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GENDER AND THE PARIS DECLARATION IN ZAMBIA

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* *The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.*

Introduction

This paper is a submission to the Division for the Advancement of Women, UN-DESA for inclusion as a discussion paper at the Expert Group Meeting convened by the appointment of the Secretary General to the United Nations, from 4th to 7th September 2007. The paper discusses Zambia's use of the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness to promote gender equality and increasing quantity and quality of assistance towards the empowerment of women, as a case to draw from¹.

The paper will review various developments in Zambia in relation to Aid institutional reform and the relationship to gender. It will end with a set of recommendations to take the Gender Equity agenda forward.

Background

Gender equality and the empowerment of women has been an ongoing government effort from as far back as the Second Republic of 1972-1991. However articulation of policy concepts and efforts to introduce institutional change through government initiative only began to mature in the mid to late 1980s. The principal drive then was often perceived as the need for women's inclusion in national development processes in contrast to the nation wide gender equity campaign that it has now reached. As a collection of issues for government actions, gender equality and women's empowerment have been most succinctly articulated in the two most recent national plans these being the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002-2004 and the Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010.

For Zambia, as with the rest of the world, foreign aid has been changing shape over much of this first decade of the 21st Century in terms of the ideals it holds as well as the commitments its development partners have aspired for in conceptualising and implementing development assistance. Zambia has been particularly influenced by internal discussions in the process of introspective review by government over the intended impacts and lack in programme and project implementation. However, it is of significant note that influence in the reform of development assistance has also come from the international development cooperation meetings, particularly the Monterrey Consensus, the Rome Declaration and culminating with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The significance of the Paris Declaration lies in its comprehensiveness as well as the level of commitment it has garnered in terms of the number of countries and the high levels of representation of its signatories.

The Context of the Paris Declaration in Zambia

In view of the changing policy frameworks of Gender Policy and Aid Policy as well as the continued review of the national planning cycle, to ensure the gender agenda is not left in the periphery there are currently multiple fronts on which national and international dialogue is taking place to strengthen strategies and processes towards gender equity in Zambia. Hence the Paris Declaration is not the single most significant policy document that is informing the discussion on gender equality and women's empowerment nor the foreign aid reform process.

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The picture of ODA flows to the gender sector is that primary assistance is received principally from the UN, Norway and the Netherlands. For both the UN the type of assistance is channelled through Technical Assistance. Norway has traditionally directed its assistance to civil society organisations. The Netherlands has directed funds directly to government. There are instances though of joint assistance such as in the support for the recent consultations on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness regional consultations and Gender equality integration into National processes, held in Livingstone, July 2007 where Sweden and Canada also chipped in.

As observed above, the substance of the Paris Declaration in general was informed by the current discussions at the time, with regard to gaps in the Rome Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus in presenting a relatively homogenous set of principles and commitments in relation to improving Aid Delivery mechanisms. At a national level the 'Memorandum of Understanding on the Coordination and Harmonisation of GRZ/Donor practices for Aid Effectiveness' (Government of the Republic of Zambia, April 2004) was the guide to the foreign aid reform process. The shorter name by which it is known is the Harmonisation MoU.

The Harmonisation MoU is primarily a commitment document between the Zambian Government and its Cooperating Partners with signatories currently numbering 16. The principal features of the MoU are that it is structured with a preamble setting out principles of commitment, a review of on going processes and a matrix outlining 23 action points. The lead action points pertinent to operations of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Economic and Technical Cooperation Department were the development of an Aid Policy and Strategy, the Development of a Joint Assistance Strategy and the strengthening of ODA flows data collection and data-base development.

In summary the Aid Policy prescribes the modes of soliciting, acquiring, disbursing, managing, reporting on, accounting for, auditing, monitoring and evaluating aid. It guides the Government and the development partners on intents and procedures as well as their underlying philosophy. As such the Policy bridges the Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010 (Government of Zambia, February 2007) and the community of development cooperating partners. The Aid Policy clearly recognizes the prioritisation of Gender mainstreaming as cardinal to the delivery of development through development cooperation.

