



Gender Action had a phenomenal last six months! This third biannual update illustrates our recent achievements and brings you up to date on our many exciting projects to ensure that big International Financial Institution (IFI) investments promote and do not violate women's rights.

## **I. VISIBILITY**

Gender Action's increasing capacity over the last two years boosted our visibility tremendously, extending our reach to more potential partners and supporters around the globe who seek us out.

### **Coalition-Building**

Because there is power in numbers, Gender Action continuously engages in coalition building. For example, a few months ago, when the World Bank threatened to end its 30 year-long support for family planning and reproductive health, Gender Action united the IFI Watcher and the reproductive rights communities to prevent the Bank from weakening its Health, Nutrition and Population Strategy. Gender Action is an active member of numerous coalitions and networks including the [50 Years is Enough US Network](#) aimed at profoundly transforming the IFIs; the [Association for Women's Rights in Development](#); [IFI Watchnet](#) connecting citizens' organizations monitoring the IFIs globally; the [International Gender and Trade Network](#); the [Jubilee USA Network](#) trying to cancel the crushing debts of poor countries; the [National Council of Women's Organizations](#); the [Publish What You Pay](#) coalition holding governments, corporations and the IFIs accountable for the use of oil, gas and mining revenues; and the [UK Gender & Development Network](#).

### **Publications & Events**

To enhance other groups' literacy and advocacy on the IFIs, we publish and disseminate publications for gender-based advocacy and present them in many venues. In the summer of 2007 alone Gender Action released an impressive three [new publications](#) and presented them at numerous workshops described below. In addition, in the last few months, Gender Action President Elaine Zuckerman spoke at Georgetown University Law Center's [Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program](#), the [Clearinghouse on Women's Issues](#) and at the [Heinrich Böll Foundation Summer School](#) on making international investments work for women. Since our [Update #2](#) in May 2007, we presented at nearly a dozen public events, three of which we held during the [Week of Global Action Against Debt and IFIs](#) coinciding with the World Bank and IMF annual meetings.

### **Expanding Media Coverage**

Gender Action has attracted increasing media coverage on our work. In the last few months, Elaine was featured on various public radio shows discussing World Bank corruption, lack of democracy and transparency, and [issues](#) surrounding its weakened Health, Nutrition and Population Policy. Gender Action Programs Coordinator Suzanna Dennis [blogged](#) her perspectives on gender issues during the fall World Bank and IMF annual meetings.

## **II. RECENT PROJECTS**

In the last six months, Gender Action's projects have made great strides in holding the IFIs accountable to their gender equality promises. Here are the highlights:

### **Mapping Multilateral Development Banks' Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Spending**

In September 2007 Gender Action released [Mapping Multilateral Development Banks' Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Spending](#)—the first report assessing the quantity and quality of Multilateral Development Banks' (MDBs') spending for reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. Mapping demonstrates a decline in World Bank and little African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank loans and

grants for reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. Mapping also charts unmet MDB commitments to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, and harmful loan conditions such as restricting public spending which undermine poor countries' ability to address these key public health issues. We have received overwhelming support for this initial project, including being invited to present our findings at three separate workshops hosted by [The Moriah Fund](#), [Wallace Global Fund](#), and project seed funder [Population Action International](#). Funding permitting, we hope to carry this work forward with a more in-depth follow-up report, a toolkit for activists, and a massive advocacy campaign.

### **Gender Justice: A Citizen's Guide to Gender Accountability at International Financial Institutions**

In July 2007 Gender Action and our partner the [Center for International Environmental Law \(CIEL\)](#) released [Gender Justice: A Citizen's Guide to Gender Accountability at International Financial Institutions](#), the first guide for taking gender discrimination cases to IFI accountability mechanisms! The Guide provides tools for women and men harmed by gender discrimination in IFI investments to use these mechanisms to seek redress. We find that despite IFI commitments to promote gender equality, only half of the eight IFIs we reviewed have gender policies to which citizens can hold them accountable when IFI projects cause, perpetuate or deepen gender discrimination. These policies tend to be weak, poorly resourced and understaffed. Most IFIs have accountability mechanisms that enable people harmed by IFI investments to raise concerns about project impacts. Although these mechanisms have not yet been used to address gender issues, they provide legal grounds for doing so. Complaints based on gendered impacts could bring redress to victims of gender discrimination caused by IFI investments, and help ensure that IFIs having gender policies comply with them. Gender Action is using the Guide to pressure IFIs lacking gender policies to adopt them to permit citizens to hold all IFIs accountable when IFI projects aggravate gender discrimination. We launched Gender Justice at the Heinrich Böll Foundation 2007 Summer School on "[Engendering Economic Policies in a Globalizing World: A Closer Look at International Financial Institutions](#)" which convened over 70 activists from around the world. Gender Action and CIEL used the occasion of the fall World Bank and IMF annual meetings to hold a second, public report launch hosted by the [Environmental Law Institute](#).

### **The Gender Dimensions of Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The World Bank Track Record**

In June 2007 Gender Action released the third in a series of reports titled, [The Gender Dimensions of Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The World Bank Track Record](#). This report evaluates World Bank investments in Post-Conflict Reconstruction (PCR) situations including a sample of its large PCR development loans and its small Post-Conflict Fund grants. Our findings demonstrate the limited extent to which the world's largest public development institution meets its own promised objective to address gender issues in all its investments. The report recommends that Bank post-conflict projects stop imposing harmful policy reforms such as public expenditure and civil service cutbacks that impoverish women and men, and systematically address violations against women's rights to contribute to achieving peace. This report served as a basis for a Gender Action-facilitated workshop on Gender and World Bank Post-Conflict Reconstruction at the Heinrich Böll Foundation Summer School.

### **IMF Campaign: Shrink it or Sink it**

Gender Action continues to be a leading member of the first concerted [global campaign to disempower the International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#) because its policy advice and harmful loan conditions violate women's rights. For example, IMF-mandated tariff reductions undermine the livelihood of farmers, the majority of whom are women in the world's poorest countries. The campaign seeks to end IMF control over the policies of low-income countries and eliminate the IMF's surveillance and gatekeeper roles determining access to donor finance. It promotes alternative financing options for countries in need without IMF conditionality. In July 2007 Gender Action co-convened a conference in Bangkok, Thailand on [Understanding Global Finance, Building International Resistance](#) to mark the ten year anniversary of the East Asia Financial Crisis which was largely precipitated by bad IMF policy advice. Elaine presented in the conference session, "The Crisis of Multilateral Institutions of Global Financial Governance." The campaign is currently broadening its focus and membership to build momentum.

### **III. Challenges**

Our finances remain fragile as we continue to work tirelessly to obtain funding to carry forward our groundbreaking projects. Given the outstanding positive response to our work, we are confident that we will secure

the support we need. To provide assistance or advice on fundraising, please contact Elaine at [elainez@genderaction.org](mailto:elainez@genderaction.org).

With continued appreciation for your support,

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