

Achieving Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Strengthening Development Cooperation



DIALOGUES AT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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Glossary of Acronyms

AMR	Annual Ministerial Review
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BPFA	Beijing Platform For Action
BSR	Business for Social Responsibility
BWIs	Bretton Woods Institutions
CEB	United Nations Chief Executives Board
CECP	Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy
CEDAW	United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CNIE	China NGO Network for International Exchanges
CO2	Carbon dioxide
CONGO	Conference of NGOs
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAC	Development Assistance Committee

DCF	Development Cooperation Forum
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID	UK's Department for International Development
DPADM	Division for Public Administration and Development Management
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFD	Financing for Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FTAs	Free-Trade Agreements
FTF	Feed the Future
G3ICT	Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies
G-8	Group of Eight
G-20	Group of Twenty
GA	United Nations General Assembly
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHI	Global Health Initiative
GLTN	Global Land Tool Network
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
GPM	Global Preparatory Meeting
HAART	Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HR	Human Rights
IADGs	Internationally Agreed Development Goals
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDA	International Development Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMVF	Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPAD	Institute for Development Assistance
IRENE	United Nations Informal Regional Network
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
IWCA	International Women's Coffee Alliance

LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NCCM	National Council for Childhood and Motherhood
NCGE	National Committee on Gender Equality
NCW	National Council for Women
NDS	National Development Strategy
NPGE	National Programme for Ensuring Gender Equality
NVPs	National Voluntary Presentations
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOK	Norwegian Krone
NPYEE	National Programme for Youth Economic Empowerment
NY	New York
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OESC	Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination
OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
ORIO	Development-related Infrastructure Facility
OSAA	Office of the Special Advisor on Africa
OSAGI	Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
PMTCT	Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS
PNETP	National Plan for the Eradication of Trafficking in Persons
PNPDIM	Promotion and Integral Development of Women
PRS	MDG-based Poverty Reduction Strategies
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
R&D	Research and Development
ROK	Republic of Korea
RTAs	Regional Trade Agreements
SDR	Special Drawing Rights
SEBA	Society for Economic & Basic Advancement
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
S&T	Science and Technology

STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
STP	São Tomé and Príncipe
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGAID	United Nations Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development
UNGIFT	United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNHSP	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOP	United Nations Office for Partnerships
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
WESS	World Economic and Social Survey
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WOCAN	Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
WTO	World Trade Organization

Preface

In 2010, the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council focused on gender equality and the empowerment of women through its Annual Ministerial Review (AMR). The AMR is an annual meeting at which Member States evaluate progress made towards the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The AMR discussion centred on progress made on implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Participants shared National Voluntary Presentations (NVPs) on country-level case studies, lessons learned and success stories on gender equality and women's empowerment. They also made recommendations on how to address current challenges in these areas.

The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) is the other major component of the High-Level Segment. The DCF serves to promote dialogue and collaboration among Member States on international development cooperation issues such as aid quantity, quality and allocation as well as accountability mechanisms and development policy coherence.

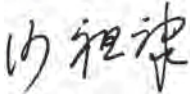
In 2010, the DCF discussions focused on those issues and the impact of the multiple global crises on MDG progress. Participants made action-oriented

recommendations that served as inputs to preparations for the MDG Summit, particularly in the context of the global partnership for development.

They also stressed the need to invest in women – in their education, health, social status and job opportunities. Investment in women is critical to the achievement of the MDGs. In the Ministerial Declaration, which provides policy guidance to Member States, leaders placed gender equality and the empowerment of women at the top of the development agenda.

ECOSOC made women a focus throughout the year. In March, the Beijing Platform for Action was reviewed at the Commission on the Status of Women, on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of its adoption; and in July, the Council focused its discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment – just as the General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing UN Women. This is a welcome development and I urge all stakeholders to work closely with UN Women so that its impact can be maximized.

This book provides an overview of the proceedings of the 2010 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) High-level Segment. It contains keynote speeches, issue papers, roundtable summaries, National Voluntary Presentations, transcriptions of other dialogues and discussions, including a video of the United Nations television debate “Face to Face” (Watch video at <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/tvdebate/>). These materials could serve as reference tools for stakeholders in implementing the Council's recommendations.



Sha ZUKANG

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations

Introduction

The Annual Ministerial Review has made a strong contribution in making 2010 a watershed year for women. First, it coincided with the final stages of negotiations on the establishment of the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Women). Second, the session also took place during a critical stage in the negotiations of the outcome document of the High-level Plenary meeting on the MDGs, when the Council had to address and, in some instances, agree on positions on a broad range of issues that were being considered in the context of the negotiations linked to the Plenary Meeting.

In this context, I am pleased to say that the Council has lived up to the expectations placed on it. The 2010 Ministerial Declaration served as a useful source for agreement on the MDG outcome document on issues related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, as did the 2009 Declaration on global public health, including the parts related to women and girls' health. The 2010 Declaration not only highlighted progress, challenges and implementation gaps but also provided a roadmap to strategies to effectively implement international commitments on gender equality and to scale up and accelerate action in this area. It emphasized the move from commitment to action in several key areas by promoting novel forms of collaborative actions, partnerships and engagement of new and diverse stakeholders.

Another key aspect of the High-level segment was the National Voluntary Presentations (NVPs) made by a record number of both developed and developing countries. These presentations by Ministers and senior Government officials, supported in some instances by national civil society representatives and development partners, represented a rich review and assessment of how countries with different challenges and strategies have addressed the MDGs, in general, and the question of gender equality and women's empowerment, in particular. The process of identifying success stories, lessons learned and gaps that remain to be filled in national development policies can greatly benefit others. Through the NVP process, the Council continued to assert its role as a useful policy forum that connects the global development agenda to national development policy efforts.

The review of progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment also required a focus on the role of women in countries in special situations, particularly in crisis and post-crisis situations. Towards this end, the Council held a policy dialogue on this issue, during which the extreme vulnerability of women and their marginalization in crisis situations were addressed. Participants made a strong call for promoting women's participation at all stages, from emergency relief to recovery and from peacekeeping to peace-building. The establishment of specific mechanisms and institutional arrangements to promote the empowerment of women, with appropriate funding, was considered essential to bring about sustainable solutions to crises. The Council could play a useful role in following up on these recommendations in the future.

The current economic and financial downturn has created much concern over its effect on the achievement of development goals. This concern was an underlying theme of the discussions of the Council during its 2010 sessions. A high-level policy dialogue was held with representatives of the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and UNCTAD, during which a commitment to multilateral action was expressed. This dialogue also stressed that major development problems cannot be solved without improved global economic governance, an issue that the Council should continue to address.

The second Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) was an opportunity to address the question of how to strengthen and make development cooperation more effective in light of the current difficult economic context. The Council asserted that official development assistance and other development financing remain essential in ensuring progress towards achieving the development goals, an important principle which was reaffirmed at the MDG

High-level Plenary Meeting. By addressing key principles and mechanisms for development cooperation, including the issues of policy coherence and aid effectiveness, the Council has successfully established itself as one of the primary arenas for global dialogue and policy review in this field.

