HUAIROU COMMISSION
Women, Homes & Community

Huairou Commission Midterm Review of MDG3 Accountability Initiative

"It is important to mention that the work that we have achieved is recognized as much by the community as by the authorities." MDG3AI Participant

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

DAMPA	Damayan ng Maralitang Pilipino Api
FEMUM - ALC	Latin American and Caribbean Federation of Women in Local Government
GAMWI	Gatundu Mwirutiri Women Initiative
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GROOTS	Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood
GSF	Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation
GWEC	Grassroots Women Empowerment Center, Inc
HC	Huairou Commission
LAMOSA	Land Access Movement of South Africa
LOCOA	Leaders and Organizers of Community Organization in Asia
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDG3AI	Millennium Development Goal 3 Accountability Initiative
MWEDO	Maasai Women Development Organization
PDAP	Participatory Development Action Program
SSP	Swayam Shikshan Prayog
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCOBAC	Uganda Community Based Association for child welfare
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPWD	Urban Poor Women and Development

"It is very clear to the community that a very small part of the budget goes to services... the government mostly funds infrastructure projects. One city in metro Manila, the women leaders presented that there is no livelihoods opportunities in their city. The village chief allocated money for the income livelihoods for the women in that area." (MDG3AI Participant)

"For this initiative we have involved 315 women in various activities, coming from 10 communities in three municipalities in the region." (MDG3AI Participant)

"We are also proud to register 6 women groups-which is equal to 180 women who have been facilitated for land surveys, already we have obtained survey plans and offers from the district land department, it is our expectation to also obtain the title deeds very soon. This process has involved quite a number of individuals-village local government authorities, District land department through the District council and the traditional authorities." (MDG3AI Participant)

"Women are demanding their rights. Women now understand that it's the government's responsibility to achieve things by 2015. But there are no projects that go to the heart of MDG. It gives women clout to ask for what they want from their government. The projects are either self-help projects, or projects that are won by the people through negotiation, or mobilisation through the Local Government Units (LGU). If we had just left the LGUs, it would never happen." (MDG3AI Participant)

"An interesting connection has been strengthened between women in Lima and women in the interior of the country, such as in Ayacucho and Ica, as well as linkages between grassroots women from different organizations, who, through our intervention have found a space for exchange, building partnerships, and mobilization. Additionally, there is the linkage that has formed in the National Congress, with some congresswomen, with the Board of Women Parliamentarians." (MDG3AI Participant)

"Paralegal training on domestic laws and international standards helped the community leaders acquire legal knowledge as well as confidence in the justness of their struggles." (MDG3AI Participant)

"This initiative allowed for the development and capacity building of grassroots women resource persons who are sharing knowledge through horizontal networks and scale up the initiative. Women groups have been impacted through the advocacy activities in their community and local government to mobilize the resources and policy level changes according the community needs. (MDG3AI Participant)

"We would like to learn more about other women's groups' strategies in gender mainstreaming in local governance and anti-eviction work and how they succeeded for possible replication here in the Philippines. (MDG3AI Participant)

"This has lead to increased empowerment and exposure for the women and encouraged many of us to take up leadership. The focus on gender based violence exposed me to an ongoing problem in the community that i had not identified as impacting on level of women's participation and we are now working to heal the victims and reduce the vice." (MDG3AI Participant)

"Men have begun to understand the contribution of women in development" (MDG3AI Participant)

Executive Summary

The MDG3 Accountability Initiative (MDG3 AI) currently demonstrates achievements towards women's empowerment and influencing governance changes for grassroot women. Across the wide range of countries in which the MDG3AI is operational, the Initiative is characterized by a high level of commitment, innovation, and partner engagement (including government). For many of the groups, there is clear scope for scaling up their work and deepening implementation of their projects in the final year. In going forward, the MDG3AI team should consider developing an overarching monitoring framework, which includes a monitoring matrix of key objectives.

This report highlights the findings of the external Midterm Review of The Huairou Commission's MDG3 Accountability Initiative (MDG3AI), funded through a grant from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Huairou Commission launched the MDG3 Accountability Initiative (MDG3AI) in October 2008 with 42 participating grassroots groups and women's organisations in 27 different countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Initiative supports the members involved to use a bottom up approach that engages locally active grassroots groups in initiating and sustaining projects. The focus of the Initiative is twofold:

1. To advance women's empowerment through supporting initiatives that make concrete improvements in grassroots women's lives;

2. To share strategies and approaches developed at the grassroots with stakeholders, policy makers and institutions for lessons on empowerment, policy and investment approaches.

The Review methodology consisted of a desk review of documents, a questionnaire which was followed up with 13 telephone conversations with those surveyed and the Huairou Commission. A total of 16 out of 19 questionnaires were completed.

Main Findings

The MDG3AI has achieved a considerable amount in its two years of operation to date, and is likely to continue to do so in the final year. It has nurtured a set of 42 grant partners, brought into the project through three rounds of grant giving, and supported them with tailor made capacity building inputs and as best possible, monitoring support. All partners that receive funds are working on issues which concern them and their constituents in relation to women's empowerment and influence in decision making to achieve fulfilment of women's rights. There are a series of achievements:

- **Women's access, presence and influence in decision making have increased**. Evidence from the Review indicates that positive changes are being realised by several mechanisms promoted by the *Initiative*, including: advocacy strategies, mapping exercises, profiling of local women leaders, monitoring local government plans and actions, and building capacity of women's awareness on their rights and responsibilities to the community;

- **There is progress in accountability**, including increasing capacity of system administrators and of local community, investing in watch dog monitoring approaches, using elections and constituency clout to gauge authorities on delivering promises. There are examples of success repeated by MDG3AI members in 3 areas: increase in responsiveness and transparency of local government

leaders; improved capacity of partners to hold governments accountable, and there is a contribution to the passing of gender friendly legislation in some countries.

- **There is continual learning and progress within the context of resource sovereignty**. Members work to advocate and dialogue for changes in relation to their access and ownership of resources. Although specific outcomes are not evident from the Review - advocacy, dialogue and capacity building adapted by members of the *Initiative* have all been supportive in the quality of consultation processes with local authorities, lobbying efforts, acquiring resources (land and proper housing), contributing to improving land policy, and considering innovative ways to earn income.

- **All groups in the review expressed how important collective action, sharing and organising together were for them and the results they are achieving.** That the process of engaging collectively and learning amongst other women's groups (both of MDG3AI and non-members) contributes to their organisational strength, the actual activities they do and the outcomes which they are now experiencing.

The MDG3AI for the time period under review should be highly praised for its dedicated contribution to supporting grassroots women's empowerment. The MDG3AI has established a strong culture, becoming much more than a grant-giving mechanism around MDG3 aims. It has had an impact on the partners beyond their individual projects, introducing them to new methodologies as well as enhancing organisational capacity and approaches. It has also encouraged learning and sharing between partners, fostering collective action and understanding.

