partnerships to catalyse the development and endorsement of gender equality national or local plans, policies or laws.” They range in size from USD 100,000 – 500,000. Implementation grants are larger—from USD 2 to 5 million—and “will support programmes in countries with agreed upon national or local plans, policies or laws that advance gender equality and women’s empowerment, and that are ready for implementation.”<sup>65</sup> The first round of implementation grants will be awarded in mid-2010.

### Resources and Allocations for Gender Equality

The Fund for Gender Equality was launched with an initial contribution of €50 million (USD 65 million) from the government of Spain. Other donors have since contributed further to the Fund, followed by close to USD 3.5 million from the government of Norway.

Similar to the Dutch MDG3 Fund, in its first call, the Fund for Gender Equality received an overwhelming response, with 1,240 applications submitted in 5 languages—English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Russian. For Catalytic grants alone there were 543 applicants, of which 27 (spanning 26 countries) were successful. These 27 initiatives represent a total 37 grantees (since 10 collaborative proposals were supported). The total of these Catalytic awards reaches close to USD 10 million. At the time of writing, 22 semi-finalists for the Implementation Grant category had been invited to submit full proposals.

### Who are the Fund for Gender Equality Grantees?

Both governmental and non-governmental entities are eligible for funding from the Fund for Gender Equality, with the Fund emphasizing a partnership approach and consultative, participatory processes between key partners and beneficiaries. Governmental agencies are further required to demonstrate commitment by contributing their own funding toward the proposed program. The table below reflects the number and quantity of catalytic grants awarded by region. Latin America and the Caribbean received the highest level of support (25%), closely followed by Africa (22%). Of the selected projects, 89% are led by civil society organizations and 11% by government agencies.<sup>66</sup>

The catalytic grants—for which the first round of awards was announced in January 2010—aim to “support the establishment of strategic coalitions or partnerships to catalyse the development and endorsement of gender equality national or local plans, policies or laws.”

64. For a complete list of Catalytic Grant winners see: [http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund\\_for\\_gender\\_equality/grantees.php](http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/grantees.php)

65. See: [http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund\\_for\\_gender\\_equality/](http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/)

66. Based on data provided by the Fund for Gender Equality secretariat.

Region	Africa	Latin America & Caribbean	Arab States	Asia & the Pacific	Europe & the CIS
Amount per grant (USD)	205,000	489,657	450,000	496,977	462,770
	200,000	495,000	354,490	255,182	420,000
	500,000	500,000	437,140	100,000	499,921
	368,750	163,361	460,000	492,400	120,625
	480,000	300,000		161,920	
	490,380	500,000		394,000	
				200,000	
<b>Total : 9,997,573</b>	<b>2,244,130</b>	<b>2,448,018</b>	<b>1,701,630</b>	<b>2,100,479</b>	<b>1,503,316</b>
	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>15%</b>

Based on AWID's analysis of the data available on the Catalytic grantees, 17 out of the 37 recipients were women's organizations—applying either alone or in collaboration with another organization. These women's groups received close to USD 4 million or 41% of the total funding awarded.

Based on AWID's analysis of the data available on the Catalytic grantees, 17<sup>67</sup> out of the 37 recipients were women's organizations—applying either alone or in collaboration with another organization. These women's groups received close to USD 4 million or 41% of the total funding awarded and they represent 46% of the grantees. Besides these 37 organizations, there are many others that participate in the projects as partners but do not directly receive the funds. Among these we can count 11 other women's organizations that are somehow benefiting from the Fund's resources.

The funds and donors profiled above represent longstanding supporters of gender equality. Specific data on their support for civil society, and specifically women's organizations, is still somewhat limited but what is available opens an important opportunity to continue to advocate for significant resources that explicitly target women's organizations as crucial partners in advancing women's rights. The results of these investments and the ability to track and show results (even when those results

67. AWID's criteria to categorize women's organizations are based on whether the work of these organizations is directly and primarily related to women's rights or women's empowerment, and if these issues are core goals of the organization and part of its mission. This differs from the method used by the Fund to classify applicants, who were asked to self identify and among the options was, "woman led organization".

are ‘holding the line’ on past advances) will be crucial in persuading other donors to expand their support for gender equality—either investing in these or similar existing funds, or establishing their own dedicated funds for gender equality.

## Part 5. Final Considerations

We close this brief with a few highlights and reflections on the significance of the information presented for resource mobilization for women’s organizing, as well as important next steps, to further strengthen and expand the resources available from this sector for advancing gender equality.

