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PANEL

**Financing for gender equality  
and the empowerment of women**

**Written statement\***

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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.

## **Development Cooperation and Gender in Zambia**

### **Introduction**

1. This paper has been prepared as a brief informing the CSW of the UN panel discussion session of February 2007 on perspectives of the developments that have taken place in the area of international development cooperation with particular respect to the management of this cooperation in the relation to the gender agenda and how the framework or architecture of the cooperation has changed in Zambia. The paper will discuss these under the headings of 1. Planning: the context of development, 2. The changing modalities of aid and 3. The evolution in the way the gender agenda is being taken forward.

### **Planning: the context of development**

2. Fifth National Development Plan: Gender in the context of development cooperation for Zambia is best understood in the light of Zambia's own intent and how this has been articulated. Zambia has, since the time of the First Republic, had National Development Plans that have addressed the strategic long term goals of the national development process. This frame work of operation was brought to an impasse with the coming of the Third Republic in the early 1990s. The thinking at the time was that the ideological winds of change that brought about the fall of the Soviet Union and were coupled with the abandonment of central planning and an adoption of 'laissez faire', would through the invisible hand of the market help provide an optimal environment to run the country. This was particularly, a given expectation/conditionality of the World Bank and IMF.

3. However, by the turn of the millennia there was a lot of rethinking and the Bank returned with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) as a management framework to act as an investment guide to managing the economy in the medium term. The PRSP, preparation though led by the bank in collaboration with the Government was bought into by the rest of the cooperating partners and commitments to this were made through a Consultative Group meeting. The PRSP ran from 2002-2004. However the Cooperating Partners did not feel at the time that Infrastructure should be considered a priority in ensuring poverty was eradicated and so would not allow for support to infrastructure to be included within the PRSP. For this reason Government developed alongside the PRSP the Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP) which contained the capital expenditure elements prioritized in governments thinking. The TNDP ran from 2002-2005.

4. The current Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) has only been launched this year, after cabinet approval the end of last year. With the inclusion of the 2006 budget the plan runs to the end of 2010, translating into a five year plan. The structure of the national strategy in relation to the gender agenda in the Plan is such that there is a preface by the President with direct emphasis on gender, there is also a gender specific chapter with the political lead of a Minister for Women, and a Cabinet Office – Gender in

Development Division (GIDD) headed by a Permanent Secretary. A third level is with regard to the programme inclusion of activities engendering actions of the line ministries at other sector level. Each of these levels articulates the importance of the gender agenda with the President taking a clear lead in outline gender as a priority cross cutting issue. The sector level operations at GIDD have a chapter articulating the five year focus on:

- Education and Skills Training.
- Economic Empowerment of women.
- Review of Laws that discriminate against women; and
- Institutional Capacity Building.

5. This third level is that of the health, education, agriculture, water, mining, manufacturing and other sectors with mainstreamed programmed activities with monitorable outcomes.

6. These three levels of intervention indicate the coordination mechanisms with a view to meeting the long term vision of *Attaining Gender equity and equality arising from the development process by 2030*.

7. Key to this process is the national Gender Policy of 2000 which at current is being operationalised through the 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 and for monitoring programmes to ensure they are gender responsive. Sub-committees were then formed in 2005 at provincial, district level to further strengthen the institutional framework of the national Gender Strategic Plan.

8. Complementing the gender policy and the FNDP is the Aid Policy which recognizes the prioritisation of Gender mainstreaming as cardinal to the delivery of development through development cooperation.

### **The changing modalities of aid**

9. The evolution of the international structure/architecture of aid delivery mechanisms goes back to the late nineties for Zambia, when the Economic and Technical Cooperation Department held a series of workshops to consider how aid may be made more effective and more efficient. Over the years since the international community has also held a number of meetings with significant resolves towards the goal of smart aid.

10. This decade alone has several such resolves beginning with the launch of the Millennium Development Goals (2000) underlined by the last goal of *developing a global partnership for development* thus broadening the spectrum of stake holder players in the international development cooperation agenda and deepening the felt need of urgency. Other resolves that followed are the:

- Monterrey Consensus – International Conference on Financing for Development (March 2002)
- Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (February 2003)
- Joint Marrakech Memorandum (February 2004)
- The MoU on Coordination and Harmonisation of Government and Cooperating Partner Practices for Aid Effectiveness in Zambia (April 2004)
- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (March 2005)

11. These MoUs and declarations evidenced themselves most significantly in the development of an Aid Policy and Strategy, Direct Budget Support, Sector Wide Approaches to Programming (SWAs), a Joint Assistance Strategy and a Development Assistance Database.