Finally, the success of the Annual Ministerial Review would not have been possible without the active involvement of entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental stakeholders, who, through their expertise and dynamism, during formal meetings or at side events, created opportunities for substantive discussions on a wide range of cross-cutting themes. Together, these activities served as the Council's hub for promoting and catalyzing tangible, multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementing the United Nations Development Agenda. Together, they have embodied the spirit of ECOSOC and its added value within the United Nations family. I trust that this invaluable spirit will stand out in this publication and I thank all those who have contributed to this successful session.



H.E. Mr. Hamidon ALI

President of the Economic and Social Council

Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations

Chapter 1

Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

Overview

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) organized its fourth Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) on the theme “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to women’s empowerment and gender equality” during the High-level Segment in 2010.

The 2010 AMR established a forum for the international community to: (1) assess the state of implementation of the United Nations Development Agenda, with a focus on its gender-related goals and objectives; (2) explore key challenges in achieving the international goals and commitments in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women; and (3) consider recommendations and new initiatives to accelerate gender-related objectives. A majority of keynote and guest speakers drew attention to the cross-cutting nature of women’s empowerment and gender equality, asserting that it is a vital component towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A number of speakers also emphasized the direct correlation between women’s rights and human rights and, subsequently, called upon the strengthening of this linkage. Many speakers also called for increased collaboration efforts and strengthened commitments, especially in the area of maternal health, which

has been cited as the area with least progress. While there was a unanimous recognition that great strides have been made in ensuring women's right and empowering women, many speakers agreed that such progress is uneven across countries.

The following is a synopsis of the contributions outlined in this chapter.

- **H.E. Mr. Hamidon Ali**, President of the Economic and Social Council, called upon all delegations to formulate and commit on an action-oriented Ministerial Declaration on the issue of women's empowerment and gender equality that will then translate to a concrete agenda. This stems from the belief that promoting the rights of women and girls will not only help achieve MDG 3 but also all the other MDGs. He also stressed the importance of women in playing active roles in reducing poverty and hunger and called upon the delegates to strengthen commitments to empower rural women. He warned that current aid commitments are still below those pledged at the United Nations and G8 Summits. In conclusion, he urged all Member States to accelerate the advancement of women's rights and gender equality, underscoring that these achievements will positively contribute to the fulfillment of the other MDGs.
- **Mr. Ban Ki-moon**, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in referring to the 2010 Millennium Development Goal Report, indicated that, while significant progress has been made in all the MDGs, overall progress is uneven. He asserted that the goals were achievable but some are likely be missed if efforts are not made to strengthen commitments and realize them through action. He highlighted three priority areas for urgent attention: jobs; food security; and investing in women. He expressed the view that the lack of attention to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, including maternal health, may put peace, security, and sustainable development in jeopardy. He was optimistic that the creation of UN Women would expedite progress and the realization of the international community's commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality.
- **Ms. Michelle Bachelet**, former President of Chile, stressed that gender equality is an essential expression of human rights and that women's rights are human rights. She called upon the international community to turn the principles established in the Beijing Declaration into visible results on the ground. She noted that, while progress has been made in this area, it remains unbalanced and uneven. She cited examples of progress that her past administration achieved to address gender disparities and social

injustices against women and girls. She concluded that women's rights should be strongly attached to the notion of human rights and that the progress of men and women are inextricably bound to each other.

- **Mr. Andrew Mitchell**, Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom, emphasized that women and girls play a salient role in ensuring peace, security, sustainable development and to the overall achievement of the MDGs. He asserted that the issue of reproductive and maternal health is one that faces the greatest challenges for the international community, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. He expressed support for the "Delivering as One" approach as an attempt to better coordinate efforts and increase effectiveness of service delivery related to social and economic development. In addition to urging Member States to take action, he called on the private sector to join the efforts of the international community to ensure gender equality.
- **H.E. Mrs. Moushira Khattab**, Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of Egypt noted the progress that has been made in empowering women and ensuring gender equality and reaffirmed the United Nations as the multilateral forum to achieve further progress. She highlighted Egypt's efforts to mainstream gender equality in its national policies. She noted with deep concern the potential ramifications that the global economic crisis will play in undermining the recent progress and called upon the international community to ensure gender equity and to make treaty bodies a more integral part of the effort to empower women.
- **Ms. Frances Stewart**, Chair of the Committee for Development Policy, declared that, while progress has been made in the areas of women's empowerment and gender equality, important gaps remain. She identified the global economic crisis and climate change as barriers to the achievement of gender equity. She noted that education, access to resources, employment opportunities, and representation in decision-making levels are key areas that can transform the lives of women worldwide and contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

Translating words to deeds: Achieving gender equality and development for all¹

By H.E. MR. HAMIDON ALI

Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations
President of the Economic and Social Council
United Nations

The 2010 High-level Segment is an occasion to focus on some of the most pressing issues in development, now made more challenging by the subdued pace of economic recovery. Recent experience proves that this is particularly true for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

At the same time, the High-level Segment, in particular, and the substantive session, in general, are the most important and high-profile events in the ECOSOC's calendar. They, therefore, play an important role in our continuous efforts to revitalize ECOSOC and, in so doing, ensure the continued relevance of the United Nations in the areas of development, social and cultural affairs. In a results-based era, the United Nations – and the Economic and Social Council – must not only bring to the global governance debate the legitimacy it possesses, given its representative nature, but also a capacity to galvanize and implement effectively international action to overcome collective challenges.

The High-level Segment must, therefore, not only be a forum for the exchange of views and experiences, but must also produce tangible results, be they in terms of policy guidance or the promotion of coherence. Results, which are understood by not only those of us in this room but also by the public at large. In the end, all of us are judged in the court of public opinion.

It is for this reason that I have challenged all delegations, including my own, as facilitator, to formulate and agree on a Ministerial Declaration that is not only short and action-oriented, but also one which is understood by the

¹ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

man-in-the-street as a collective expression of the international community on this ECOSOC theme. This means that we have to move away from long and ambiguous statements of yesteryears.

I am happy to inform you that delegations have agreed on this approach and extremely good progress has been made. I would have liked to have had the Ministerial Declaration agreed to by now. However, owing to scheduling difficulties, this has not been possible. I would like to thus urge all delegations to continue to exhibit the same flexibility so that we can conclude the negotiations on the Declaration.

The change in the format and content of the Declaration is a key point of the overall change in ECOSOC that I had called for when Malaysia assumed the ECOSOC Presidency in January. I had mentioned that my views of the changes that needed to be made are encapsulated in what I call the five “musts”:

- **Firstly:** We must adopt a proactive and constructive agenda. Our actions must be purposeful;
- **Secondly:** We must adopt shorter, more focused agreements and resolutions. Instead of an avalanche of words which bury us all, we must have a flood of results;
- **Thirdly:** We must do more to improve the atmospherics surrounding the ECOSOC. We need to promote greater transparency and honest dialogue, so concerns are clearly understood;
- **Fourthly:** We must move beyond stale arguments; and
- **Lastly:** We must do justice to the ECOSOC's role in the operational aspects of the work of the United Nations.

