Gloria Steinem and Jessica Neuwirth at Zambia Media Women Association (ZAMWA) press conference, June 2008

INTRODUCTION

Donor Direct Action was created to strengthen women's rights organizations around the world. The empowerment of women is increasingly seen as a solution to ensuring economic growth, lasting peace and sustainable development in homes, communities and countries. However, funding does not reflect this understanding as so little funding reaches those leading this change – front line women's groups.

Of the $10 billion provided to civil society organizations working to ensure gender equality in 2014, only 8% went to groups in developing countries.

"This suggests that gender focused organisations are being incentivised to act primarily as implementing agencies rather than pursue their own agendas. Their energy and resources thus risk being directed towards short-term projects that reflect donor priorities rather than constituents' needs and that are less sustainable in the longer-term"

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2016)