

EU-CIS Gender Watch

A Gender Analysis of the Czech Republic Developmental Aid



**The Network of East-West Women – Poland
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Introduction

In the area of foreign aid the aim of the Czech Republic is in line with efforts of international community to reduce poverty in the less developed parts of the world. Poverty is recognised as being the greatest obstacle to the sustainable social and economic development. So, the Czech Republic adopts a multi-dimensional approach to the reduction of poverty, that is, accepting that poverty can not be understood just in terms of economy as being simply low level of income per head of population but also taking into account other social and environmental factors. Hence, the Czech Republic fully supports the so-called international development targets - Millennium Development Goals - MDGs - adopted at several UN international conferences in the 1990s and confirmed by the 2000 UN Millennium Summit. The main target is by 2015 to decrease the number of people living in absolute poverty by half.

The Millennium Development Goals are:

1. eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. achieve universal primary education
3. promote gender equality and empower women
4. reduce child mortality
5. improve maternal health
6. combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. ensure environmental sustainability
8. develop a global partnership for development

It means that the third goal should be present in Czech Development Cooperation but it is not so far. At least there is some will to include gender in Development Cooperation. At the moment surprisingly the situation is that Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic knows about this lack and also NGOs cooperating on Development Cooperation with the Ministry are willing to fill this gap but Czech women NGOs are not interested in this cooperation. There is no women NGO member of the national platform FoRS – Czech Forum for Development Cooperation which is the member of CONCORD – European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. The membership in such a platform gives opportunity to influence Development Cooperation and gives also better chance to implement own development projects. The research among people from Ministry and people from NGOs helped me to find out that there is a time for pushing for gender to be included in the Development Cooperation.

Part 1. Basic information about development co-operation and foreign assistance

History of assistance

Assistance to people in need has a long tradition in the human history. For centuries, this tradition evolved on the basis of religious values, philosophical thinking, and other beliefs. Modern form of foreign aid began to emerge in the twentieth century, along with foundation of international legal system and international institutions. In the twentieth century, tradition of humanity and human rights had been anchored in a number of international documents, treaties and conventions among them the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), International Humanitarian Law and other. In addition, foreign assistance had been encouraged with establishment of the World Bank (1945), the United Nations (1948), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1961) and other international institutions.

Besides moral reasons, states provide foreign aid for political, economic and security purposes. During the cold war era, foreign assistance was pursued mainly on the grounds of political division of the world. The United States used its Marshall Plan to rebuilt post-war Europe, believing in the path of democracy and liberal economic growth. Political reasons were also reflected in the strategy of foreign aid to the developing world, as the cold war rivals attempted to win allies in then called the 'Third World.' Since the end of the twentieth century, developed countries have aimed to address new global problems, being aware that helping less developed states to integrate into the global economy and reduce poverty can assist in conflict prevention, prevention of international terrorism, illegal migration or environmental damages.

Thus, approach of developed states towards the less developed world has altered in accordance to the economic, political and social changes on the global scene. Over the last several decades, international community had to take into account the increasing role of non-governmental organizations, the impact of globalization, environmental problems and other factors. Consequently, developed world has been focusing above all on human development and on long-term sustainability. Development projects have encompassed crosscutting issues such as environment, promotion of democracy and civil society, or women empowerment. Concerning particularly women, who are the poorest of the poor in the world, international community has put emphasis on the concept of gender equality in development.

General data – the country commitment

The former Czechoslovakia has been a significant provider of aid to the less developed countries within the then political and ideological division of the world. After the collapse of the communist regime, Czechoslovakia and later the Czech Republic itself became a recipient of official aid. Nevertheless, a relatively smooth political and economic transition during the 1990s allowed the Czech Republic to gradually decrease received foreign aid and shift from aid receiving to aid providing country. Since 1996, when the Czech Republic reintroduced the government foreign aid program, it has been implemented in accordance with the Principles for Providing Foreign Aid, the document approved by the Czech Government Decision no. 153 of 15 March 1995. Accordingly, the Czech Republic has been more and more involved in the international development co-operation as a donor or aid-providing country; so now the country's position may therefore be described as that of an emerging donor country.

After five years of implementing foreign aid program under the guidance of the above Government Decision, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was initiating discussions of the

departments involved regarding strengths and weaknesses of existing practice and required adjustments to the existing foreign aid program that would not only reflect and take on board the five-year experience but, even more importantly, bring the practice of Czech Government even closer to the existing practice used by developed aid-providing countries and international organisations in this area. And an important part of this procedure is the current membership of the Czech Republic in the OECD and the prospective membership in the European Union (EU). In September 2001 the Czech Government discussed the Assessment and Evaluation of the Czech Republic Foreign Aid Program for the 1995–2000 Period, which provided a detailed view of the strengths and weakness of the existing system and practice of the Czech foreign aid provision.

One of the main positive aspects is the fact that Czech Republic was one of the first countries undergoing transformation to introduce, already in 1996, the official Government policy for development assistance and foreign aid program based on principles comparable with policies of developed aid-providing countries, thereby setting in train the process of transformation from a primarily aid-receiving to aid-providing country. This transformation process can be particularly illustrated by the continuing graduation process of the Czech Republic within the system of the World Bank. According to annual assessments of departments involved, a number of foreign aid projects have been completed with clearly positive results, thus making significant contribution to implementing the foreign political and economic targets of the Czech foreign aid policy as well as strengthening bilateral relations with many developing and transforming countries.

