

**Gender and Development Network  
Activities Report  
April 2010-March 2011**



Dili, Timor-Leste. UN Photo/Martine Perret.

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## Summary

The Gender & Development Network (GADN) is a diverse membership network of leading practitioners, academics and consultants working on gender and development issues in the UK. Since its foundation in 1985, GADN has allowed gender and development practitioners a means to share information and expertise, lobby government and international bodies, and advise national and international policies and practices. Through publications and research commissioned by the network, GADN advocates on key gender and development issues that feed into government and institutional policy and practice. GADN members work in partnership with development and advocacy organisations throughout the world. GADN has also disseminated information and research to partners and networks in the south, ensuring that critiques of international development institutions, international agreements and processes are read by southern NGOs working directly to address poverty, women's empowerment and gender equality. In addition, GADN is the UK national platform for Women in Development Europe (WIDE), based in Brussels.

Highlights of the past year have included:

- **Advocacy on UN Women** – 300 copies of a policy paper entitled 'UN Women: A New Opportunity to Deliver for Women' were produced accompanied by substantial and high level lobbying to ensure the agency meets women's priorities and is sufficiently funded. The paper has been disseminated widely, including reaching key people at UN Women. Research was conducted with 100 women's organisations around the world and the findings suggest that UN Women's priorities are consistent with the priorities raised by the research participants. Both the paper and the research findings were presented at the 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.
- **Violence Against Women and Girls** – The campaign for a Minister on Violence Against Women was partially successful with the appointment of a Champion. The network briefed Lynne Featherstone MP, the new Champion, on common priorities and produced a widely distributed resource: 'Violence Against Women and Girls: Your Questions, Our Answers'. 3000 copies were produced and have been disseminated to members and partners around the world.
- **Programme focus** – A gender mainstreaming group was established and met four times during the year, where members presented best practice and shared strategies.
- **The policy agenda** – GADN produced a pre-election manifesto with recommendations which were also included in the manifestos of large agencies and other networks.
- **Submissions** – GADN contributed to a number of consultations including DFID's 'Choices for Women: planned pregnancies, safe births and healthy newborns'.
- **Charity status** – Towards the end of the year, GADN successfully registered as a charity and so we now look forward to building on the successes of 2010-2011 under this new status.



Lauren Donaldson  
Coordinator, Gender and Development Network

## 1) GADN Membership

The network is made up of a range of organisations who believe ensuring women's rights and gender equality is central to international development. A variety of academics, consultants, students and other interested individuals who are not listed here also comprise GADN membership. During the past year, we were delighted to have some new members joins us, including Care International UK, FORWARD and the International Rescue Committee.

GADN members that joined or renewed throughout 2010-2011 include the following organisations:

ActionAid UK  
Amnesty International UK  
BRIDGE  
CAFOD  
CARE International UK  
Central America Women's Network (CAWN)  
ChildHope  
Christian Aid  
Development Planning Unit  
End Water Poverty  
FORWARD  
Interact Worldwide  
International Rescue Committee  
Marie Stopes International  
Minority Rights Group International  
National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)  
One World Action  
Orchid Project  
Oxfam GB  
PANOS  
Plan UK  
Roj Women  
Save the Children UK  
Tearfund  
UK Committee for UN Women  
Village Aid  
VSO  
Water Aid  
WILPF UK  
Womankind Worldwide  
Women for Women International UK

Over the past year GADN has continued with or formed partnerships with National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO), Bretton Woods Project, Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS UK), Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA), Trade Justice Movement and the Women's Resource Centre.