The MDG3AI needs to ensure adequate Monitoring and Evaluation at all levels within the project. This is lacking overall, and for the final year it needs to consider how it will consolidate its learning and monitoring with partners. **The MDG3AI as a whole has done very well to achieve as much as they have and the project is well placed to continue into the final year.**

Challenges

The Review found that although much good work is being done and groups are dedicated to implementing their activities further to have greater outcomes, they face **three significant challenges**. They are:

- *power imbalances* between themselves and the government / local authorities;
- *lack of accountability and political will* from the government in meeting demands and negotiating terms to secure rights;
- *inadequate capacities* in groups' strategies to move beyond awareness raising / claiming rights.

Review Recommendations

Based on the Review, the following recommendations are proposed for the upcoming year.

Recommendation 1: That the MDG3AI staff team propose and develop a simple but overarching monitoring framework, which includes a monitoring matrix of key objectives, purpose and final goal and use it as a monitoring tool for internal management purposes, as well as a source of information.

Recommendation 2: That the MDG3AI prioritises the third (final) batch of members in the final year of the project, both in terms of frequency of monitoring and in terms of re-assessing their capacity against what they are aiming to achieve in a year.

Recommendation 3: That the MDG3AI should take care to ensure that before the final review in 2011, the MDG3AI members should be encouraged to capture information on outcomes and their attribution more systematically and rigorously. For example, develop learning pieces with members before the end of the Initiative which relates directly to common outcome or impact areas.

Recommendation 4: Maintain focus on encouraging "shared learning" and monitoring, providing an opportunity for partners to build their capacity through learning from other partners.

Recommendation 5: That the MDG3AI maintains its support for the demand-side advocacy of its members but also pilots initiatives on strategies for engaging governments, duty bearers and service providers (the supply side) as the challenges around power, authority and process for grassroots women groups are significant.

Recommendation 6: That MDG3AI consider resource sovereignty which includes an empowerment approach for income generation as participants of the review expressed this is the priority for women and their economic empowerment.

Working with an analysis and focus that builds on grassroots women's participation, critical thinking and effective strategies that organisations have used so far in the face of voice, demand and accountability challenges will support some of the above recommendations. Beyond this it is important for the MDG3AI to explore achievements made so far in spaces of engagement in order to spread and replicate these good models to enhance the work further for the final year and beyond. Develop approaches that continue to work with the uniqueness of grassroots women so that connections are made, impacts felt, and relationships at all levels are strengthened.

1. Introduction

This report highlights the findings of the Midterm Review of the MDG3 Accountability Initiative (MDG3AI) which is funded by a grant through the Dutch Ministry. Specifically the report:

- uses the draft empowerment framework developed during the Review to assess progress;
- reflects questionnaire data and achievements attained to date;
- highlights key challenges;
- highlights key lessons;
- presents the principal recommendations that require further attention.

The Initiative

The Huairou Commission (HC) has received one of 45 Dutch grants to accelerate gender equality and the Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDG3), on the premise that organised groups of grassroots women have worked locally to develop their families and communities and must be recognised at familial and institutional levels as actors in development (and so within the call of the MDG3). The HC works from the perspective that grassroots women are experts on their communities' needs and innovators in developing solutions to the problems their communities face. They have firsthand experience of what works and what does not work in their communities and are crucial to achieving change.

From this perspective, the HC launched the MDG3 Accountability Initiative (MDG3AI) in October 2008 with 42 participating grassroots groups and women's organisations in 27 different countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The total budget of the Initiative is €1.2 million, with the grant range to members between $5000 USD – $20,000 USD a year. The Initiative supports the members involved to use a bottom up

approach that engages locally active grassroots groups in initiating and sustaining projects. The focus of the Initiative is twofold:

- To advance women's empowerment through supporting initiatives that make concrete improvements in grassroots women's lives;

- To share strategies and approaches developed at the grassroots with stakeholders, policy makers and institutions for lessons on empowerment, policy and investment approaches.

The proposed activities are designed to empower and build the capacity of poor and marginalised women. By linking diverse issues to the MDG framework and reaching out to relevant community stakeholders, grassroots women's group, within an empowerment context, are able to:

- Use the MDGs as an accountability framework and platform for dialogue between stakeholders and local authorities;

- Enlarge and strengthen their own processes and organising (by networking across villages, creating coalitions, etc.);

- Convince community members and/or stakeholders to see grassroots women differently, as political contributors to development and poverty reduction, rather than as victims, beneficiaries or targets of development programming.

2. Methodology

A questionnaire was designed with the aid of the Huairou Commission to poll member organizations of their gains and challenges (Annex 2). The questionnaire was completed by the MDG3AI members through focus group discussions of grassroots women. Nineteen implementing groups were invited to be part of the Review and 12 of these completed the questionnaire and ten gave follow up phone interviews along with three staff members of the Huairou Commission. Progress in terms of women's empowerment was defined through the questionnaire. Analysis of the information created a draft framework of women's empowerment and indicators were developed within identified areas to consider measuring women's empowerment.

3. Understanding Empowerment

This section presents a draft framework for empowerment, which emerged out of the Review discussions. The framework acts as a basis for reporting purposes in the MDG3AI (Section 4). The framework is still a work in progress, and is piloted for this Review.

The MDG3AI defines and understands women's empowerment to mean, *being able to articulate women's work from a position of strength instead of a recipient of government services, an actor in the process.* During the Review, participants expressed how they define and understand empowerment:

- *"It is the process of awareness and capacity building which leads to greater participation in transformative action."*
- *"Empowerment is based on factors such as capacity, the ability for strength and leadership but it is also focused on factors such as self-esteem."*
- *"A woman who is empowered has self-respect. Self – respect and self esteem are often under-represented to build women's strengths as role models."*
- *"Everything we do now (voice, engage, dialogue, hold authorities to account) connects to the changes we are seeing in women and the men of our community. It is not just the result of a*

house, understanding what is ours, but attitudes are changing from men and how they work with women.”

Based on the responses and discussions the following framework presents participants' analysis and perspectives of what is fundamental for women's empowerment. If resource sovereignty, women's leadership and collective action, along with government accountability and responsiveness are all in place, the likelihood of women's empowerment will increase and changes in well being (impact) will be felt. The framework focuses on these four overlapping elements which form a “virtuous cycle of empowerment” as illustrated in Figure 1. The four elements are:

- *Leadership*: describes the extent to which a woman's role, capability, presence and influence in decision making processes at all levels is increasing.
- *Accountability and Responsiveness:* refers to the extent to which women and men scrutinise government and hold them to account, and the extent to which public policies and institutions respond to the needs of grassroots women and uphold their rights, including access to basic services, equality, and civil liberties.
- *Resource Sovereignty:* the extent that a woman has control over her resources and their derived benefit. Having authority over resources ensures that a woman is more likely to build an asset base.
- **Power of Collective Action:** describes the ability in which women can together network, organise, collaborate in order to achieve their mutually agree aims.