I am also pleased to note that this message has resonated not only within the United Nation but elsewhere too. For example, as a result of the meeting between the ECOSOC, the Bretton Woods Institutions, WTO and UNCTAD, there is now a renewed spirit of cooperation, rather than competition, between these institutions. This can only be good for our collective constituencies, namely, the world's poorest and most marginalized, to whom we are all accountable as members of a common human family.

The theme of this year's Annual Ministerial Review, “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women”, is particularly opportune and timely, as women all too often are the poorest and most marginalized. It allows us to strengthen the linkages between gender equality, women's human rights and

non-discrimination as a basis for progress in development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Yet, despite this increasing awareness everywhere, women and girls today face gender-based discrimination. While MDG-3 relates directly to the empowerment of women, all MDGs are dependant upon women having a greater say in their own development. Malaysia's own experience is testament to this. Nowhere else is the mutual interdependence between development, human rights and development stronger than in the issue of gender.

Since the last substantive session, we have engaged in a broad preparatory process for the Annual Ministerial Review to explore key challenges in achieving gender equality and to consider recommendations and proposals for action across critical areas.

ECOSOC had also addressed innovative partnerships and sources of funding through a Special Event on Philanthropy. Representatives of various stakeholders discussed modalities of cooperation to end violence against women and girls and promote women's economic empowerment.

The Global Preparatory Meeting, on the other hand, sent a clear message: rural women are a critical force in reducing poverty and hunger and, therefore, in sustainable development. If countries are to achieve their development goals, concerted and targeted action is needed to empower rural women.

We are fortunate this year to have had 13 countries volunteering to make national voluntary presentations. These reports offer an inside look into national efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

All these activities prove the importance of addressing this year's theme and also of ECOSOC's role in these efforts.

The second Development Cooperation Forum taking place this year is an opportunity for us to accelerate progress in strengthening the global partnership for development.

This year, the state of development cooperation is reviewed against the backdrop of competing demands on development policies and aid flows, as the world is still recovering from the devastating economic and financial crisis. Despite steady levels of aid, we are below the commitments made at the United Nations and G8 Summits.

The Forum has all the potential to become the principal venue for global dialogue and policy review on the effectiveness and coherence of international development cooperation. The strong legislation of the Forum allowing for the inclusion of all relevant development actors provides a unique opportunity

to garner a wide range of inputs for a deepened dialogue and understanding of the international development cooperation agenda. These issues are vital to the achievement of the MDGs. However, the potential that the DCF has is constrained by the following:

- **Firstly:** It is held once every two years;
- **Secondly:** It only produces a Chair's summary; and
- **Thirdly:** It is not institutionally linked to any other processes related to development cooperation either within the United Nations or outside.

This is an issue that will need to be addressed during the Sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly when, as you know, we will review Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council.

I trust that with its strong legislative basis, the enthusiastic involvement of the United Nations system and the other development partners will enable the Council to move forward with firm commitment and strong political resolve to accelerate progress in the economic, social and cultural spheres worldwide.

Increasing uniform delivery through collective action²

BY MR. BAN KI-MOON

Secretary-General
United Nations

As we meet, the world is still grappling with the aftershocks of multiple crises.

The financial, food and climate crises have set back efforts towards the Millennium Development Goals and threaten future progress.

We live under the shadow of continued global financial and economic uncertainty.

The recovery from the most severe recession in recent history has been tentative and uneven. It cannot compensate for the losses suffered.

Tens of millions more people have been pushed into extreme poverty. Yet, despite these setbacks, there is reason for optimism.

The 2010 Millennium Development Goals Report shows that we have made significant progress in some countries on reducing extreme poverty over the past decade.

The overall poverty rate is expected to fall to 15 per cent by 2015 – that is half of 1990 levels.

More children than ever before now have access to education. Global school enrolment stands at 85 per cent. Many countries have crossed the 90 per cent threshold.

We have seen significant declines in child mortality and the incidence of measles, malaria and neglected tropical diseases.

We have also seen dramatic increases in access to antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS.

² From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

Tens of millions of lives have been saved through collective action by governments, civil society and international organizations.

These successes - many of which have taken place in the world's poorest countries - show that the MDGs are achievable.

They show that where we try, we succeed. If we don't try, we fail. The recipe is clear: the right policies, adequate investment and reliable international support.

However, let me inject a note of caution. Overall progress has been uneven.

We are likely to miss several Goals, especially in the least developed countries, land-locked developing countries, small island developing states and countries in, or emerging from, conflict.

Climate change remains a threat to sustainability. Hunger and food insecurity stalk millions.

Stubborn disparities persist - between rich and poor, between rural and urban, between males and females.

The vast majority of the world's people still need - and deserve - drastic improvements in their quality of life.

They need a world where the benefits of economic and social development reach everyone - a world where the major economies are held accountable to their many commitments.

This is the message I will take to the MDG Summit in September.

And it is the message I delivered to G-20 leaders this weekend.

I was encouraged by the commitment of leaders there to accelerate progress on the MDGs, despite the challenges they face.

The next G20 Summit in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in November, will include development on the agenda for the first time.

Governments must agree on a concrete action plan that provides a clear roadmap to meet our promise by 2015.

We must deliver results for the world's most vulnerable.

As the United Nations' central forum for international economic and social issues, this Council has an important role to play.

I see three urgent areas for focus.

First: jobs. Today, world unemployment is the highest on record. 211 million people are unemployed. We need to create 470 million jobs in the next ten years. It is time to focus on decent work - in all nations, not just the wealthy - common-sense investment in green jobs and a green recovery.

Second: food security. Worldwide, more than 1 billion people are hungry. Let us respond to this unprecedented number by delivering on the commitments made in l'Aquila. Let us invest in the world's small farmers. They produce most of the world's food and are the mainstays of developing economies.

Third, let us invest in women. This is where we need progress the most. Social, political and economic equality for women is integral to the achievement of all MDGs. Until women and girls are liberated from poverty and injustice, all our goals - peace, security, sustainable development - stand in jeopardy.

It is therefore most appropriate that this session of the Economic and Social Council is focused on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Empowering women is an economic and social imperative.

Of the 72 million children of primary-school age still excluded from school systems, two-thirds are girls.

Women hold only 18 per cent of the world's parliamentary seats.

And throughout the world, too many women live in fear of violence. Violence against women is a crime and must not be acceptable in any culture.

In too many countries, policies, legal frameworks and social justice systems are just not adequate.

Of all the MDGs, the one where we have achieved least success is on maternal health.

Each year, between 10 and 15 million women suffer long-term disability due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

Every year, more than a million children are left motherless. In the 21st century, it is unacceptable that mothers should still be dying as they deliver new life.

I urge this Council to generate support for our Joint Action Plan on women's and children's health.

Indeed, you have a crucial role in making women central to all future negotiations on development.

The outcome of the recent 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration should feed directly into your negotiations and into the outcome of the MDG Summit in September.

