

Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development

I. Introduction

We, advocates of gender equality and women's empowerment for effective development, intend to promote the Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development and mobilise additional support and partners. This Plan captures commitments to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights made at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan, Republic of Korea. Our intent is to build momentum for implementing commitments in a timely and effective manner by expressing our support and desire to participate in post-Busan activities, as appropriate and in a coordinated way, and giving due consideration to applicable provisions of CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and other human rights instruments.

We recognise that achieving gender equality and women's rights is a moral obligation and a development imperative, and critical to actualising internationally-recognised human rights goals. Common goals for achieving gender equality and advancing women's empowerment have been defined in national and international laws and treaties, and internationally agreed-upon development goals. Progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment is a prerequisite for realising human rights and achieving inclusive development, democratic governance, social and economic justice, and peace for all. A growing body of evidence – including academic, policy, and private sector research – shows that empowering women, realising rights, and reducing gender gaps in health, education, labour markets, and other key social and economic areas is associated with higher economic growth, more effective management of public resources, greater agricultural productivity, improved food security, better health, nutrition, and education of children, and a variety of other development outcomes.

Addressing the structural factors underlying women's lower economic, political and social status requires political commitment, accurate information, rigorous analysis, coordinated action and adequate investment. Identification of the drivers and consequences of gender inequality through the collection of gender-relevant data and strong accountability mechanisms, including stakeholder dialogue, is critical to designing effective and appropriate policy, targeting investments, and advancing development progress and human rights.

We commend participants in HLF-4 for their strong commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment as captured in the Busan Outcome Document (BOD) and anticipate that these commitments are reflected in the shared consensus emerging from this Forum, including the implementation of the Busan Building Blocks and the new Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

Gender Commitments in the Busan Outcome Document

20. We must accelerate our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programmes grounded in country priorities, recognising that gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to achieving development results. Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right, and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. As we redouble our efforts to implement existing commitments we will:

- a) Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonise and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men.
- b) Integrate targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.
- c) Address gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding.

The voluntary, non-binding commitments described below build upon the BOD.

II. Building the Evidence Base for Action

“Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonise and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men.” (Busan Outcome Document, paragraph 20a)

In recent decades, various initiatives aimed at improving the systematic collection and processing of gender statistics have been undertaken. However, despite progress and continuing efforts, much remains to be done. In a number of areas of critical interest for policymakers, basic gender data and indicators, including sex-disaggregated data, are still non-existent, insufficient or lack comparability across countries.

Many different initiatives can contribute to achieving BOD paragraph 20a, and we encourage all partners to increase efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonise and make full use of sex-disaggregated data to inform and guide economic and social development. Making full use of sex-disaggregated data will facilitate the creation and use of public policy and public funds to benefit all citizens.

One such initiative, the “Evidence and Data for Gender Equality” (EDGE) Initiative, advances these objectives. EDGE was launched at the HLF-4 “Special Session on Gender” on 30 November 2011 to build momentum for implementing BOD paragraph 20a. Further information can be found in Annex 1.

We commend the engaged actors for their leadership through EDGE and express our support for this initiative. Other initiatives aimed at implementing the BOD commitment to sex-disaggregated data and its use to inform policy are duly encouraged.

III. Strengthening Accountability

“Integrate targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.” (Busan Outcome Document, paragraph 20b)

We endorse the recommendations agreed upon at the 29 November side event “Progress on gender equality and women's empowerment since the Paris Declaration, ” organised by the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality and UN Women, and will endeavour to support their implementation to:

- Address and integrate targets for gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s rights in accountability mechanisms, and ensure the participation of women and women’s organisations in these mechanisms based in relevant country, regional and international standards and commitments.
- Ensure that aid and public expenditures are targeted appropriately to match gender equality and women’s rights commitments and benefit both women and men, including tracking aid and public expenditures for gender equality and women’s empowerment as appropriate. All actors should broaden the focus of their efforts to strengthen gender equality beyond the social (health and education) sectors to others such as infrastructure, economic growth, and democracy and governance. Support for gender equality and women’s empowerment in the economic and productive sectors should be strengthened.
- Ensure that any global monitoring framework on aid/development effectiveness after Busan fully integrates gender equality and women’s rights dimensions in the key monitoring indicators and review process. This could build on lessons learned from the gender equality module of the 2011 Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey, used by 24 of the 78 countries that undertook the Paris Declaration Survey.¹

The complete recommendations can be found in Annex 2.

IV. Integrating Gender Equality Goals in Development

“Address gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding.” (Busan Outcome Document, paragraph 20c)

We recognise the importance and challenge of addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, with specific focus on non-traditional sectors and in peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts. As we seek to do so through our own organisations and partnerships, we also agree to support the implementation of the Busan Building Blocks in ways that help realise the gender-specific commitments therein, and the gender-related and human rights commitments endorsed in the BOD.

We recognise the importance of more inclusive partnerships and commend HLF-4 for highlighting the distinct roles of civil society and the private sector. We express our support for the commitments undertaken by each and aim to improve coordination, where relevant, to build

¹ See *Findings from the Gender Equality Module of the 2011 Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey*, OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2011 (www.oecd.org/dac/gender/effectiveness).

on complementarities and increase our impact to enable women's empowerment and gender equality.