The Assessment also demonstrated that the fact that five years later Czech Republic does provide foreign aid is on its own simply not enough but that it becomes essential to concentrate on further developing efficiency, transparency and system of the foreign aid program. In doing so the Czech Republic will fulfill requirements arising from its membership in the OECD and the prospective accession to the EU and from implementing results of various UN conferences, particularly the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, that identified a need for reduction of poverty throughout the world by means of economic and social development to be the primary target of the international community. The main conclusions of the presentation, aiming to improve the existing practice and system for providing foreign aid, may be summed up as follows:

- Government Decision no. 153/1995 used for managing and implementing foreign aid program since 1995, will continue to provide a general framework; prospective accession of the Czech Republic to the EU may necessitate its further amendment;
- the planned target to increase volume of finance allocated to the foreign aid program had not been met in the period in question; the annual funding cycle is often clashing with the longer term nature of many foreign aid programs;
- the documentation of foreign aid program for 1996–2000 period tends to be inconsistent and incongruous, there is no uniform approach to keeping statistical evidence;
- Czech foreign aid program is characterised by an excessively wide range of territories receiving foreign aid, there are no clearly defined territorial priorities (e.g. according to the foreign aid plan for 2001 there are a total 83 projects in nearly 50 countries);
- sectoral targeting is also very wide given the relatively low financial volume of the Czech foreign aid program; in future it would be advisable to concentrate more on the areas where the Czech Republic has comparative advantage and also to prioritise the needs of developing countries in more detail;
- there are no uniform criteria for assessing and evaluating foreign aid projects, hence the results of such assessments and evaluations are inconsistent and incongruous;

- there is clearly a lack of uniform methodology for developing, planning and managing foreign aid projects; uniform methodology would make implementation of projects more effective and transparent;
- the coordinating role and competency of the MFA had not been used to sufficient extent and degree during the monitored period, i.e. the level of involvement of the Czech Embassies in relevant territories has been rather low;
- the cooperation of the Czech Republic with other aid-providing countries and relevant international organisations, especially in the form of trilateral cooperation, should be developed further; also, compared with developed countries, the level of cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in implementing foreign aid projects is also rather low;
- essential preconditions for a successful Czech foreign aid policy should include establishing the so-called 'development platform' and adequately promoting targets and results of the foreign aid program to increase awareness of the professional and general public.

Development assistance, development policy, development cooperation – laws and treaties signed by Czech Republic

According to the Competences Act (Act No. 2/1969, as amended), “the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the Czech Republic’s central public administration authority in the field of foreign policy; as such, it is responsible for creating the concept of and coordinating development cooperation and coordinating external economic relations.” In cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also coordinates the Czech Republic’s foreign humanitarian aid.

As a member of the European Union (EU) and of the international community of democratically and economically developed countries, the Czech Republic recognizes the principle of solidarity among people and countries and assumes its part of responsibility in addressing global issues. One expression of this attitude is development cooperation, which constitutes an integral part of the Czech foreign policy. In accordance with the principles of the EU and in defence of its own interests, the Czech Republic provides its own development cooperation on the bilateral as well as multilateral basis.

The Guidelines of the development cooperation after the Czech Republic’s accession to the EU, approved by Government Resolution No. 302 of 31 March 2004, define development cooperation in the broader sense as a comprehensive government policy in respect of partner countries going through the process of development and transformation; in a narrower sense, development cooperation is the assistance provided by the Czech Republic in the form of transfers of funds, material, expert and technical assistance for the purpose of achieving long-term sustainable development of partner countries.

The Czech Republic’s development cooperation concept for 2002-2007, noted by the Czech Government in Resolution No. 91 of 23 January 2002, states that the framework objective in the field of development cooperation is to contribute, in line with the efforts of the international community, to the reduction of poverty in less developed parts of the world by encouraging their socio-economic sustainable development. The Czech Republic identifies with the multidimensional approach to the reduction of poverty, which should not be understood only in the economic terms of low per capita income but also in the context of other social and environmental relationships. The Czech Republic fully supports the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs) identified by the UN international conferences in the 1990s and confirmed by the UN Millennium Summit in 2000. The central goal is to reduce the number of people living in absolute poverty by half by 2015.

The Czech Republic's development cooperation is based on the principles of partnership (it must always respond to the demand on the part of the beneficiary, not to the offer on the part of the donor), efficiency and transparency. Development cooperation reflects the interests and needs of the Czech Republic and helps intensify political and economic relations between partner countries and the Czech Republic. Development cooperation is provided in accordance with the Czech Republic's security interests.

Principles of the development cooperation, approved by Government Resolution No. 302 of 31 March 2004, have identified as a fundamental component of the Czech development cooperation the programmes of cooperation with priority countries, with a view to encouraging the application of the principles of partnership, efficiency and transparency, and to ensuring consistent application of the Public Procurement Act (Act No. 40/2004). Once formulated, the programmes will lead to better predictability of development cooperation and facilitate planning to all parties involved.

Declared objectives of foreign assistance and development assistance

Foreign aid is an integral part of the Czech foreign policy and, in a wider context, it can be regarded as helping to implement general targets of the Czech Republic such as:

- providing support to democracy, human rights and social justice – the Czech Republic regards democracy and democratic environment as basic guarantee of development in aid-receiving countries (stressing particularly the equal rights for women, children and other vulnerable groups and providing access for their education);
- providing support to developing countries to join, on the basis of equality, the global economy – integration of the economies of developing countries into global economy and international trade that will prevent developing countries to be marginalised, while also helping to diminish de-stabilising effect of the increasing gap between the developed and less developed countries (with the spread of information technology continuing to play an increasingly important role in this process of less developed countries joining the global economy);
- providing support to the environmentally safe sustainable development – foreign aid projects should make either direct or indirect contributions to the improvement of environment and quality of life of people in aid-receiving countries.