To give further detail to this mapping of Cooperating Partners to the National Plan, in mid 2006 the Government led cooperating partner division of labour consultations apportioning the support of different cooperating partners to particular sectors in accord with the needs of those sectors, and the abilities of the selected partners. Thus we have the current crop of partners in the 'Gender Sector'.

In regard to the above, for Zambia a number of Paris Declaration elements as embodied in the five pillars of Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Development Results and Mutual Accountability, predate the Declaration. This paper maps the relationship between the Paris Declaration pillars and the state of affairs as they prevail in Zambia.

Ownership

Ownership in the Paris Declaration makes reference to the development process being led by the country being assisted. This would typically be characterised by documented policy and

legal frameworks within a national context to guide the development process. In Zambia's case this is reflected in the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) currently under implementation over a five year period.

The gender national strategy in the Plan presents a gender specific chapter with the political lead of a Minister for Women at Cabinet Office. The Ministerial position has only been established in the last three years-separate from the rest of the division which has been there for well over a decade. This is coupled with a senior level Permanent Secretary heading the Gender in Development Division (GIDD). In addition the division coordinates activities for engendering actions of other ministries. The sector level operations at GIDD have a chapter articulating their five year focus on:

1. Education and Skills Training.
2. Economic Empowerment of women.
3. Review of Laws that discriminate against women; and
4. Institutional Capacity Building.

The principle sectors targeted are those of the health, education, agriculture, water, mining, manufacturing and other sectors with mainstreamed programmed activities with monitorable outcomes. These institutional arrangements are set with a view to attaining the long term vision of *Attaining Gender equity and equality arising from the development process by 2030.*

Key to guiding the ownership element, as viewed from the perspective of the Paris Declaration, is the implementation of the National Gender Policy of 2000, which is presently being operationalised through its 2004-2008 strategic plan. As part of the continued government dialogue with various stakeholders in 2003 the government established the Gender Consultative Forum aimed at advising on emerging issues and for monitoring programmes to ensure they are gender responsive. Sub-committees were then formed in 2005 at provincial and district level to further strengthen the institutional framework of the national Gender Strategic Plan.

The national gender policy highlights a number of policy areas which include poverty, health, education, decision making, gender based violence, land, agriculture, environment, science and technology, legal reforms, natural resources, commerce and trade and labour and employment. The national gender policy also takes into account the issues and concerns contained in strategic documents such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997); and the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals (2000).

Generally the above delineates the growing levels of **Ownership** that the government has as a reflection of the Paris declaration. The articulation of these programmes and activities in the national budget has over the period consequently raised the overall financing that the Division has received in its annual recurrent budget from the central treasury.

Alignment

Having set out the need for country ownership of the development agenda, the Paris Declaration calls for any assistance that may be received by a country to be channelled

towards its already intended programmes through its own institutional frames with a view to ensuring that country leadership is supported. In other words, those development partners in the sector need to support government priorities by using government aid delivery mechanisms. This ensures the partnership minimises the creation of parallel implementing units at the expense of the overall or selected components of the country's Aid Policy.

In Zambia the policy framework for this alignment is basically the Aid Policy and Strategy for Zambia. However compliance to its use overall and specifically in the implementation of the advancement of gender equity cannot be measured at this stage in view of the novelty of the policy. It is only in the past year that it has begun to be put to use. In addition it should further be noted that a number of capacity constraints accompany the dissemination of the Aid Policy.

Under **Alignment**, as with the following element of **Harmonisation**, the Joint Program of Support to the Gender Sector may be said to be the immediate translation of the Aid Policy into a sector-based strategy. The Joint Program outlines the areas of support that the various Cooperating Partners in supporting the sector would participate in. This will allow for cooperating partners to constantly liaise with GIDD on their implementation of both the Fifth National Development Plan section on Gender together and the mainstreamed elements of other sectors pertaining to Gender equality programmes and activities. This approach may be referred to as a Sector Wide Approach to Programming (SWAP).

