

Asia and Pacific High Level Consultation on Financing for Development

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**Check on delivery*

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Distinguished Chair, panellists, state representatives, civil society, human rights and development institutions, friends,

I will not spend my allocated time on more background than necessary. Suffice to say as discussed by APWLD today, and the wider WWG on FFD, WMG on SD and others in recent position statements, these FFD discussions and negotiations take place within current global development crises of food, fuel, finance, climate and more, and manifesting in communities and countries in fierce, complex, interlinked ways that are unprecedented in scope and scale.

Specifically in this intervention due to time, I will cover just a few key areas of critical concern related to domestic resources mobilisation for social sector financing, but integrated within deeper discussions on the strength, coherence and specific focus of FFD and the P2015DA processes.

But always noting they are necessarily distinct processes, and therefore also needing to retain the 6 priority areas and structure of the Monterrey consensus in the Addis Ababa Declaration - as we have raised in our ‘Women’s Working Group on Financing for Development’ comprehensive response to the Addis Ababa Accord Zero Draft of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, developed just the past few weeks.

We have multiple strategy recommendations, among them calling for:

- Productive and diversification policies in value-adding, sustainable and job intensive sectors, especially for women;
- Reminding that there is no ‘new basic social contract’ as in para 11, rather already an obligation to fulfil the human right to social security, under the UDHR and ICESCR; We have recommended language for para 32 to reflect this concern;
- Calling for complementary macroeconomic, trade, investment, labour and social policies to remove obstacles for gender equality focused development strategies;
- Policies, regulations and services to transform current patterns of gendered division of labour in all sectors, not just in formal workplaces but inclusive of attention to domestic care workers, agriculture and fisheries workers, and more;
- Supporting transformation of unfair and unequal gender roles in societies;
- Addressing unequal distribution of unpaid care work, by improving social infrastructure, expanding universal care services, and more;

Expanding the fiscal policy space on tax collection including broadening tax bases in just and progressive ways, removing gender biases, taxing instead profitable sectors and wealthy individuals;

- This is not about formalising the informal to widen the tax base (para 20), as much as promoting taxation systems that focus on collection from profitable sectors currently under-taxed, including the financial sector and extractive industries
- Also international cooperation on tax matters, addressing tax evasion, tax avoidance, and tax dodging;

- We see the UN as the multilateral space to agree on reporting standards for all TNCs, review of tax incentives, and structures in compliance with human rights obligations, gender equality and environmental standards;
- As part of this, we call for upgrading of the UN Tax Expert Committee to an intergovernmental body, if this is as an adequately resourced and intergovernmental body under the UN (see para 28);
- We also see financial transactions tax as a useful complementary initiative, but as in para 62, not as a substitute for North-South cooperation and the Global Partnership on Development;

I have the WWG for FFD detailed text proposals to share, and will also provide it to ESCAP and UNWomen for distribution following this session.

I wish to further touch on just a few key areas:

First, we must ensure strongest and most substantive **gender equality and women's human rights focused outcomes into the post2015 development agenda, into the FFD processes, and in all development and human rights work. Any global development agreement must be consistent with long-agreed gender equality and women's human rights agreements, and be clearly human rights framed. We need transformative MOI and financing for this to occur, in scale, scope and quality to effectively implement proposed SDG Goal 5, and across all proposed 17 goals and targets.**

I call to your attention a joint statement of over 30 South and North States including from Asia Pacific at the second drafting session on FFD in New York, on 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the FFD Zero draft'. Also noting for your use, 'Transformative means of implementation and financing for gender equality: UN Women messages to the joint session between Financing for Development and Post-2015 processes', for which there is also a paper available to participants.

We have a strong concern that there is as yet no specific mention of dedicated resources to advancing GE and WHR and empowerment in this zero draft, as we had in the Monterrey

and Doha agreements. Meanwhile, we welcome language in para 1 and para 6 of the zero draft as encouraging, but needing far stronger and consistent language throughout the document to ensure there is no instrumentalist language on gender equality, and women's human rights and empowerment, and no slippage on long-agreed gains.

While being universal, the SDGs must address financing to overcome specific regional contextual realities, so I am very pleased to note paragraph 77h of the SAMOA Pathway outcome document of the SIDS states, to support and resource work to end the hardest-to-shift structural and social barriers against recognition and fulfilment of gender equality and women's human rights. For LDCs and SIDs, it also always about debt relief and debt justice.

It is important to reflect that FFD is not about 'P2015DA' as a singular process, but indeed about wider FFD reform focus of economic governance, monetary and financial systems, with flow-ons for overall implementation of national and regional development plans, the p2015DA, BPOA, ICPD, UNFCCC and more. This is the critical nature of these discussions in Asia and Pacific today and in there regional meetings right now, and requiring transformational strategies in every place, as well as consolidated in Addis Ababa in July.

Thinkers as diverse as Edward De Bono, Noam Chomsky, Gita Sen, Nicole Bidegain, Audre Lorde and Albert Einstein have interestingly all said variants of the same thing - that current world thinking cannot solve world problems right now, because ultimately the current conventional world thinking is itself the source of the problem.

So in these discussions of domestic resource mobilisations, we must articulate BOTH the underlying domestic policy space in all their diversities, as well as the international institutional environment. We must investigate honestly the extent to which these both enable and constrain state revenues to raise revenue and implement productive, labour, social policies and macroeconomic policies.

In our WMG on FFD response, we raise issues including need for a strong section on follow-up and accountability mechanism for FFD specifically; on ‘States as primary duty bearers of human rights and development’, and not watered down by any multi-stakeholder partnerships that might delegate state responsibility to others including the private sector. This must surely be reflected in the zero draft with national ownership to appear much earlier than paragraph 72.

So we must measure well, and much better than before. Why? To know whether, and how many women and girls, trans people, men and intersex people throughout their life cycle, and in all their diversities including people with disabilities from we heard earlier today, are able to live healthily, safely, securely, in equality with others, and in full recognition and fulfilment of their human rights.

We also measure to see how other species are faring, and right now 150-200 of them are becoming extinct every day. **We measure how healthy are our ecosystems,** without which we cannot anyway have any real measure of development sustainability, nor as a species. We measure so we know what to finance, how to prioritise, what is under-funded currently and how that affects both persistent inequalities within and between countries, and in order to **establish, support and monitor through a multilateral UN-led process, just which precautions and regulations must be in place** to ensure that we do not deepen any barriers as we purport to address them.

Three more related points on this overall - that the measures of FFD therefore are inherently national and sub-regionally led as well as global. There is diversity in the 22 States and territories of the Pacific, as much as within the broader Asia and Pacific, and global context.

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