Part 2. Gender Perspective in developmental cooperation and foreign assistance

Inclusion of gender in European law and international agreements binding Czech Republic

Main International agreements binding Czech Republic in terms of gender:

CEDAW – The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

Beijing 95 – Czech Republic together with other 188 governments adopted Beijing declaration and action platform concentrated on removing obstacles to allow women participation in all spheres of public and private life

The national plan of action, or national gender equality strategy, is called the Priorities and Procedures of the Czech Government in Promoting the Equality of Men and Women. The Priorities are divided into 7 areas:

- promotion of the principles of equality of men and women as part of the government policy
- legal support for gender equality and raising legal awareness
- promoting equal opportunities for women and men in access to economic activity
- balancing social position of men and women caring for children and family members in need
- considering women from the viewpoint of their reproductive function and physiological differences
- suppression of violence directed at women
- monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of promotion of the principles of equal treatment of men and women

The only national program related to gender so far has been the 2003 National Strategy to combat all Forms of Trafficking in People with the Scope of Sexual Exploitation. To date no measures have been undertaken to reduce the gender pay gap.

Main European agreements binding Czech Republic in terms of gender:

A. general

1. ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights – Council of Europe is permanently seeking to strengthen and develop these rights through various legal and political Instruments which are adopted in the framework of intergovernmental cooperation

2. Different instructions from European Parliament and European Council

B. regarding ODA

1. ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (Cotonou Agreement) was signed in Cotonou in June 2000 and constituted the most elaborate system in the EU's development co-operation policy. Major innovations have been the enhancement of political dialogue between EU and ACP countries, commitment to strengthening consultations with civil society on policy issues and program implementation, refocusing development co-operation on poverty eradication and of

course the negotiations of a new trade framework, the so-called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with 6 ASP regions, namely the Caribbean, Pacific, East, South, West, and Central Africa. Funds for the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement come from the European Development Fund, which is funded by Member State contributions, thus separate from the EU budget. Gender equality has been included under Cotonou as one of the cross-cutting issues combining the integration of a „gender-sensitive approach“ at every level of development co-operation with the adoption of specific positive measures lie in the areas of women’s participation in national and local politics, support for women’s organizations, as well as women’s access to basic social services and productive resources.

2. Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI) Regulation No 1905/2006 of European Commission and of the Council sets out a simplified framework for financing various areas of European Community development co-operation for the period 2007-2013. With a budget of 16.9 billion euro, DCI is considered to be the main funding tool for EU development co-operation programmes around the world and is funded from the EU annual budget. The DCI is managed by DG RELEX and implemented by EuropeAid. The Regulation supports actions at two levels: geographic programmes in five regions (Latin America, Asia, Central Asia, South Africa and the Middle East) and five thematic programmes, which are additional to actions funded under geographic programmes.

The five thematic programmes are: investing in people (addressing human and social development issues, including gender equality), environment and sustainable management of natural resources, non-state actors and local authorities, migration and asylum and food security.

The thematic programme „Investing in people“ sets four key priorities for action on human and social development, good health for all, education, knowledge and skills, *gender equality* and other aspects. Apart from its inclusion as a separate area for action, consideration of gender equality issues has also been included in the priority areas of education and health.

Under „Investing in People“ the promotion of gender equality and women's rights, implementing global commitments as detailed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, activities include:

- supporting programmes that contribute to achieving the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action with a special emphasis on gender equality in governance and political and social representation and other actions to empower women;
- strengthening institutional and operational capacities of key stakeholders, civil society organisations, women's organisations and networks, in their endeavours to promote gender equality and economic and social empowerment, including north-south and south-south networking and advocacy;
- including a gender perspective in monitoring and statistical capacity building, by supporting the development and dissemination of data and indicators disaggregated by sex, as well as gender equality data and indicators;
- reducing the adult illiteracy rate, with particular emphasis on female literacy;
- actions against violence against women.

„The total allocation to gender equality oriented programmes under „Investing in people“ amounts to approximately 57 million euro representing a light improvement in comparison to the resources allocated towards the promotion of gender equality and the rights of women and girl

children under the gender budget line (9 million euro for three years covering the period 2004-2006). Nevertheless, it is still marginal compared to the total allocation of over 1 billion euro foreseen for the implementation of the thematic programme as a whole. The main weakness of the DCI thematic programmes lies in the fact that they include no specific analysis or reference to the gender dimensions of employment and social cohesion, food security, migration and environmental management. Moreover, they do not foresee any support for gender-sensitive programmes in the above area.¹

Inclusion of gender in national governmental structure and in legal framework of Czech Republic

Since 2002, the labour law has been enriched with many provisions concerning equal treatment. The legal framework for equality and non-discrimination in employment relationships in the Act No. 65/1965, Labour Code fulfills almost all formal requirements of European law. Attention now needs to be paid to the strengthening of the implementing structures and policies, and programs which would bring the de facto situation in line with the law.

Since 1998 several bodies have been established which were supposed to deal with issues of equality and discrimination of women. Their powers were restricted to report-writing and issuing recommendations, none of them had the power to assign tasks, give binding directions or effectively inspect other government bodies. None of them had the competence to independently assist victims of discrimination within the meaning of Article 8a of Council Directive 2002/73/EC.

One such mechanism is the Unit for Equality between Men and Women at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs within its Department for Integration into European Union following the Government Resolution 6/98. The unit was established to coordinate the government policy in the field of gender equality and ensure the harmonisation of the Czech legal system with European law.

