

Global Summit on Grassroots Women's Leadership and Governance

Huairou Commission | March 3-8, 2011 | New York City

Outcome Statement from the Grassroots Summit on Women's Leadership and Governance, March 3-5, 2011

March 7, 2011

We are grassroots women leaders and NGO leaders from 38 women's organizations and movements working at the local, national, regional and global levels to increase women's participation in decision-making structures, build women's leadership, improve the lives of our families and within our communities. We are from 22 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and North America. We work to improve access and quality of service delivery, to ensure decentralization works for grassroots women's organizations and movements. Through our work, we would like to demonstrate how local development work is connected directly to political spaces and how large numbers of women lead by example to model the outcomes of development. At a Grassroots Summit on Women's Leadership and Governance, grassroots women from around the world committed to working on specific actions which would elicit support from partners to enable women's effective political participation.

1. We are planning to **“Create mechanisms for grassroots women's participation in decision making and planning”** through establishing transformative leadership structures between grassroots women leaders in formal and informal leadership positions.

We call for support from partners for:

- Establishment of structures and mechanisms that facilitate transformative leadership processes, such as multi-stakeholder task forces which can monitor the sustained participation of women leaders
- Grassroots representation to go beyond quotas and affirmative actions with at least half of representatives in office with diverse representation and equal space in decision-making for men and women
- Government and political parties to establish a gender desk and grassroots commissions in different ministries, with integrated horizontal and vertical trainings led by the grassroots women
- The creation of a flexible “innovation fund” to
 - Strengthen grassroots women's innovative practices in leadership and governance (for innovation and expansion to new areas and members)
- Grassroots parallel reports on policy implementation (shadow reports)

2. We are planning to “**Create a facilitative environment for women’s participation in democratic processes at different levels**” through supporting grassroots women organizationally and personally as they assume positions of power, establishing political support with national government to give recognition and legitimacy to grassroots women leaders and their initiatives and by convening regular regional meetings to strengthen regional engagement.

We call for support from partners for:

- Women to be recognized as political actors with equal representation with men in all levels of political decision-making, locally, nationally, regionally and globally (from local boards and budgetary committees, to district councilors to state representatives) and take measures to integrate grassroots women’s vision, concerns and strategies into mainstream policy decisions
- Grassroots exchanges, and capacity building for grassroots women to engage with local authorities, political parties and decentralization processes

3. We are planning to “**Build principled partnerships to promote grassroots women’s effective political participation**” for capacity building, visibility and deepening the knowledge base through private sector, universities, media and authorities at all levels.

We call for support from partners for:

- Partnerships with institutions and organizations committed to the advancement of women's leadership and promotion of democratic processes and grassroots women's organizations on an equal footing
- UN Women and other UN Agencies to include grassroots women in local, national and global decision making processes and on advisory boards