12. The Aid policy articulates the processes and guidelines of how Aid shall be solicited, acquired, disbursed, reported on, accounted for, audited, monitored and evaluated. Though broad to the degree that it seeks to give guidelines, the policy none the less generates clear direction with regard to how aid should be managed. It also focuses on the behaviors of government and cooperating partners in the delivery process. It speaks on the forms of the various ‘new’ aid modalities citing Direct Budget Support as Zambia’s preferred.

13. The importance of Zambia’s Direct Budget Support, lies in the fact that it helps Zambia keep a consolidated account of receipts, significantly reducing transaction costs as the support is directed to the main budget framework and not to projects and programmes. This reduction is a shared benefit with cooperating partners as they also reduce on the number of reports they have to generate for their head-quarters. Funds brought in this way are once distributed, accounted for through a performance assessment framework. This serves to allow a verifiable measure of the use of disbursed funds considering the fungibility of money in view of funds being merged with government revenue from taxes.

14. DBS though Zambia’s preferred disbursement mode, is not Zambia’s only one. SWAs are similar in nature to DBS except that the funds received do not meet the national budget needs but only the sector plan needs. Sector Wide Approaches to Programming (SWAs) are currently in full use by the Education and Health Sector. These are being extended to the Water and Roads sectors with a view to extending to sub-sectors in Tourism, agriculture.

15. The Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia seeks to act as a reaction to the FNDP with regard to outlining the envisaged support that the cooperating partners will avail and who would avail it when, in the light of the Aid Policy. This would work with complete financial projections over the five year period. The JASZ is in the very last stages of its drafting and is to be finalized and launched within the coming few weeks. A principle process that government contributed to in the development of the JASZ is the selection of preferred cooperating partner in each sector. A note worthy element of this process was

the low levels of interest exhibited by most cooperating partners in being selected to the gender-cross cutting sector.

16. The Development Assistance Database is to be a public access database for reporting on all cooperating partner programmes in the country so as to track resource inflows and implementation progress. Its functions would allow for searching for programmes by Cooperating Partners, district, province, sector and target group (including women and girls). It is hoped to enhance the transparency with which mutual accountability may be made by the various stakeholders to the development process.

17. The foregoing modalities are recent developments. Their timeframe for implementation is medium to long-term. For this reason monitoring for evaluation requires another year or so of implementation. Monitoring for managing the processes is currently on-going.

### **Gender and the way forward in Zambia**

18. Government faces limitations in terms of scope, capacity and mandate. Scope becomes an issue in view of limitations on governments' physical presence and how it may intervene at a grass roots level. For this reason other players influencing the value systems of society need to be incorporated in the efforts to allow gender to be mainstreamed not only in the government programmes but also in the context of the family unit. With regard to capacity of all the stake holders in the efforts of developing gender systems in society government civil servants are amongst the least paid for their work, compared to NGOs, Consultants in the field or even the private sector. The numbers in the civil service are few, the turn-over is high. So then what with roles? it must be noted that the players that should take the front line, is civil society. Particularly the development practitioners should develop checks within society through community based institutions.

19. The Media projects the culture of the future, and this can be exemplified in the media turning the spot light on child defilers, and immediately the practice will be vilified by society it will be hidden or avoided. Similarly the trade unions again may act as watch dogs in the work place. Could there be no social responsibility ethic with regard to who is employed, so that federation are also causing employers to be accountable? What of the faith based institutions? These contribute considerably to the norms of the society as they engage pragmatically in the families values. All these stakeholders should be partnered by investigating what counts to gender balancing and equity in the context of their communities.

20. The heads of corporations that are well established should initiate a self renewal in their employment policies. They ought to be the champions of change. Why? There is greater spin-off in employing women as evidenced in their dexterity in finger work in the garment industry.

21. In the context of Government priorities these are the challenges being faced. A challenge of institutional arrangements. The strengths of government current position lies in the inclusion of the gender agenda in the Fifth National Development Plan with a relatively significant strategy. The FNDP's articulates programmes to capacity build for Gender Mainstreaming, to gender mainstream the implementation process of the Plan, to develop Gender management information systems, to review legal frameworks, to enhance the economic empowerment of women and to ensure all this is monitored and evaluated with the intent of constant change towards meeting the national vision of *'Attaining Gender equity and equality arising from the development process by 2030.'*

22. These are the challenges that present opportunities for change in Zambia. Those areas of resistance to this movement of change should be dialogued and reasoned with through advocacy but also we must allow institutions to lead by example what needs to be done at the house-hold and individual level.