



Women

On the Move for Equality

Education International's First World

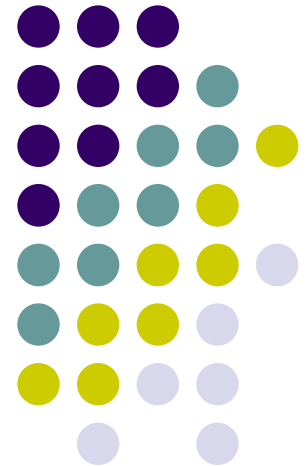
Femmes

Women's Conference

Mujeres

Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok,

19-23 January, 2011



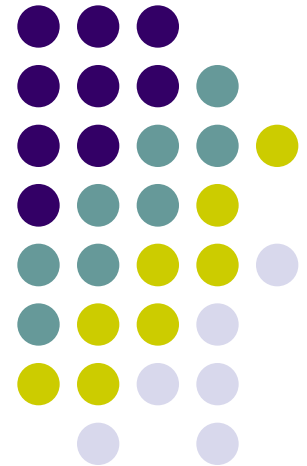
***Friday 21 January – DAY 1 Theme:
Taking Stock of the Status of Women
in today's World
A Panel Discussion***

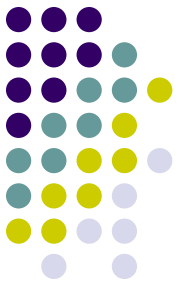
***Financing for Gender Equality for full
employment and decent work for women***

Presentation by:

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**Former Representative to the United Nations
International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)**





On the Move for Equality

- In reviewing the overall theme of this Conference, “On the Move for Equality”, it is instructive to focus on strategies to achieve real gender equality.
- The question of how to finance gender equality and women’s economic empowerment through decent work is a critical part of that debate.

The Policy Debate on Financing for Development



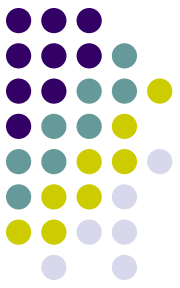
- At the global policy-making level, and particularly at the United Nations, this discussion has been part of a larger debate on Financing for Development (FfD).
- Member States of the UN were motivated to focus on this area of policy because of the pervasiveness of poverty and failed development.
- And we know that poverty has a woman's face, and that women and girls bear the brunt of failed development through lack of access to education and social services, and through lack of prospects for decent jobs.

Trade union women at the forefront of the FfD debates



It is therefore important for trade union women to be at the forefront of these policy discussions; and we have been, from their inception at the UN Conference on Financing for Development in **Monterrey Mexico in 2002.**

The Policy framework on Financing for Development:



With a view to developing strategies to mobilize resources for development, the Monterrey Consensus (as the Conclusions of the 2002 FfD Conference was called) adopted a comprehensive policy framework, encompassing six major ways to raise resources for development:

- Mobilizing Domestic Financial Resources for Development
- Mobilizing International Resources for Development: Foreign Direct Investment and other Private Flows
- International Trade as an Engine for Development
- International Financial and Technical Cooperation for development
- External Debt
- Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development

Incorporating the gender dimension in Financing for Development



Member States committed to using this framework at national level to further economic growth and development. Their commitments included a focus on gender-sensitive development, and the strengthening of national efforts in support of gender budget policies.

Strengthening the gender dimension in Financing for Development



- A follow-up Conference to assess progress in meeting the Monterrey commitments was held in Doha in December, 2008.
- Policies for gender equality were considerably strengthened for the 2008 Conference, as compared to the 2002 Conference.
- This was due in large part to the efforts of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW), which devoted its 52nd Session in March 2008 to the theme of "Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment".

A Policy Framework on Financing Gender Equality



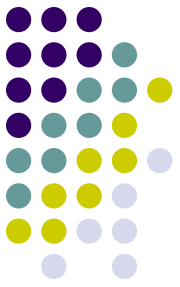
- A good set of Conclusions was adopted at the UNCSW, and these fed into the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, adopted at the end of the 2008 Conference.
- Having strong conclusions on women's economic empowerment in a UN Declaration on Development is important and entirely relevant to the theme of our Conference, "On the move for Equality", and to our deliberations of today.
- Its significance resides in the fact that governments have committed to advancing gender equality and to allocating adequate resources to achieving this.

Connecting the Global to the Local



- At the global level, the task ahead for trade union women is to continue our active engagement in the UNCSW and other UN Fora, to ensure the adoption of strong Conclusions in favour of working women.
- At the national level there remains the challenge of ensuring that governments are accountable, and live up to the commitments they made at the UN.