V. Conclusion

This Plan captures commitments that guide the international community toward effective and inclusive development and benchmarks against which progress will be measured following the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness at Busan. We welcome new partners to endorse this Plan and look forward to supporting the implementation of these commitments in coordination with HLF-4 participants and the new Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. To advance our collective efforts, we agree to review our progress before the end of June 2012 and continue building momentum for gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights. We look forward to working with governments, multilateral organisations, civil society and other stakeholders to realise these goals, and with the OECD and the UN to monitor the implementation of the Plan, consistent with their comparative advantages and respective roles.

ANNEX 1

Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE)

The new Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Initiative aims to improve the availability and use of statistics that capture gender gaps in economic activity. It capitalizes on the United States' call to action at the May 2011 OECD Ministerial Session on Gender and Development and builds on recommendations of the UN International Agency and Expert Group on Gender and Statistics.

Working in close cooperation with international organisations and government statistical agencies, the UN Statistics Division and UN Women will lead and manage the Initiative from 2012-2015, which will include: 1) the development of an online database for a harmonized set of indicators on education, employment, and entrepreneurship, among others, linked to existing relevant databases, and 2) a set of common pilot activities in a small number of partner countries to develop protocols and data collection methods for sex-disaggregated data on entrepreneurship and assets, two areas with large data gaps.

EDGE supports the efforts of national statistics offices to collect gender data and indicators, including sex-disaggregated data, particularly in the areas of education, employment and entrepreneurship, based on common standards that would allow harmonization and wide comparability across countries and regions. It will be coordinated with the Busan Action Plan for Statistics, which supports gender data collection and use, and statistical capacity building in partner countries, by committing to mainstream gender statistics into national statistical systems.

ANNEX 2

Recommendations from the side event “Progress on gender equality and women's empowerment since the Paris Declaration”

29 November 2011

Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea

Today we have nearly 6 years of experience in using the Paris Declaration principles – ownership, alignment, results, harmonisation and accountability – to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment. We now have the evidence of what works. Significant efforts have been made to ensure that gender equality elements have been integrated into the implementation of the Paris Declaration.

The Outcome Document of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid effectiveness, the *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*, includes strong commitments on gender equality and women’s empowerment:

Gender Commitments in the Busan Outcome Document

20. We must accelerate our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programmes grounded in country priorities, recognising that gender equality and women’s empowerment are critical to achieving development results. Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. As we redouble our efforts to implement existing commitments we will:

- a) Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonise and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men.
- b) Integrate targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.
- c) Address gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding

At the HLF-4 side event “Progress on gender equality and women's empowerment since the Paris Declaration” organised by the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality and UN Women on 29 November, we looked at what we have learned over the last few years. We addressed in particular the aid effectiveness principles of ownership, results and accountability which are critical to achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment (MDG3). Our recommendations include:

Funding and ownership of gender equality

- Both donors and countries need to put the money where their mouths are. Donors and countries need to ensure that aid and public expenditures are targeted appropriately to match gender equality commitments and benefit both women and men.
- Countries and donors can improve the tracking of resources spent on gender equality, to ensure that these are appropriately targeted to benefit both women and men.

- All actors should broaden the sectoral focus of their efforts to strengthen gender equality beyond the social sectors (health and education). Support for gender equality and women's empowerment in the economic and productive sectors should be strengthened.
- Donors and countries need to support capacity development in government agencies to strengthen gender responsive planning and budgeting. This will enable more effective responses to women's empowerment in economic areas and beyond.
- We can expand knowledge on effective policy options to address gender biases effectively through innovative, transformative and empowering approaches including public/private partnerships.
- When you *track* results, resources and actions – money follows.

Results, statistics and accountability

- For effective results-management, both governments and donors need to collect information and make use of data disaggregated by sex to measure progress against gender indicators.
- The Busan harmonised list of gender indicators is an opportunity to strengthen relevant government systems to make available data disaggregated by sex and gender statistics, and reinforce their use in policy making and partnerships. We welcome the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Initiative to implement and use these indicators.
- Gender equality and women's rights advocates need to be involved in policy dialogue, policy design and review processes. This will facilitate more demand driven and effective policy choices.
- Donors and partners should systematically address and integrate targets for progress against agreed commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment and rights in accountability mechanisms at the country level. We all need to become more accountable for our promises, including national, regional and international standards and commitments.

For the future

- It is time to deliver on the promises we made in Accra to design and implement our respective development policies and programmes consistent with our international commitments on gender equality, such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action (AAA, paragraph 13c). The strong gender equality commitments in the *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation* provide a solid basis for future work.
- Any monitoring framework on aid/development effectiveness after Busan must fully integrate gender equality dimensions in the key monitoring indicators. This can build on lessons learned from the gender equality module of the 2011 Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey, used by 24 of the 78 countries that undertook the Paris Declaration Survey.
- The *Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development* will provide a valuable tool to monitor and ensure accountability for all gender equality commitments made at HLF4.