

THE STOCKHOLM FORUM ON GENDER EQUALITY

# TACKLING GLOBAL GENDER INEQUALITY THROUGH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND FEMINIST POLICIES

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Contributors: CONCORD Sweden. Moderator – Hans Linde (RFSU, Sweden);  
Rapporteur – Emilie Desire Castillo Cardenas

## OVERVIEW

Gender inequality is a global problem and to tackle it we need more feminist policies in development cooperation and other areas. This panel discussed the role of civil society, but also what governments and donors need to do through development cooperation and other policy areas to contribute to gender equality and the advancement of women's and girl's human rights globally.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### Where are we?

Women are always considered as part of the struggle when it comes to issues of sexual and reproductive rights but not when it comes to economic empowerment, an arena still dominated by men.

There is not enough funding for women economic empowerment in relation to the demand, especially in the rural areas with the highest rates of poverty.

The focus of economic empowerment remains individualistic. Strategies are still oriented to benefit individual interest.

There is a difference between gender equality policies from the private and public sector. In the private sector they promote more benefits for women economic independence; this increases the privilege of those women that can get into the private sector.

In the case of Palestine, one of the main challenges is the Israeli occupation. This occupation creates a territorial fragmentation that results in the impossibility of a unified law on gender equality.

To a large extent, women in conflict zones do not have rights, and in these zones gender-based violence happens on a daily basis. Women in conflict-ridden areas are also marginalised from political arenas, and in those rare cases when they are included, they are just there as mere representation for quotas.

Migration laws generally have a patriarchal structure that results in gender bias and violence. This is very problematic as a majority of international migrants are women.

The current migration laws and rights for migrant women are not sufficient to protect them. Migrant women are the most vulnerable group. Lack of safe and legal pathways for women to migrate is adding to this challenge. Safe migration procedures offered by governments are only available for migrants with high qualification profiles.

The fact that irregular migration is not protected affects the global south enormously as 70 per cent of migration is taking place in this region.

### **What are we doing?**

In different parts of the world, civil society movements are developing cooperative ways of working together and helping each other.

In Bolivia people have developed cooperative childcare to encourage women economic participation.

Political advocacy is necessary; Sweden should spread the word about the process of creating feminist policies and a feminist government on an international level.

Civil society movements are working hard to influence and push governments to create more holistic perspectives on the role of migrants for the economy of the countries; and to promote a process where governments can reflect upon what should be the real aim of migration policies.

The operation 1325 initiative between Sweden and Palestine aims to create new means of communication and new media for universities to promote women political participation as well as to promote new gender-sensitive programmes and curricula for university courses on media and communication studies.

Civil society movements are playing an important role in promoting awareness of the significance of human rights for women and girls.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Where do we go from here?**

Foster the use of global frameworks (human rights declarations) that provide strategies to push governments to work for gender equality. But do not forget the importance of the work of local governments in developing strategies that respond to specific contexts and needs.

Promote the creation of civil society movements in all levels of national advocacy. Reinforce already existing civil society moments. Train local advocates to strengthen them in their activism.

Build capacity and flexibility for migrants. Focus on safety, not least when it comes to transportation for rural women in order to increase their possibility of economic empowerment.

Civil society organisation should work to develop alternatives of feminist policies on a smaller scale. These practical examples can show governments what a feminist policy will look like in practice and on a broader level.

Foster the development of security and protection mechanism for illegal migrants.

Increase the visibility of the work of grassroots movements. ■

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