



Report from the conference:
***Practicing the Promises: Post-Busan development agenda
from gender perspective.***
Opportunity or challenge for EU NMS?
in Warsaw, Poland
December 13-14, 2011
organized by KARAT Coalition



Table of content:

Background

Capacity building sessions:

Session 1: Aid effectiveness process before and after Busan

Session 2: Busan outcomes through gender lens

Session 3: Gender and aid effectiveness in development cooperation of EU NMS

Session 4: Beyond the HLF4: what's next with the new aid effectiveness agenda?

Session 5: Beyond the HLF4: Dialogue between CSOs and decision makers on gender in the new aid effectiveness agenda

Working groups summary: strategy and action plan

Participants' evaluation of the conference

Background

This conference of the Connect! East South West Women for development project was organized by KARAT on December 13-14, 2011 in Warsaw entitled: *Practicing the Promises: Post-Busan development agenda from gender perspective. Opportunity or challenge for EU NMS?*

The conference was joined by: representatives of women's and development NGOs from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Austria, experts on gender and effectiveness issues, representatives of partners from developing countries of Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan) as well as Africa (Kenya and Malawi), representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) from Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia as well as Czech Development Agency. In total, around 35 participants representing donors and beneficiaries of development aid.

This meeting was a next step in 3 years work of KARAT members in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and the Secretariat in Poland aimed at greater inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment in development policies and practices of EU New Member States. KARAT's advocacy, awareness raising, networking activities have been implemented based on the constructive dialogue and in close cooperation with development organizations, especially NGDO platforms in NMS as well as MFAs and Agencies responsible for development cooperation in NMS.

The conference was organized two weeks after 4th High Level Forum on aid effectiveness in Busan (HLF4) and it was aimed at

- Increasing awareness and understanding of aid effectiveness process and Busan Outcome Document on aid effectiveness from gender perspective
- Mapping and analysis of donors (especially from EU NMS) and Global South partners engagement in ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment in development policies and programs
- Identification of possibilities for CSOs lobbying and advocacy work on European, regional and national level using new aid effectiveness agenda towards gender –sensitive and –responsive development cooperation
- Development of common advocacy strategy of CSOs from EU NMS for gender sensitive implementation of aid effectiveness agenda after HLF4 in Busan.

Capacity building sessions:

Session 1: Aid effectiveness process before and after Busan

Objectives of the session:

- Ensure the common understanding of the aid effectiveness agenda, especially its latest outcomes from 4th High Level Forum in Busan
- Explain the importance of women's organizations in development effectiveness processes like Open Forum for CSOs development effectiveness and BetterAid platform
- Present the engagement of EU NMS on HLF4

Summary of the session:

The first capacity building session was devoted to presenting the latest outcomes from the 4th High Level on Aid Effectiveness in general and specifically from perspective of women's organizations.

Marcin Wojtalik from Institute of Global Responsibility (IGO) in Poland and representative of BetterAid platform during HLF4 presented the main findings from the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and its interpretation from CSOs point of view. He presented also the road to Busan from European perspective as difficult process to achieve the European consensus due to the lack of political will and weak leadership from EU side. Also explained the negotiation process in drafting the outcome document (including the idea of group of sherpas introduced by the 3rd draft of Busan outcome document and its way of proceeding). The document is weak and some issues were crossed out because of bordering the partnership and inclusion of new actors like emerging economies (China, India and Brasil), said Wojtalik during his speech. He highlighted also few important issues: broad scope and

changing the idea from aid to cooperation, success of International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) which is mentioned in the core document, strong commitment to country systems struggled by Rwanda governmental representatives, mentioning “human rights” and “decent work” in the core document. After Busan Forum the general observation is lack of political will to push the agenda forward and to go further in commitments even when the Paris Declaration and The Accra Agenda for Action are still valid and not fulfilled.

