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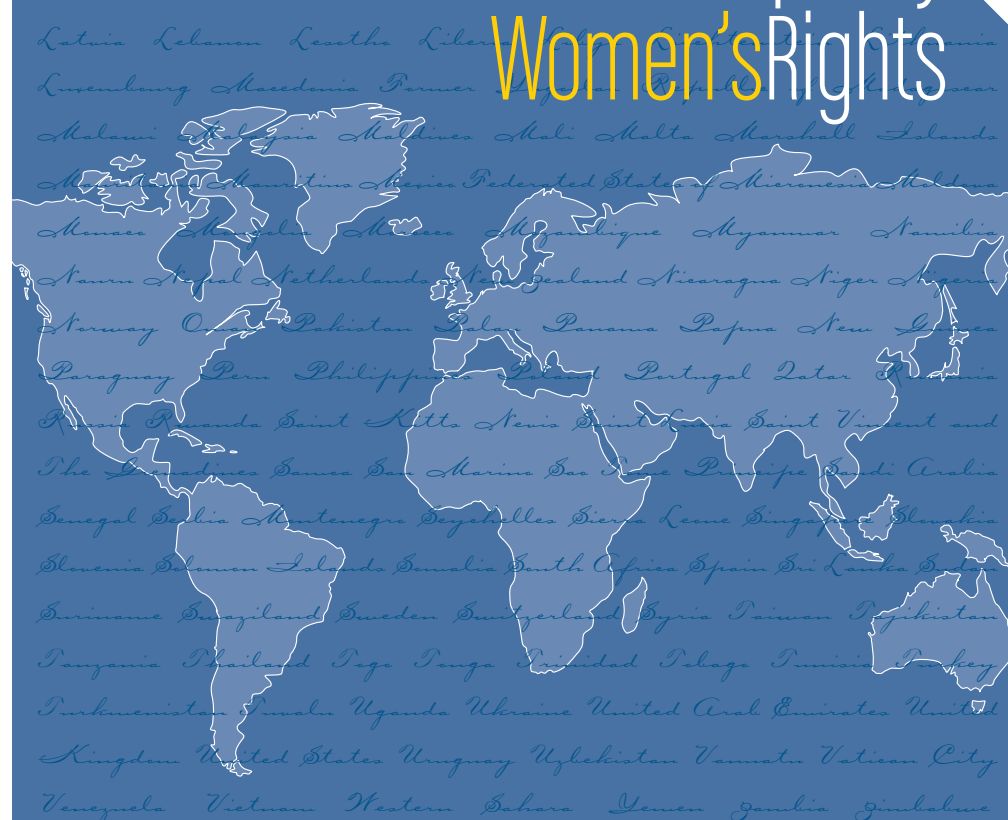


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Gender Equality Women's Rights



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About GenderAction

Gender Action is the only organization dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's rights in all International Financial Institution (IFI) investments—such as those of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)—the largest public sources of development financing. Although IFIs pay lip service to the need for gender equality, our research demonstrates that their investments all too often ignore, even exacerbate the plight of poor women and their families. Gender Action does advocacy to hold the IFIs accountable on their promises to empower women.

GenderAction Advocacy Programs

ECONOMIC REFORMS AND GENDER

Gender Action monitors the gendered impacts of IFI loans and works with local partners to mitigate their harmful effects on low-income women and men. IFI loans typically require poor countries to adopt policies that slash government spending, effectively choking investments to combat HIV/AIDS and provide health care and education. Poverty deepens and feminizes as women's home care for sick family members increases with public spending cutbacks, reducing time for paid work. In response, Gender Action recently produced a "Gender Guide to World Bank and IMF Policy-Based Lending" to help citizens groups perform gender analyses of policy-based loans and conduct their own advocacy. As a founding member of the first global campaign to curb the destructive power of the IMF, Gender Action and its partners are promoting alternative finance for poor countries without strings attached.

WOMEN, THE ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Because massive IFI infrastructure projects have huge environmental and social consequences, in "Boom-Time Blues: Big Oil's Gender Impacts in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Sakhalin," Gender Action and CEE Bankwatch Network examined IFI-financed pipeline projects on the ground. We showed how IFI pipeline investments increase poverty, human trafficking, rates of HIV/AIDS and still births, and drive women into sex work. We are using Boom Time Blues to advocate that IFIs fulfill promises that their investments will protect women from harm.

ENGENDERING COUNTRY STRATEGIES

Gender Action and its partners argue that countries must be allowed to decide their own national development strategies. As things stand, poor countries must prepare Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs), development plans written to meet World Bank and IMF specifications. Gender Action's experience with partners in PRS countries shows that PRSs overall have neglected to address gender gaps and promote women's rights, and their IFI-driven economic reforms actually impoverish women and men in developing countries.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN PEACE AND CONFLICT

Gender Action's dedicated Women's Rights advocacy program ensures that IFIs promote women's reproductive, property and political rights and address gender-based violence and the feminization of HIV and AIDS. In 2007 Gender Action helped coordinate emergency civil society advocacy to prevent the World Bank from ending its support for family planning and reproductive health. With impeccable timing, we released "Mapping Multilateral Development Banks' (MDBs') Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Spending," the first report exposing diminishing MDB spending for these issues. We recently published "Gender Justice: A Citizen's Guide to Gender Accountability at IFIs" with the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) to help people harmed by gender discrimination in IFI projects seek redress. We also released, "The Gender Dimensions of Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The World Bank Track Record," demonstrating that the majority of Bank post conflict investments ignore gender issues and reinforce patriarchal patterns. Gender Action is following up on these reports to hold the IFIs accountable to implementing their gender equality promises.

TRACKING IFI GENDER IMPLEMENTATION

IFI gender experts are vital to mitigate the detrimental impacts of IFI operations. Our "Reforming the World Bank: Will the Gender Strategy Make a Difference?" reveals that gender experts compose less than a fraction of one percent of World Bank staff and that most non-gender experts lack incentives to address the imbalance. Our "Gender Justice" reports that other IFIs have even fewer gender experts and incentives. We are following-up with pressure on the IFIs to hire more gender experts and provide incentives for all staff to address gender impacts.

Partnerships and Funders

Gender Action's partnerships have been soaring due to overwhelming demand for help integrating gender dimensions into civil society activities. In the last year we have collaborated with and provided gender inputs into the work of 50 Years Is Enough Network, ActionAid International, CEE Bankwatch Network, CIEL, and the Environmental Law Institute. We recently joined the Jubilee USA Network, the Publish What You Pay campaign, and co-founded IFI Watchnet North America network and the IDA-15 campaign to improve the World Bank. Key funders include many generous individual supporters and the Fund for Innovation in Public Service, the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Libra Foundation, The Moriah Fund, Population Action International, and Sigrid Rausing Trust.

Our Advocacy Strategies

Gender Action's multifaceted complementary strategies include: (1) partnering with and providing IFI literacy to developing and transition country women's and other citizen groups through joint analysis of IFI investments and coordinated advocacy; (2) partnering with international groups that pressure IFIs to address environment, labor, human rights, transparency, accountability and other issues; (3) persuading donor governments to hold the IFIs accountable on gender; (4) monitoring and reporting on IFI progress in integrating gender; and (5) conducting gender advocacy directly on the IFIs.