



## **GLOBAL COOPERATION NEWSLETTER** **August 2010**

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### **Social Protection – moves to enhance global advocacy**

A high-level Advisory Group has been established by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and WHO. The Advisory Group is tasked to enhance global advocacy and develop further global policy aspects of the social protection floor. The Group is expected to strengthen the voice and action of the Social Protection Floor initiative by aligning distinguished global leaders and opinion-makers to promote the cause and to reach out a broader audience. They will prepare a global report that will be an advocacy tool on global, regional and national policies and strategies to support the implementation of the social protection floor.

The Group is chaired by **H.E. Ms Michelle Bachelet**, former president of Chile.

The members are:

**Mr Aurelio Fernández López** Chair of the European Union Social Protection Committee (Since 2007), Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Social Security of Spain.

**Mr Ebrahim Patel** Minister of Economic Development of South Africa, former spokesperson of the Workers Group in the Governing Body of the ILO.

**Ms Eveline Herfkens** Founder of the MDGs campaign, Executive Coordinator for the MDGs Campaign (2002-2008), Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands (1998-2002).

**Mr Kemal Dervis** Vice-Chair of the Brookings Institution (since 2009), Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (2005-2009), member of the Turkish Parliament (2002-2005) and Minister for Economic Affairs of Turkey (2001-2002).

**Ms Margaret Wilson** Professor of Law and Public Policy, University of Waikato (New Zealand), Member and spokesperson of the New Zealand House of Representatives (2005-2008), Minister of Labour (1999-2005).

**Mr Martin Hirsch** Former High Commissioner for Active Solidarities against Poverty and for Young People of France (2007-2010), former head of Emmaüs (2002-2007).

**Ms Sudha Pillai** Secretary of the Planning Commission of India (since 2007), former Secretary of Labour and Employment.

Ex-officio members **Mr Juan Somavía** - Director-General of the International Labour Organization and **Dr Margaret Chan** Director-General WHO.

### **Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on the Budgets of Low-Income Countries**

Oxfam International has released *The Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on the Budgets of Low-Income Countries*, <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/impact-global-financial-crisis-budgets-low-income-countries> The study was prepared by Development Finance International, Inc (DFINTL) <http://www.dfintl.com/>. By examining the financial performance and policies of 56 low-income countries (LIC) during the period 2009-2010, the study aims to analyze the impact of the global financial crisis on the budgets of low-income countries and consequently on their spending to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

It finds that the crisis created a huge "fiscal hole," with LICs' budget revenues reduced by US\$65 billion in 2009-2010. Prospects for the whole of 2010 are not promising. The report expects that 46% of the LICs will have revenues below 2008 levels. It warns that, even if rich countries recover from the crisis, poor countries will continue to suffer because of the "time lag in transmission."

To face the crisis, the greater part of LICs resorted to "fiscal stimulus" in 2009. However, only a few of them continued this policy in 2010 as the International Monetary Fund advised them to reduce their social spending. The report notes "While the IMF protected social sector spending at the start of the crisis, it is now advising countries to reduce it."

Regarding the impact of the crisis on MDG spending, the report finds that, despite the crisis, some countries made efforts to focus expenditures on MDG-related issues. Nevertheless, these spending policies varied widely per country and per sector. Health, infrastructure and agriculture were the sectors benefitting most, while social protection and education were the most neglected. The report warns that for 2010 most countries are further reducing their budgets for "one or more of the priority pro-poor sectors of education, health, agriculture and social protection, just at a time when they need to massively increase such spending."

The report concludes by calling upon the international community to sign up to tough new aid targets at the Millennium Summit (<http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/>) in September 2010; to guarantee additional sources of "innovative financing;" and to provide grants in exceptional circumstances. It further recommends to take into account domestic debts and to monitor MDG spending in a transparent way.

### **Gender Equality as a Means to Finance Development**

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) has published *An Investment that Pays off: Promoting Gender Equality as a Means to Finance Development*. In the wake of the financial crisis, public budgets have come under constraint and governments are searching for options to cut expenditure. Measures aiming at increasing gender equality might very well be on their list of budget cuts since gender equality is still often considered to be a 'luxury good' and not a necessity for poorer societies. However, cutting investment in gender equality is not a smart move for any government as the authors Stephanie Seguino, Günseli Berik and Yana van der Meulen Rodgers demonstrate in their paper which is available at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/07228-20100806.pdf>

### **Commonwealth Foundation offers practical support for key women's issues**

Through the Ninth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (9 WAMM) and the partners' forum that precedes it in June 2010, the Commonwealth Foundation provided a platform for civil society's concern for women.

When a bride is victimised for being unable to fulfil her husband's family's financial demands, the result is often referred to as 'dowry violence'. In the worst cases, those who cannot meet the demands are killed to make way for a new financial transaction – that is, another marriage. The Commonwealth Foundation supported a four day event of the India based organisation Vimochana. The event highlighted the plight of women and heard personal testimonies from survivors, analyses by experts and calls for more equitable treatment of women in marriage.

The Foundation provides grants to support the issues faced by many women around the Commonwealth. Over £100,000 in grants has been committed by the Commonwealth Foundation to support women's issues in the past 12 months. These have included support for: disability groups; those living with HIV and AIDS; women's rights in the area of public accountability; as well as women's' livelihood opportunities.

For more information on the Commonwealth Foundations' grants beneficiaries, visit the recent grants page on the Foundation's website <http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com/>

### **Stopping violence against women in the Arab world**

From IPU ebulletin Issue No.23, 20 August 2010 <http://www.ipu.org/eb-e/23-main.htm>

Members of Arab parliaments met in Beirut in July 2010 to discuss the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and how it could be better

enforced. The event was organized with the support of the IPU, the Lebanese Parliament, UN-ESCWA and UNDP.

