



KARAT Coalition conference

European Development Days 2011 associated event

Practicing the Promises: Post-Busan development agenda from gender perspective Opportunity or challenge for EU NMS?

Warsaw, 13-14 December 2011

KARAT Coalition is pleased to invite you to the conference on gender equality and women's rights in Post-Busan development agenda to be held on **13 and 14 December in Warsaw, Poland**. The event will particularly focus on discussing opportunities for EU NMS to improve their commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation policies and programs.

The conference will take place two weeks after the 4th High Level Forum on aid effectiveness in Busan, Korea and will be held two days before the European Development Days 2011 on 15 and 16 December in Warsaw, Poland.

This conference is an event officially associated with the European Development Days 2011.

1. Rational

Women form 50 % of world's population and they perform 2/3 of the world's work. At the same time they own less than 1% of the world's property, they constitute 70% of the world's poor living for less than 1\$ per day, on average only about 17% of parliamentarians and 2/3 of world's illiterate are women. Therefore development cooperation aimed at poverty reduction, improvement of health, level of education, democratization, equality and international cooperation cannot be effective without taking into account gender aspects of development problems and undertaking appropriate measures. This fact is recognized in all international development policies and programs (UN, EU, OECD) and gender sensitive approach is implemented by many experienced donors. This is not yet the case of the new donors. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia are still building the basis for their development cooperation. Both CSOs and decision makers lack awareness, knowledge and capacity in gender and development area.

The aid effectiveness agenda implemented by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and more recent the Busan Outcome Document (the final version will be available at the beginning of



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December 2011), aims to improve the quality of official development assistance (ODA) in order to take full advantage of its development impacts.

The EU is a leader in development cooperation and has a great impact on development cooperation not only among EU Members but also globally. The commitments adopted on EU level are slightly noticed and hardly implemented on national level, especially in EU NMS. As we can observe weakening of EU ambitious to be leader of the international aid effectiveness agenda before IV High Level Forum in Busan on aid effectiveness, European Civil Society Organizations mobilize to advocate on European and national levels to strengthen the role of EU in the aid effectiveness process related to gender issues.

Since the entry into the EU in 2004 and 2007, the NMS have made commitments to increasing and improving their aid to developing countries. In the context of fostering their own development, and dealing with their impoverished backgrounds, responsibilities of becoming a donor require a great deal of adjustment. NMS are missing the necessary experience, expertise, and often a political will to be truly engaged in the process. As a result, volumes of the EU12 Official Development Assistance (ODA) are far behind the committed targets (0,17% GNI in 2010) and miss the effectiveness pledge. Furthermore, gender equality and women's rights are one of the weakest and the most fragmented issues in the NMS development cooperation systems.

Women's organisations in NMS generally are still rarely involved in development cooperation, also development organizations rarely adopt the gender-sensitive approach. Their input and advocacy actions, however, are essential to support relevant decision-makers, and other development actors to recognise how fundamental gender equality and women's rights are to effective and sustainable NMS ODA, which is a constantly growing part of the EU funds for aid.

A strong East-West-South dialogue and exchange is needed to build EU-wide support for development co-operation and for putting women's rights and gender equality at its centre. In this context it is crucial to consider the expertise of women's organizations from partner countries based on the rule of ownership of the official development assistance (ODA) received from EU, in particular EU NMS. The development cooperation policies and programs could be much more effective when needs of partner countries are identified and the North- South partnership influence the process of programming and implementation of the ODA flows.

2. Objectives of the conference

Main objectives of the conference:

- Increase of 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 IV HLF in Busan.

3. Participants of the conference

The conference will gather 30-40 participants from:

- Women's organizations and NGOs from EU NMS: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia
- Women's rights and gender equality organizations from partner countries
- Gender and development NGOs and networks
- Representatives from Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Commission, UK Department for International Development (DFID) tbc

4 . The Project

The conference is held within the framework of KARAT Coalition project funded by the EC: *Building Support in New Member States for Gender-sensitive and -responsive European Development Co-operation*, shortly: **Connect ! South East West Women for Development**. The project is aimed at building the capacity of women's organisations and development organisations in NMS: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia to advocate for the full implementation of the EU Development Consensus and the EC Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation. It also focuses on strengthening the allies and solidarity between women's organizations in Central- Eastern Europe and Global South.

The project is implemented with the following partners (which are KARAT's member organisations):

Gender Education Research and Technologies (Bulgaria), Gender Studies, O.P.S. (Czech Republic), Org 'AUR' (Romania), and Slovak Center for Communication and Development (Slovakia).

More about the project: www.karat.org

5. The Organizer

KARAT Coalition is a regional coalition of organizations and individuals that works to ensure gender equality in the CEE & CIS and Central Asia, monitors the implementation of international agreements and lobbies for the needs and concerns of women in the region at all levels of decision-making fora. KARAT is active in the fields of advocacy, monitoring, capacity building, and networking within the context of its 4 thematic programmes: gendered economic and social justice; women's human rights; gender focused development cooperation; and organisational and strategic empowerment.

KARAT Coalition is composed by 60 members organization from 25 countries with a secretariat based in Warsaw.