Government of Czech Republic recognized **gender mainstreaming** as effective tool for removing gender inequalities in Czech Republic (Government Resolution 456/2001).

In October 2001 the Cabinet issued Resolution 1033/2001 by which it established the Governmental Council for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women („Governmental Council“). The Governmental Council is a permanent advisory body of the government in the area of creating equal opportunities for men and women. The Governmental Council has no executive or supervisory powers. It can make only recommendations to the government.

From 2007 Czech Government has got new Ministry for Human Rights and National Minorities. New Minister is the head of Governmental Council and is responsible for the topic of equal opportunities for men and women in Czech Government. Also the representatives of NGOs are the members of the Governmental Council.

Cooperation between the government and NGOs is recommended in the Priorities and Procedures of the Czech Government in Promoting the Equality of Men and Women („Priorities“), but followed only by a part of the ministries. Concrete conception of integrating women's NGOs into the activities of the ministries is missing. In Priorities Czech Government made commitment to inform actively about measures to support equal opportunities, to take care of equal opportunities during the process of law preparation, to support public discussion about gender equality. Each year there is published The Report of the Fulfilment of the Priorities.

¹ Maria Karadenizli, Who decides?, WIDE network, Bussels – Belgium, 2007, page 24.

Drawing up the Priorities and at the same time writing the periodical Government Reports on the Fulfilment of the Priorities was responsible Unit for Equality between Men and Women. In 2004 representatives of NGOs prepared Shadow report – critical analysis of governmental priorities and reports of their discharging.

Government Resolution 456/2001 prescribed the creation of one gender focal point at each ministry. At least half the working time of one civil servant should be dedicated to the coordination of equal opportunities. The responsible official (gender coordinator) should bear responsibility for being the contact person for gender-related issues in the field. Most ministries entrusted a clerk in the human resources department with this task. I never succeeded in getting in contact with this person from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and I never received the answer for my questions regarding gender in Czech ODA from this person.

The discrepancies between law and practice in the respective area are present in all the inclusion of gender in national governmental structure and in legal framework.. The development of last few years brought more positive changes in laws than in practice. The improvements are very often only respecting European Directives, there are not real positive changes in the area of equal opportunities.

„A general concern with the institutional mechanisms in the Czech Republic is the limited understanding of the concept of gender, gender stereotypes, gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and equal opportunities. The lack of political will at the top level is a significant obstacle, as is the lack of enumeration of the financial resources that should be dedicated, and that are dedicated to equality.“

I found this general concern in Monitoring Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Czech Republic from 2005 and I am not happy to see that after the three years it is still true.

Inclusion of gender in Czech developmental cooperation and foreign assistance

How important is gender for Czech ODA? In the basic program document of Czech foreign policy in chapter about ODA you can find commitment to „contribute to remove gender inequalities“. Conception of development cooperation considers gender equality as one of the main crosscutting issues but it is never seen as sector priority. However you can see gender equality in all program documents of priority countries (except Vietnam – where it was promoted for second priority of social care sector). In terms of statements the state cares about gender.

Part 3. The role of non-governmental organizations

NGOs seen as a partner

Participation of NGOs on ODA was in 2006 20% of all the spendings and 31% of realized projects.²

There is good cooperation between the NGO platform FORS (its members are NGOs dealing with Development cooperation and Czech development agency and also with Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are regular contacts and official meetings of representatives from those organizations about ODA. The cooperation of NGOs with other departments of Ministry of Foreign Affairs or with other ministries is not so good. FORS is asked to comment the development cooperation materials of Czech Development agency and Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Department. FORS is also asked for help during preparational phase of the calls for proposals on Development Cooperation. FORS helps to set circumstances and rules for realization of development projects.

In the latest report for CONCORD (evaluation of 2006) FORS warn that there are no detailed statistics for 2006 showing how much of its claimed ODA is in fact debt cancellation. According the FORS report Czech Republic also inflates its aid by counting the costs for housing refugees in the country and for educating foreign students. There are three fundamental weaknesses of the Czech Republic's ODA system: low poverty focus, low predictability of spending and low aid effectiveness. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a formal coordinating role over ODA delivery, but lacks legislative authority as well as a budget to effectively fulfill this role. FORS called on the Czech government to: make necessary budget increase to reach their commitment to spend 0.17% of GNI by 2010, improve effectiveness, transparency and coordination of aid and also reform the institutional framework for development assistance and establish a professional development agency (under the coordination of MFA) to manage the entire Czech ODA program. The Development agency started to work in January 2008. There were steps also made in terms of effectiveness, transparency and coordination of aid. The worst problem is probably budget increase. There is no will in Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fulfill this commitment.

In this official report for CONCORD there was no call for including gender into Czech ODA.

NGOs - a mandate to monitor

There is a good cooperation between NGOs to monitor Czech ODA. All Czech NGOs which are working on ODA are members of FORS platform (Czech Forum for Development Cooperation). But it is a little bit strange situation because the NGOs from FORS are not only monitoring the ODA but they are also realizators of development projects.

The main reminder of FORS is that the amount of finances spent on ODA does not respect international commitments. Ministry of Financies (in cooperation with Czech Parliament) does not respect committed growth while allocating sources for ODA.

The process of transformation of Czech ODA system FORS considers positive. Of course there are problems to be solved but the agency functioning from January 2008 tries best and will be settled in a year. Till 2010 each project of Czech ODA will be managed by the agency. From 2011 the agency will be able to start fulfilling new conception – with new topics and perhaps also new list of priority countries in terms of better coordination.