Figure 1. Empowerment Framework for Grassroots Women's Organisations
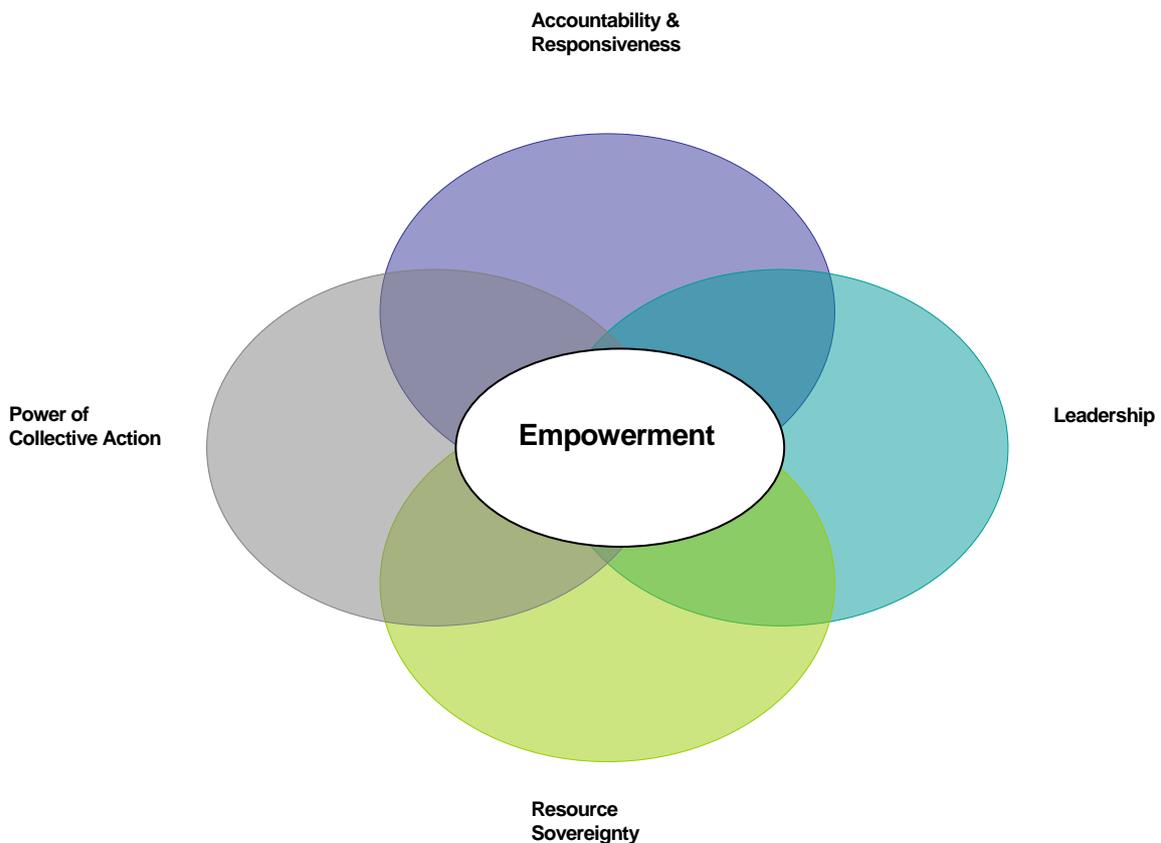
Indicators on Empowerment

Below are several indicators which participants of the Review developed in accordance with the four key areas of the framework which can be used to map out changes in women's empowerment.

Table 1. Empowerment Framework Indicators

Leadership
- Greater participation in transformative action, to greater decision-making power and control over one's life;   - Women legitimately have the ability, individually and collectively, to take part in decision-making processes that shape their societies and their own lives;   - Increase of women leaders in local government structures;   # and % of women in village council and committee posts;   % of women leaders in municipal/city government positions   # of women involved in decision making bodies/processes;   - Women making decisions on issues of income, marriage, and education of children;   - Women are engaging themselves in political issues as well as in decision making bodies;   - Women demonstrate local ownership of the governance process (that women, and men/husbands together with the local government authorities have continued to sustain identified community activities);   - Women feel informed and up to date on development processes in their community and can claim space and participate meaningfully in the process;   - Grassroots women are ready to learn more and participate at district level planning and priority identification meetings;   - Increased voluntary participation of women in community development process (E.g. Local authority service delivery action plans).

Accountability and Responsiveness
- Women are not scared to pursue justice utilising both formal and informal mechanisms;   - Increased number of women holding leaders accountable;   - Women are reaching out to their parliamentary representatives and other leaders to learn more of what they are involved in for the district and give update on development projects in the district;   - Women participating in the decision making, funds allocation processes are vigilant in the process to ensure transparency and accountability;   - Local Government Units respond to women's needs and priorities;   - Grassroots women are willing to speak and voice their concerns;   % of women articulated needs which have been mainstreamed into development plans;   - Notable collaboration with women among the traditional and the local government authorities;   % of women confidently addressing matters with local authorities affecting their community

Resource Sovereignty
- Women acquire land through the customary land practices;   - Women achieve increased control and participation in decision making that leads to their better access to resources, and therefore, improved socio-economic status;   - Grassroots women are capable to secure their properties including land;   - Increase value of time spent in economic activities equals an increase in income generated;   - Participation in livelihood programs;   - Income generated for women from livelihood programs;   - Grassroots women make primary decisions over economic production matters.

Power of Collective Action
- More women speaking out openly to encourage other women and build confidence on their abilities;   # and % of effective women groups formed;   - Capacity of women to organise and decide for themselves without interference of men;   - Increased number of women providing mentorship / act as a role model to other women;   - Women volunteer not only to benefit themselves and their community;   - Women organise and mobilise together when they realise that they are capable of changing their lives;   - Women efforts and participation has been recognised as an integral part of the community's development (as in the case of women's success in advocating for the recognition of their organisation in their respective town/city and the change in the mindset of some local officials that women are a strong force when empowered).

4. Findings, Mechanisms, Progress and Challenges

A.   Leadership

Mechanisms used by MDG3AI members

To increase women's leadership and participation in decision-making processes, the MDG3AI makes important investments in grassroots strategies that have a strong likelihood in supporting women's leadership and their ability to influence decision making. Those interviewed expressed there are four mechanisms which they work with to increase women's participation, presence and influence:

- *Networking and peer mentorship*: the MDG3AI funds grassroots women to come together to organise their movement, to meet new people and to learn from other women. Many of these organisations have organised a form of Local to Local Dialogues (Ntankah, Groots Kenya, and GSF Ghana). Some of these dialogues involve grassroots women meeting women in decision making positions. Outcomes of these meetings include strengthened women's participation as leaders in governmental and non-governmental spaces. (Espaço Feminista).