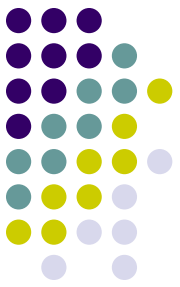
The Doha Declaration on Financing for Development



The commitments of Governments are stated in these words in the Doha Declaration:

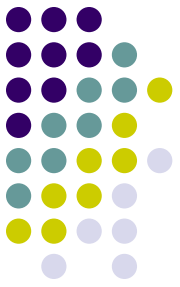
“1. We, Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, gathered in Doha, Qatar, from 29 November to 2 December 2008, ... commit ourselves to eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development as we advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system...

The Doha Declaration on Financing for Development contd...



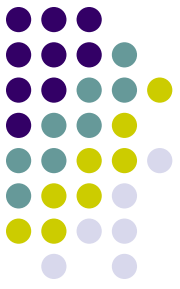
4. We recall that gender equality is a basic human right, a fundamental value and an issue of social justice; it is essential for economic growth, poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and development effectiveness. We reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming into the formulation and implementation of development policies, including financing for development policies, and for dedicated resources. We commit ourselves to increasing our efforts to fulfill our commitments regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women.”

The Doha Declaration and Decent Work



The mainstreaming of gender equality is also linked to decent work and to the provision of social services: “12.... The realization of full and productive employment and decent work for all is essential. We will continue to invest in human capital through inclusive social policies, inter alia, on health and education, in accordance with national strategies...”

As we “take stock of the status of women in today’s world”, the theme for today,



- we note, sadly enough, that the implementation of these important Conclusions of 2008 on financing gender equality received a severe setback with the onset of the multiple crises: the economic, financial and food crises in that same year.
- And the crises are ongoing.

Maintaining Commitments to gender equality in a time of crisis



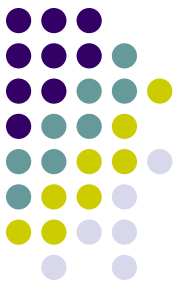
- In the EI/ITUC/PSI Statement to the upcoming UN CSW55, (March, 2011), we insist on the importance of maintaining commitments to gender equality:
- “Investment in all quality public services is a key driver of development. As such, trade unions have grave concerns with the reductions to budgets supporting public services which governments have undertaken in response to the current economic crisis.

Investing in Quality Public services

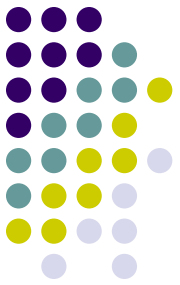


- Budget cuts are having a negative impact on the provision of quality public services which are central to eradicating poverty through the delivery of health care, education, and decent work for women.
- Investments in the public sector and in the social ministries charged with development, education, labour and gender equality should be increased not decreased in a time of crisis, if the Millennium Development (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) goals are to be achieved.“

Shifting from an unsustainable model of economic development



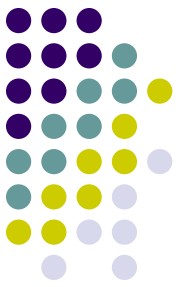
- We contend that it is the neo-liberal economic agenda informing and dominating global economic policy-making that has caused the crises.
- A change in these policies is a pre-requisite for ending the crises.
- A change in these policies is a pre-requisite, if women are to achieve decent work, have access to social services and come into the full enjoyment of their human rights.



The crux of the problem

- The current neo-liberal model of financial globalization is neither gender-friendly nor employment-centred;
- it does not, a priori, set out to ensure quality jobs and decent livelihoods for women and men;
- it does not set out to ensure that human and trade union rights guarantees are in place.

The current economic model is self-serving



The current neo-liberal model of globalization sets out to:

- accumulate huge profits for multinational companies, and private sector entities;
- ensure massive wealth for top financial operatives managing large banks, private equity funds, hedge funds and other high-risk financial instruments.
- As a by-product of this, trillions of dollars are lost every year to productive investments in the real economy, that could create quality jobs and improve the livelihoods of working women and men and their families.

An Alternative Model of Economic and Social Development



Based on the UN's Financing for Development Agenda, and the CSW52 Agreed Conclusions, trade union women must add their voices to the Global Unions' calls for a shift from the neo-liberal model of global economic policy-making, on a number of fronts:

- Financial regulation and accountability
- Adopting an employment-centred approach to recovery, based on the ILO Global Jobs Pact (GJP), and the ILO Resolution on Gender Equality at the heart of Decent Work.
- Maintaining government commitments to reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNI in ODA , with a significant share allocated to gender equality objectives and EFA goals

An Alternative Model of Economic and Social Development contd...



