

#TaxJustice for Women's Rights!

Global Days of Action | 8-24 March 2017

www.globaltaxjustice.org

BACKGROUND – WHAT'S AT STAKE?

- Women, girls and our allies around the world are calling on our governments to take action for tax justice to fund and fulfil women's rights and ensure women's economic equality and access to justice, health, education, care resources, water, safety and decent work.
- Discriminatory national tax laws, tax havens, and tax cuts for the rich protect capitalism and male privilege, and intensify gender inequality. It's time to put a sharp gender lens on such practices and implement fiscal justice measures that will ensure greater equality.
- We've reached crisis point. The global scandal of tax dodging by multinational corporations and the richest people is devastating our economies and depriving governments of the funds urgently needed to pay for public services vital to achieve women's rights and economic equality.
- Women and girls – especially those marginalised or living in poverty, suffer the most when public services are starved of adequate funding. This includes lack of access to free quality public healthcare, water, education, childcare, social protection, and anti-violence, sexual and reproductive health services, and lack of safe public transport that make cities safer for women.
- Growing use of the VAT and other regressive consumption taxes, as well as lowering of corporate and progressive taxation, is worsening gender inequality.
- More tax-supported public investment in public services is the answer, *not* privatization. For example, the cost of privatized education prevents girls living in poverty from going to school.
- Women spend 2.5 times more time performing unpaid care and domestic work than men.¹ As social services are deprived of public funding, women take on an even greater share of unpaid work.
- In many countries, women perform much of the work in public healthcare and education services. When companies and the rich don't pay their share – and public services are cut, female public service workers who have their wages cut or lose their jobs are doubly impacted.
- Where there are no public water services, women and girls most often carry the burden of getting water to their homes at whatever human cost, making them vulnerable to violence, and keeping them away from education and other work. Access to public water is vital for women's economic autonomy.
- In order to deliver on their human right obligations to citizens, governments must raise sufficient domestic resources to fund public services including public early childhood education, elder care, healthcare, affordable public housing, transportation, and clean water. Such investments will reduce women's burden of unpaid care and enterprise work, ensure more decent work in public service jobs, and free up women's time for education, political participation, and self-care.
- While primarily northern nations, multinational corporations and the wealthy write the tax rules, the tools to fund women's rights and economic equality are undermined. The world will not be able to achieve women and girl's rights, gender equality or the Sustainable Development Goals without taking action for tax justice. We also call for the establishment of an inclusive intergovernmental UN Global Tax Body, where all countries have a seat at the table and equal say in determining international tax rules.

¹ UN Women (2015) *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming economies, realizing rights*: http://progress.unwomen.org/en/2015/pdf/UNW_progressreport.pdf p. 24