## 2) Members' Meetings

At GADN members meetings, information on gender and development is collated, disseminated and analysed with presentations by expert speakers. Members' meetings provide vital networking and advocacy opportunities, as well as enable members to share their experiences and make a real difference to gender and development issues. The GADN also provides an informal but important support structure for gender professionals working in an increasingly difficult development environment. During 2010-11, the network held three members' meetings:

### **How can we bring together our work on Women's Rights and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights?**

On 25 May 2010, the **GADN** and **UK SRHR Network** held a joint meeting focused on women's rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights. **Jessica Woodroffe** (GADN) discussed the hopes for collaboration between the two networks. **Leo Bryant** (UK SRHR Network, Marie Stopes International) spoke about the political opportunities and dangers for family planning under the new government and **Mette Kjaerby** (APPG for Population, Development and Reproductive Health) spoke of the changing landscape within parliament. **Karen Newman** (Population and Sustainability Network) discussed the links between sexual and reproductive health and climate change, and finally **zohra moosa** (ActionAid UK) looked at SRHR from a feminist perspective.

### **Peace, Security and Violence against Women: Is SCR 1325 delivering for women?**

On September 23 2010 **GADN** in collaboration with **Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS UK)** hosted a public seminar on peace, security and violence against women in the context of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. **Sharon Sme** (**ActionAid UK**) introduced the work of the GADN Violence against Women Working Group and led a discussion about the causes and consequences of violence against women while **Laura Hotchkiss (GAPS UK)** introduced the work of GAPS UK, the No Women No Peace Campaign and the APPG on Women, Peace and Security. This was followed by a discussion led by **Mairi MacRae (Womankind Worldwide)** on how GADN and GAPS can work together and what the two networks hope to see from a revised UK National Action Plan on 1325. The seminar then welcomed **Chris Hunter and Alice Hutchinson (FCO)** who addressed the UK government's approach to SCR 1325 and details of the revised National Action Plan, followed by a consultation space that allowed the FCO to answer questions from the audience about the revised plan. The second half of the meeting included presentations by different GADN members with case studies regarding the actual implementation of SCR 1325. **Howard Mollett (CARE International UK)** gave a presentation on the 'Research on the impact of 1325 on the lives of women in Nepal, Uganda and Afghanistan'; **Dr. Annalise Moser (Consultant)** presented on 'Civil Society Monitoring of 1325: Global Analysis from 11 Countries' (Project of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders), and **Katherine Ronderos (CAWN)** gave a presentation on 'Women in Honduras: Trapped between Peacebuilding and Militarisation'.



## UN Women: A new opportunity to deliver for women



After its initial launch in July 2010, UN Women officially became operational on the 1 January 2011. Following this, GADN held a meeting which explored the recommendations of GADN's UN Women Working Group for shaping an agency that can deliver real results for women and girls.

Tom Kelly from DFID's UN and Commonwealth Department presented DFID's position on UN Women and updated members on the position of the UK Government on funding for UN Women.

### 3) GADN Secretariat and Trustees

2010-2011 was another exciting year for GADN. After two years in the post, Polly Trenow stepped down as Coordinator and Lauren Donaldson took over the role in April 2010. Towards the end of the year GADN successfully registered as a charity. This will allow us to fundraise for activities and increase core capacity next year. As part of this process, the 'UK' was removed from our name to reflect common usage.

#### GADN Trustees and Advisory Group

Over the year GADN was led and supported by a number of experienced and dedicated individuals from the development sector as part of the GADN. Early on in the year GADN's Board of Trustees expanded to include Nadja Dolata from Save the Children UK and Kathy Peach from VSO. This expansion has increased the group's capacity and has been extremely positive, introducing new areas of expertise and complementary experiences to the Board of Trustees.

Members of GADN's Board of Trustees for 2010-2011 were:

**ActionAid UK:** zohra moosa

**BRIDGE/IDS:** Alyson Brody

**Independent Consultants:** Helen Derbyshire, Jessica Woodroffe (Chair)

**Oxfam GB:** Ines Symth

**One World Action:** Emily Esplen

**Plan UK:** Kanwal Alhuwalia

**Save the Children UK:** Nadja Dolata

**VSO:** Kathy Peach

**WaterAid:** Samantha French (Treasurer)

**Womankind Worldwide:** Rachel Carter

The above Trustees also sit on the GADN Advisory Group, members of which provide advice on strategic direction and policy, and support the implementation of the network's strategic plan. During 2010-2011, the Advisory Group also included the following non-trustees: Kate Bishop and Sharon Smee (ActionAid UK) and Rosa Garwood and Nick Pialek (Oxfam GB).

