

# SDG 17

## STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Sustainable Development Goals seen from a feminist approach

Gender equality is essential for all the SDG, but women end up being the least benefited from the means of implementation, whatever form they may take. Very few countries today prepare gender sensitive budgets that allocate funds to services and programs for women, and these exercises have revealed gaps regarding the funding of women's needs, reaching into 90%.

### Why feminist organizations are key players in achieving gender justice and SDG?

**Feminist and women's movement organizations** have always played a key role in the struggle for recognition and full exercise of women's rights. Thanks to them and their **collective action** we have made progress as women throughout history. Hence, they are the voices that need to be heard if we want to achieve women's rights and **gender justice**. Their visions, strategies, analysis, approaches and practices must determine the funding agendas, as well as be present in decision-making spaces about development funding. It is essential that they gain access to a funding that allows them to continue their **transforming practices**.

### How is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development financed?

One of the key instruments for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of SDG is the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), approved by the governments in the Third Conference on Financing for Development that took place in July 2015. **Feminist and women's movements** carried out a critical review on the content of this agenda. Firstly because it offers an instrumental vision about the economic participation of women, considering that

*gender equality, women's empowering, their full participation under conditions of equality and their leading role in the economy are fundamental to achieve sustainable development, then productivity and economic growth will improve significantly. Women's rights are a matter of Human Rights and justice rather than an instrument or means to achieve economic*

growth or increase productivity.

In addition, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) emphasizes the idea that economic growth is the main source of national resources. As it has been repeatedly denounced by feminisms, economic growth, **in a neoliberal and patriarchal system, is based on the exploitation of the labour force and the unpaid work of women**, and it is directly related to serious violations of Human Rights, especially women's rights. The agenda does not incorporate either an analysis of the structural and systemic causes that produce and reproduce inequality, poverty and gender inequality. It does not interrelate neoliberalism, fundamentalism, militarism, racism and the patriarchy. Neither does it an explicit

acknowledgment of the impact that neoliberal policies and structural adjustment programs have on women's lives, as **The Beijing Platform for Action** does.

## Who is the guarantor for Human Rights?

From a **feminist and Human Rights point of view**, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) lends a dangerous importance to the private sector as a **key actor development funding and women's empowerment**, considerably lowering the responsibility of the states as the principal guarantors of Human Rights

For instance, we can read in the final document: **we encourage the private sector to contribute to [...] a full and productive employment of women [...], equal pay for equal work** but it does not incorporate an agreement that guarantees that transnational corporations do not use gender pay gap to increase their profitability. Moreover, there are no accountability mechanisms linked to the fulfillment of **Human Rights and gender equality**.

Also, feminisms are worried about the vision on the Official Development Assistance contained in the Addis Ababa Agenda, because **the compromise and obligation from rich countries to finance women's rights and gender equality disappears**. In the final document, the Agenda only includes that **it is urgent for the countries to monitor and report on the budget allocations for gender equality and the empowerment of women**.

## Is women's agenda fragmented once again?

The focus of the agenda on the approach of **multi-stakeholder partnerships** can have serious consequences in regards to the realization of women's rights, because there is a risk that women's agenda will be fragmented. A lot of stakeholders interested in working with "women and girls" do not recognize the **Beijing Platform for Action, the Cairo Plan of Action nor CEDAW** as the instruments that guarantee an advance in women's rights. These are stakeholders that do not work from a Human Rights approach with a gender perspective nor from an intersectional feminism. As a consequence, **women's agenda is fragmented**, thus targeting the little available funding to non transforming vertical actions. For exam-

ple, there is funding for programs that work for women's sexual and reproductive health without recognizing their **physical and sexual autonomy**.

Programs to eradicate violence against women or actions for economic empowerment are financed without working the **sexual violence** or **sexual and reproductive rights**.

Other times, there are proposals of programs for the political participation of women that do not develop the concept of women's citizenship, necessarily related to the right to decide on one's own body. All of these actions work from the effects and not from the reasons that provoke inequality and discrimination. **By fragmenting the agenda, opportunities for transformation are lost**.

**Notwithstanding the above, only 5% of external assistance funds had gender equality as a main objective in the period 2012-2013.\* As shown by the studies by AWID organization, most feminist and women's movement organizations do not have access to funding. The proportional average annual income from a sample of 740 women's organizations in 2010 was barely USD 20.000. According to the last global survey, women's organizations rely mainly on the support to one-off projects and do not have long-term flexible funds. Likewise, 48% of respondents of AWID's survey never received structural support and a 52% never received multi-year support. \*\***

\* OECD DAC (2015), *From commitment to action: Financing gender equality and women's rights in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*.

\*\* AWID year 2013: *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*.

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