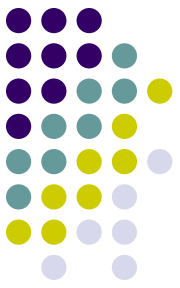
- Adopting Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as a key tool in national development strategies, with a view to ensuring that adequate resources, whether from external aid or domestic revenue, are channeled towards fulfilling international gender equality and human rights commitments, and towards the strengthening of national women's machineries, to equip them to play a lead role in advancing gender equality.
- Accounting for women's unremunerated work: Governments must use methods to measure women's unpaid work, and its contributions to the national economy. These should be used as a basis for providing matching funds for women's income generating activities and for support to the care economy, including the promotion of ILO Convention 156 on the sharing of family responsibilities between women and men.

An Alternative Model of Economic and Social Development contd...



- Innovative financing for development, including a Financial Transactions Tax (FTT)
- Debt cancellation

Measures to counter the excesses of neo-liberal policies



To counter the excesses that caused the financial crisis, trade unions must continue to advocate for:

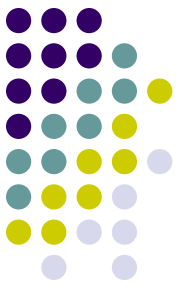
- full regulatory coverage of all financial institutions, products and transactions,
- clear mechanisms for transparency, accountability,
- strict disclosure requirements.
- Tax Justice

The need for tax justice



- Much needed tax revenues in developing countries are foregone, because of mis-pricing, and use of tax havens by multi-national companies.
- Trade unions are advocating for the stepping up of work by the OECD and UN tax bodies:
 - to combat tax evasion and address the issue of tax havens,
 - to support governments to develop a package of measures to protect and strengthen their tax base and their tax collection systems.

Overcoming the decent work deficit in relation to women's employment



An important focus needs to be placed on overcoming the decent work deficit in relation to women's employment; in particular:

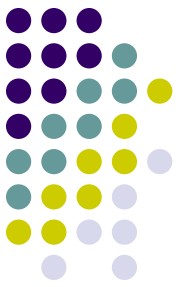
- Structured discriminations that deny women access to training, job and professional advancement opportunities, decent work, equal pay
- Unequal burden-sharing with respect to family responsibilities
- Lack of access to social services and social protection
- Precarious, low-paid, at risk work, especially in the informal economy, the entertainment industry, and domestic work
- Child labour in these sectors, particularly affecting girls
- Sweatshop conditions, especially in export-processing zones

The Policy Framework for overcoming these decent work deficits



- We do have a policy framework that should form the basis for overcoming the decent work deficits identified, and for mainstreaming gender into the policy responses to the crises.
- Article 24 of the ILO Global Jobs Pact (GJP) affirms our position, that the ***“current crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to shape new gender equality policy responses. Recovery packages during economic crises need to take into account the impact on women and men, and integrate gender concerns in all measures. In discussions on recovery packages, both regarding their design and assessing their success, women must have an equal voice with men.”***

The Policy Framework for overcoming these decent work deficits contd...



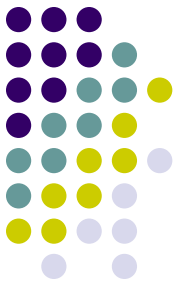
- The 2009 ILO Resolution on Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work spells out a broad and comprehensive range of policy considerations and policy measures that should inform the process of mainstreaming gender into decent work policies, with specific reference to the current economic crisis.

A call for ratification and implementation of the central equality Conventions



- The Resolution on gender equality at the heart of decent work calls for a series of measures to counter structured gender discrimination in the world of work.
- These include protections for women of child-bearing age, and for those involved in child and family care activities.
- In this regard, governments have a responsibility to ratify and implement the Maternity Protection Convention (N0 183, 2000) and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No 156 – 1981).

A call for ratification and implementation of the central equality Conventions contd...



- We also have the core gender equality Conventions: the Equal Remuneration Convention (100, 1951) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) convention (111, 1958).
- We should be advocating for these as the central gender equality Conventions that should be ratified and implemented by governments, and that should underpin policy responses to the crisis.
- We should seek to have their key clauses, such as pay equity, maternity protection, and child care, integrated into collective bargaining agreements.