² Zapojení FORS do ZRS, www.fors.cz, 6.2.2008

Part 4. Official Developmental Assistance and Gender

Gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in Czech ODA

Official documents of Czech MFA provide in dept information about foreign development cooperation in terms of strategy, goals, form of cooperation, fund allocation and other aspects. However, gender aspect is not defined in detail. According to the MFA publication International Development Cooperation of the Czech Republic, gender is considered as a cross-cutting issue, in the same way as environment, promotion of civil society, etc. These cross-cutting issues are taken into consideration during implementation of every project. Drawing on available information such as goals of development aid or assistance given to education and health, it can be assumed that special attention is given to girls and women who continue to be in the least fortunate conditions in targeted countries.

As a new member of the EU, the Czech Republic made an international commitment to give 0,33% of GNI for development cooperation. However, at the present time it seems the Czech Republic will fail to fulfill this aim. In 2006 the Czech Republic gave only 0,12% GNI and from financial planning of Development Cooperation for 2008-2010 (which was on July 25th 2007 agreed by the Czech government) it is expected this amount will be even lower – 0,09%. Among the reasons of this situation is growth of GNI but the absolute numbers are expected to be also a little bit lower. From the budget of the Czech Republic the amount for development cooperation is approximately 3,5 milliards CZK per year – more than half goes as fees to EU, UN and other international organizations.³

The main objectives of the Czech Republic's development cooperation include reduction of poverty, social development, economic and industrial development, gradual integration of partner countries into the world economy, agricultural development, development and strengthening of democracy, human rights and good governance, introduction of legal principles, migration management, sustainable development with special emphasis on its environmental aspects and post-conflict renewal. Although Czech development projects are realized in more than 30 countries, some of these countries are officially defined as a priority. In accordance with the objectives set out in the Principles of the development cooperation and with the Czech Republic's foreign policy interests, the government approved the Czech Republic's plan to channel its development cooperation in the long run to the following priority countries: the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Zambia, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Mongolia, the Republic of Yemen, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. Furthermore, Afghanistan and Iraq were also included due to the current situation.

Since the 1990s, the system of Czech Development Cooperation has undertaken enormous changes. NGOs are more and more important in the process. First important step was choosing the priority countries 4 years ago. Angola or Vietnam are representatives of priority countries that the Czech Republic has traditionally cooperated with. In addition, the possibility of sharing the experiences of the transformation process played an important role during this decision making process.

Insufficient gender equality strategy in Czech ODA

Up to now, development cooperation of the Czech Republic did not include gender, except a brief statement with reference to cross-cutting issues. There are no statistics and no gender

³ Used data are from article Milan Konrád, Češi chtějí bojovat s negramotností, Svět na dosah 2007 (Special supplement of Mladá fronta newspaper, which followed Development Cooperation of Czech Republic, prepared by People in Need, October 13th 2007).

development projects. Nevertheless, there seem to be at least some will to include gender in development cooperation. At the moment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic knows about this deficit and NGOs working together with the Ministry on development cooperation are willing to fill this gap. Yet, Czech women NGOs do not seem to be interested in this cooperation. No women NGO is a member of the national platform FoRS – Czech Forum for Development Cooperation which is the member of Concord – European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. The membership in such a platform provides the opportunity to influence development cooperation and also improves the chance for NGOs to implement their own development projects.

In the project documentation of Czech Development Aid gender is considered a cross-cutting issue – the phrase “equal opportunities of women and men” is stated here as point 7.3. It is one of the seven main criteria for decision making process, among them sustainable development of the project, impact on environment, or sustainability of the chosen technology. The way how this point is understood by private companies or NGOs that would like to be involved in development projects means no understanding or indifference to gender criteria. Only very few participants of calls for development projects mention in their applications they will care for gender equality while implementing the projects. A few exceptions do not forget to mention gender equality in their proposals but only as formality.

The only one political party that highlights in its program the importance of women in development is the Green Party. However, the Greens failed in their attempt to enforce equal opportunities in development cooperation into the governmental statement.

From the statistics of Ministry of Foreign Affairs it is not possible to find out how many women and men, what age, ethnicity and so on did participate in the project. Ministry of Foreign Affairs plans to start making gender statistics of Czech ODA and plans to support gender development projects. So far however, gender is for Czech ODA only a formality; when realizing a development project, most of NGOs write in their applications that they respect equal opportunities but never give example how. „Equal opportunities are very weak criteria during decision-making about the project“, says Milan Konrad from Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also points out that in the committees which decide about the realization of the development projects are no experts on gender equality.⁴

The fact that development projects do not take into account gender is not only mistake of NGOs that submit the proposals. Most importantly Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an institution, which is preparing conception of Czech Development Cooperation and gives financial support to the projects, should require analysis of the results of projects from gender perspective. „Development cooperation and gender are marginal topics in Czech society and when you put them together, it is even more marginal“, says Ondrej Horky from Institute of International Relations in Prague.

In the program documents of the Czech government, establishment of gender statistics and gender analysis appears to be an important task, however, equal opportunities have so far stayed only on the level of program documents. According to the report on fulfillment of priorities and procedures of the government while enforcing the gender equality, Ministry of Foreign Affairs concentrates on staff policy. However, it seems that Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not able to fulfill its own program priorities. Even though the Ministry stated in this report that “supporting equal opportunities is a natural part of realized projects,” reality is far different.

⁴ Michaela Appeltova, Genderova slepota v rozvojove spolupraci, www.ta-gita.cz, 26.2.2008.

On the other hand, the Ministry supports projects (even though there is only very few of them) in which the target group are only women. These projects are mostly about education or development of small entrepreneurship, which is in line with the Millennium Development Goals. An example of such project is Chechen women's center IMAN which is realized by Berhat in cooperation with People in Need.