- *Capacity building and knowledge sharing*: the MDG3AI emphasises the need to share and learn across groups, as much as possible. Those interviewed expressed that through their work and support of the Initiative skill building and information sharing has meant an increase in the number of women who feel empowered and have the background knowledge, to effectively lead and engage in decision-making mechanisms. Examples include i) community support desks for women candidates and building capacity of elected women leaders (UCOBAC); ii) supporting paralegals to help people have an understanding of the local government constituency (UCOBAC); monthly seminars to inform grassroots women of the national budget and how it can be gendered in order to achieve gender sensitive budgeting (Espaço Feminista).

- *Mapping, mobilisation and profiling of local women leaders:* those interviewed expressed that through the capacity building around mapping and advocacy, they are more capable of strategizing together with peers, and are organising and working with local women leaders to bring positive examples into the community. Several interviewees stated they are seeing concrete examples of women who are seen positively in the community and seem to be making changes with local authorities. Many participants shared the view that, "Women feel encouragement to take on leadership roles and to act."

- *Advocacy*: All groups which were interviewed expressed the importance of their advocacy work, and that the aim of advocacy is to influence public-policy and resource allocation decisions within decision making structures. All participants expressed that they use MDG3AI funds to fuel their advocacy efforts. Such as funding debates on the radio about the lack of women in leadership positions (Ntankah) or in the Kakamenga district Groots Kenya has been working in the Interim Independent Electoral commission by conducting civic education and encourages women to register as voters. This involves women in the elections, national referendum and national elections which can lead to greater confidence to participate in the process.

Progress
Through MDG3AI's investments, there is reported progress in community changes in attitude towards women in leadership positions; new trends of women in leadership roles, and local authorities recognizing and seeking grassroots women's expertise in local matters.

According to MDG3AI members, many expressed that changes have taken place within areas of leadership and participation (See Table 2 below for percentages). The largest satisfaction amongst those interviewed is that women are feeling more empowered and participating increasingly in local decision-making processes. As a result, community members and local officials are recognising women's influencing role within the community. This moves them beyond just having access or presence in spaces of decision making.

> '*We are proud of the arising relationship with the women leaders at district level. We have been able to change negative attitudes between women leaders and grassroots women and create a relationship. The women district taskforce is an added value towards strategising with women leaders, and accessing new partners.*' (MDG3AI Participant)

The Review process highlights that there have been **changes in attitudes** of women in leadership roles both by men and women. In Peru one participant spoke about how '*grassroots women are now coming out of their homes and local leaders are asking them for their opinion on community development*', going to community forums. Some respondents noted that women were personally avoiding leadership roles because of the negative images associated with decision making roles. These images include being a bad mother, a prostitute, or someone who didn't care about their family or their community (Ntankah). Those interviewed had stated that '*negative perceptions are now changing due to the MDG3AI work.*'

> '*Grassroots women have changed their attitude towards women in leadership. They used to see them as prostitutes when they leave their homes every day and dressed well for their meetings.*' (MDG3AI Participant)

There is an **increase trend in women in leadership positions** inside their communities (Espaço Feminista and SSP India). Anecdotes of women demanding leadership positions on local councils and community meetings demonstrate women have built relationships and opened political spaces to become leaders within their respective communities. Stories of radical changes within communities show that grassroots women are implementing advocacy strategies that try to change the way leadership is perceived and attained by grassroots women. '*It's important to mention that grassroots women organized in cooperatives have played a decisive role for the following reasons: their organizational structures are directed only by women, of which 280 women form part of the organizational structures. These changes have been successful, even when in the past these structures have been directed by men*' (Las Brumas). Another example, in the Gatundu district in Groots Kenya, they have submitted an application for a woman Chief. The women in Gatundu collectively decided that they would like to have one woman as a Chief in their area and helped her apply. The GAMWI leadership wrote a recommendation for her and nominated her. '*Although the results are yet to be announced, we (women) have very high hopes that she has been taken.*' This will be the second woman to compete for such position in the district. In Kenya, a significant achievement in the Nanyuki village was that women contributed to the writing and inclusion of marginalised groups in the National Land Policy.

Local government recognize and seek grassroots women's expertise. Participants clearly expressed local authorities are increasingly inviting grassroots women into decision making spaces, and wanting their advice on particular issues in relation to community matters. For example, GWEC and partnering women's organisations have successfully lobbied the government to place members of GWEC on the National Housing Committee. GWEC now has a direct influence on policy making to ensure that all housing policies have a gendered approach. In the Gatundu district with Groots Kenya, more women are now being invited to attend district level committee meetings. In Peru, men feel that women have better skills at representing the community then men do because of the training women have received (Groots Peru).

Table 2: Questions from the survey which relates to leadership

Questions	(1) No Progress	(2) Struggling with the issues	(3) Change has taken place, results are clear and evident	(4) Exceeded expectations, extraordinary, exceptional change is happening
B. Progress in Participation in Decision-making				
3. Are more women participating in local decision-making processes?		6% (1)	69% (11)	25% (4)
4. Grassroots women have increased ability and advocacy skills to influence decision-making?		6% (1)	75% (12)	19% (3)
5. As a result are they seeing improvements in their lives (i.e. basic services, water, sanitation, health, etc.)?		20% (3)	60% (9)	20% (3)
6. Has some change happened as a result of your work?			81% (13)	19% (3)
C. Women's Leadership (grassroots, appointed and elected leaders)				
7. Are more grassroots women taking on leadership roles?		6% (1)	81% (13)	13% (2)

Challenges

There are three major challenges which participants expressed in regards to women taking leadership roles in governance; **gender power imbalances** are reflected in the community and within one's self, **gender based violence**, and an **inadequate capacity** and know how of women in leadership and governance.

According to those interviewed, power imbalances continue to undermine women's empowerment and access to leadership positions. For example, there is a general lack of support from the community as it disturbs the power imbalance in the Nanyuki district (Groots Kenya), "women who upset the balance have the attached stigma of a prostitute or a woman who is careless with her family". Many members of the community don't believe that women ought to be leaders of the local community as there is fear that their homes or community would become disorganised. Sometimes the most resistance comes from women themselves - in that women refuse to mentor or help other women (Espaço Feminista). As the numbers of women in leadership positions increase, there can be backlash from the community, demonstrating how the power imbalances reflect deeply held beliefs. For example, Espaço Feminista worked with a woman who was wrongfully accused of being involved with drug dealers in order to prevent her election as vice-president of the neighbourhood association.

According to interviewees, GBV can prevent women from achieving leadership positions because it robs a woman of her self-esteem, and confidence. For example, a woman who fears violence in the home lacks the energy, capacity and time to pursue activities such as holding local leaders to their promises, spending time for organising a women's organisation, or demanding for resources. She often feels ashamed and is focused on her own wellbeing as a priority over the wellbeing of women's organisations (Ntankah) (SSP – India) (MWEDO) (Groots Kenya).

The issue of women's capacity in taking on and demonstrating leadership qualities is also a challenge due to the above issues of power imbalances, inadequate support from communities, a women's level of confidence but also the quality of education and leadership skills a women has. While working to increase women in leadership positions, many of the organisations interviewed express the challenge of illiteracy and know how which can be a barrier for grassroots women taking up leadership roles. *'The lack of confidence in reading translates to a lack of confidence in leading which can lead illiteracy to be debilitating'* (Groots Kenya – Kakamenga & Nanyuki).