Katarzyna Staszewska, representative of WIDE Network (Women in Development Europe) and member of BetterAid platform responsible for Gender Equality Issues, answered for basic question about the role of women’s organizations in development effectiveness process. To account women from partner countries in the process the voice from women’s movement needs to be heard on international level. Women’s organizations are not engaged in the process from the very beginning, but before Busan they did a lot, like collecting data, mobilizing women’s organizations, conduct the consultation process and published *Key Demands from Women’s Rights Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan 2011) and the Development Cooperation Forum (2012)* to be organized and strong among the CSOs. The gender equality and women’s empowerment is mentioned in the outcomes in point 20, which is maybe not enough from women’s movement perspective, but gives the great starting point to advocate for further implementation.

Kinga Lohmann from KARAT Coalition presented the role of women’s organizations (WO) in the global process of Open Forum for CSO development effectiveness which brought together civil society organisations from around the world to discuss the issues and challenges to their effectiveness as development actors. WOs took active part in achieving the international consensus on understanding of development effectiveness and establishing the principles of CSOs by highlighted gender equality and women’s empowerment issues in the process. The global thematic consultation on gender equality and women’s empowerment in different regions among the world gave the legitimacy to present the coherent system of recommendations. The Open Forum process was considered not only by CSOs but also by decision makers as very important process among CSOs to improve their effectiveness in development cooperation.

After presentations of the panelists the representatives of state institutions from EU NMS gave their short comments and interventions answering for the question about the engagement of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia in effectiveness process, on road to Busan and about their presence during the HLF4.

The general conclusion was that the engagement of EU NMS was quite weak, except Poland due to the Presidency in the EU Council, because all the countries aren’t the main donors and don’t play the leading role in development cooperation. The interest was even lower because of the limited capacity inside the institutions. Some of the representatives also admitted that the effectiveness agenda is still not relevant to their development cooperation systems which remain still under construction.

The questions from the floor was mostly concentrated on detailed information about the negotiation process, role of different actors and advocacy work which has been done by CSOs before and during the HLF4.

Session 2: Busan outcomes through gender lens

Objectives of the session:

- Present the lessons learnt by women’s organizations in the preparation process and at HLF4
- Explain the opportunities and possible consequences of the Busan outcomes for gender equality and women’s empowerment

Summary of the session:

The panel discussion was moderated by Veronique Dion, the independent consultant (former One World Action) who focused here attention on the outcomes of Busan Partnership from gender perspective, especially for women in partner countries and women’s organizations working on development issues. Chipso Kanjo from Coalition of women living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi, Roselyn Musa from FEMNET, Dosalieva Balgaky from Women’s Support Center in Kyrgyzstan and Kasia Staszewska from WIDE Network expressed their concerns after the HLF4 and they were trying to find the way how the Busan outcomes could be relevant for their everyday work.

Roselyn Musa summed up the HLF4 in metaphorical way said that the HLF4 was like Korean food – you have all tastes, but the mixture have a strange taste. There were few positive things like point 20. In the Busan Partnership and last minute gender initiative introduced by US and Korea, few things were the huge compromise like building block on gender equality which won't be established and only fragmentary understanding role of human rights in development and she described also few challenges like US and Korean Joint Gender Action Plan and different approach in women's empowerment defined by different actors. Kasia from WIDE agreed with Roselyn that WOs need to be careful with Gender Action Plan proposed by US and Korea and emphasized that this is a huge step forward with changing the paradigm from aid to development as now the process is broader and all Policy Coherence for Development issues are included from now on. For Chipso Kanjo from Malawi the most important outcome from the Busan Forum was the broader involvement of different actors in the process and the transparency issue which is critical for the partner countries. From Kirgiz perspective the most important is the implementation of Busan commitments and its influence on national policies and practice, so women's organizations from Central Asia are looking forward the next steps.

The questions from the floor raised various topics connected with different parts of Busan Partnership and role of networks like WIDE and FEMNET in the process.