GADN would also like to thank the volunteers who have supported it over the last year including: Uzma Osinibi, Monica Mukerjee, Azmina Dhrodia and Charlie Wilson. As ever, their work has been a vital backbone to the continuation of the network.

The Trustees and Advisory Group met throughout the year to decide on the strategic direction of the network including heading up working groups and supporting the network's strategy and planning process for 2010-11. The dates of the meetings were:

- 25 May 2010
- 15 July 2010
- 11 October 2010
- 26 November 2010
- 27 January 2011

On the final date, the Trustees held a day-long strategic planning meeting facilitated by Nadja Dolata and Jessica Woodroffe to decide upon the strategic aims of the organisation for the upcoming year. GADN's existing priority areas will continue, with increased focus on presenting a positive alternative agenda.

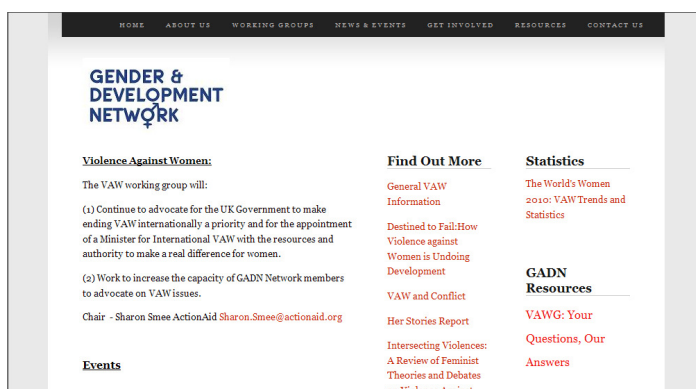
#### 4) GADN Communications

##### The GADN Newsletter

In 2010-11, GADN regularly communicated across its network primarily through its monthly newsletter. In addition, GADN updated its online presence, most notably through the re-design of its website and utilising its Twitter account.

Once a month the GADN Newsletter provides updates about the network's activities. The newsletter also provides information about the latest employment, advocacy and training opportunities and remains an easy way to post members' activities via a responsive central administration. In addition, GADN provides a regular email service, keeping members updated on the latest news in gender and development and responding to enquiries for information from members, decision makers and the public.

##### GADN Website



In August 2010, the GADN website was redesigned to ease audience accessibility to key gender and development information and will eventually have the capacity to host a private login section for Trustees to discuss and share information regarding internal GADN matters. The site also includes a separate component for each of the individual working groups, now allowing members to be easily informed

about the latest efforts of working groups while providing simplified access to resources for the varied themes.

## **5) GADN and UK Department for International Development (DFID)**

At the start of 2010, GADN set an overarching aim to work with DFID to improve their policy and practice so they promote gender equality and women's rights. In May 2010, the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition Government was formed and GADN warmly welcomed DFID's focus on promoting gender equality as a departmental priority, in line with the commitment to put women's rights at the heart of the UK's aid efforts. GADN seeks to provide the technical input to ensure that these policies can effectively be put into practice.

Throughout 2010-11, GADN succeeded in maintaining its close working relationship with DFID, responding to consultation requests on maternal health in the developing world, the DFID Bilateral Aid Review and DFID's draft Business Plan, as well as meeting with staff from the Equity and Rights Team in DFID in April and September to ensure GADN are well placed to support DFID in its effort to mainstream gender and women's rights throughout its work. In January 2011 GADN Chair Jessica Woodroffe and several GADN member organisations met with senior DFID officials to discuss the new gender strategy; a number of our recommendations appeared in the final strategy.