There were only a few development projects concentrating on women among those realized in 2006. Examples of such projects include: detection of HIV positive prostitutes in Ukraine or project of People in Need helping HIV positive women in Namibia. Interesting example is the project of the opening a Center for agricultural education in Bié which was realized from 2003 in Angola by Czech Agricultural University - Institute of tropics and subtropics. Czech program document for this priority country says: „There is a great need to empower women, to make the access to education and employment easier for women. This development cooperation project of the Czech Republic will continuously support position of women in Angola.“ In practice however, the Czech development cooperation did not take into account gender issues at all and supported above all men. Since the evaluation report from the project uses systematically generic masculine „students“, it is hard to find out , how many of them were women. Project administrators have admitted that at the beginning of the study program there were approximately 15 women from 100 accepted students. The study finished 3 women and 20 men. A few students had to stop the study because of pregnancy; one of the students gave birth to her child and was absent only a few days because she wanted to finish the study. Women can formally have the same right to study but in practice they have not got the same opportunities. Nevertheless, probably because of gender sensitive employment policy of western donors, the graduates – women have better chances while looking for their jobs. Czech project for education in the area of agriculture in Angola supports above all men. On one hand Czech development project can contribute to overall enhancement of achievement of Angolan agriculture and women can profit from it. At the same time the project goes against its goals as it makes inequalities between women and men even bigger.

The only examples of Czech development bilateral projects in which you can find the principles of gender equality from governmental evaluation report:

- Women center IMAN – Chechnya, realized in 2005-2007, with the budget of 3,9 mil. CZK
- Establishment of the centre for victims to domestic violence – region Šumadija, Serbia, realized in 2006 – till now, with the budget of 8,8 mil. CZK⁵

Czech Development Cooperation refers to development goals but in practice it often fails to take gender into account.

Since January 2008, the Czech Development Cooperation has gone through significant transformation. So far, each ministry realized its own development projects. Gradually (till 2011) the centralization of development cooperation should be finished under the roof of Czech Development Agency. The agency will create the conception of development cooperation. The number of priority countries and sectors should be lower but the agency should more concretely specify the development projects. The centralization will bring bigger specialization of development cooperation and much higher demands for employees of the agency. The number of people and their expertness is still discussed, so it is possible that there will appear the space for a specialist on gender issues. This is an opportunity for Czech Women Lobby, network of 21

⁵ MUDr. Džamila Stehlíková (Czech Minister for Human Rights and National Minorities), Report on fulfillment of Priorities and procedures of government on advocacy for equal opportunities for women and men in 2007, proposal for external suggestions, prepared for the meeting of Czech Government in April 2008, page 25.

gender NGOs. But no Czech gender NGO is currently following the development cooperation. „Czech gender NGOs work with concept of gender equality which is concentrating on European women and men, with certain education and social background“, explains the Director for Development and Strategic Planning of Gender Studies – Linda Sokačová.

It seems that non-profit sector is more sensitive towards gender equality topic. „Gender mainstreaming“ is a part of the demands of the campaign Czech against poverty. One of their partner organizations is also Gender Studies, o.p.s. But their last director told me that they are not prepared to cooperate on gender in the context of development cooperation seriously.

A scholar of the International Relations Institute in Prague Ondřej Horký states in his analysis „Women, men and development“ that in the Czech Republic women NGOs are concentrating above all on equal opportunities, equal access to sources, conditions of maternity leave and similar questions but they are not interested in problems of women from South very much. The relations between disadvantages on the basis of gender and poverty are very close. Ondřej Horký concludes that „Those who fight against the global poverty but do not take into account the inequalities of women and men and those who fight for women’s rights without thinking of the poverty in development countries are not solid... Gender perspective is necessary for understanding of poverty and development.“⁶ Women do not have equal opportunities in most societies of the world. Discrimination of women is even bigger in the development countries. Women and girls comprise the majority of the world’s poorest people.

As for other NGO activities, at the end of March 2008, Czech NGO People in Need decided to donate 500.000 CZK from the humanitarian fund of Peoples in Need Club of Friends to help women in Congo who were raped in a long war conflict (they intend to support hospitals for women and female therapeutic centers). Long fights have resulted in hundreds of thousands of women and girls being massively and brutally raped by both rebels and the Congolese army. In addition to health problems, these women are also often abandoned by their own families and excluded by their communities. Conflict has also left behind an entire generation of orphans born as a result of the violence. „I hope and believe that those 500.000 CZK will be the beginning of solidarity with Congo women and that further help from the Czech Republic will follow“, says Igor Blažević, the director of One World film festival where the documentary about Congo women was presented this spring.⁷

People in Need is probably the only Czech NGO which is at the same time working on development cooperation and also while implementing projects thinks of equal opportunities for women and men. During project implementation in developing countries, People in Need sometimes cooperate with local women NGOs. Nevertheless, representatives of People in Need think they are not experts on gender and would welcome gender organizations to collaborate on development projects.

Efficiency, quality and transparency of ODA from gender perspective

There is no research on effectiveness of ODA but it is planned as a topic of FORS during the Czech presidency of the EU. They plan to monitor it on the basis of Paris Declaration and also Czech Government will be participating on this monitoring process.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness aims to increase the impact that aid has on reducing poverty and inequality and to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In the whole document, however, gender equality is only mentioned once, when it is weakly

⁶ Ondřej Horký, *Ženy, muži a rozvoj*, Institute of International Relations Prague 2008, page 6.