- This remains a crucial sector because of its size—AWID surveys have consistently found close to 30% of total combined income reported from women’s organizations comes from this sector—and because of the fact that these are public funds. Women’s organizations have an important and valid role in ensuring that donor (and recipient) countries are living up to their gender equality and human rights commitments.
- In spite of likely decreases in overall levels of ODA, still **billions of dollars are being made available under the banner of gender equality**. New mechanisms and special funds are being created or continued by a number of different agencies—in addition to the four featured in this document, important commitments have also been made by Irish Aid, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation and the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women. These innovative mechanisms are a response to greater awareness of the importance of women’s organizing and work specifically focusing on gender equality.
- Although it appears that more resources than ever are available from this sector for women’s organizing (or at least that the tracking and reporting of this funding has improved so we can better see how much funding is being allocated), their accessibility is limited and their conditions present challenges that have been noted by many women’s rights organizations. The size of this funding, and the fact that grants disbursed are often very large (hundreds of thousands of USD at a minimum, necessitating rigorous financial and administrative procedures) means that **only a limited number of women’s organizations—the largest—are generally able to access this funding**. However, there have recently also been interesting experiences with collaborative resource mobilization; for example, smaller organizations coming together to request funding from the Dutch MDG3 Fund, or the emphasis on collaborative proposals by the Fund for Gender Equality.<sup>68</sup>

68. For other examples, see Hopenhaym, et al (2008). *FundHer Brief 2008: Money Watch for Women’s Rights Movements and Organizations*, pp. 27-31.

While it is a very **promising sign to see the pie growing** in terms of resources for gender equality from bilateral and multilateral agencies, as usual, it is **important to dig further into questions of distribution and accessibility of the resources.**

- This so-called **“absorptive capacity” challenge** also contributes to a dynamic where some funders in this sector aim to support “intermediary” or “re-granting” institutions. One example of this is the number of women’s funds that received MDG3 Fund support, in effect breaking down grants to smaller organizations. While these mechanisms are important in channeling funding for different-sized organizations, it would appear then that the very large organizations (with annual budgets over USD 1 million) and the small ones (with annual budgets under USD 100,000) may be accessing these resources either directly or via re-granting. It is not clear what is happening with those women’s organizations ‘in the middle’.
- Thus, while it is a very **promising sign to see the pie growing** in terms of resources for gender equality from bilateral and multilateral agencies, as usual, it is **important to dig further into questions of distribution and accessibility of the resources.** Women’s organizing takes shape in a range of formal and informal structures, working

at local, national, regional and international levels. It provides crucial services, produces valuable research, holds powerful actors to account, and serves as a steady advocate and innovator in advancing women’s rights and gender equality. Even though some progress has been made, overall funding available continues to be insufficient to achieve and sustain internationally agreed-on goals for gender equality and women’s rights. There are already estimates on the financing gap for the gender dimensions of the MDGs that show that resources available to achieve those goals were falling short by between USD 12 and 30 billion in 2006 (to support the achievement of MDG3 and MDG 5 in low-income countries); this gap is expected to rise to between USD 24 and 83 billion by 2015.<sup>69</sup> Ensuring that these resources are made available is crucial not only for attaining the commitments set out in the BPFA and the MDGs, but for sustaining this diverse array of actors on the frontline of women’s rights. Research by AWID’s WITM initiative in 2010 and 2011, including a new global survey of women’s organizations, will aim to shed further light on the question of resource distribution and other key elements of the ever-evolving funding landscape.

- **Additional research** is needed to understand the **dynamics of funding from non-DAC donors**, including their attention (or lack thereof) to gender equality, particularly considering that this sector is likely to grow considerably in the years ahead. The participation of civil society organizations from these countries in shaping development cooperation policies and monitoring implementation, will be increasingly important to ensure that aid from these new sources supports women’s rights and gender equality.

69. Caren Grown, Chandrika Bahadur, Diane Elson, and Jesse Handbury (2008) “The Financial Requirements of Achieving Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” in *Equality for Women: Where Do We Stand on Millennium Development Goal 3?* Mayra Buvinic, Andrew Morrison, A. Waafus Ofose-Amaah, and Mirja Sjoblom, eds., Washington, DC: World Bank, pp. 4 and 22.

- There is an urgent **need for stronger systems to track funding for gender equality and for women’s organizations**. Strong systems for tracking and analyzing statistical information on donor funding are not mere technical exercises—they are crucial political tools to monitor commitments to gender equality and strengthen their implementation. The gender equality policy marker is currently the only available tool and its use remains limited, as well as the percentage of ODA that it covers. Also, more attention needs to be placed on seeing that multilateral agencies and funds created through public/private partnerships (such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the UN Democracy Fund) are tracking their funding for gender equality.
- Considering the strong pressure, particularly in a time of crisis, to show ‘results’ and the push for efficiency in donor spending, it is critical that when investments are made in women’s organizations and gender equality work, strong systems are in place to speak to the impact that work is having. This will require **further research and expertise to support donor agencies in monitoring and evaluating the impact of their work on gender equality in appropriate ways**. These systems are particularly important considering that the time is ripe to build on the experiences of the special funds and budget lines targeting gender equality and ensure a strong case for their renewal as well as to encourage other funders to follow suit in providing strong financial backing to their commitments to women’s rights.



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