### **GADN responds to DFID's consultation on reproductive, maternal and newborn health**

In late September Jessica Woodroffe (GADN Chair) and Zohra Moosa (GADN Trustee and Women's Rights Advisor at ActionAid) attended a consultation meeting with DFID on the maternal health plan, with Andrew Mitchell speaking. Following this, GADN submitted a response to DFID's consultation on reproductive, maternal and newborn health. The network warmly welcomed the coalition government's interest in reproductive, maternal and newborn health as a key factor in eradicating poverty and sees reproductive health as an essential component in achieving women's equality and empowerment, which in turn is another key factor in tackling poverty. We were therefore pleased that the consultation extended beyond maternal health and addressed women's whole lifetime of reproductive health.

We commended the Coalition Government on including discussion of choice and women's empowerment when discussing the MDGs and beyond. The network considers the ICPD Plan of Action and Beijing Plan of Action to provide an excellent framework and we urged the coalition government to continue to play a leadership role in ensuring that these international commitments on sexual and reproductive health and rights are realised globally.

In the submission GADN stressed that a crucial way in which these commitments can be made reality is in ensuring women's groups and organisations are adequately funded and supported and are involved in all stages of programme and policy design, implementation and monitoring.

### **GADN contributes to DFID's Bilateral Aid Review**

With the new Coalition Government in place, Bilateral and Multilateral Aid Reviews took place within DFID. Following NGO concern, Secretary of State Andrew Mitchell promised strong consultation and discussion with the full range of NGOs on the review of the Government's bilateral, multilateral and humanitarian work.

At the start of October, GADN contributed to the BAR. GADN strongly welcomed the requirement for DFID country offices to demonstrate how their work addresses Gender and the Role of Women. We know that directing funding towards women and girls is one of the most efficient ways of investing UK ODA. However, in addition to investing in women and girls to build their contribution to poverty reduction and economic growth, in the submission GADN urged DFID to recognise that women and girls also have the right to benefit directly from aid funding and to be equally recognised in all bilateral aid decisions. We recommended, therefore, that the requirement to demonstrate how DFID bilateral programmes address Gender and the Role of Women (which includes women's and girls' rights), be thoroughly mainstreamed through each of the four pillars that structure the Bilateral Aid Review (Wealth Creation, Climate Change, Direct Delivery of the MDGs, and Governance and Security).

### **GADN responds to consultation on DFID's Business Plan**

In January, GADN responded to an informal consultation on DFID's draft Business Plan. We welcomed DFID's focus on promoting gender equality as a departmental priority and commended DFID on its strong commitment to empowering women and girls in the Business Plan, including prioritising improving maternal health, with an inclusion of a related outcome measure. However GADN called for the inclusion in the Plan of impact indicators, beyond maternal health, to support their commitments, which include increasing the number of girls completing secondary and primary education; promoting economic empowerment of women and girls through jobs and access to financial services; and piloting new approaches to eliminating violence against women and girls. GADN suggested two impact indicators for meeting their commitments to ending VAWG and promoting women's economic empowerment. GADN also called for all data across the Business Plan to be gender disaggregated.

### **6) GADN work with HMG and Parliamentarians**

Over the past year, GADN advocacy work has largely been around co-ordinating the work of network member organisations rather than initiating.

### **GADN produces manifesto for UK General Election**

In the run up to the General Election in May 2010, GADN produced a manifesto of key pledges that we called for from all the political parties. GADN called on the next UK Government to put gender equality and women's empowerment at the heart of its international development agenda, and ensure the UK's existing commitments on gender equality become a reality for women and girls across the world.

Following the formation of the new Coalition Government, in August GADN wrote to Theresa May MP to congratulate her on her appointment as Minister for Women and Equality, to update her on our work to promote gender equality and women's empowerment internationally, and to reiterate the five critical areas of concern that were outlined in the pre-election manifesto, briefly:

- End violence against women and girls worldwide.
- Increase women's political participation and leadership.
- Empower women and girls to take full control of their sexual and reproductive lives.
- Make UK aid more effective, transparent and accountable to women and girls.
- Implement the UK's international commitments on gender equality.

