

Informal Review Session on Chapter I of the Monterrey Consensus “Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development”

(14 February 2008, UN Headquarters, Conference Room1)

International Presentation Association, along with the Women’s Environment and Development Organization, ENLACE, the Feminist Task Force of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, and other women’s organizations were working together on drafting recommendations to the FFD review session on Mobilizing Domestic Financial Resources for Development, as contributing to the theme of Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the upcoming Commission on the Status of Women at the end of this month.

This is building on a set of recommendations developed for the General Assembly High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development in October 23, 2007, which can be accessed on the FfD UN website.

Colleagues, as mentioned earlier by the panelists, the Monterrey Consensus made a number of commitments to mobilize and allocate resources for achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of women. Governments committed to mainstreaming “the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors”[para 64], and to reinforcing national efforts aimed at formulating “social and gender budget policies” [para 19]. However, despite the emphasis on gender awareness, the issue is not central in the document, as mentioned by the panelist Nilifur Cataguay. We concur with the panelist in stating that the Monterrey Consensus was inadequate and incomplete in addressing the issue feminized poverty and gender inequality. Gender issues do not figure or are only marginally dealt throughout the rest of the Consensus document.

Current preparations for the follow-up review Conference in Doha provide an opportunity to assess progress in meeting these and further commitments.

We would like to present some recommendations for your consideration around the theme of mobilizing domestic resources:

Mobilizing Domestic Resources

On the issue of Gender Responsive Budgets, in national policies, priority should be given to effective resource allocations for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals, including:

- ensuring that women have equal access to employment opportunities and labour market services, as highlighted by one of panelists this morning,
- as well as women having equal access to
 - Social services
 - full and productive employment and decent work;
 - ensuring access to basic utilities and social protection for all;

We recommend that Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) should be adopted as a key tool in national development strategies, with a view to ensuring that adequate resources from domestic revenues are channeled towards fulfilling international gender equality and human rights commitments.

GRB as a mechanism for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in national policies and programmes requires specific budgetary allocations, increased funding and a strengthened mandate for national women's machineries to build capacity, implement GRB initiatives, and to monitor and evaluate gender equality outcomes.

Funding and support are required for adequate gender analysis for effective policy decisions on the financing of gender programmes.

On the issue of the unpaid care economy, Governments must use methods to measure women's un-paid work and its contribution to the national economy through developing and implementing time-use surveys to make visible the number of hours women spend working versus the actual income or payment they receive for their work.

As agreed at the ECLAC Quito Consensus in 2007, these methodologies should be assumed by the National Statistics Offices at the country level as an instrument to measure poverty, and the results should be included in the National Accounts Systems.

These contributions should be costed as investments to the national economy, and used as a basis for providing matching funds for income generating activities, for social services and direct support to the care economy, thereby effectively transferring women's work from the non-cash to the cash economy.

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