⁷ www.clovekvtisni.cz, 29.3.2008

made a cross-cutting issue. Since poverty is a feminized phenomenon with the majority of the world's poor being women, any attempt to reduce poverty and promote development must first interrogate its gender dimensions. Women's rights advocates say that the Paris Declaration illustrates the absence of political will to make gender equality a reality. They also argue that "...overarching binding international agreements and mechanisms related to women's rights and the right to development must be the foundation upon which to build more recent commitments to the Millennium Development Goals and the Paris Declaration. Otherwise, there is a substantial risk that the political and formal achievements of women's movements and human rights advocates from past decades, and the responsibility of multilateral institutions to these agreements could be undermined by more limited new agendas and practices that do not take these rights into account."⁸

The Paris Declaration sets out five principles to govern the relationship between donor and recipient governments: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability. Analysts have pointed out the shortcomings of these principles as tools for development. Among other things they offer limited opportunities for women's participation, and for women's needs to be addressed, particularly if their governments are not committed to gender equality. They have also criticized New Aid Modalities such as general budget support, sector wide approaches, poverty reduction strategy papers, basket funding and joint assistance strategies. Most of these have an overall effect of redirecting aid away from individual projects and as a consequence, development work directed at gender equality suffers.

The Declaration has also been widely criticized for its 'nuts and bolts' approach to development; it takes a technical approach to aid management and delivery and in the process pays less attention to the actual impact that the aid has on achieving the goals of development. The approach that the Declaration takes reflects the fact that 'the majority of policy makers leading and managing the aid process are economists, administrators, technocrats or planners.' The voices of women and other sectors of civil society have not been adequately represented. While there have been limited opportunities for civil society participation in some processes, women's organizations and networks have not been well represented.⁹

The general goals of the consultation are:

- To contribute to the inclusion of women's rights organizations concerns on Aid Effectiveness in the Accra Agenda for Action.
- To contribute with common recommendations and proposals on gender equality and Aid Effectiveness to the Advisory Group for the 3rd High Level Forum preparation and beyond Accra.
- To identify threats and opportunities, lessons learned and best practices from the ground on Aid Effectiveness shared by women's rights organizations and networks.

The specific goals are:

- To update women's organizations and networks on the debate status and perspectives of ODA effectiveness and follow-up the Paris Declaration.

⁸ Alemany, C., Craviotto, N., Hopenhaym, F., Implementing the Paris Declaration: Implications for the Promotion of Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 2008.

⁹ Kathambi Kinoti, No Aid Effectiveness without Development Effectiveness, AWID 2008.

- To facilitate debate among women's organizations and networks to agree common positions and share experiences and lessons learned.
- To promote the dissemination of the Aid Effectiveness debates and process in the participant's networks and countries after the consultation and promote their engagement in the road to Accra and beyond.
- Strategize between women's organizations and activists ahead toward the Commission of the Status of Women, Doha and Accra processes.

If aid is to effectively impact development, women's voices must be central to discussions on Aid Effectiveness and their participation in all processes must be ensured. It is hoped that this consultation will contribute significantly to their increased participation and impact.

Other observations

Increasing understanding of development problems can be observed among the Czech public. Almost half of the Czech population supports growing budget for Development Cooperation. Public opinion researches on aims of Development Cooperation show that Czech population considers improvement of the situation of women and children as very important. According to the latest research, improvement of lives of women and children is on the second place.¹⁰ Czech population considers as the most important matter in development cooperation fighting HIV and other diseases. EU member states aim the Development cooperation in the same direction. Priorities of EU inhabitants do not differ much from the plans of the United Nations as their opinions correspond to the Millennium Development Goals.

The people involved in development projects think it is important at this moment that the public gives bigger support to the increase of development cooperation. Regarding surveys of Czech Development Agency - the Czech public would welcome more information about development cooperation of the country. There is a project „Development Cooperation as a current topic of public and media“, realized by People in Need with the support of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During 2007, there were from time to time printed enclosures about Development Cooperation in the most popular newspaper; in addition, there is an information website about development cooperation (www.rozvojovka.cz) and a guide of Czech development cooperation was published.

Concerning the quality of official documents, it can be concluded that governmental reports are issued within the deadline and follow the criteria set by OECD and DAC in the reports. The problematic issue remains the fact that items which should not be counted are also counted in Czech ODA, for example supports for foreign students. A lot of bilateral ODA projects are researches or do support the development of industry but can not be considered as long-term changes fighting against poverty and respecting Millennium Development Goals.

¹⁰ Milan Konrad, esi chteji bojovat s negramotnosti, Svet na dosah 2007 (Special suplement of Mlada fronta newspaper, wchich followed Development Cooperation of Czech Republic, prepared by People in Need, October 13th 2007).

Part 5. Recommendations

Recommendations for EU Institutions¹¹

First step for donor and developing countries is to deliver on their commitments to International Human Rights frameworks and key agreements on Women's Rights and Development such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA, 1995), the Convention on the Elimination All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Millennium Development Goals, especially Goal 3, (MDG, 200).