Parliamentarians, both men and women, discussed how to counter stereotyping and modify people's mentalities in order to bring about change in the region in attitudes to women. Many called for the removal of discriminatory provisions from current legislation. More broadly, this means reforming the legislative framework, reviewing discriminatory provisions and drafting new ones. It also requires sensitization and inter-parliamentary diplomacy at the regional level. Legislating on violence against women was seen as one of the most pressing priorities. To date, only one country in the region has passed a law on violence against women. Of particular interest was the issue of violence against women during civil strife and conflict.

Legislation, said the parliamentarians, should criminalize acts of violence against women in all settings and include measures to prevent violence, assist victims and rehabilitate perpetrators. It should also provide for national action plans, training and sensitization and for the necessary money to be allocated in the national budget. To help raise awareness of violence against women and trigger appropriate legislative responses, the participants agreed to launch a regional parliamentary campaign as a component of the IPU's parliamentary campaign called *Parliaments take action on violence against women*.

### **Role of community assets and measuring their impact on health promotion**

The Geneva based NGO Alliance for Health Promotion is conducting a virtual discussion on the role of community assets and measuring their impact on health promotion from 30 August to 19 September 2010

Does the mantra that "if it can't be measured, it can't be funded" always hold true? How can outcomes of NGO activities in health promotion be made "tangible" or measurable?

This virtual discussion aims to highlight practical challenges and approaches to generating "evidence" for the role of community assets in the process of mainstreaming health promotion. Issues surrounding the need for "evidence" will be discussed and participants will be invited to provide innovative solutions based on their experience.

Lessons from the Workshop organized by the NGO Alliance at the 20th IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion <http://www.iuhpeconference.net/> will be shared by the moderators.

The discussion will be divided into three thematic weeks:

Week 1: What are community assets? How do community assets contribute to health promotion?

Week 2: How do you know a Health Promotion program is working? What are the challenges to measuring it?

Week 3: How can we show evidence that community assets impact health promotion?

The discussion will be held in English. To sign in, go to <http://www.ngos4healthpromotion.net/>

### **Self-regulation in civil society**

The One World Trust reports that around the world civil society organisations (CSOs) are promoting good practice and demonstrating their credibility through self-regulatory initiatives. Research by the One World Trust has identified more than 350 such initiatives operating on a national, regional and international level, suggesting that self-regulation within civil society is much more widespread than previously thought.

Despite this proliferation of initiatives, there has been relatively little study of how they work. This means that it is hard for potential users, donors, or even the initiatives themselves to understand whether membership of a code of conduct or certification scheme is a reliable signal of quality.

One World Trust is leading research in this under-explored field, through their CSO Self-Regulatory Initiatives project, which provides the first comprehensive analysis of CSO self-regulatory initiatives. There are two new briefing papers *Responding to Development Effectiveness in the Global South*, and *Ensuring Credibility and Effectiveness: Designing compliance systems in CSO self-regulation*. The first sheds light on the particular motivations and challenges to developing self-regulatory initiatives in Southern countries, and follows on from the paper OWT released in November 2009, *Responding to NGO Development Effectiveness Initiatives*, which explored drivers of self-regulation in the North. The second explores the different approaches self-regulatory initiatives use to encouraging compliance with

their frameworks such as self, peer, and third party assessments and discusses their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Significantly, both papers highlight the extent to which self-regulatory initiatives respond to, and are affected by, the political and social context in which they are developed. This suggests the need to appreciate the specifics of an initiative's relationship with the state, donors, and the public, in order to understand its form and content.

One World Trust is exploring these issues through its project on CSO self-regulation and consultancy work with different initiatives. By exploring the challenges and benefits of self-regulation, OWT hopes that its work will help initiatives to strengthen accountability and effectiveness within the sector. For further information and the papers mentioned above [http://www.oneworldtrust.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=68&Itemid=55](http://www.oneworldtrust.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=68&Itemid=55)

### **UNRISD Web-Based Development Forum for G20**

The UN Research Group for Social Development (UNRISD) has launched an online discussion forum <http://community.eldis.org/.59d66237/Discussions/> as part of work relating to its Development Forum for G20 to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea during October 2010. UNRISD is inviting people interested in their work to participate in the online debate.

The Development Forum for G20 is inspired by the pressing need to rethink the relationship between broader economic and social development goals and the international financial and trade regimes in the midst of multiple crises, in particular the global economic crisis. The G20, <http://www.g20.org/> will play a significant role in shaping the new international financial and trade regime. The Development Forum for G20 aims to provide a channel through which innovative ideas on development, particularly those from the perspective of non-G20 countries, can be articulated as inputs into G20 discussions.

The web-based discussion attempts to encourage debate on alternative development approaches that are inclusive, equitable, democratic and sustainable. Such an ambition requires formulating approaches and policies that integrate economic growth, environmental sustainability and social equity, recognizing the intrinsic role played by a range of social policies in production and distribution as well as protection and reproduction. The challenge is to translate such principles into concrete policies whether at a local, national, regional or global level.

The discussion will be stored in the following folders using key words: Climate Change and Green Economy; Multiple Crises and Social Policy; Trade and Social Development; Finance and Social Development; International Economic and Social Governance.

For further information, refer to General Information under the [www.development-forum-for-g20.org](http://www.development-forum-for-g20.org).

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