Together, we must urge governments to change attitudes and policies towards women and girls.

We must end inequality and discrimination and make women and girls aware of their inalienable rights.

This is a landmark year for gender issues. We are commemorating the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the 10th Anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325, to name just a few highlights.

And this year, we are on track for another major step forward.

I welcome the decision by the Sixty-third session of the General Assembly to merge the four United Nations gender entities into a composite entity. I am closely following the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations during the current session that will make this a reality.

The creation of UN Women will mark a significant advance towards further strengthening our capacity to work with Member States to coherently meet the needs of women and girls.

We all need to deliver as we collectively tackle global crises and work towards the MDGs.

Women need to be included at all levels of political decision-making.

We must strengthen political commitment to change laws and policies that discriminate against them. Women's contributions in homes and in workplaces are essential to improving food security; to building community resilience to climate change and natural disasters; and to finding lasting solutions to poverty.

I count on you to maintain focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in your negotiations at the Annual Ministerial Review and at the Development Cooperation Forum.

And I urge you to consider how to expand your national efforts towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Each is achievable. We have the tools. Let us match them with political will and cooperation.

Women's rights as human rights

BY MS. MICHELLE BACHELET³

Former President of Chile

It has been 15 years since the historic world conference on women in Beijing, which marked the major progress in the struggle to end multiple types of discrimination against women throughout the world and defined a clear mission to promote women's right. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Actions serve as an important action plan for women's right, gender equality and female empowerment all over the globe.

The international community must turn these principles defined in Beijing into concrete actions and continue encouraging governments and civil society organizations to ensure conditions of real equality for women for all nations.

We must be particularly attentive to the harsh realities of places where, due to cultural and even religious reasons, women experience multiple forms of discrimination, oppression and violence and we just cannot tolerate this situation and must condemn them without hesitation.

We must reserve our utmost fervent solidarity for women, who find themselves in situations of subjugation and, in some cases, slavery. We must always say it loud and clear that human rights are universal and gender equality as an expression of those rights is universal as well so women's rights are human rights. No philosophical, political, religious or other reasons can justify the violation of these fundamental ideals and this is the type of globalization that we have to value to the utmost.

I am convinced that, in order to put an end to these institutions, laws, and customs that perpetuate gender inequality the international community must carry out a monumental and consistent effort to break the inertia of injustice.

You could say that we must and I quote "move mountains" and that is correct. That is what we need to do and, in order to move mountains, we must act

³ Executive Director and Under-Secretary General, UN Women

decisively. Much progress has been made since the Beijing conference and it is important to mention it because it serves as the foundation for the next steps we have to take.

I think that the main achievements are the gender equality causes are more vigorous and there is more awareness of the need to change structures that subjugate women. We know that the progress that we have made is far from uniform. In some countries, women have reached very high-level positions while, in others, there are few spaces for them to work or to participate in civic affairs and they do suffer a lot of discrimination.

Politically correct statements about this matter are not enough. We need for women to stop being marginalized by structures of power and to stop being just minorities with little decision-making powers because, on the contrary, in many societies, women are the same in numbers or in leaders. So, we need both the jury and the factor equality.

We must make empowerment a reality. Truly working so that women can become the protagonist of their own emancipation. All societies need to encourage this process as part of our efforts to leave behind the archaic customs, sexist prejudices, and confinement to roles established for women by patriarchy. All of these things have stunted the progress of humanity and it can be done.

I had the immense honour of being the first woman to be elected President of the Republic of Chile. My election in 2006 was evidence of a profound cultural transformation that has taken place in Chile since its democracy was restored in 1990, following 16 and a half years of dictatorship. I have not forgotten about how, on the day I took office, thousands of women throughout the country wore a presidential sash across their chest just like the one I wore as a symbol of the fact that they all felt that they were entering la Moderna, the presidential palace, alongside me.

At the end of my term in March of this year, I was privileged to see how proud so many women were of the progress we have made, particularly in the area of social protection, which shaped a very popular measure in my country, influencing health, education, opportunities for women for children and for girls. We realize that in many countries, women are invisible so one of my first decisions was to re-visibility women. And we put together a cabinet of ministers and vice-ministers made up of an equal number of men and women. This had never been done before in Chile and, of course, provoked a lot of criticisms. I also placed a number of women in other top governmental positions to the regional government or in important public agencies. This was not an easy task.

I witnessed the uneasiness that female leadership awaits in some parts of the political class. This dissent has manifested itself in different ways and I have to be strong, in order to do my job without feeling intimidated. I sought to establish forms of fluid contact and dialogue with citizens in the context of realizing democracy. I set out to encourage people's participation in civil society by allowing them to participate in the creation of public policies on education, early childhood matters, salaries, pensions and a lot of other issues. This took place through the creation of advisory commissions made up of community representatives and experts from across the political spectrum. Afterwards, we were able to create several important bills that we sent to Congress for discussion and I would say with very fast approval. And it worked very well.

Power is not exercised in just one way but, throughout history, different leadership styles have all shared the imprint of masculinity. Dominant notions of authority, decision-making skills and leadership qualities are all confined within a rhetoric that is defined mainly by men. And, as President, I realized that people were much more critical of my leadership just because I am a woman. In different ways, many people implied that it was up to me to prove that I was qualified to be President and, following my election, some came to the conclusion that sexism in the Chilean society has died out but prejudices do not die easily.

During my first month in office, I learned that my errors would be judged more severely by those led by a man. Despite everything, we worked patiently, hard, and consistently and we demonstrated that female leadership can be as efficient and get good results, too.

My administration sought to ensure that women will receive the rights that they were due not only in discourse but also when putting public policies into practice, in legislations, and in governmental programmes. And one relevant issue of leveling opportunities for women is access to jobs with developed programmes supporting women capacity and skills and technical and entrepreneurial skills and also something very important – access to credit, in order to generate real conditions for improving women's possibilities, opportunities, job and salaries. One key law we passed during my term was one that established salary equality between men and women performing the exact same function.

However, probably the most prominent change made during those years was our pension system reform. The main component of this reform was a subsidy for thousands of women who have long been excluded from the job market

or who have only held low level jobs without benefits. Today, women from the three lowest-income quintiles of the population, 60 per cent are working women will be guaranteed with a pension starting when they turn 65 whether they have worked outside of home or not and regardless of the type of jobs they held. Clearly, we have seen that the work we have done for women has benefitted society, in general. Men benefit because they have lost the negative attitude that they once had and can form more equitable relationship with women, their willingness to do more housework and help raise the children is one form of progress.

One key issue has to do with reproductive rights because, of course, maternal health is essential. I am a doctor and we have improved a lot in maternal health in our country. It was also thought that we need to improve reproductive rights and so we made progress by broadening birth control regulations and legalizing emergency contraception, commonly known as the morning-after pill. And today, Chilean women have more control over their own bodies, which is tremendously important. But we also believe that in equal societies, inequality starts from the crib so that is why we have developed a childhood support programme with special emphasis on health and access to initial education and we multiply by 5 times the number of nursery facilities free of charge for the most vulnerable families and children, so that they can start having opportunities earlier on in their lives. In the meanwhile, in order for democracy to be fully achieved, gender equality must come about in the public sphere, particularly in politics.