## **GADN meets with the Government Equalities Office to discuss CEDAW**

In November, GADN Chair Jessica Woodroffe and representatives from GADN member organisations attended a meeting convened by the Government Equalities Office to discuss key issues relating to the UK's 7th Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Periodic Report, which is due to be submitted to the United Nation's CEDAW Committee in May 2011. This was an opportunity for the Government to engage directly with women and their organisations in this process, discuss key gender priorities and gain their input into the report. The event also helped the Government ascertain how Government and NGOs can improve their communication with each other in the future.

GADN followed up this meeting with a letter to Lynne Featherstone MP, Equalities Minister, outlining GADN's recommendations for the next CEDAW report and commending the GEO on the having a discussion on new consultation mechanisms which will combine organisations working domestically and internationally.

In 2010, GADN became a member of the NGO Stakeholders Group on International Gender Equality Policy chaired by the Government Equalities Office.

## **Working with the Shadow Cabinet**

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP gave a keynote speech outlining Labour's priorities on international development and how women and girls can work together around the world to promote women's rights and tackle inequality. Harriet Harman spoke positively about GADN and following the event GADN wrote to her about the coalition government's work on SRHR and DFID's new gender strategy.

Prior to this event, the UN Women working group met with Harriet Harman and members of the Shadow International Development team to discuss what they see as being the critical factors in ensuring UN Women is a success.

## **7) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

### **Violence Against Women and Girls: Your Questions, Our Answers**

The GADN VAWG working group produced a widely distributed resource: 'Violence Against Women and Girls: Your Questions, Our Answers'. Launched during the 16 Days of Activism in 2010, the resource enables everyone to speak with a consistent voice about key issues and to make our answers, either as individual organisations or as a network, simple, grounded in evidence and effective. In March 2011, 'Violence Against Women and Girls: Your Questions, Our Answers' was translated into Bangla by GADN member Tearfund.

3000 copies of the resource were produced and have been disseminated to members and partners around the world. Members have found the resource very useful for country programmes. The resource has also been read by academics, such as the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics. Copies have reached MPs and civil servants, including Lynne Featherstone MP, Katie

Hancock (Home Office), Jane Doogan (DFID) and Katrina McCreadie (FCO), who met with the GADN VAWG working group in January to discuss Lynne Featherstone's role as International Violence Against Women Champion. The resource was also presented in a meeting with Ellie Reeves of the Labour Party National Executive Committee, and copies were circulated at a Fabian Conference in January.

Examples of distribution by members include Roj Women circulating the resource at seminars they organised in March at SOAS and the Kurdish Community Centre, as well as Oxford Women's Festival (reaching students, members of the Kurdish community in London, and the general public). One World Action disseminated copies at the National Dialogues on Gender Equality in International Development Co-operation Programmes in Bulgaria and Romania in February. At these National Dialogues, the resource was picked up by consultants, women's rights organisations, mainstream NGOs, representatives from the Development Cooperation sections of the Bulgarian and Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Romanian Equality Commission, and Swedish and Dutch Ambassadors to Bulgaria.

### **Campaign for Minister for International Violence Against Women**

In our pre-election Manifesto, GADN asked the UK Government to make violence against women and girls a foreign and development policy priority by appointing a Minister on Violence Against Women and Girls whose brief covers FCO, DFID, and MoD. In March we were delighted to announce that thanks to the heavy lobbying by GADN member organisations – in particular ActionAid UK – the Government announced Glenys Kinnock as the new Minister on global violence against women.

However, when the new Coalition Government was elected in May, this Ministerial post was not retained. In July the VAWG working group wrote to William Hague MP, FCO Minister, asking the Coalition Government to appoint a Minister for International Violence Against Women and Girls whose brief covers the FCO, DFID and MoD. The letter stated that this appointment would facilitate the implementation of the Coalition Government's commitment to ending violence against women and girls, making a lasting difference to the lives of millions of women.