B.   Accountability and Responsiveness

Mechanisms used by MDG3AI members

To increase collective accountability and responsiveness of duty bearers, authorities and government, MDG3AI has invested in the following mechanisms and approaches.

- **Capacity building of system administrators:** Informing of local authorities of MDG3-relevant policies and international conventions has helped to fill gaps in information provided by the state, and improve communications between the decentralised and main offices. By informing local authorities of policies and conventions, it can initially help build relationships with duty bearers for subsequent "watch dog" measures if necessary. Some members use capacity building sessions with local authorities as a way to explain the country's MDG3 commitments but also as an entry point to engage with authorities (Ntankah, Cameroon). Those interviewed also expressed how by building capacity of local authorities to understand the MD3 aims it has to a degree further built a relationship with those authorities for future collaboration.

- **Capacity building of local community**: Informing the community about relevant accountability tools such as the local budget or master plans, and teaching them how to understand them and informing them of their rights is extremely useful in having the local community understand the commitments governments are responsible for. Some MDG3AI members use this as a community building exercise tool to raise awareness of plans the government has for their local area (Espaço Feminista, Brazil and SSP India).

- **Watch dog methodology:** The Watch dog approach holds the government accountable for their responsibilities based on the plans they have laid out in master plans, or public budgets, law and policy (local or national). Often the mechanisms involve obtaining documents, analysis of the document with grassroots women in the community and determining if there is or has been real action on the plans. If action has not taken place, lobbying the government and shaming the public official responsible often results in actions (Ntankah) (SSP).

- **Auditing of elections:** Auditing of elections involves having grassroots women volunteering as election monitors to ensure that the process represents the community. Some of the benefits of auditing elections described by interviewees were that women feel include in the local governmental process and have opportunities to meet female authorities in local government (GSF Ghana and Ntankah, Cameroon).

- **Using elections as leverage:** A popular method for demanding accountability is pitting each electoral candidate against one another. Name and shame tactics are used against election candidates who do not follow through on promises. Those interviewed expressed this has also been an opportunity to meet with candidates and discuss issues and opportunities if the official was elected (SSP, GROOTS Peru, Las Brumas).

Great effort has been made through the MDG3AI to hold leaders, local authorities and government officials to account but responsiveness lags behind. Capacity building has played a big role in supporting women to know 'how' to hold government to account and to develop their own unique strategies to do so.

Increase in groups' capacity to hold government to account. Capacity building has played a big role in supporting women to know 'how' to hold government to account, and develop strategies to do so. This support has been significant for members and they are now championing strategies which are inclusive, participatory and collective in nature. Several participants expressed, engagement with government has increased through existing platforms (e.g. community planning meetings) and spaces for dialogue are taken advantage of and generated by women more and more, such as in the case of the Local to Local Dialogue methodology. Use of formal mechanisms to protest are now considered important avenues for redress and the quality of partners' oversight and monitoring has improved significantly (FEMUM, Groots Kenya, GWEC).

'With the mark of our support, the municipality of Villa El Salvador has approved the Equal Opportunity Plan, and has likewise included our suggestions in their operative planning. The officials have been trained in new models (prepared for this second stage of the intervention) in policy marketing and negotiating, gender best practices, innovative services and others' (MDG3AI Participant)

Introduction of new gender friendly legislation demonstrates that national governments are making efforts in being gender accountable and the efforts of grassroots women are resonating within the national constituency. For example:

- FEMUM-ALC Peru developed a gender equality plan which was approved within the local government with involvement from grassroots women. Villa El Salvador has now approved the Equal Opportunity Plan as a direct result of FEMUM-ALC's advocacy.
- Las Brumas is also holding the government accountable to the law by comparing the government's actions with publically available plans.
- In 2004, GWEC and their partner women's organisation lobbied for the enactment of a Gender and Development ordinance by the City's legislative council and a bill was passed because the GWEC members were able to mobilise a large number of women to advocate against the council members.

Increase in responsiveness and transparency of local government and leaders. Another example and area to note from the Review is the trend of local authorities seeking expertise from local grassroots women's groups. For example, GWEC is now recognised by the local government and has a legal identity to transact business. GWEC and the partner women's organisations have been requested by a councillor in San Jose del Monte City to assist in the drafting of the Gender and Development Ordinance.

Table 3: Questions from the Survey which relate to Accountability and Responsiveness

Questions	(1) No Progress	(2) Struggling with the issues	(3) Change has taken place, results are clear and evident	(4) Exceeded expectations, extraordinary, exceptional change is happening
B. Progress in Participation in Decision-making				

4. Grassroots women have increased ability and advocacy skills to influence decision-making?		6% (1)	75% (12)	19% (3)
5. As a result are they seeing improvements in their lives (i.e. basic services, water, sanitation, health, etc.)?		20% (3)	60% (9)	20% (3)
6. Has some change happened as a result of your work?			81% (13)	19% (3)
C. Women's Leadership (grassroots, appointed and elected leaders)				
8. Are local leaders more accountable and responsive to grassroots women's priorities?		31% (5)	63% (10)	6% (1)
9. Are grassroots women more aware of issues, have greater knowledge on how to influence and engage with local authorities?		6% (1)	69% (11)	25% (4)
10. Have they made a formal partnership or agreement (i.e. MOU) with local government?	13% (2)	31% (5)	50% (8)	6% (1)

Challenges

Two challenges which were repeated in the Review survey were, i) the lack of political engagement and accountability and ii) the lack of knowledge of how government system works.

There is a lack of understanding and, in general, political will (incentives do not exist) from local authorities to take women's issues seriously. The lack of understanding of women's issues often results in officials not giving an issue the attention that it requires. For example, the government resettled slum communities in the Philippines without including an assessment of women's needs and concerns. The process did not include gender sensitive practices and resulted in disruption to many women's livelihoods, such as moving women away from their main livelihoods near the train stations (GWEC).

Secondly, there is a need to continue to strengthen the capacity of grassroots women groups to understand and monitor the performance of their local government / authorities and the expenditure of public funds. Participants of the Review reflected that the engagement, dialogue and influencing part of the process needs to be more constructive beyond demanding accountability. Despite efforts in informing women grassroots organisations, MDG3AI members continue to report challenges in having sufficient understanding of government systems, processes and procedures. This specific capacity is essential if grassroots women are to take hold of the demand side of accountability. In Espaço Feminista's survey, there was a response stating, '*I could never believe that one day I would study a master plan, it makes me feel so empowered*'.

