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CC: Roy Trivedy, Nick Dyer, Kemi Williams

26 May 2009

**GADN Response to DFID Consultation Document - Eliminating World Poverty-
Assuring our Common Future**

Dear Amisha

The UK Gender and Development Network welcomes the DFID Consultation Document, '**Eliminating World Poverty – Assuring our Common Future**'. We believe that it is a timely opportunity to discuss DFID's broader aims and objectives given the current economic climate.

The UK GADN would also like to thank the DFID White Paper team for meeting with our members on 27 April 2009 at ActionAid Offices, London. We believe it was important to meet with DFID representatives and share our feedback and concerns of the document in person. We hope this meeting signals an ongoing commitment to engage with GADN members.

However we were disappointed that two senior staff on the White Paper Team, Roy Trivedy and Nick Dyer, did not attend the meeting. We know that they are committed to ensuring that gender equality is fully integrated in the proposed White Paper so hope that this submission will reach them directly.

This response has been drafted after consultation with GADN members and other experts in the gender and development field. We believe that it reflects the key concerns of our membership, many of whom have partners in the countries that DFID supports.

If you have any queries on the substance of our submission, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above details.

We look forward to continued engagement with the team on the forthcoming White Paper and other remits of DFID.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zohra Khan', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Zohra Khan, Chair, UK Gender and Development Network

UK Gender and Development Network Response: Eliminating poverty – Assuring our Common Future DFID Consultation Document

Overall

DFID's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment should be explicit in each of the sections/priority areas in the forthcoming White Paper. This means:

- Greater and explicit coherence between the forthcoming White Paper and DFID's **international and organisational policy commitments** to gender equality and women's rights, including CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, MDGs and the DFID Gender Equality Action Plan;
 - Inclusion of **gender analysis and sex disaggregated data** on the different and unequal ways in which women and men experience each of the issues being addressed;
 - Commitment to ensuring the **involvement of poor women and men** in policy-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including women's involvement in decision-making positions, and support to women's organisations;
 - Commitment to **promoting gender equality and women's empowerment** in the context of each of the issues being addressed, measured through gender sensitive indicators
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1. Global economic growth

GADN asks that the forthcoming White Paper reflect a commitment from DFID to ensure that:

- **Aid will remain a priority** in the current economic crisis, delivered in a way that is pro-women;
- Mechanisms are developed to enable spending on gender equality and women's empowerment to be monitored and tracked particularly in the context of new aid modalities such as Direct Budget Support (e.g. using **gender budgets** methodologies);
- Aid will focus on reducing inequality as well as eliminating poverty to **avoid the mass pull-out of aid to middle income countries** where inequality is rife and women are disproportionately impacted.

GADN asks that the focus of DFID's strategy to minimise the effect of the economic downturn on poor women and men should be:

- Ensuring provision of **basic social services and infrastructure**
- Promoting and protecting the **informal sector**, labour intensive industries and agriculture, where most women are concentrated;
- Prioritising **women's economic empowerment**, through investing in women entrepreneurs, and by promoting gender equity in all business development initiatives;

- Supporting an **equitable business environment** including systems for labour protection e.g. ILO core labour standards and fair trade.
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2. Climate Change

GADN asks that:

- Plans are made in full recognition of the **capabilities, capacity, knowledge and interests** of those most likely to be negatively impacted by a changing climate, including poor women;
 - Steps are made promote the continuing **involvement of poor women** in identifying priorities and solutions, shaping debates, developing technologies, and making decisions;
 - There is a stronger commitment to **recognising gender differences and inequalities** in relation to water scarcity, women and men as subsistence farmers, disaster management and sustainable energy;
 - There is recognition that poverty alleviation will not be possible if the current way of life in richer country is maintained. **Companies need incentives** to develop alternative energy projects and develop green jobs e.g. photo voltaic cell technology in Africa.
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3. Fragile States

GADN asks that:

- DFID prioritises measures to tackle **violence against women** which is inextricably linked with women's participation – violence is both a cause and consequence of low levels of women's participation in all decision making, particularly in conflict areas. This should be part of a broader strategy against VAW in all of their work – and that measures include support to traditional and local reconciliation processes;
- DFID plays a key role in pressing for the implementation of **SCR 1325 and 1820, backed up with resources and measurable indicators**, to secure women's participation in all peace processes and post conflict constitution writing;
- DFID establishes a **fund for sexual and reproductive health services** for women who have experienced violence, encompassing medical, psycho-social and legal services;
- DFID ensures that **peace processes** allocate seats for representatives of the public, including women, as part of the negotiating process;
- The White Paper recognises the specific needs of **refugee and displaced women**.

DFID should prioritise the urgent epidemic of violence against women (VAW) both within DFID and the UK government, both in its work on fragile states, but also as part of a broader government strategy.

International institutional reform

GADN asks that:

- Institutional reform processes include **institutional gender analysis** and concrete strategies to promote the structures and processes necessary for addressing women's and men's needs and promoting gender equality;
 - Commitment is made to **raising the voices of poor men and women**, including efforts are made to get representation from the global south and from women onto the boards;
 - Despite the World Bank recent commitment to gender through the smart economics policies, there is still a serious lack of evidence that gender equality is being mainstreamed throughout its work. The GADN would like to see a commitment to **review the IDA 16 spending in order to ensure it is gender sensitive**;
 - DFID take a lead within UN member States on the issue of UN reform and commit substantial funds for a new, independent and fully-resourced UN entity on gender equality and women's rights.
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Delivery

The last White Paper made much of the need for **good governance**, in terms of building capability, responsiveness and accountability.

The GADN asks that:

- core principles of good governance are reflected in the forthcoming White Paper, including the importance of women's political participation

Policy commitments to gender equality are commonly subject to "policy evaporation", both in DFID and in its partner organisations. DFID has made great progress in the last 2 years, in the context of the GEAP, in creating the right **enabling environment** to implement gender policy commitments and impact on poor women's lives.

GADN asks that:

- Building on DFID's recent experience, the forthcoming White Paper is explicit in **committing resources** to building and sustaining leadership, staff capacity and systems of accountability for gender equality policy commitments in DFID *and* in its partner governments