In my country, Latin America, and in the rest of the world, we have to do much more to increase the participation of women in all decision-making voice. Gender quotas can help increase the number of women in public health – for example.

I believe that consciousness-raising campaign about the equal participation of women in the public sphere, leadership training and transparent hiring practices are all very important. First, we must eliminate discriminatory laws and practices and then we can encourage participation at the highest possible level right away. I believe that political parties should commit to achieving gender parity within the leadership and also in the list of candidates that they put up for elections.

As you all know, the southern region of my country was hit last February 27th by an earthquake that measured 8.8 on the Richter scale. A wide strip of land was critically damaged. More than 500 Chileans lost their lives and we will be rebuilding the country for a number of years. However, what I want to highlight here is that immediately following the catastrophe, when many citizens

and towns were without basic services and there was little or no food for all the families who have lost their homes, many women led the way in finding solutions for their community. It was very moving to see hundreds of women coming together to meet the needs of those around them and that is also the same in Haiti, where women were really were the fundamental leaders on how to confront all these damages of Haiti's earthquake and that is what I call true leadership.

There is much more to do in Chile, in the rest of Latin America and in the rest of the world where numerous forms of discrimination still persist. In practice, many women are unable to fully exercise their rights and have unequal access to opportunities. However, my outlook is optimistic. My own experience has shown that women can make our voices heard and make an ever greater impact on our nations of taking towards a more just, social order. We have to work hard so that democracy becomes deeply rooted in our regions so there can be more freedom for all. We, the women of the world, have to make sure that institutions are placed at the service of the community. All of this will lead to gender equality and women empowerment.

I will also like to insist that women leadership must be absolutely inclusive and take on a humanist stance in society. Economic growth is important but shared progress and greater cultures of solidarity are important as well. Women have the conviction that our outlook, our specific sensibility and reasoning based on dialogue and consensus-building will be highly advantageous for societies. Women can make major contributions to public life, to development, and must stand up and be ready for the challenges ahead.

That is why I am committed to the cause of gender equality. You can count on me to continue struggling for a better world for all.

Women empowerment: Lynchpin of development goals⁴

BY MR. ANDREW MITCHELL

Secretary of State for International Development
United Kingdom

It is a great honour to address this year's opening session of the ECOSOC High-level Segment. I am particularly pleased that the focus of this meeting is gender equality and the role of women in development, peace, and security. This is what we view that we in the United Kingdom consider to be particularly important. I hope that over the next few days, the ideas we share and the commitments we make will stimulate a renewed international effort to support the opportunities, right, health, and status of women and girls around the world.

As I said in my speech at the Carnegie Institute on Friday, the place of women and girls in development generally is impossible to overstate. Promoting gender equality is vital for meeting the MDGs and for creating prosperous, safe, and peaceful world, where women have better access to health services, to education, to economic growth. Their children are healthier and better education. As a result, economies flourish and societies are more peaceful.

By contrast, where women and girls are treated as inferior to men and boys, a vicious circle of limited education, poor employment opportunities, ill health, forced marriages and all too frequently violence and exploitation can be established and perpetuated. Focusing more support on girls offers an opportunity to replace that vicious cycle with a virtuous one that puts women at the heart of their families and their communities. As a result, women are able to bring in money to their families, get involved with local enterprises, and make sure their children are educated. These are vital agents of change.

The United Nations has an important leadership role on gender equality. It is good to see that it is recognized and reflected the need to do more. How-

⁴ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

ever, more needs to be done. The high-level plenary meeting on the MDGs in September is an important opportunity to put investment in women and girls at the very centre of an action agenda to meet the MDGs by 2015.

October will mark the 10th anniversary of the historic Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security to which the Secretary General has just referred. This resolution recognizes the vital role played by women in preventing and resolving conflict. I think, for example, of the brave Liberian women who, in 2003, stood in their capital city dressed in white and refusing to move until peace was reached. While women have a role in combating violence, they are also disproportionately affected by it especially sexual violence during conflict.

In February, the United Nations recognized the urgency of the situation by appointing its first special representative on sexual violence in conflict. I applaud the work of the United Nations in this area and call upon the international community to continue its work to protect women and to give them a greater role in creating peace.

The United Nations has also maintained and strengthened its support for all women. It must show leadership by mainstreaming and prioritizing gender equality in all its work. It must ensure that its efforts are as coherent and effective as possible in support of women's empowerment and in the promotion of women's rights and security. I understand negotiations to establish a single composite United Nations body to lead this crucial agenda. May they at last be near conclusion.

I urge all Member States to finish this process quickly so that the new entity can start this work as soon as possible. This requires sensibility and it requires a practical approach, putting aside ideology and politics in favour of common sense and determination to make a real difference to real women in real time in the real world. To that end, the new entity must be established and managed in a way which will command confidence of its financial contributors whose support it needs.

I look forward to the appointment of a strong and committed leader with the skills and enthusiasm to ensure that the new entity lives up to our expectations. I urge all of you here today to instruct your teams to go the final distance to make this happen. There are now just five years remaining before we reach the target date set for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

It is clear that we will only achieve those goals by putting a renewed focus on gender equality and women empowerment. I hope that through our dis-

cussion this week we can shine a spotlight on the rights and opportunities of women throughout the world. In doing so, we must pay particular attention to the issues of reproduction and maternal health.

Maternal health is the most off track of all the MDGs. Nowhere is this more evident than in fragile and conflict-affected settings. People living in these countries account for around one-fifth the population of the development world but disproportionately for around three-quarters of the total number of infant and under 5 death. They also represent some three-quarters of the births that take place unsupported by medical attendants. Despite signs of recent progress, more than a third of a million women die due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth each and every year. The majority of those deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries with young women, particularly vulnerable. Girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are twice as likely to die as those in their 20s.

It does not have to be like this. Melinda Gates said earlier this month “It’s not that we don’t know what to do or that we can’t do it. It’s that we haven’t chosen to.” We have within our grasp a golden opportunity, a perfect moment where we have the perfect technology and political will if not to eradicate maternal mortality, to reduce it significantly. And tackling the MDGs is, therefore, a major priority for the United Kingdom’s new coalition government, where we have confirmed that we will stand by our commitment spending 7 per cent of our gross annual income by 2013, and will enshrine that in British law.

Last Friday, our Prime Minister, David Cameron, called on the General Assembly to create a strong package of support for maternal health focused around good quality care and stronger health systems. The United Nations can increase its impact on important issues, such as maternal mortality by using its resources and skills more strategically and adopting innovative approaches, such as Delivering as One. The Delivering-as-One approach allows the efforts of United Nations agencies to be coordinated, targeted, and more responsive to the needs of countries’ government leading to more effective and efficient results on the ground. Innovative changes of this kind in the United Nations system are essential if it is to do more to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide and support wider development issues.