C. Resource Sovereignty

Mechanisms used by MDG3AI members

Resource sovereignty, or a person having authority over their own economic resources, is a central component of empowerment. Resources can be defined as land, or assets such as shelter, or income generation assets. Authority over or access to one's resources also means being able to transform their resource into benefits and have authority over those benefits (financially or nutritionally). A woman's

sovereignty over her resources translates, for example, to a women's ability to own land in her own right, the authority to dictate where the finances from her land should be invested, and have decision making over her home and shelter. Below are five mechanisms that MDG3AI organisations have focused for securing resources for grassroots women:

- **Capacity building:** Informing or training community members on their legal rights in order to protect women from losing legal access to their land. For example, UCOBAC holds community meetings to encourage couples to legally document their traditional weddings in case the husband passes away, the wives are still entitled to his assets. In Tanzania, MWEDO informs the community of the Village Land Act, explaining the process to register traditionally allocated land for legal entitlement (Ntankah). Capacity building in the form of legal training has been useful in regards to anti-eviction strategies (Ntankah, Cameroon). LOCOA with organizations in four SE Asian countries have formed an anti eviction coalition for the region, and are developing an anti-eviction manual which documents different methods in advocacy for the protection of homes and assets, led by grassroots women. Capacity building is also necessary for skills in income generation (focusing on agriculture) within an agricultural focus which includes formation of piggeries, food storage capacity, fruit and vegetable planting (SSP, India; Cooperativa Ser do Sertao/Pintadas). Non agricultural capacity building initiatives include savings' groups (LUMANTI, Nepal & UPWD, Cambodia), tie and dye making (Ntankah, Cameroon) and forming micro credit groups (SSP India).

- **Advocacy**: Advocacy in resource sovereignty entails in many cases working to influence the community and community leadership towards a reallocation of resources. One method is holding community discussion groups, or radio programmes which convinces fathers of the benefits of giving equal shares of land to their daughters and sons (Ntankah). Another example involves advocating the village traditional leaders to give communal land to women's groups and registering it legally in their collective name (MWEDO, Tanzania).

- **Gender based analysis:** of national policies is a method of ensuring resources are allocated in women's favour. Examples include gender budgeting over national and local budget policies (Ntankah, Cameroon) and advocating for gender sensitivity in housing policies (GWEC, Philippines). Cooperativa Ser Do Sertao/Pintadas, Brazil are advocating for the continuation of government agricultural programmes which will ensure that women farmers are able to sell a diverse range of foods in the market and encourage farming as an income generating activity.

- **Dialogue**: Holding community dialogues in public forums, such as during football matches, or engaging the community in public debates during community meetings, gives the community a chance to form and voice opinions around particularly sensitive topics, such as land ownership. Ntankah has successfully used this forum to encourage husbands to write their wives into their wills.

- **Networking and peer learning**: Creating connections between grassroots women and authorities can prevent economic loss to women. For example, engagement with land networks, and creating a forum to encourage networking on forced evictions (UPWD, Cambodia), has proven successful. Another method is enabling grassroots women to build relationships with national housing committees to ensure that housing policies are gender friendly (Espaço Feminista, Brazil).

Progress

Women increasingly are gaining resources such as land and assets. The MDG3AI is making phenomenal gains in women gaining resources. Firstly, *women are gaining land.* Examples such as, MWEDO reports 350 women have acquired land and 180 have registered through the local land surveyors. MWEDO is trying to ensure sustainability by advocating for women representation on Village Councils to who oversee

land registration. The Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation (Ghana) now has 80 women who have land titles in their name.

Secondly, women are gaining financial resources. For example, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) has been building women's self-help groups that promote a range of activities to increase women's economic empowerment. These include the creation of vegetable grower's groups, organic farming projects, and upkeep of home herbal/spice gardens. After one year, over 750 women have formed vegetable producer groups.

Improved methods of income generation which cross gender paradigms. Further MDG3AI is encouraging innovative methods which break gender stereotypes to increase women's resources. Specifically with income generation, often there are activities which are gendered. Often times, activities which produce the largest income are often male dominated and women are relegated to roles which are less financially profitable. Breaking gender stereotypes demonstrates how MDG3AI is increasing women's access to greater sources of income. An example is through the Cooperativa Ser do Sertao who have developed innovative strategies for women to earn an income. In Brazil, most agricultural cooperatives are male dominated. With Cooperative Ser do Sertao, women are able to diversify their cooperative to sell vegetables and fruits which increases the variety of food available to villages to provide a holistic and complete diet for families in the village. Secondly, the diverse range of fruits and vegetables are commodities mainly grown and sold by women which increases women's financial gain.

Table 4: Questions from the survey on resource sovereignty

Questions	(1) No Progress	(2) Struggling with the issues	(3) Change has taken place, results are clear and evident	(4) Exceeded expectations, extraordinary, exceptional change is happening
A. Progress in Securing Access and Control over Land and/or Housing				
1. Are women included and actively participating in land and/or housing reform or regularization processes?		29% (4)	42% (6)	29% (4)
2. Has women's access and control over land and/or housing increased?		14% (2)	57% (8)	29% (4)

Challenges

Four major challenges exist for MDG3AI members in the efforts to assist grassroots women to achieve greater resource sovereignty.

Power imbalances within the community. As demonstrated in the governance and accountability sections, power imbalances are still a major hindrance in women gaining resources. Examples include: gender based violence which prevents women from having the self esteem or wherewithal to challenge their family or local authority over resources (GWEC). As land is traditionally a patriarchal domain, some women don't challenge their husbands for fear of conflict with their husbands or they don't know how to take legal action to claim back the land (Groots Kenya – Kakamega, GWEC, and MWEDO).

The political economy of reform (or lack of reform). In many countries the constituency for reforms that will improve grassroots women's lives have been too weak for changes to allow women to gain resources. For example MDG3AI members repeated that village bureaucracy creates walls in granting women legal

documents to own land (MWEDO - Tanzania); there is a lack of public policies that are gender friendly in the ownership of land and housing (GWEC); and there is a lack of follow through in the implementation of monitoring policies and their gender impact (GWEC).

Lack of capacity. Indicative of a lack of community knowledge on housing and land, MDG3AI organisations are focused on building capacity of women and communities on rights and mechanisms to access housing and land (MWEDO Tanzania and Ntankah Cameroon). Several are also (sharing and systematizing strategies) building capacity around anti eviction. (GWEC) (LOCOA).

Environmental factors. Women's access to resources is further restricted by environmental issues. For example, drought conditions that negatively impact the growth of crops in semi-arid climates are a problem that all in the community encounter, but impact most heavily on women (MWEDO) (SSP). Further during food crises, commodities that are mainly grown by women are more insecure due to greater fluctuations in market prices.

D.   Power of Collective Action

Mechanisms used by MDG3AI members:
There are two main mechanisms women are using to organise their movements. First is networking and peer learning across local, regional, or international boundaries. Secondly, women's organizations have mobilized to secure physical space for their organizing, income-generating and capacity building activities. Table 5 highlights the MDGAI invested in grassroots participation in these events for the purpose of networking, peer learning and coalition building.

