

"I want to get involved in local politics and specifically to be Chief Executive of the local District Assembly. Before, I didn't know this was possible."

Alice, Women's leadership workshop participant, Ghana



Catherine Klirorakou

Delivering for women globally

Womankind Worldwide's vision for the next UK Government

"2015 will be a critical year for achieving progress on women's rights internationally."

In no country in the world do women enjoy the same rights or opportunities as men. Entrenched discrimination against women persists across social, cultural, political and economic spheres, and violence against women remains endemic. Women continue to be excluded from peace negotiations and decisions about the future of their families, communities and countries, and are overwhelmingly represented in global extreme poverty and economic inequality indices¹.

2015 will be a critical year for achieving progress on women's rights internationally. The successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals will be agreed, and a 20 year review of progress on the Beijing Platform for Action² – the defining international blueprint for global progress on gender equality – will take place.

As a global leader the UK plays a crucial role in securing strong international commitments on gender equality and women's rights, and in developing cutting-edge initiatives for their implementation.

Taking action on the violence, inequality and discrimination experienced by women

worldwide will lead to more inclusive, stable and peaceful societies, in which women fully participate as equal citizens.

Significant progress has been made in recent years, which the next Government must not roll back on. It must build on current momentum and ensure that every aspect of the UK's internationally-focused work fully delivers for women.

The time is now, and the opportunity to achieve women's rights globally must not be missed.

Priority Actions

At the heart of concrete action for women is supporting local partners, notably women's rights organisations, to achieve gender equality. Women's movements have played a pivotal role in progressive policy and legal reform, and play a critical role in driving positive changes that can shift social norms over the longer term³. Women's rights organisations can also empower and mobilise women, including the poorest and most marginalised, to come together to know and claim their rights⁴.



“Since the project I have started to work in the community and seen many positive changes. There is more peace and unity.”

Musu, Access to justice project participant, Sierra Leone

Catherine Klirdotakou

Womankind calls on the next UK Government to place this approach at the core of all efforts for gender equality, and to commit to the following:

- Actively support the inclusion of a stand-alone goal on women’s rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment in the framework that replaces the Millennium Development Goals and ensure that the new framework contains transformative targets and indicators on (1) preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, and (2) ensuring women’s full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels;
- Agree to a cross-Whitehall International Gender Equality Plan within its first 100 days. The Plan must outline how the root causes of gender inequality will be tackled, and prioritise increasing funding to in-country women’s rights organisations to work alongside the Government to develop, implement and monitor progress on gender equality objectives;
- Track how much DFID spends on women across its work, by committing to include the amount spent in support of gender equality in all aid expenditure reporting. This should include improved reporting on aid allocated to women’s rights organisations by using the OECD-DAC Gender Marker, in line with the UK’s DAC membership obligations;
- Ensure DFID, FCO and MoD governance policies and programmes prioritise the equal and meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels. This will involve working to strengthen political systems and governance institutions and increasing their accountability to women, including at the local level, as well as promoting special measures to ensure women’s representation;
- Ensure tackling violence against women and girls is prioritised in the UK’s country level work, including prevention, protection and response. The next Government should address the most common form of violence against women and girls: intimate partner violence;
- Make a strong renewed commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action at the High Level event due in September 2015, and fully implement obligations under CEDAW, including General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (2013), and under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent related Resolutions⁵. This approach should be embedded across DFID’s bilateral work, by requiring the business case and reporting of all projects and programmes to demonstrate how they meet these internationally-agreed obligations.

1. Women Deliver: bit.ly/1IHwhdB
2. UN Women: beijing20.unwomen.org
3. World Bank: bit.ly/QMNEum
4. Comic Relief: bit.ly/1uhKQWh
5. United Nations Peacekeeping: bit.ly/1fbba9f



Further information

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Womankind Worldwide is the UK’s leading international women’s rights and international development organisation, working with women’s rights organisations across Africa, Asia and Latin America.