1. Democratic ownership and participation:

- The new aid architecture needs to be more comprehensive of all development stakeholders—particularly CSOs, including women's organizations and movements;
- Governments, regional and multilateral organizations must interpret the terms of national country ownership as democratic ownership and elaborate on its implications in the context of countries' obligations to international Human Rights law, including women's rights and gender equality.
- Donor and developing country governments must commit to supporting the conditions that are necessary for CSOs and women's rights organizations to fulfil their roles in development processes (planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation).
- Donor and developing country governments must promote women's rights organizations in different decision-making processes and donors' policy planning, including in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

2. Strengthening mutual accountability:

- All relevant actors must commit to the highest standards of openness and transparency:
 - Donors and international financial institutions should deliver timely and meaningful information, adopt a policy of automatic and full disclosure of relevant information, and submit to the norms and direction-setting of the United Nations (UN).
 - Developing countries' governments must work with elected representatives, the public and CSOs to set out open and transparent policies on how aid is to be sourced, spent, monitored and accounted for.
 - Diverse CSOs must also exercise accountability and continuously draw their legitimacy from their constituencies.
- Donor governments must provide transparent information on how Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocations correspond to policy commitments, and developing countries' governments have to provide transparent and publicly available budgets. Specially emphasis needs to be put on reporting on resources allocated to gender equality / women's rights strategies.

3. Monitoring and evaluation:

- The operational development strategies established by developing countries for 2010, related workplans and the monitoring system of the PD implementation, must fully integrate gender equality targets and indicators.

¹¹ Those recommendations are mostly recommendations from the International Consultation of Women's Rights Organizations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness presented at the meeting of European GEAR group in Brussels on April 3rd 2008, by Nerea Craviotto, WIDE.

- Existing and new ODA management review and performance assessment tools and measures must reflect a results-based monitoring and evaluation component with a special focus on how gender equality and women's empowerment targets are being met, in both donor and developing countries.
- The acquisition and improvement of sex-disaggregated data must become predictable, regular and consistent to support planning, negotiation, monitoring, and evaluation of development and aid policies.
- Gender budgeting must be promoted.

4. Mobilising resources for gender equality and women's rights strategies:

- Promote the integration of gender responsive budgeting as a tool to combine with General Budget Support (GBS) and Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs), with the participation of women's empowerment organizations.
- Donor and developing country governments must ensure direct funding and establish clear mechanisms for the participation of women's rights organizations as part of civil society, particularly women from socially excluded groups, in all the national development planning processes and aid planning, programming, management, monitoring and evaluation.

5. Accra High Level Forum:

- Donor and developing country governments must ensure that gender equality and women's rights concerns are effectively addressed during the roundtable discussions, especially in RT1: Democratic Ownership, RT4: Development results and impacts, RT5: Mutual accountability, RT6: The role of civil society organizations in advancing aid effectiveness, RT9: Implications of the new aid architecture on aid effectiveness and the role of non-DAC donors.

Recommendations for National Government of Czech Republic

- Czech Republic should compare aims of development cooperation with international commitments
- Czech Republic should in development cooperation prefer fight against poverty before its security and trade interests.
- Czech Republic should use the advantage in the area of passing its experience with transformation and democratization in Balkan and post-soviet countries
- In context of financial perspective of EU, Czech Republic should support effective and equal use of sources from European budgets according to the subsidiarity principle
- Czech Republic should emphasise on the parts of EU constitution in the area of securing international development and stability
- The broad public should be more informed about Czech ODA
- Statistics on gender in Czech ODA should be available
- More and more women's NGOs should be involved in realization of Czech Development Cooperation and also in monitoring of ODA

Czech political commitment to gender equality is reflected in a number of legal and policy documents. Critical analysis of Czech external relations agenda reveals a significant lack of

coherence between policy declarations and practice with regard to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment as well as between Czech development objectives and priorities. Gender mainstreaming should rather be understood as tool for developing a critical analysis of development and for designing programmes that place at their centre women's rights and empowerment.

The need of increased mobilization by women's organizations in Czech Republic in terms of ODA is urgent.

Recommendations for NGOs

- Address the contradictions between the negotiating positions and the development objectives set in legal and policy documents and in co-operation agreements with partner countries by:
 - Analysing the gender impact of trade liberalization in the area of agriculture, services and investment through the development of country specific studies
 - Examining the gender impact on the increased use of development financing in support of regional integration of gender equality concerns in existing assistance programmes
- Monitor the implementation of commitments to gender equality
- Monitor the implementation of gender sensitive programmes in the area of external relations:
 - Monitor the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive programmes and actions under the Development Co-operation Instrument thematic programmes
 - Undertake a gender review of country specific programmes
- Facilitate systematic and timely access of partner organizations to information on latest policy developments, for example the formulation of policy and programming documents
- Provide information to partner organizations on funding opportunities for women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality issues
- Advocate for the active participation of women's organizations in policy discussions on development issues and concerns.

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About the Author

Kristina Kosatíková graduated from Charles University in Prague (Faculty of Social Sciences) in 1996. She worked in private sector as executive director of graphic studio (1994-2003). In non-profit sector she cooperated on several projects as project manager (2001-2006). For example she worked on Communicating Town project which had the aim to improve the communication between Town Halls and citizens. Now Kristina is working as Coordinator of International Gender Policy Network (IGPN).

IGPN is a membership based, non-profit, non-governmental organization that has been established in order to strengthen and foster the policy work impact of the women's movement and to ensure the sustainability of women's movements in the Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

IGPN is a network with vision of gender equality. IGPN is also a network with members in all those countries: new EU member states, candidate states and their neighbour states. These are the countries that have got all possible relationships with Development Cooperation. There are donors of Official Development Aid (ODA), recipients of ODA and possible recipients of ODA among them. IGPN members will try to enter the national platforms in the countries that are EU members and will try implement their knowledge into Development Cooperation. The third Millennium Goal is not less important than the others. Development Cooperation that will include gender will be more effective.

Interviews

Martin Náprstek – Czech Development Agency

Jana Krczmářová - FORS

Alena Králíková – Gender Studies, Czech Against Poverty

Eva Ferrarová – development projects lecturer

Igor Klimeš – People in Need – coordinator of development projects