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Dear KARAT News Readers !

KARAT Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your partnership, cooperation and support through 2011. We hope that the New Year 2012 will be a messenger of peace, joy, success and good tidings for all of you.

Very best wishes,

The KARAT Secretariat

Benefits and disappointments of HLF4

The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) came to a close on Dec.1st 2011 and although some observers describe the event as a turning point for international development, the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) taking part in the negotiations were slightly unsatisfied. From the CSOs' perspective the Busan HLF4 did not address the issue of human rights sufficiently as the final document [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#) lacks the explicit commitments to adopt human-rights based approaches. It does not give adequate attention to women's rights, the right to development and environmental justice. The final document, however, stresses the importance of CSOs in "promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation" (article 22).



The CSOs express their satisfaction with the fact that the new aid effectiveness agenda focuses more on results as rights based development outcomes rather than aid delivery and it is more inclusive. For example it involves not only the OECD-DAC, but also the United Nations, South-South Cooperation actors, parliamentarians and local authorities, civil society and the private sector.



commitments.

The CSOs' demands and expectations towards HLF4 were formulated during the Busan Civil Society Forum (BSCF) which took place just before HLF4. There, the women's organizations from across the world, including KARAT, signed the [Busan Women's Forum Political Statement](#). This common voice of women called on all governments and other development actors involved in the HLF4 to include the women's rights and gender equality perspective in a new development cooperation framework. A position of the CSOs was clearly expressed by the sentence "Put Women's Rights at the Center of Development" on the pink scarves worn by the BSCF participants. Unfortunately, the key players of the HLF4 (e.g. China) were not inclined to abandon their countries' interests to the human and women's rights

The Busan HLF4 was attended by the KARAT members from the Forum of Women NGOs of Kyrgyzstan, Gender Education, Research and Technologies Foundation (Bulgaria) and representatives of KARAT Secretariat.

[Better Aid Statement on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

[Better Aid position on the proposed Busan Joint Action Plan on Gender Equality and Development](#)

[Civil society statement to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness](#)

For more information please contact Marta Gontarska at: marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl or Ewa Pintera at: ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

Busan outcomes through gender lens

The CSOs' representatives from EU New Member States, Africa and Central Asia together with the delegates from EU NMS Ministries of Foreign Affairs discussed the Busan outcomes from gender perspective during a two-day KARAT conference held on December 13th-14th in Warsaw (Poland).



The conference's participants focused on the opportunities and threats of the new development agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment, the role of CSOs in the new agenda and cooperation between CSOs and decision-makers in NMS in the context of the Busan final document's implementation on national and international level. They talked about the new (post-Busan) possibilities for CSOs' lobbying and advocacy on European, national and regional level using new aid effectiveness agenda towards gender sensitive and gender responsive development cooperation. The participants also analysed the gender equality and women's empowerment in the national policies and programs on development cooperation in the context of aid effectiveness.

The conference resulted in developing the recommendations and proposals of activities concerning advocacy and lobbying the decision-makers in NMS to include the gender equality issue in their development policies. The event was also an opportunity to launch the WIDE aid effectiveness report "[EU Donors under women's watch](#)".

The conference was part of KARAT's project *Connect! East South West Women for Development*, it was an associated event of the European Development Days 2011, and it was also the event of Polish EU Presidency.

For more information please contact Marta Gontarska at: marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl

Gender, development and Central Asia from European perspective

The European Development Days (EDDs), called a policy-making "laboratory", took place in Warsaw on December 15th- 16th 2011 bringing together the key partners in European Union development cooperation. The forum highlighted the recent advances and important initiatives in key areas of development such as peace, security, democracy, good governance, the economic crisis, international finance, trade, food security and human rights as well as served as a platform for policy brainstorming and forward-looking recommendations ahead of key international summits.

During one of a panel session the EDDs' participants discussed the gender equality role in a development policy referring to the World Bank report "[World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development](#)". According to the report the lives of women around the world have improved dramatically in recent years but the gaps still remain in many areas. The report stresses that greater gender equality can enhance productivity and improve development outcomes for the next generation.

There was also a debate on the current situation in Central Asia. The participants analyzed possible scenarios of the countries and tried to answer how Europe can support sustainable economic development in Central Asia. The participants agreed that in Central Asia a progress towards democracy and civil liberties is real but slow and if change comes, it will come from the grassroots level. This is where donors should be focusing their efforts. It was also stressed that the Central Asia societies are given stability at the cost of progress toward a more open society.

KARAT's representatives noticed that almost all panel discussions raised the issue of new emerging donors (China, Russia, India, Brazil and Mexico) and their role in the global development policy. In relation to that, the role of private sector in development aid was discussed in terms of its will to keep up to the standards of fair aid, i.e. make business which takes into consideration social justice and human rights, the values which unfortunately were rarely referred to.