- **Networking and peer learning.** Networking and peer learning is crucial for women to build power to take collective action and organise. The ability to exchange knowledge across networks in important to share and replicate successes and to avoid prior failures. Examples of networking and peer learning include an e-newsletter that is widely disseminated as well as, the opportunity to physically represent the organisation in international meetings or regional activities. (DAMPA) (GWEC) (MWEDO). In Barangay Tanza, the 5 organizations created an intergenerational dialogue between, youth, older persons, women and home owners association. The group developed plans targeting specific interest as well developing multiple actors (DAMPA).

- **Physical and financial space to organise.** The significance of the financial contributions made by MDG3AI funds to members should not be under valued. The empowerment framework emphasizes the multiple dimensions of support needed and in the face of political, economic and social constituencies often working against women's rights. Having physical and financial space (resources) is pivotal for women's (organizations) movement to organise (mobilize). The space enables the organisations to focus on strategizing the women's movement instead of worrying about logistics. (Cooperativa Ser Do Sertao)

Table 5: Summary of Review participants that have attended international meetings

Number of surveys	Meeting Name
5	Asia Grassroots Women's International Academy, Cebu City, Philippines (October, 2008)
3	World Urban Forum IV, Nanjing, China (November, 2008)
1	Commission on the Status of Women, New York, U.S.A. (February, 2009)
2	Local to Local Dialogue Training, Accra, Ghana (March 2009)
7	UN-Habitat Governing Council Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya (April, 2009)
2	UN-ISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Geneva, Switzerland (June, 2009)

4	Local to Local Dialogue Training, Quito, Ecuador (July, 2009)
1	Anti-Eviction Strategies Mapping Meeting, Makasar, Indonesia (November, 2009)
2	Africities Summit, Marrakesh, Morocco (December, 2009)
1	Commission on the Status of Women, New York, U.S.A. (February, 2010)
2	Grassroots Women's Land Academy, Lusaka, Zambia (February, 2010)
9	Grassroots Women's International Academy, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (March, 2010)
10	World Urban Forum V, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (March, 2010)

Progress:

MDG3AI recognises that in order to effectuate any substantial changes in women's empowerment, women need to organise. The ability to understand each other's perspectives helps to understand where the challenges, barriers and strengths lie. At the heart of MDG3AI, grassroots groups focus on bringing women together through local, regional and national exchanges. The purpose is to strengthen a collective voice so that this can be scaled up and allow for successes to be replicated in other areas.

The *Initiative* is making a concerted effort to invest in grassroots women, their empowerment and strategies they are using to hold government to account, acquire land and improve the lives of grassroots women. This is felt across the *Initiative* and with members and is making a positive impact on women's empowerment. All groups in the Review expressed how important this was for them, how it contributes to their organisational strength as well as the actual activities they do and the outcomes which they are now experiencing. **Investing in organised groups of grassroots women and supporting them to strengthen their work and link up horizontally with peers is a key approach which is critically important for any success to happen in MDG3.**

Women's groups have more prestige with local authorities as they access international forums (DAMPA)(GWEC). This has helped support women to take up leadership roles based on increased prestige gained through involvement in international or other events which results in greater recognition and a greater respect for their work (Groots Kenya –Kakamenga). '*Being part of the MDG3AI gives attention to our organisation and housing and eviction issues. Local authorities now understand the context of the issues and see its part of a global campaign. They give greater attention to global campaigns than just local organisations' (*Groots Peru).

Increased capacity through networking and peer learning. Bringing grassroots women together provides opportunity to increase each other's capacity in a reciprocal manner. Through the networking and peer learning meetings, organisations are able to react to different challenges quicker and possibly prevent greater catastrophes (GWEC) (Groots Kenya –Kakamenga). '*MDG3 Initiative likewise broadened the network of LOCOA in some countries and provided LOCOA with insights and lessons as well as opportunities to get updated on current situations in various countries which can facilitate LOCOA's own strategic planning for the next 3-4 years to be conducted in October 2010'* (LOCOA).

Increase cohesion amongst the women's movement. Having space and capacity gives women a reason to bond with each other. There is a related understanding of each other from the position of women and where their cohesion strengthens each other's quality of life (Groots Kenya – Gatundu). "*Our main challenge was to create a group able to support each other despite their huge differences, based on a spirit of being part of it (pertencimento), and solidarity." (*Espaço Feminista)

Table 6: Questions from the survey on power of collective action

Questions	(1) No Progress	(2) Struggling with the issues	(3) Change has taken place, results are clear and evident	(4) Exceeded expectations, extraordinary, exceptional change is happening

B. Progress in Participation in Decision-making				
3. Are more women participating in local decision-making processes?		6% (1)	69% (11)	25% (4)
4. Grassroots women have increased ability and advocacy skills to influence decision-making?		6% (1)	75% (12)	19% (3)
5. As a result are they seeing improvements in their lives (i.e. basic services, water, sanitation, health, etc.)?		20% (3)	60% (9)	20% (3)
6. Has some change happened as a result of your work?			81% (13)	19% (3)
C. Women's Leadership (grassroots, appointed and elected leaders)				
9. Are grassroots women more aware of issues, have greater knowledge on how to influence and engage with local authorities?		6% (1)	69% (11)	25% (4)

Challenges

Despite the progress, there are still challenges which prevent women from coming together to organise.

Lack of commitment and understanding of women's causes prevents women from working together. There is a general lack of commitment in regards to the women's movement by the community, husbands, and by the women themselves (Ntankah). A challenge is the divide between grassroots women and non-grassroots women groups. For example, during Local to Local meetings, it was difficult to find women in local leadership positions who were interested in meeting with grassroots women. Both groups of women do not feel they have similar priorities and it can be difficult to organize a meeting. '*It's a movement of different women*' (FEMUM-ALC).

Scaling up. Grassroots women are coming together but groups felt frustrated that they could not scale up this effort more due to limited financial and human resources. Groups identified that one of the greater tasks for them is the inability to gather women effectively and work with them on a regular basis. It was reported that they are overstretched already and so scaling up women's collective action is difficult at times. (GWEC)

Inadequate financial and physical capacity for networking and collaboration. Cooperativa Ser Do Sertao has difficulty finding a physical space for their members to meet. It creates a large challenge for the group to have regular meetings and to find a supportive community. The lack of financial assets also makes it extremely difficult for organisations to learn from movements in other regions. Organisations such as DAMPA work through less expensive methods to continue the peer learning such as e-newsletters, but it has been expressed that physical networking meetings where you can meet people face to face are critical and must be supported (Espaço Feminista Brazil).

Multiple small funds. The last and a largest challenge faced by the organisations within the MDG3AI is the lack of consistent financial capacity of the grassroots group. As the MDG3AI provides a small portion of funds that contributes to each organisation's overall objectives, it's difficult to determine which financial contribution is directed to the impact. For example, MDG3AI is only one of the initiatives that fund the organisations overall objectives, other projects include Women's Land Link Africa, or local funding sources.