Another area promoted within the context of alignment is the use of Direct Budget Support. In Zambia the Poverty Reduction Budget Support programme is the closest comparison to this with the number of signatories growing towards 10. The objective of Direct Budget Support is to ensure that funds granted to government placed into the treasury's account are transmitted to the set sector goals using government machinery. This way the funds would then be subject to disbursement, reporting, accounting, auditing and monitoring and evaluation in accord with pre-existing government capacities. This does away with increased transaction costs through separate management of the assistance.

There have been concerns concerning this area from various quarters particularly with respect to the risk of marginalizing cross cutting areas from the priority of funding. However with clarity within the National Plan as to how resources should be used in taking the Gender agenda forward there are adequate accountabilities within the plan to ensure funds budgeted flow to the intended activities.

Harmonisation

Harmonisation makes reference to the joint application of assistance so as to minimise the generation of transaction costs such as extra meetings, reports, phone calls et cetera that would arise out of uncoordinated support to government programmes. This element of the Paris Declaration places most of the onus on the development partners that is those assisting in development to integrate their assistance. In Zambia under the Harmonisation MoU matrix cited above, the harmonisation of aid is particularly evident in the development of the Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia. This is a document embodying the collaborative response to the Fifth National Development Plan – which is the ownership element of the Paris Declaration.

In mid 2006 the government met with all the cooperating partners under the Harmonisation MoU and through a drawn out consultative process allocated the sectors of support that each cooperating partner would be positioned in. This was referred to as the Division of Labour. During the time the criterion used for these placements included historical presence in the sector, institutional/skills capacity of cooperating partners, an attempt to keep sectoral involvement to about three and quite importantly being well received by the line Ministry in the sector. This forms the basis of the Joint Programme of Support to the Gender Sector outlined in the **Alignment** section above.

Managing for Development results

In the Paris Declaration the expectation is that countries being assisted should within the context of their national plans have a framework for evaluation of results. These results should allow for adjustments where necessary in ensuring sustainability to the results. Zambia's monitoring framework in this regard though extensively developed is yet to go through the rigours of process application. There is a matrix of expected outputs in the National plan with activities detailed in terms of expected outputs. The monitoring framework at a sector level is still being finalised.

The Sectoral Advisory Group which is the formal and regular framework for the reviews of various programmes within the sector consist of multiple stakeholders including civil society, cooperating partners and government representation from other ministries. One very significant review of such nature is the recent regional review of the Gender and the Paris Declaration conference held in Livingstone in July 2007. Appendix 1 is the communiqué of the workshop.

Mutual Accountability

Mutual accountability in the Paris Declaration makes reference to the process of reviewing stake-holder commitments and contributions to the development process. This element of the Paris Declaration is especially important with respect to ensuring the broadly agreed milestones in sectoral reviews, allow for responsible task executing institutions, are accountable.

Sectors such as Health, Education, Private Sector Development, Tourism and Environment, Agriculture and Water all have mechanisms by which the management and coordination of the ODA may be reviewed. Sector Advisory groups which are a hybrid of donors, civil society and line ministries regularly review sectoral objectives.

With the formulation of the Joint Programme for Support to the Gender Sector the Sector Advisory Group strengthening will lead to the introduction of mutual accountability frameworks. The Joint Programme will result in regularly held meetings with a comprehensive guideline to meeting outcomes to ensure consistency, as its implementation will involve the regular review of sectoral objectives and the roles that each stakeholder has in the implementation of the Fifth National Development Plans contents.

As already indicated the overall design and structure of the review however places greater responsibility on the Ministry of Finance and National Planning as these reviews coupled with the Management for Development Results element feed directly into the intended mid term review of the Fifth National Development Plan.