As in the Busan new topics like private sector engagement in development and risk management have appeared the advocacy of CSOs need to include all the issues and new challenges. The changes in the global direction of development are also caused by the financial crisis and its repercussions and influence on shaping documents like Agenda for Change published in 2011. The EU and OECD are no longer leaders in the process and the new leader doesn't show up, so the weak political will is omnipresent.

The gender equality issues are visible in BetterAid platform thanks to the involvement of women's organizations and are a part of consensus between different CSOs. *Now we have to work 10 times harder* – said Kasia Staszewska – *to implement the commitments and to mainstream gender in the implementation process*. It is good that women's movement don't speak one voice, because the coalition of different people and different topics is the power to be the strong partner in the discussion, not the antagonist. The similarities and differences between Beijing process in mid 90's, 20th century and the process of aid effectiveness and presence of women's issues there was also widely discuss, as the experiences from UN process could be useful.

Session 3: Gender and aid effectiveness in development cooperation of EU NMS

Objectives of the session:

- Present the main findings from case study research about gender-transformative development policies and practices in Czech Republic and Poland

Summary of the session:

Enlargements to the membership of the EU in 2004 and 2007 extended to New Member States the Union's responsibility to reduce poverty and address women's empowerment and gender equality through development cooperation. Over the past 15 years, the EU established strong commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment and with the Amsterdam treaty, the integration of equality between women and men into all Community policies and activities became a legal requirement. In the development arena, this commitment was translated in the EU Consensus on Development cooperation, the Gender Communication and more recently the Gender Equality Action Plan. In joining the EU, NMS became politically and legally bounded by these commitments. During the accession process the lack of clarity from the EU with regards to development cooperation lead to discrepancies between commitments and practice, a gap which is heightened when gender equality and women's empowerment is considered.

The NMS are key players to contribute to the EU commitment to poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs: Their experiences both as aid recipient and donor can lead the way to innovative approaches to development and the creation of an enabling environment for CSOs-donor engagement. However, expertise in the area of women's rights in development is somewhat limited and political will inconsistent. The two pieces of research were conducted to explore the extent to which gender equality commitments were appropriated, owned and contributed to shape development policies and processes in Czech Republic and Poland.

Wojtek Tworkowski, independent researcher from Poland and Lucie Bilderová from Gender Studies prepared the short summary of their researches. The general conclusions were quite similar from both of the speakers that there is lack of understanding gender issues in development among the stakeholders and both countries are far away from implementation of effectiveness development agenda. As both systems are shaping still there is a space to influence for the system from gender perspective. The engagement of women's organizations is necessary to advocate and raising awareness about the linkages between gender and development and the role of women in development. CSOs and other implementers should also take into account that gender equality is central to effective, sustainable development.

The presentation of the findings from case study researches was the introduction to the SWOT analysis of gender equality and women's empowerment in national policies and programs on development cooperation in the context of aid/development effectiveness prepared in working groups.

Session 4: Beyond the HLF4: what's next with the new aid effectiveness agenda?

Objectives of the session:

- Present the further steps in implementation of Busan outcomes on international and national level and possible scenario of CSOs' engagement in development effectiveness process
- Inclusion of Southern and Eastern perspective for development processes in the future

Summary of the session:

The Busan implementation two weeks after the HLF4 was still uncertain and unclear for all actors as in the core document only two points were devoted to the post-Busan framework. Marta Gontarska from KARAT Coalition analyzed the hints and time bounded commitments from the Busan Partnership document like June 2012 for the set of indicators and launch a new, light and inclusive structure – Global Partnership and fully implementation of *a common, open standard for electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on resources provided through development co-operation*. She also presented the set of indicators proposed by CSOs (lead by OXFAM) as a draft for the discussion as lack of interest and support from donors' side was observed.