Hague responded assuring HMG's commitment to tackling VAWG internationally and promising at the level of the UN for the UK to continue to be one of the main supporters of action to address VAW, including at the CSW and the Human Rights Council, and through their support for UN Women. He took note of GADN's call for a Ministerial post to tackle VAW and gave consideration to the leadership and coordination of HMG's work on tackling VAW domestically and internationally. GADN also signed onto a letter in October to Rt Hon Theresa May MP calling for the post to be at Ministerial level to ensure the role has the mandate, access, authority and resources to ensure the UK delivers on its international obligations to promote women and girls' rights overseas, as well as asking the Government to commit to giving the role a remit that covers the Foreign Office, MOD and DFID, and a seat on the National Security Council.

GADN continued its campaign for a Minister on International VAW and was partially successful with the appointment of a Champion (Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone) on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November).

Since this appointment, the VAWG working group has focused, and continues to focus, on the resources that the Champion is provided with. At the end of January, GADN met with Lynne Featherstone MP and colleagues from the Home Office, Foreign Office and DFID to talk about her new role as International Violence Against Women Champion. The GADN VAWG working group put together a coordinated brief for the Minister which draws on a range of examples of their work and the work of their partners which have made a real difference to the lives of women around the world.

In February the group provided Lynne Featherstone with a second briefing to expand on the two key priorities raised in the meeting: sexual violence in conflict as a key security issue, and VAWG and political participation. The briefing also provided further points on coordination, reporting and key moments in 2011, as well as links to key resources. GADN's VAWG working group has thus positioned itself as a source of expertise and information for the Champion and for suggestions of country visits and events which the Champion should attend.

There has been evidence of increased knowledge and focus in the area of VAWG and political participation, exemplified in Lynne Featherstone's presentation at ActionAid on International Women's Day 2011, where she spoke about VAW as a barrier to political participation in Afghanistan.

### **GADN comments on HMG's Strategy and draft Action Plan for tackling violence against women and girls for 2010-15**

The VAWG working group conducted advocacy work around the need for an international VAWG strategy, with members meeting the Home Office, DFID and FCO to push this straight after the election. The group provided briefings on what this might look like in practice.

In October, GADN welcomed the invitation from DFID to comment on HMG's strategy for tackling violence against women and girls for 2010-15. The new strategy for 2010-15 contains an international strand (largely down to GADN's VAWG working group's advocacy work), and will be an important way to bring together domestic and international work, ensuring coherence and read-across, and will raise the profile of international efforts on VAWG. The strategic narrative was launched on 25 November.

In December, GADN attended a meeting held by the Interministerial group of Violence Against Women and Girls, chaired by Home Secretary The Rt Hon Theresa May MP. Whilst the meeting largely focused on VAWG in the UK, GADN welcomed the unprecedented inclusion of an international element in the strategic narrative and the appointment of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Equalities and Criminal Information as the overseas champion on the UK's international work to tackle VAWG. GADN requested greater consultation with external organisations with regard to work that was due to be taken forward in this area. Mark Lowcock, Director General for Country Programmes for the Department for International Development, agreed to arrange a meeting with key stakeholders to discuss the department's plan.

Following consultation on the strategic narrative, GADN were invited to comment on the draft Action Plan in January, which contained more substantive narratives articulating desired outcomes, outputs and activities. GADN recommended that the Plan has a clearer timescale; links with other cross-government processes and mechanisms such as the Building Stability Overseas

Strategy, the National Security Council, DFID's Gender Strategy and the UK's Framework for Results for improving Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health in the developing world; and outlines indicators that the UK can develop and use to track the success of its own work. GADN also highlighted that measurement of behavioural/attitude change does not fit nicely into quantitative data sets and indicators and at the community level there needs to be flexibility to develop and own indicators of change. GADN also highlighted that femicide in Central America should not be ignored, as without a focus on this issue and countries in this region it will not be a comprehensive strategy. GADN also stressed that VAWG needs to be tackled in middle-income as well as low-income countries.