I applaud wholeheartedly and support the leadership shown by the United Nations Secretary General in launching a global effort to advance progress on women’s and children’s health and wholeheartedly support the Secretary-General’s words on this today. This provides a historic opportunity to deliver

for women and children only through a concerted international efforts will we finally put an end to the travesty that is mothers dying on the very day that should be one of the happiest of their lives. Donors must play their part, partner countries, too, but now is the time for the private sector to step up and contribute alongside civil society and philanthropists.

Together, we can achieve this goal and ensure a better future for the world's poorest women and children. The United Kingdom will play its part in supporting this effort and I encourage other Member States to do so as well. Maternal health is not just about giving birth. It is about giving women choice, about whether and when they have children. A quarter of all women in sub-Saharan Africa want to delay or avoid their next pregnancy. These women want more for their children, not more children. Globally, more than 215 million women who want to delay or stop having children do not have access to modern methods of family planning. This unmet demand has real consequences for people's lives as indeed of the 75 million unintended pregnancies that each year results in 20 million unsafe abortions and nearly 70,000 maternal deaths. Improving reproductive and maternal health is the lynchpin of poverty eradication and it is only through giving women greater choice and access to family planning and safer births that we will lift communities from desperate poverty.

Over the coming months and years, I shall try to ensure that Britain embeds making progress on this in all our bilateral programmes working closely with the United Nations agencies, where appropriate, to take forward this vital agenda. Ladies and gentlemen, the evidence shows overwhelmingly that we will not be able to solve many of the problems facing our world today without an increased and sustained focus on girls and women.

My hope is that this years Economic and Social Council will draw international attention to this pressing issue and will secure broad support for reforms and innovations that enable the United Nations to contribute more effectively to gender equality. In that way, we can take advantage of this historic opportunity to empower women and girls and accelerate progress towards the MDGs.

Reviewing ongoing progress in women empowerment and gender equality⁵

BY H.E. MRS. MOUSHIRA KHATTAB

Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs

Egypt

Egypt highly appreciates the efforts of ECOSOC and values the focus of this Substantive session on gender equality and empowerment of women, a huge challenge still facing global community and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Egypt is eager to utilize its current ECOSOC membership to further enhance its much appreciated efforts in this regard.

A special mention of thanks to the Secretary-General and his Deputy for their concerted efforts and deep commitment. The United Nations Calendar this year is marked by several landmark events. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) launched the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action. The review was an opportunity for governments to take stock of the progress being made, including towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sustainable development.

No fair observer can deny the progress achieved in many critical areas throughout our quest to empower women to equally enjoy their rights. Thanks to the collective efforts of the United Nations and its Member States, hundreds of millions of women are now free from discrimination and violence; enjoying their right to education; employment and participation. Many women now occupy leadership and decision-making positions.

One of our proud achievements, as we meet at the house of Nations, is its human rights system that has created a supportive environment, where rights are monitored with transparency and accountability, thanks to the reporting process, where state parties submit their reports to the treaty bodies and to-

⁵ Ibid.

gether they engage in a constructive dialogue. As state parties exert tireless efforts to honour their commitments, statistical averages are no longer accepted, as they hide disparities that deprive the most vulnerable of equal opportunities. Such transparency has enabled us to focus on the rights of those at risk, with women and children at the forefront. The system has also revealed linkages and interdependence between their rights. Universal Periodical Review has reinforced this direction.

Milestones, such as the Cairo International Conference for Population and Development; Beijing; United Nations General Assembly Special Sessions and its follow up are testaments to this success.

Many States were accordingly encouraged to enforce legal frameworks to protect the rights of women and children. Adequately mandated and well-resourced national entities were established to monitor such rights; National Action Plans were formulated; the role of civil society recognized and viable partnerships established. Participation of women and children has emerged stronger in making decisions that affect their lives; coalitions supportive of their rights have been established and strengthened.

Egypt has been at the heart of all of this. Under the leadership of Egypt's First Lady Suzanne Mubarak, gender equality and empowerment of women is a political commitment and a priority. Honouring our commitments under human rights treaties including CEDAW and CRC, we adopted a rights-based integrated development approach.

We engendered design and implementation of policies and budget tracking, with a view to allocating more resources for development programmes supportive of equality and the empowerment of women. Recognizing the pivotal role of national entities entrusted with monitoring and coordinating the rights of women and children, Egypt has come a long way. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) was established well before the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Women National Committee, then National Council for Women (NCW); Family Courts; National Council for Women and National Council for Human Rights. Complaint mechanisms were established at the National Council for Women and National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. In 2009, these efforts were crowned with the establishment of the Ministry for Family and Population.

In all economic strategies, policies and action plans targeting poverty alleviation, Egypt focuses on and considers the respect, protection and fulfillment of women's human rights and fundamental freedom, including the right

to development and participation. It is mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty. Women were granted equal civil and political rights, as well as rights to participate in economic, social and cultural development.

The National Council for Women prioritized the enhancement of women's participation in the hierarchy of economic management and processes to ensure coordinating and maximizing economic resources. This meant building the capacity of women, as we believe that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency, and sustained economic growth and that increasing women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the MDGs and to the eradication of poverty, the greatest global challenge facing the world today, and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

In a historical step, Egypt's Constitution was amended to allocate a quota of 64 seats in the Parliament for women. As a temporary affirmative action, we hope that it will enable women equal opportunity to assert themselves and to add to their competitive strength in the long run. The Egyptian woman has achieved great progress. "She" has become a minister, a judge, chancellor of one of the biggest universities and a Governorate Secretary General. In our quest to combat violence against women and children, we established a national action plan; we played a pivotal role within the study of the UNSG; and we established a legal framework and mechanisms that protect vulnerable children and compatible with CRC.

Egypt played an instrumental role at the regional and international levels. It suffices to mention the establishment of the Organization of Arab Women, which is graciously supported by Arab First Ladies. The Suzanne Mubarak Women for Peace Movement is playing a critical role to stop trafficking of persons. It wages the campaign "Stop Human Trafficking Now", launched an international help line, worked in the implementation of SC resolution 1325 and, in cooperation with UNODC, the movement implements UNGIFT. At the initiative of Egypt, the African summit in 2008 calls for drafting an international Action Plan to Combat Trafficking. The initiative was supported by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Declaration (which Egypt currently chairs); similar support was given by NAM First Ladies, who consider the Action Plan to be a vital tool to protect women victims.

Back home, we adopted anti-trafficking legislation this year. We have recognized the close link between women's and children's rights and that

ensuring equal rights for the girl is the logical entry point for women empowerment. The part to women rights goes through the gates of the family and empowering it to assume its responsibilities as the first and most important institution that instills democracy and dignity in the hearts and minds of its members, males and females alike; an institution fully aware of the role of boys and men in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. This is precisely our mission in the Ministry for Family and Population. This was important to prove that the inter-gender relationship is not a zero sum game, and that women regaining their rights do not come at the expense of men's rights.