The representatives from partner countries reacted on the presentation taking into account the possible scenario of implementation the commitments on national level and how they can influence on their everyday work. Chipo Kanjo from Coalition of Women Living with HIV/AIDS admitted that the governments in partner countries are not ready to implement so advanced commitments, so the umbrella organizations have a role to play in make them aware about the opportunities and obligations going along with Busan Partnership.

Roselyn from FEMNET emphasized that lots of work needs to be done by women's organizations after HLF4 like promoting the outcome document (by translation and dissemination activities) and also interrogate systems in the country to empower women and give them full rights.

For the representative of Women's Support Center from Kyrgyzstan the ownership is the topic which still needs improvement on both sides and after Busan CSOs should be included to the discussion as key player and till now the dialogue between governments, donors and CSOs was very poor.

All of the speakers agreed also that CSOs need to be engaged in shaping the future commitments like set of indicators and be involved as key actor in Global Partnership.

Session 5: Beyond the HLF4: Dialogue between CSOs and decision makers on gender in the new aid effectiveness agenda

Objectives of the session:

- Map of advocacy work on national level in EU NMS – good practices and challenges
- Find possible channels for cooperation between CSOs' representatives and decision makers

Summary of the session:

The panel discussion was moderated by Izabela Wilczyńska from Polish Humanitarian Organization (PAH), who has a great experience in advocacy work, especially with Polish decision makers, for sustainable development cooperation system focused on poverty reduction and human rights based approach. Among the panelists two

groups of stakeholders were invited: the representatives of decision makers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Czech Development Agency) and representatives of development organizations working under the umbrella of CONCORD in Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania.

The panelists discussed the possible scenario of engagement of CSOs in implementation of Busan commitments and the ideas for the future cooperation with decision makers after Busan, but also on national level to establish the dialogue on partnership basis. The panelists presented the good practices like the evaluation of projects from gender perspective made by independent researchers in Czech Republic, consultation process conducted by Polish MFA with CSOs and by Romanian MFA focused on working with partner countries and memorandum of understanding signed to improve the dialogue between decision makers and CSOs. Although the panelists admitted that they weren't the gender specialists they discussed also the issue what could be useful for them to raise their awareness about gender issues and how to attract different actors in gender matters. As still many things has to be improved to establish the real dialogue all panelists gave at least one recommendation for the future.

The proposed solutions were the following:

- Establish clear rules of cooperation. E.g. by signing Memorandum of Understanding
- Establish of guidelines for programming for development cooperation including the consultation with CSOs
- Organisation of round table about Busan Partnership commitments and the implementation process of development effectiveness agenda
- Establish the dialogue and start the awareness raising process via trainings, round tables, joint participation in events
- Ongoing Communications between CSOs and decision makers to maintain the relationship
- Advocacy work towards decision makers and CSOs for inclusion gender issues in their policies, programs and projects from women's movement.

Working groups summary: strategy and action plan

The common strategy and action plan to be implemented after the conference was developed by the working groups discussions carried out each day of the conference. The discussions were based on significant inputs of experts presenting dynamics and outcomes of Busan aid effectiveness process as well as findings of research and case study analysis on gender equality in development cooperation of NMS.

The outcomes of these groups work includes: SWOT analysis of current situation regarding gender equality in development cooperation of NMS, priorities for work towards greater inclusion of gender equality in development cooperation as well as implementation of Busan outcome document, recommendations to different actors and finally short and long term action plan. These are presented below:

1. Analysis of current situation

The first step in preparing the strategy and action plan for the implementation of Busan outcome document from gender perspective was an analysis of current implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment in development policies and practices of NMS: strong and weak points as well as opportunities and threats:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMS are more trustful, because they are not a former colonial power • NMS have the memory/experience of being a recipient of development assistance aid • They have historical linkages with CIS countries/Central Asia • Capable of using transitional experience – good and bad practices • Presence of some CSOs with strong interest/expertise on gender issues • NMS adhere to the European and international commitments on gender equality and development cooperation 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of understanding of development cooperation as poverty reduction and of signification of gender equality and women's rights • Tied aid • Not using country-system • Lack of political will and absence of political champion on gender and development • Limited capacity in institution to implement NGOs recommendations • NMS have other priorities than gender issues • No functioning machineries on gender equality at national level – more difficult to implement • NMS are not gender-sensitive and take gender equality for granted (e.g.: education and health care). As a result, gender is not taken into consideration in development cooperation programs and projects • Lack of knowledge and sensitivity on gender amongst all staff of NGOs and policy-makers and implementers • Lack of policies and legal framework/lack of comprehension • Lack of financial resources dedicated to gender and budget prioritizing gender issues • Lack of or weak monitoring systems – to be developed and recognized
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMS can use their comparative advantage (e.g.: transformation experience) • Use already existing commitments on gender and development (EU policies, international commitments, etc.) • Use the interest of NGOs and institution to build capacity • Build linkages with women's organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa • Development systems are still being shaped giving space for influence (e.g.: consultation in Poland) and push for gender-sensitive and responsive development cooperation • Join forces as NMSs and work together as a platform/ network not only at national level, but at the regional one. We can promote practices and share knowledge. • In the process of shaping gender policies, affirmative actions in development cooperation plans and programmes is a step forward • Encourage CSO implementing projects with a gender aspect to be more systematic and focus on empowerment. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualization of development cooperation as economic growth through trade • Lack of gender sensitivity amongst decision-makers in developing countries can divert resources for women's rights work when using country-system (budget support) • Financial resources for gender work are decreasing • Advocating for gender equality, whilst not implementing at NMS level • Lack of stability within institutions (corruption) • Lack of recognition of the role of NMS by the EU and certain networks such as CONCORD. Need for NMS to speak as one voice within the EU.

2. Priorities

The main conclusion of the discussions around the implementation of Busan outcomes from gender perspective in NMS was that although the aid/development effectiveness process worked out a number of gender sensitive guidelines and indicators these are still rather long term aims of NMS who are still designing policies and structures of its development cooperation and are not advanced enough in including gender issues in their development cooperation to be able to fully implement Busan outcomes. It was concluded that in order for the development policies and practices of NMS to be gender sensitive, responsive and effective in terms of ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment basic progress in understanding gender issues, building capacity and instruments must be made. Therefore following priorities for advocacy, awareness raising and networking activities have been defined:

1. Common understanding of gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation/development effectiveness within the development sector (CSOs and institutions i.e. MFAs)
2. Adoption of crosscutting gender equality and women's empowerment approach in development policies and practices of NMS in line with international commitments and guidelines i.e. CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of ALL forms of Discrimination against Women), BPfA (Beijing Platform for Action), EU Gender Action Plan, etc
3. Capacity building of MFAs (at different levels and in different departments including assessors of the project proposals), development agencies, CSOs and other relevant actors on gender equality and women's empowerment aspects of development
4. Introduction of evaluation systems which would include assessing gender related aspects of the projects as well as the development programs and policies (sex desegregated data gathered during the monitoring and evaluation).

3. Recommendations

In order to achieve the implementation of above listed priorities following recommendations for actions of women's and development organizations in NMS have been formulated:

1. Simplify language and ensure less technical, user friendly communication on gender in development cooperation and effectiveness adopted to different groups (institutions, CSOs, public)
2. Develop guidelines for implementation of gender issues in development cooperation on the level of programs and proposals on how practically implement gender equality and address women's rights in NGOs project work
3. Agree on memorandum of understanding between CSOs and MFAs, guidelines on gender in development cooperation
4. Strengthen cooperation between women's organizations and NGDO platforms, as well as increase cooperation between CSOs in NMS, to exchange experience, build capacity and stronger support for gender in development
5. Advocate for the implementation of gender sensitive evaluation of programs and projects include (promote gender indicators and advocate for its implementation already at programming stage)
6. Consult development related institutions and CSOs in partner countries at all stages: programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
7. Use significant dates (i.e. 8th of March), related events and processes to promote gender in development cooperation and effectiveness process

