



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

► Financing for Development

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African Feminists Strategy Meeting on **Financing for Development (FfD) & Post 2015 Development Agenda**

We, the representatives of African women's rights organizations, trade unions, civil society organizations including peace-building, indigenous, faith-based and community based organizations, media and academia from across 17 countries working in the spheres of environment, agriculture, finance, health, leadership, governance, law and trade met in Nairobi from 6 – 8 May 2015 to reflect on the current debates and negotiations taking place in the Financing for Development (FfD) and the Post 2015 Agenda processes. We wish to add our voices to these deliberations to ensure that crosscutting issues that have an impact on the positive progression of women and girl's rights and gender equality are addressed.

African women are the backbone of economic development in the region. However, majority of them are predominantly employed in the informal sector, work in

low-skilled jobs and are often marginalized in decision making particularly in the collection and redistribution of resources for sustainable development.

Ahead of the 3rd International Review Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3) that will be held in July 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as well as the adoption of the Post 2015 Development Agenda in September 2015; we acknowledge the need for **models of financing for sustainable development underpinned by principles of economic and social justice with a gender-responsive approach**. In addition, African women must be meaningfully included in policy discussions, in the articulation, development, implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of these processes.

We also reflect on the need to ensure adequate financial allocation for the implementation of the SDGs to further the realization of gender equality and the rights

and empowerment of women and girls which require not only fiscal resources but political will and a shift in norms and values that ensure the systemic conditions that keep women and girls subjugated.

We also recognize the linkage between women's ability to participate in the labor market and their control over their reproductive health. In this regard, structural reforms are needed to address how multi-dimensional poverty, inequality and discrimination affect women and girls within their particular contexts, especially as it pertains to discriminatory and heavy unpaid care workloads, violence against women, poor infrastructure and lack of public services.

Furthermore, we are astounded by the findings of the Report of the [High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows](#) which estimates illicit flows from Africa to be US \$50 billion per annum. Enactment of **freedom of information** laws where they do not exist, and an enhancement where they do exist, ensuring citizens are able to **access information** as a way to enhance **transparency and accountability** are very crucial. The importance of **transformative leadership** in decision-making cannot be underscored in order to ensure progressive fiscal policies that will curb illicit financial flows and end corruption - at local and global levels.

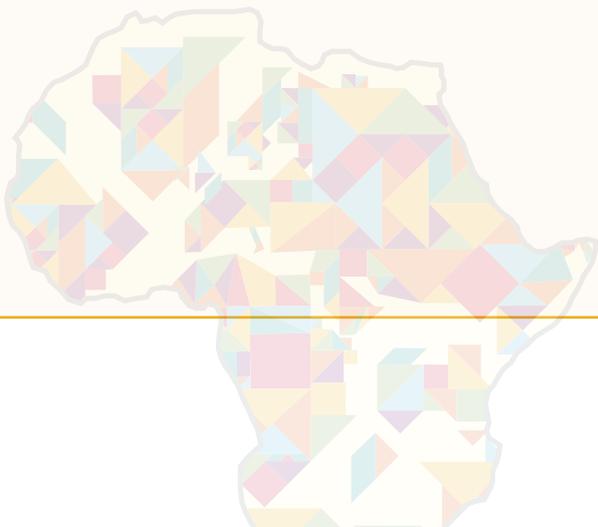
We note that the Monterrey Declaration, called upon developed states to commit to 0.7% of ODA to be committed to reproductive health services, responding to the needs of women, however, the empowerment of women and girls is being limited by not only the rules of international trade and finance such as access to markets, credit and finance, agricultural subsidies

but also corruption through the mismanagement of taxpayer's resources.

We therefore call for the following:

- a. In **global partnership** which manifests a transformative shift in the relationship between African countries and the international community that:
 - Is rooted in the principles of social justice, equality, mutual interest and respect for the ability of Africans to take charge of their own development;
 - Allows reforms in the unfair rules that govern the flow of global trade, finance and technology;
 - Allocate resources and investments with no conditionality thereby increasing African governments accountability to their citizens
- b. In **international finance**, an end to illicit financial flows. More specifically:
 - Return of Africa's lost resources and curbing of future leakages through changing the international rules of taxation to ensure that all states share tax revenue fairly,
 - Assessment of foreign direct investments and their impact on climate change with particular attention to agricultural policies that often result in large scale eviction, land grabbing and monoculture,
 - Banning of unfair trade regulations that facilitate the dumping of cheap products including food, making it difficult for developing countries to develop local industries and small-holder farming systems.

- c. **In domestic finance**, instituting of progressive taxation systems that:
- Support the social welfare of citizens including health care to reduce maternal and infant mortality.
 - Gender-sensitive tax reforms geared towards removal of value added tax (VAT) on essential commodities such as food products to ensure tax regimes do not place an undue burden on marginalized groups including but not limited to; impoverished, rural, minorities, people with disabilities, those living with HIV/AIDS
 - **Increased efficacy of tax collection** by increasing the capacity of government administrations to collect revenue and increasing the tax literacy of domestic populations.
- d. **Gender responsive financial facilities** to enable access of interest-free credit facilities that will encourage upward mobility of women in the informal sector.
- e. **Sustainable funding** for development initiatives driven by a feminist, gender-responsive agenda, including civil society organizations and arms of the UN and AU that focus on gender and development to ensure stability in funding sources.
- f. A **gender audit of all international, regional, state and devolved national government budgets** to ensure gender participation in decision making, allocation, evaluation and monitoring of financing processes.
- g. **Industrialization should be engendered** - and promoting decent work, fair pay, living wages, better working conditions for women and a conducive environment for women to become leaders in this sector.
- h. **Informal industries** where products can be sold on the local and international market **should be encouraged and protected**.
- i. **Intellectual property rights** should not prevent access to medicine as well as technology, critical to the survival of women and girls in the process of poverty alleviation.
- j. **Reproductive health services** for women (*including but not exclusive to cervical/breast cancer screening and comprehensive abortion care services*) should be included in national health insurance policy.
- k. **Eradication of all taxes on essential reproductive health commodities and services** (*including but not exclusive to sanitary towels, family planning services and safe abortion services*).
- l. Public financing for the establishment and running of **shelters for survivors of violence**.
- m. A specific percentage (%) of tax revenues should be allocated to improving the existing **health infrastructure** including comprehensive and quality social protection health systems.





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