The Action Plan was launched in the spring and the group's input resulted in the inclusion of the Building Stability Overseas Strategy as an action. Previously there was no mention or knowledge of BSOS among those working on the Action Plan. The group also pushed for a clearly articulated position that ministerial responsibility for tackling VAWG lies with international departments and not the Champion, and this was stated in Action Plan. The group also pushed for the articulation of how the UK will engage with other European processes, and these were included in the Action Plan.

During 2010/2011, policy work between GADN and GAPS became more connected, steered by the GADN VAWG working group. As a result, the policies on Women, Peace and Security and VAWG have become more closely aligned. For example, the revised National Action Plan on 1325 contains reference to the appointment of a 'Special Representative' to provide leadership and coordination on tackling VAW and HMG's Violence against Women and Girls Action Plan has a concrete action around the 1325 NAP.

## **8) UN Women**

Following 2009-2010 when the network was heavily involved in the EU GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform) campaign, GADN has continued its work to ensure the new UN gender entity reflects the needs and desires of the world's women and the global women's sector, starting with the creation of a UN Women working group in April 2010.

Ahead of the G8 summit in June 2010, GADN's working group on UN Women wrote to Prime Minister David Cameron to ask him to use his influence with the G8 and other UN member states to press for an ambitious agenda for the Women's Agency. The working group were troubled by the lack of consensus on the executive board and believe the creation of the Agency is a momentous opportunity to change the course of women's lives globally, at a time when they bear the brunt of disease and poverty. Because of the working group's letter, David Cameron raised the Women's Agency at the G8 summit.

In December, 300 copies of a policy paper entitled 'UN Women: A New Opportunity to Deliver for Women' were produced accompanied by substantial and high level lobbying to ensure the agency meets women's priorities and is sufficiently funded. The paper lists recommendations which build on existing principles promoted through the GEAR campaign and GADN's own lobbying over the last couple of years, but provide more detailed suggestions for how these could be delivered based on an analysis of what has and has not worked in the UN system in the past. This paper outlines concrete recommendations for shaping an agency able to achieve this in 4 areas:

- Global autonomy and decision-making
- Operational capacity and accountability
- Civil society participation
- Funding

The paper has been disseminated widely, including reaching key people at UN Women, DFID, the Government Equalities Office, the UK Mission to the UN and the UK's International Development Committee. Many of the recommendations included in GADN's policy paper have been picked up by UN Women in their draft strategic plan, including having Civil Society Advisory Groups at the regional and headquarter level.

During the year, research was conducted by international consultancy firm MDF Training and Consultancy with 100 women's organisations around the world, many of whom are partners of GADN member organisations, and the findings suggest that UN Women's priorities are consistent with the priorities raised by the research participants. Both GADN's policy paper and the research findings were presented at a side event at the 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

## **9) Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)**

Aside from GADN's work on SRHR that has already been discussed (including the members meeting and DFID's consultation), in early November, together with Marie Stopes International and EuroNGOs, GADN co-hosted the conference 'Gender and SRHR at the Heart of the MDGs'. Expert speakers, policymakers and participants from across the globe came together to find common ground and a joint way forward on gender, the MDGs and SRHR. GADN Chair Jessica Woodroffe chaired the opening session on 'The Importance of Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights and of Engendering Poverty Alleviation Policies and Programming'. This set the scene to the conference by looking from different angles at Gender and SRHR as main drivers to alleviate poverty. Several GADN members participated in the conference, with Interact Worldwide, ActionAid UK and Nanci Hogan (a Gender Consultant) presenting in the parallel sessions. Katie Tong from Interact Worldwide looked at 'Assessing and responding to adolescents' SRHR needs in emergency settings: Lessons from Haiti and Pakistan', zohra moosa of ActionAid UK presented on 'Beyond motherhood: how violence against women undermines sexual rights' and Nanci Hogan discussed 'Tools and Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles to Women's SRHR posed by Religious Fundamentalism'.