A societal movement to uphold the rights of the girl was launched. Local communities played an exemplary role to break the silence surrounding taboos that violated the rights of the Girl, such as depriving her of education; subjecting her to genital mutilation; and exploiting her in early marriage. We launched the Girls Education Initiative that assured the vulnerable their rights to quality and active learning. Egypt became the first country to implement the UNSG initiative. UNICEF, our partner, documented our achievements. Our success in combating FGM went beyond our wildest expectations. We articulated a bottom-up societal refusal to the practice that led to its criminalization. The passing of the law criminalizing female genital mutilation (FGM) was a dream come true long held by advocates of Girls' rights. It crowns tireless efforts since the turn of the 20th century. The Egyptian girl will always proudly cherish and remember the day when she was effectively liberated of this utter violence and violation of her integrity and basic rights. 2009 witnessed a paradigm shift in combating child marriage. Perpetrators were brought to justice for the first time in Egypt's history; awareness-raising campaigns and family empowerment lead to the sharp decline in the practice.

The success of our efforts has lent itself to proving that all monolithic religions are vehemently opposed to discrimination or violence against females. In a great partnership, Christian and Muslim leaders combined their efforts and proved beyond doubt both religions' inherent respect for women; and that discrimination or violence are cultural practices and in no way religious teachings. FGM; for example; is practised in certain geographic areas by followers of all religions. We continue to disseminate correct information and enlightened interpretation of religious verses.

The challenges that still face the global community are, however, cause for considerable concern. It suffices to note that 62 years after the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights, slaves are free yet, millions of women across the globe are still victims of discrimination and harmful practices, suffer gender-based violence, economic discrimination and lack access to basic reproductive health services.

The recent economic and financial crisis, the food and fuel crises and the challenges of climate change have all had a profound impact on our efforts to achieve the internationally agreed MDGs. Each of these overlapping crises exacerbates existing gender inequalities, and threatens to undermine the progress made, so far, and makes it even more challenging to achieve the practical realization of gender equality.

Egypt attaches great importance to, and avidly supports, the establishment of the new gender entity aiming to consolidate the efforts of the United Nations in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. As a co-chair of the NAM and the Group of 77 and China Coordination Committee, Egypt has strived to reach common ground; enabling this new entity to commence on a solid foundation to ensure its success, and we will continue to do so. We hope that the General Assembly adopts the resolution of the system wide coherence, establishing the entity before we leave New York.

There is a dire need to make the treaty bodies, including CEDAW and CRC, an integral part of the United Nations efforts to empower women, fulfill their rights and achieve the MDGs. The Concluding Observations and General Comments of Treaty bodies need sustained and not only seasonal attention when it is time for reporting. We need to continue the reform of United Nations treaty bodies systems, within the action plan to reform the United Nations by ensuring democratic practices. We aspire to closer interaction and coordination between the United Nations Headquarters in New York and in Geneva on human rights issues to a stronger role for the Human Rights Council in monitoring women's and children's rights. All of this must target the implementation of all the resolutions and recommendations agreed to, including the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and CSW agreed conclusions. We need more coordination among the United Nations agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors. We look to an enabling environment for a responsible role of the civil society.

Achieving peace and ending occupation is a dire demand to achieve gender equality and full enjoyment of all basic and human rights for women. The sufferings of women in armed conflicts and under foreign occupation, in particular, Palestinian women as a special challenge for the global community that

needs to be promptly addressed by the international community to alleviate discrimination and all violations against those women who are deprived of all their inalienable rights.

In closing, democracy will remain far so long as half the humanity remains deprived of helping their communities with their most valuable contribution. We must not leave one stone unturned and Egypt lends its unwavering support to your efforts.

The fourth domain for gender equality: Decision-making and power⁶

BY MS. FRANCES STEWART

Chair of the Committee for Development Policy

There has been progress towards meeting the goal of promoting gender inequality and the empowerment of women but important gaps remain; and this progress is being threatened by several intersecting crises, such as the world financial crisis and recession and threats to food security, under the looming shadow of climate change and the crisis of human rights and security.

The Gender Equality Task Force of the MDGs identified three domains: *the capability domain*, notably girls' and women's education, training and health; *access to resources*, notably to assets, including land and finance; and employment; and *the security domain*: protection from violence of all sorts (political, criminal and domestic).

I would add a fourth: The domain of *decision-making and power* (the task force included this in access to resources).

In each domain, there has been advance but large gender gaps remain.

First, with respect to the *capability* domain, there has been considerable progress globally and, in most parts, of the world.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shows that the ratio of girls to boys in educational attainment has risen everywhere: in 1970, it was 0.2 in South Asia and by 2010, it was nearly 0.6; in Africa, it rose from 0.3 to 0.65; and in Latin America, from 0.75 to 0.9.

But there are still unwarranted gaps. For example, in Pakistan there is 40 per cent female literacy compared with 77 per cent male; in Uganda, 66 per cent compared with 82 per cent; and in Ethiopia 23 per cent compared with 50 per cent.

⁶ Ibid.

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of female education – it contributes to health and nutrition of the family, as well as family incomes, and economic productivity. The one characteristic shared by all the best human development performers is a high ratio of female to male education. *The promotion of female education must be a priority everywhere.*

Secondly, on *access to resources*: in many countries, women traditionally had no land ownership rights; and financial credit too was almost exclusively available for males only. Here too there has been progress.

While early land reforms were all directed at men – for example, in Zimbabwe 98 per cent of resettlement permits were held by men - in the last decade, many countries introduced land reforms to guarantee women's right to own or inherit land and prohibiting gender-based discrimination, e.g. the 2004 Family Law in Mozambique; a 2003 law in Vietnam; and reforms in India and Rwanda.

But many of these reforms are more theoretical than real, and women are prevented from exercising their rights by custom and hierarchies. While the reforms are necessary, women need support to benefit fully from them. *Better access to law and the creation and strengthening of women's associations are needed to help women improve their access to land rights.*

Microcredit is often targeted at women and has hugely improved gender balance in access to small amounts of credit – with the Grameen Bank leading the way and covering millions of women in Bangladesh. This has been duplicated all over the world. Microcredit has not greatly enriched women, but it has empowered them on a small scale, and has had positive results in health and nutrition. *It needs to be complemented with improved access to good productive technologies and to markets.*

In contrast, medium- and large-scale, bank credit remains almost exclusively male. Unequal access to land and other assets makes women a much worse prospect for formal sector loans. *Policies are needed to improve women's share of formal sector medium-size loans.*

As far as *employment* is concerned, women now form 40.5% of the global work force (2009), a small increase over the previous decade. Women work in less well paid occupations (18% in industry, compared with 26% men), and a much higher proportion in agriculture. They are to a greater extent in vulnerable occupations and forms of employment than men.

