

## **AN APPEAL OF GENDER EXPERTS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE FOURTH HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON AID EFFECTIVENESS**

We, the gender experts and women's rights organizations, representing the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, the participants of the consultative meeting held in Tbilisi on September 16, 2011 within the framework of preparation for the Fourth High Level Forum on aid effectiveness, Busan, Korea,

acknowledging the importance of the governments' and public society institutions' contribution of the abovementioned region to advocacy and facilitation of the efforts of international organizations and developmental agencies in the establishment and development of institutional mechanisms for gender equality promotion,

welcoming adherence of the states of the abovementioned region to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other fundamental and basic national commitments on gender equality facilitation and anti-discriminatory policy strengthening, we do outline a significant progress of the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia in implementation of these goals.

recognizing the significant contribution of the governments and public society institutions to implementation of the national strategies and improvement of legislations targeted at empowerment of women and strengthening of their capacity in the areas of political, economic, social and cultural development.

We believe very strongly that institutionalization of the mechanisms of gender equality promotion is one of their extremely important achievements - namely, gender expertise of legislation and developmental program documents, gender analysis of national budgets, integration of gender indicators into the system of monitoring and evaluation of different directions of national policies of the countries mentioned. We would like to outline that these and many other accomplishments became possible thanks to the permanent support of donor agencies and civil society institutions of the countries in the region and due to the presence in these countries of initiatives creating an enabling environment for democratic development.

At the same time, it is worthwhile of noting that the efforts of the developmental partners in the field of gender equality policy promotion meet a number of risks and challenges potentially diminishing ultimate effects of the changes accomplished and creating conditions to stepping backward from democratic achievements. Thus, instability of the political systems in the countries of this region causes anxiety and affects inertia of the political will to facilitate gender equality policy, and slackens the pace of institutional mechanisms – all these urge for the necessity of constant efforts of civil society in holding democratic accomplishments and demanding for accountability for gender equality. Moreover, the gender equality policy has not been recognized yet an integral part of the systematic processes of democratization and implementation of human rights.

Fuzzy mandates, the lack of coordination in operations of key participants/stakeholders/actors in the area of gender equality facilitation, weakness of institutional capacity of state and civil society institutions represent serious challenges for interaction of partners to facilitate gender equality policy, the implications of which are as follows:

- ✓ Ineffective identification of the developmental priorities;
- ✓ Predominance of economic indicators over human capacity development indicators;
- ✓ Focusing on processes rather than results of development;
- ✓ Choosing reactive rather than proactive development strategy;

- ✓ Existence of gaps in the national development strategies and gender equality achievement plans.

Aiming at withstanding threats and challenges impeding gender equality facilitation in the countries of the region, we appeal to the national governments, civil society institutions and donor agencies to do the following:

**1. Acknowledge women's rights and gender equality organizations as the full-fledged partners on the issues of development in the spheres of political, social and economic activity of the states including issues of ensuring regional security and cooperation.**

State bodies and donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Ensuring mechanisms of systematic involvement of civil society, women's organizations and gender experts, in particular, in the process of identification of national priorities in the area of development and obtaining a wide range of mindsets, positions and views forming a new vision on these problems and recommending ways for their tackling.
- Enhancing legislation pertaining to the policy and methodology of drafting and shaping up the government's social order requesting public and non-governmental organizations for implementation of developmental programs and projects based on competition.

Civil society is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Consolidation of resources and working expertise in the field of gender equality, stirring up civil sector's participation and securing qualitative outcomes of its operations;
- Reinforcement of civil society active position at holding civil society monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of political, social and economic developmental programs, public presentation of the positions and views of women's organizations and organizations advocating gender equality principles.

**2. Include without fail gender priorities into the national and sectoral strategies of development, as well as strategies of donor organizations, including issues of ensuring at the maximum high level the participation of civil society in the processes of planning, budgeting, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the appropriate strategies and development programs.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Creation and strengthening of national mechanisms for promotion gender equality by providing maximum high level political and institutional status, and ensuring adequate funding.
- inclusion into the national development plans of a set of measures targeted at increasing the level and the quality standards of living, creation of conditions for an equal access to services and social and economic infrastructure, as well ensuring enforcement of the legal rights to property, thus providing a basis for democratic development.
- Inclusion into the national development plans a set of measures on poverty reduction.
- Identification of accurate funding parameters and volumes of funding for gender equality priorities in national development strategies and sectoral programmes.
- Ensuring access to monitoring and evaluation data of national development and sectoral programmes to make a decision on aid provision.

Donor organizations are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Inclusion of gender equality priorities into all external aid programs to be provided in accordance with national and sectoral programs and recommendations of CEDAW, MDG and in compliance with other existing international commitments.
- Ensure targeted funding of the budgetary line items of the development programs stipulated for gender component and comprising from 10% to 30% of a total sum of an official aid specified for certain development program.

Civil society is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Active participation in the process of identification and actual justification of gender priorities and their inclusion into the national strategies, programs and plans of social and economic development, as well as participation in planning, implementation and monitoring.

### **3. Use gender statistical data for the purposes of planning, monitoring and evaluation of the development strategies**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Securing elaboration and use of unified gender indicators in the system of analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of the development program.
- Accessibility and reliability of gender statistical data in compliance with international standards.
- Ensuring a regular system updating and elaboration of new gender disaggregated indicators according to the needs and interaction of agencies in data exchange.
- Ensuring a regular amending and updating the structure of statistical indicators as changes emerge in the country's political, social and economic system.

Donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Support to improvement of a system of national gender statistics for the use of statistical data in process of planning and implementation of the programs of official technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation of their effectiveness and efficiency.