Looking Into The Future

The Paris Declaration is approximately two and a half years old. A lot of the commitments contained there had already been initiated or were already being implemented in Zambia prior to its being signed. Since the time of its signing however a number of developments enumerated above have been finalized and others have been initiated. This includes the finalisation of the Fifth National Development Plan (Ownership), the Aid Policy and Strategy (Alignment), the Joint Assistance Strategy (Harmonisation), the development of Sector indicators in Gender (Managing for results) and the dialogue still current on the formulation of Mutual accountability frameworks with respect to the Fifth National Development Plan implementation review.

Other initiatives outside the above but with an important bearing on the implementation of the Paris declaration ideals are:

The regional workshop on Gender and the Paris Declaration (July 2007) – The communiqué from this workshop raises pertinent carry home recommendations placed in a regional cooperation context. The issues of gender budgeting, gender disaggregated data, use of information technology, regional collaboration, centrality of Ministers of Finance in ensuring the causes are advanced among other issues elaborates the felt needs for the Paris declaration summed as its lack of a gender sensitive frame work for the Paris Declaration.

The Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development (August 2007) – This gives regional drive to, amongst other issues, allowing for greater share of women in decision making positions as well as give governments accountability frame that societies can measure them with. The contents are enriched from the resolves of the above-referred regional workshop on Gender and the Paris Declaration.

The Regional Workshop on Civil Society Organisations and the Paris Declaration (September 2007). This is to be held with a view to consolidating the work of the Advisory Group on Civil Society Organisations to the OECD Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. The meeting will sharpen the focus of the role of CSO's in the implementation of the Paris Declaration in the area of Advocacy as well as development work with regard to Gender in Development.

The Non-Governmental Organizations Bill (Parliamentary Committee stage, August 2007). The fact that the bill has gone to parliament and has been subjected to a review of the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs, Governance, Human Rights and Gender Matters speaks of popular representation in formulating the law. The Committee actually opened it up for discussion with a wide range of stakeholders and intense feedback has been made. The comprehensiveness of this feedback caused the bill to be withdrawn for further internal procedural review for considered amendment. Once turned into law this piece of legislature will prescribe the nature of NGO's and their registration.

The mix of these issues present a picture of the sector as that of being progressive. There is heightened leadership interest with a consistently growing body of institutional frameworks to manage the development of gender equity policies. What lacks though quite often is adequacies of capacities within the context of government. This inadequacy of capacities in the numbers of personnel, leads to inadequacies of specialization, further handicapping policy dissemination, implementation and review. This inadequacy may weaken any initiatives embarked on. A further possible threat may be the implementation of other policies such as

Decentralization without ensuring the cross over of the gender policy frameworks its accompanying institutional demands are integrated into it. These threats and other weaknesses may be addressed through the following recommendations.

Recommendations

The question that this paper sought to address is that of the relationship of Gender to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as it is found in Zambia. The importance of this lies not only in the centrality of both aid and gender in the discussion of development. The fact that the Paris Declaration only mentions Gender once, is due to a great deal in what its authors were immediately interested in, that is systems enhancement. From a gender perspective the declarations silence on Gender requires redress. The regional communiqué on Gender and the Paris Declaration makes several recommendations which are here below selectively adapted to the author's perceived priority for Zambia in redressing the need.

1. Strengthening the capacity and the resource base of the national machinery to enable them engage effectively in promoting gender equality in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda.
2. Strengthening the collection, analysis and utilization of sex and gender disaggregated data to promote evidence based programming, monitoring and evaluation.
3. That Governments develop and enhance capacity for the implementation of gender responsive budgets.
4. Strengthening the capacity of Governments and CSOs to effectively engage with the Donors and the UN system around the Paris Declaration.
5. That the Ministries of Finance take leadership in ensuring the promotion of gender equality in New Aid Modalities for enhanced aid effectiveness through dialogue, negotiations and coordination.
6. Strengthening the role of regional institutions in developing collective approaches for promotion of GE and within the Aid Effectiveness context.
7. The inclusion of gender equality as a core and integral part of the Accra High Level Forum Agenda for enhancing the development of a gender sensitive monitoring framework for the Paris Declaration.

