

United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
Expert Group Meeting on financing for gender equality
and the empowerment of women
Oslo, Norway
4-7 September 2007

**THE PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS
AND
GENDER EQUALITY**

Cathy Gaynor *

Division for the Advancement of Women
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations, New York

Introduction¹

Brazil, Morocco and Tanzania. But stronger linkages are needed between those who support GRB and those working on PFM, to ensure more mainstream uptake of these tools. It will be important too to ensure that women benefit from and that gender equality is incorporated in the capacity development programmes that are part of implementing this principle. A further dimension is ensuring that gender policies and commitments such as the Beijing Platform of Action and CEDAW are included in the base to which donors align.

Donor agency formal responses to the Paris Declaration and websites on aid effectiveness suggest that few connections were made before 2006 between these issues and gender equality. Talking to social and gender specialists in agencies at headquarters and field level, they indicate that they did not participate in early work on the new aid architecture. The PD agenda was the remit of a rather select group and gender specialists did not make early connections. For example, the declaration itself and the twelve indicators for monitoring it were in place before we critiqued them, while in developing Joint Assistance Strategies there does not appear to have been a significant input on gender equality issues in countries such as Zambia (where gender was decidedly not a 'darling' sector) or Tanzania where comments from agencies to an early draft of the JAS are devoid of gender equality content.

Monitoring and Evaluation of progress and impact of new aid modalities

The Paris Declaration has a set of indicators (12) and targets to monitor and evaluate progress. A baseline monitoring survey was conducted in 2006 involving 31 countries. While the current set of indicators and targets are not gender responsive and the baseline survey focused chiefly on partnership building blocks and management capacity, some of the indicators could be expanded to incorporate gender dimensions. And even as it stands, information from this survey can help gender specialists identify where they can add value. Some examples are suggested in earlier paragraphs of this paper related to Paris Declaration principles.

An evaluation is un..8(S ae)-7.7(e no)-wet can83(sl.4(b)TJ7(can83 gend)he)7.5(s5(e)7.5(Apact2(C(Paris Eva)-3

gather evidence and prepare to influence upcoming key events, such as the Third High Level Forum (HLF) in Ghana in September 2008⁶. This momentum needs to be kept going in meetings of the Aid Effectiveness Working Party, in the DAC Networks and amongst their members, as well as the HLF3 Steering Committee to ensure a high profile for these issues at Ghana.

Another key forum for action on gender equality and the Paris Declaration is that of civil society. One such is the Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness created to include CSOs' perspectives in preparation for HLF3 in Ghana. The Dublin workshop explored possible avenues to maximise the space and impact created through this forum. Other civil society initiatives include, for example, work undertaken by the Gender and Development Network exploring what is happening to civil society organisations who work on gender equality under the new aid environment. The findings should be available soon and can inform country-level and macro-level influencing strategies.⁷

Other key initiatives which help take forward the agenda include the planned Mapping Studies of the EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace. The objective of the mapping studies (covering 12 countries) is to provide baseline information on gender, national development planning, and the aid effectiveness agenda. The mapping studies will identify a set of indicators that can be used to assess and monitor the extent to which new aid modalities take into account gender equality and women's empowerment and the intention is to use this to identify entry points for multi-stakeholder groups to secure greater commitment to gender equalities in countries and at HLF3 in Ghana in September 2008. One particularly valuable feature of this exercise is that it makes links with the existing Paris Declaration twelve monitoring indicators and brings out the gender dimensions of these or otherwise complements their focus. The future challenge will be to have these dimensions incorporated in on-going PD monitoring surveys.

Another initiative aimed at gathering evidence and spurring action at field level is a research project launched by DFID, with support from other donors, to generate an evidence base for HLF3 in Ghana and to provide practical recommendations to strengthen the poverty impact of the Paris Declaration through attention to gender equality, human rights and social exclusion. This project offers opportunities for in-country and cross-country collaboration on experiences and identification of lessons and good practice. Phase One of the project has produced a Conceptual Framework and Partnership Strategy and includes a literature review which identifies processes and entry points with which

Over and above these special initiatives, the approach of recipient countries and of donor agencies to engage citizens, ministries and staff of agencies more widely in addressing gender dimensions of the Paris Declaration agenda has, so far, been fragmented and insufficient. Given that gender specialists have only recently focused on making these connections explicit, this is perhaps not surprising but we should not lose any more time. Several bilateral agencies have had recent workshops and seminars for their gender advisors/focal points on the Paris Declaration and relevance to them (e.g. Finland and Netherlands), and more are planned (e.g. Denmark). Canada has provided guidance sheets for practitioners in the field

by adequate country and sector level gender analysis. Gender specialists need to anticipate and advise on how to minimise the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that new modalities and processes provide.

The Paris Declaration offers five