## **10) Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming has been defined by the UN Economic and Security Council as "Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

In July 2010, GADN set up a gender mainstreaming group chaired by programme staff from Plan UK and Save the Children UK. This has been seen as a really important development for the

network, providing a balance to the focus on policy and continues to be of great value to many members who are responsible for gender mainstreaming within the international development organisations for which they work, or who are involved in other aspects of programme work and want to increase their knowledge of gender mainstreaming. The working group met four times during 2010-2011 as part of a series of workshops that allow members to share and discuss in greater detail the challenges and approaches to gender mainstreaming in their respective organisations – which is part of a wider process of action learning. An essential part of these workshops is the presentation of gender mainstreaming ‘case studies’ that allow individual members to share ‘in-depth’ their experiences from their own organisation. This will continue into 2011-2012 and it is hoped that these case studies may at a later stage be developed into a learning product or publication.

Processes of organisational change are always context specific – gender mainstreaming is no exception. The purpose of the case studies therefore are to allow GADN members the chance to contextualise their experiences with the group and really explore the current challenges, opportunities and approaches to gender mainstreaming in their organisations. The case studies are intended to be explorative, questioning and positive in outlook.

### **11) GADN and the MDGs**

The GADN MDGs working group was very reactive ahead of the September Summit. Having held a members meeting and public seminar in March 2010, the GADN MDGs working group submitted a statement to the UK Government on ‘Gender equality at the 2010 UN MDG review summit’. In the statement, GADN recommended placing gender equality at the heart of the UK’s strategy to accelerate progress to 2015, as part of the Government’s broader commitment to fairness. In particular GADN urged the UK Government to focus on three priority areas in setting its position for the 2010 UN summit; Expand economic opportunities for women; Promote women’s political participation and leadership; and Increase efforts to end violence against women and girls.

The GADN MDGs working group also submitted evidence to The International Development Committee’s Inquiry into the 2010 UN Millennium Development Goals Review Summit.

Following the MDG Review Summit in New York, Bond hosted a season of award winning documentaries in association with Good Screenings that explored the MDGs. GADN co-hosted the screening of *Sisters in Law* on 4 October, directed by Kim Longinotto and Florence Ayisi, which follows State Prosecutor Vera Ngassa and Court President Beatrice Ntuba as they help women fight often-difficult cases of abuse, despite pressures from family and their community to remain silent. The film highlighted some appalling cases of violence against women and girls but showcased the strength of the women and girls in the film to seek justice. At the centre of the film was Vera, who was truly inspiring in standing up for women and girls’ rights and fighting for justice. Following the film, Emily Esplen (One World Action and GADN Trustee) discussed the MDGs and Kim Longinotto described her experiences making the film.

### **12) GADN Engagement with Women In Development Europe**

As usual GADN engaged with the European Network of organisations working on gender and development, WIDE, for which the GADN acts as a UK platform. Representatives from the GADN attended the annual conference “Migration in the context of globalization: women’s human rights

at risk?" in Bucharest, Romania in June 2010, participated in the capacity building on "Effective tools: result chains and key performance indicators" in November 2010, and attended the Board meeting in June and November 2010.

### 13) Conclusion and thanks

The Gender and Development Network has had a busy and exciting year. We are thankful to all our members who pay membership fees and those organisations who have given us core funding for 2010-2011: ActionAid UK, Christian Aid, Oxfam GB and Plan UK. Without their support GADN would not be able to function.

We are also grateful to our hosts, One World Action, who have continued to show their hospitality and commitment to women's rights through hosting the network.

GADN would also like to thank all the Trustees, Advisory Group members and volunteers who have given up time from their work to drive the network forward as well as those members who have been in working groups, supported members meetings, inputted to policy responses, given feedback to events and generally contributed to the strength and diversity of the network.



PICTURE: Women's Solidarity for Human Rights in colourful traditional clothes sing and dance with umbrellas in high spirit despite falling rain. The umbrellas symbolize erratic weather patterns in Asia while traditional dances are a sign of harvest season. Photo posted on flickr by **Oxfam International**