For more information please contact Ewa Pintera at: ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

Central Asia women fall victims to tradition

The audience gathered in Warsaw Club "Political Critique" on Dec.1st 2011 had a unique chance to hear stories about the Central Asian women who fall victims to their countries' traditions. The representatives of NGOs from Azerbaijan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan shared the stories about acts of violence against women such as bride kidnapping and women trafficking, which are widely accepted in their countries' societies. The speakers stressed the role of tradition which prevents women from demanding justice and creates an illusion that these serious acts of violence are legal. The event was a final part of a two-day strategic meeting within the KARAT project *Coalition to CEDAW as a Tool to Improve Women's Access to Justice*. The project partners from Central Asia and Poland shared their concerns and ideas about how to improve the women's access to justice in the project countries. In the course of discussion four core types of barriers effecting women's access to justice were identified : institutional, legal, socio-economic and cultural. The outcome of the strategic meeting were regional level recommendations that will provide a basis for the input of KARAT into CEDAW's Committee General Recommendation on Access to Justice.

For more information please contact Aleksandra Solik at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

KARAT Board meeting

The KARAT Board meeting took place on November 30th – December 2nd in Warsaw. The Board discussed the coming elections for KARAT Board, preliminary evaluation of the KARAT Programme 2009 – 2012 and a development of direction and strategy for KARAT's new programme 2013 – 2016.

The preliminary evaluation was preceded by presenting the content and outcomes of KARAT project *Coalition on CEDAW as a Tool to Improve Women's Access to Justice*. The project partners and the board members discussed the project's results from a perspective of NGOs' cooperation within KARAT Coalition. All eight project partners admitted that the project had good results in their countries and hoped for its continuation. They stressed that although KARAT does not work directly on the problems addressed on the national level it provided the relevant tools (e.g. trainings in CEDAW Convention and CEDAW OP) needed for addressing the women rights' violations.

While evaluating KARAT's Programme for the 2009 – 2012 Board members expressed their satisfaction that KARAT had become well recognized and stable Coalition with more members, and importantly more members involved in projects, and more projects. At the same time they stressed that it cannot take this situation for granted. Therefore, KARAT should try to take diverse actions and measures to keep pace with the changing social, political and economic environment with a special focus on changes in the EU.

For more information please contact Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

A new KARAT member

The Board accepted a new member of the Coalition – The Public Fund of DIA (Business, Initiative Women) from Kyrgyzstan.

The DIA lobbies for and protects the women's human and economic rights and interests, especially in the south Kyrgyzstan. It has a broad knowledge on CEDAW mechanisms and in cooperation with other Kyrgyz NGOs monitors the CEDAW Convention and OP CEDAW implementation by the state. The DIA prepares the alternative reports to international bodies on state's performance as concerns realization and promotion of human rights. It also co-organized the trainings in CEDAW within Women Support Center Gender School in Osh area. The DIA has received the UN Development Fund for Women's award for its work for realization of CEDAW Convention in Kyrgyzstan.

Apart from its human rights' protection oriented activities the DIA works on improving Kyrgyz women's economic situation by promoting and supporting the women's business initiatives. With support of this organization five micro credit agencies have been established.

Now KARAT Coalition consists of 61 member organizations.

For more information please contact Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

Members' News

Uzbekistan: Law enforcement officers study CEDAW Convention

Uzbekistan law enforcement agencies will receive the updated comprehensive compendium of the national and international documents concerning trafficking in persons. The compendium, edited by the anti-TIP NGO Istikbolli Avlod, a KARAT member, is a response to a growing demand for resources addressing the human trafficking from the Uzbek counter-trafficking, crime-prevention and customs units dealing with this serious problem. The compendium will include the CEDAW Convention and its Optional Protocol to raise awareness of the law enforcement officers on women's rights and non-discrimination principles. An idea to include the still non-ratified OP CEDAW into the compendium is a part of lobbying activities for the OP CEDAW ratification by Uzbek government to guarantee a better women's right protection in Uzbekistan.

The problem of human trafficking in Uzbekistan is very serious. Due to the poor economic conditions in the country, vulnerability to labor and sex trafficking is widespread and not restricted to certain groups. The government openly acknowledges that TIP is a problem and in recent years it has strengthened its cooperation with the anti-TIP NGOs like Istikbolli Avlod to prevent the trafficking and help the victims.

For more information please contact Liliya Khamzayeva at: lhamzayeva@mail.ru

Kyrgyzstan: NGOs' network for better human rights' protection

There is a chance that Kyrgyzstan will meet its international commitments to protect the human rights to a greater extent as on November 16th 2011 twenty Kyrgyz NGOs decided to establish a network to monitor the state's performance as concerns realization of CEDAW Convention and OP CEDAW.