Each funding source funds a different activity which all contributes to the higher objective. Having multiple short term funds for different project makes it difficult for members to organise long term goals or long term planning. It also creates difficulty in attribution of specific funds to specific outcomes. (SSP, Groots Kenya, DAMPA).

5. Conclusion

The MDG3AI is on track to achieve the objectives it has set out to do. The components of the Initiative, which are identified in the Empowerment Framework, are largely being implemented considering the diversity and depth of organisations the MDG3AI supports. **Grassroots women groups are effectively implementing the individual projects, to the best of their ability and with great commitment and enthusiasm to take the next year forward.**

The Review process identifies that positive changes are taking place in the four overlapping areas of the framework. Furthermore, awareness creation, greater voice and overall representation of grassroots women is growing according to those interviewed. There is significant appreciation and enthusiasm for bringing women together to understand how they need to and can influence the process of development, as it affects their lives. Grassroots women are influencing and strengthening accountability mechanisms as they are becoming more involved in the process.

However, most groups expressed the view that the next year of the MDG3AI needs to expand and build on these initial achievements for significant long lasting change and outcomes. It is not enough to raise awareness, to dialogue or demand for changes or to shift policy, but there needs to be greater follow up of these activities to see if or how implementation is occurring. Desired outcomes such as increased grassroots women representation on local councils, gendered planning, and women friendly budget development – are still few in number. Institutions at the local community level are slow to change, and the quality and level of grassroots women's oversight and monitoring of government needs strengthening (particularly at policy level). Systems of sharing best practice and successes to be replicated need to be shared more. The levels of responsiveness and accountability of local authorities, service providers, and governments are still not at a level which reflects that they are not taking grassroots women's needs seriously, nor are local government systems changing fast enough or deep enough to be more transparent and effective for grassroots women.

Grassroots women groups funded by the MDG3AI are open about their challenges as they are about their successes, and for this they should be commended. Their overall commitment and perseverance in supporting, advocating and demanding change for the betterment of women in the face of complex and significant challenges is extraordinary. Their spirit and optimism is inspiring and what makes the MDG3AI a real success.

6. Moving Forward - Recommendations

The following are recommendations for the MDG3AI as it moves into its final year.

Monitoring & Evaluation, Learning

The overall Review findings did not focus on the monitoring and evaluation system or approach within the MDG3AI. However there needs to be consideration in the final year of monitoring and learning for the entire MDG3AI team, linked to but broader than a collective revision of the Empowerment Framework.

Recommendation 1: (Key recommendation) That the MDG3AI team **develop an overarching monitoring framework, which includes a monitoring matrix of key objectives, purpose and final goal, and use it as a monitoring tool for internal management purposes**, as well as a source of information for external

review. The monitoring framework should be shared and discussed with partners/members so everyone is engaged. MDG3AI should also consider the implications for providing further support to the members on how they will capture outcomes from their activities, including the possibility of more detailed thinking on the utility of the "Most Significant Change"[1] methodology, women empowerment outcomes and indicators, identifying **success stories** and **ensuring outcomes are in line with the overall objectives of the** *Initiative*.

Recommendation 2: That the MDG3AI prioritises the third (final) batch of members in the final year of the project, both in terms of frequency of monitoring and in terms of re-assessing their capacity against what they are aiming to achieve in a year.

Recommendation 3: That the MDG3AI should take care to ensure that before the final review in 2011, the MDG3AI members should be encouraged to capture information on outcomes and their attribution more systematically and rigorously. For example, develop learning pieces with members before the end of the Initiative which relates directly to common outcome or impact areas.

Capacity Building and Supporting Organisations in Grassroots Women Led - Government Dialogue

MDG3AI capacity building processes seek to engage critically with organisations and respond to the needs of the grassroots women. Working away from blue-prints and recipes for change, MDG3AI recognises that new learning takes place in different ways for different organisations and is context sensitive.

Recommendation 4: (Key Recommendation) Maintain focus on **encouraging "shared learning" and monitoring, providing an opportunity for members to build their capacity through learning from other partners**. Any training inputs and exchanges should be tailored as much as possible to the various levels of member capacity and need, using the more experienced members as trainers/mentors where feasible.

Recommendation 5: (Key recommendation) That MDG3AI place more focus on the application of **advocacy considering the 'supply' side and non-adversarial approaches, and strategising around grassroots women - government dialogue**. Accountability has both a demand and a supply side, so it's important to address both aspects of governance and accountability.

This will not be easy, but capacity building to address the realities of proven imbalances and non-responsive government and service providers will be needed. A key to governance outcomes and progress is not just grassroots women's abilities to press and demand for accountability and responsiveness, but also the willingness and capacity of local authorities to respond.

The MDG3AI should therefore think creatively about how best to **provide learning opportunities around governance and accountability, drawing on the experiences, lessons and success stories of partners experience and good practice**. A two-way dialogue requires that grassroots women are able to voice their needs or demand their rights in a capable and coherent format, whilst authorities have the necessary awareness and skills to be able to hear those voices. Where possible, exchanges and training should try to include local authorities so that buy in and relationship building is encouraged early on. Above all, however, practiced experiences, rooted in the "political economy" between grassroots women and duty bearers, need to be shared across women's groups members in the MDG3AI.

Enhancing the Difference made through MDG3AI Partnerships

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[1] For reference of the "Most Significant Change" method, please refer to MANDE resources. www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf

The concerns and aspirations of grassroots women's organisations matter to the MDG3AI and should continue to come into the centre of its decision making. Bringing voices of grassroots women into planning and decision making process is fundamental for the *Initiative*.

Recommendation 6: That MDG3AI **consider, through consultations, resource sovereignty and income generation** as relevant outcome measures for members. Members of the Review expressed this as a priority for women for their economic empowerment, and that future programming includes an empowerment approach to women's income generation. This would include women's access to markets, agricultural extension, agricultural inputs and the right to grow crops which maximise her food security and income generation. Within non-agricultural income, this could include holding the government responsible for women's fair shares of the income from small scale/local domestic manufactures, to production for international exports, traded commodities asset sales and public-private partnerships.

In line with the above recommendations, the HC/MDG3AI should consider for the next phase of the programme (if there is one) a strategy on how to build from its current work in grassroots women - government dialogue. Some useful points to consider and build on further:

- A robust monitoring framework will be essential to strengthen both the logic of interventions and the evidence that the MDG3AI is making a difference;
- recognise that change is long-term and the strategies for supporting grassroots women will need to take on a long term vision and approach;
- understand that attitudinal change is important and underpins accountability and economic outcomes;
- work at a number of levels (village, commune, provincial and national) and build alliances and networks across these levels, and develop appropriate measures of success;
- bring people face to face (meetings, workshops, round table, advocacy events) to accelerate shared learning;
- support capacity building initiatives that take into account tackling power structures and both sides (supply and demand) of governance and accountability;
- recognise that a wide range of regional and international agencies can play a role in supporting work at the national level for engagement;
- understand that the capable organisations are important as role models of accountability and integrity for others working at the grassroots level.