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COMMUNIQUE

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS
AND GENDER EQUALITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA

11 TO 13 JULY 2007

1. The Regional Workshop on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Gender Equality in Southern Africa, attended by participants from 12 countries, hosted by the Government of the Republic of Zambia and organised by United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Zambia held in Livingstone, from 11th to 13th July 2007.
2. APPRECIATING the commitment and support of the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the leadership of His Excellency, the President, Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, State Counsel on the promotion of gender equality in the context of the New Aid Environment.
3. ACKNOWLEDGING the contribution made by partner countries, Norway, Netherlands, Canada and Sweden as well as Southern African Development Community (SADC), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the United Nations (UN) System for facilitating regional consultations on gender equality and aid effectiveness to take place.
4. RECOGNISING
 - The opportunities presented by the Paris Declaration for promoting gender equality and women's human rights.
 - The available diverse and rich experiences from participating countries that can inform the strengthening of gender equality and women's human rights in the aid environment.
 - The role of regional institutions in developing collective approaches for promotion of Gender Equality (GE) and within the Aid Effectiveness context. .
 - Also the efforts at engendering national development plans
 - The multiple roles of CSOs in the implementation of the Paris Declaration.

NOTES WITH CONCERN

- The evaporation of gender issues in policy frameworks.
- Weak consultative processes between government and its citizens and the need to strengthen them.
- Inadequate partnership building among government, donors and the UN system and CSOs.
- Non-utilization of gender responsive budgeting as a tool to inform national budgeting processes.
- Inadequate and under utilization of sex and gender disaggregated data to promote evidence based programming, monitoring and evaluation.
- The lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the implementation of the principles of the Paris Declaration
- Limited capacity of Government and CSO to effectively engage with the donors around the Paris Declaration.
- The continued tying of aid

- The absence of a communication strategy for the wider sharing of information and consultation with and between the various stakeholders
- At the absence of a strong driver of change and under resourcing of the national machinery, which is largely absent in decision making fora.

FURTHERMORE WE NOTE:

- The absence of a gender equality issues as a core component of the Paris Declaration.
- The lack of a gender sensitive monitoring framework for the Paris Declaration
- The lack of recognition of gender equality as a core and integral part of the Accra High Level Forum Agenda

THEREFORE RECOMMEND:

The institutionalisation of consultative and participatory processes for improving ownership and accountability for gender equality and aid effectiveness and ensuring that gender equality advocates and women's voices are adequately reflected in policy making instruments.

That Governments and Donors and the UN system recognise the role of CSOs in promoting accountability for gender equality and women's human rights in the aid effectiveness agenda

That Governments develop and enhance capacity for the implementation of gender responsive budgets

Strengthening the collection, analysis and utilization of sex and gender disaggregated data to promote evidence based programming, monitoring and evaluation.

Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the implementation of the principles of the Paris Declaration

Strengthening the capacity of Governments and CSOs to effectively engage with the Donors and the UN system around the Paris Declaration.

Strengthening the capacity and the resource base of the national machinery to enable them engage effectively in promoting gender equality in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda

Strengthening the role of regional institutions in developing collective approaches for promotion of GE and within the Aid Effectiveness context

That the Ministries of Finance take leadership in ensuring the promotion of gender equality in New Aid Modalities for enhanced aid effectiveness through dialogue, negotiations and coordination.

Formulation and implementation of a communication strategy for the wider sharing of information and consultation with and between the various stakeholders

That Governments and Donors and the UN system to consider discussing the untying of aid at the Accra Meeting

The inclusion of gender equality as a core and integral part of the Accra High Level Forum Agenda

Finally that Governments support the call for a strong, unified, independent and properly resourced UNIFEM for GE and women's empowerment.