Civil society is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Using gender statistics in the process of elaboration and monitoring of the development programs.
- Elaboration of recommendations for regular updating the system of statistical indicators in compliance with the development programs.

### **4. Building up capacity of the partners to ensure effective gender equality facilitation.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Enhancing capacity of civil servants responsible for elaboration and implementation of the development programs in integration of gender approaches and extension of rights and opportunities of women through effective tripartite collaboration of the state, civil society and private sector;
- Enhancing capacity for gender mainstreaming through consolidation and strengthening of inter-sectoral collaboration within governmental structures;
- Observance of the principles of succession and consistency in development through capacity enhancement based on previous experience and positive outcomes achieved in different spheres of political, social and economic development.

Donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Enhancing donor agencies institutional capacity for the purposes of effective implementation of gender equality strategies;
- Support in strengthening capacity of women and women organizations in ensuring their political and economic involvement and more active participation in the decision-making processes inclusive of elaboration of national development policies and donor support strategies to the country.

Civil society is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Continuous enhancement of professionalism, competency and quality of services rendered and achievement of significant outcomes in the advancement of gender equality in collaboration with state bodies and donor agencies.

### **5. Ensure a principle of democratic governance, accountability, transparency and lack of any forms of discrimination towards women and creation of conditions for their participation in increasing efficiency of the development processes.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Making due consideration of gender-specific needs and interests of all groups of population through their involvement in major political frameworks and platforms of the donor agencies and the governments;
- Elaboration of national mechanisms for obtaining financial aid from donor agencies by using mutually agreed-on gender equality indicators;
- Involvement of gender experts in the work of donor councils for ensuring effective promotion of gender priorities in national development processes leading to enhanced development and aid effectiveness.

Civil society is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Lobbying and advocating of interests of those groups of population which have no opportunities for public expression of their demands, needs and concerns;
- Elaboration and application of a broad public outreach strategy to inform citizens on the existing problems, actual outcomes and possibilities for improving effectiveness of external aid as they considered in gender-related context ;
- Organization and carrying out alternative monitoring of the processes and implementation of the development programs from gender perspectives;
- Inclusion the representatives of NGOs and gender experts into the sectoral donor councils for ensuring integration of gender priorities into the strategies of donor support and enhancing development and aid effectiveness.

**6. Create effective mechanisms for coordination of donor aid (including new donors in the region) to ensure better transparency, availability and coordinated approaches in the provision of an external aid.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Taking a leading role in coordination of donor aid at the country and regional levels, safeguarding inclusion of gender priorities into the development programs and plans;
- Elaboration of national mechanisms for attraction of the financial aid of donor agencies;

State bodies and civil society are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Improvement of a system of providing data on the programme related and financial information from the projects on gender equality advancement and as well as reflecting a gender dimension in all other projects.

Donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Providing for a mandatory expertise of all without exclusion strategies and programs of an external aid provision to the country at the stage of their drafting, elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation from the standpoint of their compliance with international commitments on promotion of human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability.
- Improvement of a system of providing programming and funding data on the projects aiming at promotion gender equality, or applied gender mainstreaming approach, supported from donors' funds.

State bodies and donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Ensuring principles of transparency, interaction, succession and harmonization in donor aid provision taking into account gender equality principles;
- Establishment of a Gender Consultative Council to function in collaboration with donor agencies within the framework of a government-donor agencies coordination mechanism.

**7. Establish a system of conflict prevention and post-conflict security and ensure a genuine participation of women in the processes of peace building, reconciliation and post-conflict recovery.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Elaboration of a preventive system of the potential conflicts prevention, planning the post-conflict development inclusive of gender aspects;

- Ensuring participation of women-experts and/or women representing civil service in the processes of peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and confidence restoration;
- Development of regional cooperation on the issues of securing immediate response and actions.

Donor agencies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Allocation of funding in the volume comprising 15 percent of a total amount of donor aid stipulated for the peace-building and post-conflict recovery programs, in compliance with the UN Secretary General's 7-point Action Plan for Women's Participation in Peacebuilding.

Civil sector is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Active advocacy for promoting the principles of people's diplomacy, creation of the groups of women-mediators available for the work in the post-conflict countries of the region;
- Monitoring and control over provision of humanitarian aid and taking immediate and vitally important actions on peace building, post-conflict reconciliation and recovery;
- Initiating procedures and mechanisms of reconciliation and restoration of confidence in post-conflict situation including the work on the prevention of new conflicts;
- Actively advocate for the development of regional cooperation to ensure gender responsive immediate response and actions.

**8. Ensure integration of gender topics (principles and aspects) into the government's mechanism for regulation of interstate relations in the area of regional security and cooperation.**

State bodies are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Promotion/advancement of human development issues inclusive of gender equality put on the agendas of the regional and global security and cooperation structures;
- Formation of an institutional mechanism for inclusion of gender equality policy into the existing regional cooperation agreements and structures.

Donor organizations are urged to be responsible for the following:

- Support to inclusion of gender equality principles into the policies and strategic approaches of regional cooperation structures;
- Targeted allocation of resources for advancement of gender equality principles and policy in the activities of regional cooperation structures;
- Emphasizing issues of integration of gender equality principles into the government's mechanisms for regulation inter-governmental relations in the area of regional security and cooperation.

Civil sector is urged to be responsible for the following:

- Initiate the process of integration gender equality topics on the agendas of regional cooperation structures, ensure provision of necessary gender expert support to such initiatives ;
- Lobbying and advocacy of gender mainstreaming approach in the policies and operations of regional cooperation structures.