4. Action plan

Based on the developed recommendations following actions have been proposed to be implemented by KARAT Secretariat and members in cooperation with NGDO platforms in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia:

SHORT TERM (by April 2012):

1. Gather and publish information on development effectiveness and gender equality, focused on Busan outcomes to be shared with different development actors in NMS as an awareness raising tool (in format of electronic information package on KARAT's website)
2. Prepare and circulate one pager info about effectiveness and gender equality as conference statement along with official letter with recommendations to appropriate institution in each country (head of development cooperation department, etc)
3. Organize meetings with MFAs, roundtables on Busan outcomes from gender perspective (in cooperation with development and women's organizations)
4. Organize discussions of women's organizations with NGDO platforms aimed at designing common advocacy work (including gender aspects in their activities)
5. Addressing gender equality in development during related events/processes (especially in all involved countries in the context of GAP implementation report and additionally in Poland within consultations of multiyear strategy by MFA)

LONG TERM:

1. Training for ministries/agencies on gender in development (very specific and practical, based on case studies/examples – especially in Czech Rep.)
2. Active involvement of women's organizations in NGDO platforms
3. Training for NGDOs on gender in development especially on addressing gender inequalities within development projects (based on CEDAW, Beijing, etc)
4. Influencing the TOR for the assessors /evaluators of development projects – gender mainstreaming
5. Providing inputs to annual aid monitoring reports on gender aspects (Poland, Czech rep.)
6. Development of simple gender indicators for CSOs and institutions with background information (check list)
7. Initiate discussions on MoU regulating cooperation within development sectors, especially between MFA and CSOs

5. Implementation and coordination

KARAT Secretariat and KARAT members involved in the implementation of organization's Gender and Development program will base their activities related to the aid and development effectiveness process on the strategy and action plan described above. This document will be circulated for comments to all who contributed to its development during the conference.

KARAT members in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and the Secretariat in Poland will be responsible for coordination of activities and cooperation with NGDO platforms as well as relevant institutions in these countries. KARAT Secretariat will coordinate common activities.

The detail timeline of the activities and the division of tasks will be agreed between the coordinators. The implementation of agreed activities will be monitored through regular conversations among the coordinators. Information on all undertaken activities will be regularly distributed through KARAT information tools (website, KARAT News, discussion groups, etc).

Participants' evaluation of the conference

Although at the end of the conference some of the participants have already gone around 20 people (out of 37 participants) took part in the evaluation round and 16 people fill in the evaluation form. The conference met the expectations of all the participants and all of them claimed that the objectives of the agenda have been fulfilled.

Among the listed strong points of the conference the participants mentioned most often: the mixture of participants (different stakeholders like decision makers and various CSOs representatives), create a space for shearing experiences between EU NMS and networking possibilities not only for CSOs but also decision makers were appreciate a lot. The advantage of the conference was also the timing (2 weeks after HLF4) and the topic as it was difficult to follow the agenda before and during the two days all basic information were presented by the people how participated in the process and follow the agenda. The participants also appreciated the presence of different networks like KARAT, WIDE, FEMNET and CONCORD which represented broader groups of interest. Some of the participants admitted that after the conference they have some clear picture how to proceed in coming future around the development effectiveness issue on national level. The participants also believed it is necessary to join voices with different perspective and experiences from various countries to work together on gender and development issues and building a common understanding of the issues.

Participants emphasized that more interactive and inclusive discussion would helpful to engaged all the participants and reinvent the methodology of the meeting. Also more concrete examples and case studies from developing countries could be presented to illustrate the gender and development links.

The logistics were rated high and good cooperation with organizers was highlighted.