The process of monitoring focuses on regional experts and institutions that will write the alternative reports to CEDAW Committee and other international bodies and that will conduct a regular documentation and analysis for high quality, timely and effective interregional advocacy campaigns.

The launch of the network and monitoring process was preceded by a special training for CSOs' representatives and local governments at Gender School of the Women Support Center in September 2011. Its participants learnt about the CEDAW Convention, national gender policy, and human rights concept and practiced advocacy campaigning skills through participation in role-plays. The training was a part of the project *Promotion of political and economic women rights in the new context of Kyrgyzstan* supported by Fund for Gender Equality, UN Women and conducted by the Women Support Center, a KARAT member, Women Entrepreneurs Support Association and other leading gender and human rights regional NGOs.

For more information please contact Aigul Alymkulova at: aaaigul@gmail.com

Romania: Women's enterprises as a chance for fair job market

The women in Romania who wish to advance their careers will be given an opportunity to take part in courses, seminars and transnational exchanges to develop their entrepreneurial skills. The women who need help to start their own businesses will find a professional support at one of the four Centers for Counseling (one-stop-shop) in each geographical region where the project *Equal Chances and Respect – Entrepreneurial Instruments from a Gender Perspective* is implemented.

The project, conducted by the Women's Association of Romania, a member of KARAT, has emerged from the need to encourage women entrepreneurship. The statistics show that country-wide women are less involved in entrepreneurial initiatives than men. At the same time, the women entrepreneurs are 70% more willing to invest their time and effort in perfection of their managerial skills.

It is expected that increasing involvement of women in the entrepreneurial projects will contribute to the elimination of disproportions between women and men's chances on the job market.

For more information please contact Liliana Pagu at: afr@opensys.ro

Call for participation

Slovakia: Be a part of Global Education project!

Dear KARAT Members, we call on you to participate in an important and interesting project – developing of a specialised public library with books and other resources on global issues such as gender, development, human rights and environment.

The Information Centre of Global Education has been recently established in Slovakia by the [Slovak Centre for Communication and Development](#), a KARAT member. Its goal is to collect the publications on global issues from across the world and offer them to the public. Therefore, the Centre kindly asks you to send them information on any interesting analytical book/books your organization published, so they could order it.. The Centre will cover price of the book/s as well as postal fees.

What is Information Centre of Global Education? It is specialised public library offering a wide range of services for people interested in global issues. It offers them background materials on topics such as global development, climate change, poverty, gender issues, human rights, sustainability, globalisation, etc. It also offers educational and presentational resources and advice for teachers, students and others for presentations, studies and lessons on various subjects.

If you wish to share some publications with the Centre please contact Peter Ivanic at: ivanic@sccd-sk.org or Zuzana Jezerska at: jezerska@sccd-sk.org

For more information please contact Zuzana Jezerska at: jezerska@sccd-sk.org

Resources

World Bank: Gender equality and development

The World Bank's annual flagship report "World development report 2012: Gender equality and development" focuses on gender equality for the first time in 30 years. Its basic conclusion is twofold: development can contribute to gender equality; and gender equality can help promote development. The report looked at the three main areas: markets, institutions (both formal and informal), and households. Institutions are as much to blame as the other two factors, and the report suggests that they deserve special attention. The report sets four priorities for public action: reducing excess female mortality and closing remaining education gaps, improving access to economic opportunities for women, increasing women's voice and agency in the household and in society, and limiting the reproduction of gender inequality across generations.

Read more about the report [here](#)

AidWatch: Polish development cooperation 2010

Each year, the Polish AidWatch Working Group in cooperation with Zagranica Group (an association of Polish non-governmental organizations involved in international development cooperation, democracy support, humanitarian aid and global education), produces the annual report looking at the performance of Polish government on targets for development aid quantity and quality.

This year report includes a chapter on gender equality issue developed by KARAT. KARAT assesses the Polish government's efforts towards including gender equality perspective in its development policy as unsatisfying and gives the recommendations, including introducing of gender equality as a horizontal priority in Polish development cooperation, in line with international standards, drafting a comprehensive action plan for gender equality in Polish aid, in cooperation with experts, directing budget resources to implementation of actions related to gender equality and women empowerment under Polish aid, and transposing the action plan for gender equality into strategies, annual and multiannual plans, calls for proposals and application processes.

Read the full report [here](#)

UN: Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity

In December 2011 the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a ground-breaking report on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity. The 25-page report documents discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, in all regions of the world, and outlines how international human rights law can be used to end violence and related human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The report emphasises that the Human Rights Council and UN Member States have a duty to address human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Read more about the report [here](#)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

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Edited by Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek

KARAT Coalition

ul. Rakowiecka 39A/ 14

02 521 Warsaw, Poland

www.karat.org

phone: +48 22 8491647

fax: +48 22 628 20 03

Subscriptions and news contributions are welcomed at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

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