Women's *pay* is universally below that of men for same jobs. Over the world as a whole, women's total earnings range from 16 to 74 per cent

of men's. *Gender discrimination in employment and pay should be outlawed.* While women have increasingly taken on paid employment outside the home, their responsibility for household work has changed very little. Consequently, women generally work much longer hours than men. *There is a need for much greater support for the care of children and the aged.*

Probably, the least progress has been made in the *security domain*. Data on wars and violent conflicts show a decline from the mid-1990s, but violence remains unacceptably high and women are often prime victims. Moreover, there appears to have been a growth in international crime networks, with a growth in illicit trafficking of drugs and people. The trade in women for sexual exploitation is estimated at \$3 billion per year.⁷ Domestic violence represents the greatest threat to women: surveys show that across countries from 16 per cent - 50 per cent of women have been assaulted at some point in their lives. Domestic violence is generally thought to lessen, as women become more educated and empowered, especially as they gain greater rights to land and home ownership. Today, it remains a huge concern for many, many women – half or more of women in some societies.

In the fourth domain, *decision-making and power*, there has been a rise in UNDP's gender empowerment measure (GEM) in every region (this includes political participation and decision-making; economic participation and decision-making power; and power over economic resources).⁸

Women's representation in parliaments has risen from 11 per cent in 1975 to 19 per cent today, with advances at the local level, too. In 25 countries, women became a speaker or presiding officer of parliament for the first time in the last decade. There has been some progress in the private sector, too. But women are still grossly underrepresented in power. *Measures are needed to increase women's capacity AND to require more equal representation in positions of power.*

The worst situation with respect to all four domains is among women in deprived groups: they face treble deprivation: (i) as members of a deprived group; (ii) through general gender-based societal inequalities; and (iii) particularly strong gender discrimination within the group.

⁷ UNODC 2010.

⁸ Political participation and decision-making, as measured by women's and men's percentage shares of parliamentary seats; economic participation and decision-making power, as measured by two indicators – women's and men's percentage shares of positions as legislators, senior officials and managers and women's and men's percentage shares of professional and technical positions; power over economic resources, as measured by women's and men's estimated earned income.

For example, in Guatemala, female indigenous mean years of schooling is just 1.3 years compared with 4.6 for non-indigenous females and 5.5 for non-indigenous males.

It is necessary to improve the position of indigenous groups generally as well as of women, if this problem is to be tackled.

In summary, despite progress on all four domains since Beijing, women are not fully mainstreamed in development policy. And there is a danger that continued progress is being threatened by several intersecting crises prevailing in the world today. These are affecting both men and women. But women are especially vulnerable.

Crises are likely to have different implications for women and men due to pre-existing structural inequalities on several counts: the gender division of labour within the home and in the labour market; gender inequalities in access to assets and resources, and; gendered social norms, which constrain women's access to resources to markets, education, health, and so on. The weak positioning of women in economic, legal, political and socio-cultural spheres also renders them more vulnerable and less resilient to shocks.

Crises are generally regressive and tend to accentuate existing inequalities. The experience of past crises has revealed several significant channels of gender impact. First, cuts in social spending led to significant increases in the burden of unpaid work borne by women which compensates for the loss of public provisioning. This adversely affected their ability to participate in skill training, employment and other activities. Second, labour market restructuring led to an increase in the role of women as "labour of last resort" concentrated in low-wage jobs lacking social benefits. Third, tensions from economic hardship and shifting gender roles in the family gave rise to domestic and other forms of violence against women.

The assessment of how crises impact on gender and the design of necessary policies to offset negative impacts are compromised by severe gaps in sex disaggregated data. Additionally, data that are available undercount women's work and engagement in productive activities. Women's substantial contribution to housework and care activities tends to be unvalued or undervalued in national accounts and undercounted in labour force statistics. Women are largely represented in the informal sector, therefore, they do not show up in employment and unemployment statistics and do not have access to formal safety nets.

We must note the huge variability in the costs of crisis, in general, across the world; and in the costs for women and the poor, in particular:

- Some economies soon recovered (Brazil, China and India), partly due to Keynesian stimulus packages. The recovery, however, has often been uneven, with recovery in the financial sector but not in investment and employment. The stimulus packages were biased in favour of the financial sector, which caused the crisis in the first place.
- Fiscal stimuli aimed at restoring growth can have different gender and other distributional consequences, depending on their design. In practice, the stimulus packages showed little, if any, gender sensitivity. In fact, the main components of the various stimulus packages seem to still reflect “gender stereotypes” in policy-making. Packages stress public investment in physical infrastructure but little emphasis on social infrastructure, which has higher concentration of female workers and can help to free women’s time from non-remunerative activities. Moreover, the dominant perception of women as farm helpers and not as main farmers affects the way in which assets, information and productive inputs are directed to farming families.
- Stimulus packages should be designed to protect a wider range of workers or unemployed with emphasis on the low-income segments. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening the social infrastructure, the provision of care for young children and old persons, health and education services and specific segments of physical infrastructure, such as water and energy supply.
- Some economies had good social protection systems before the economic crisis so people (particularly women) had access to support during the crisis. For example, through the *familia bolsa*, in Brazil; conditional transfers in Mexico; the National Employment Guarantee scheme in India; and a variety of pensions and other forms of social support in Costa Rica. The lessons from previous crises are that it is necessary to have such schemes in place in advance and they need to have comprehensive coverage; most schemes introduced after a crisis erupts are too late and too small.
- Governments and the international community should use the ongoing intersecting crises as an opportunity to mainstream gender-related objectives in policy-making.
- National development policies should give greater priority to improvement in the direct access by women to land and assets. Governments can also play a major role in this by enforcing inheritance laws, authorizing purchase or lease of land by women and directly transferring land to them.

- Monetary authorities need to guarantee microfinancing programmes sponsored by financial institutions or to provide sufficient liquidity to commercial banks which have microcredit programmes. Microcredit is often a lifeline for low-income women and their families. Women's access to credit, beyond microcredit, needs to be facilitated.
- The role of international cooperation is critical. Most of the poorest countries are aid dependent and are under IMF programmes, which tend to constrain public expenditures on social services. Official development assistance (ODA) is expected to decline in 2010, and it is disappointing that only an additional \$50 billion was earmarked to low-income countries in the package negotiated by the G20 in April 2009.
- The major danger is that a new round of cuts in developed countries will threaten global recovery and will be followed by cuts in developing countries; aid will be cut; and progress that has been made for women (and on other MDGs) may be seriously impeded.

Chapter 2

High-level Policy Dialogue on Current Developments in the World Economy and International Economic Cooperation

OVERVIEW

The recent financial and economic crises have created much concern over their effect on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This chapter highlights the current state of the world economy in recovering from the crises, with particular emphasis on the experiences of developing countries.

A high-level policy dialogue was held during the High-level Segment of ECOSOC in New York on 2 July 2010, between the members of the Council, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, on the theme “Current development in the world economy”. Its purpose was to assess the economic situation in 2010, with five years remaining towards the agreed goal of achieving the MDGs by 2015. Presentations by the panelists were followed by an exchange of views.

Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, moderator of the discussions, highlighted some of the key indicators from the *World Economic and Social Survey 2010*. He noted that, after having contracted by 2.0 per cent in 2009, the world economy is expected to grow by 3.0

per cent in 2010 and 3.1 per cent in 2011. Yet, the pace of recovery is far from sufficient, particularly for increasing employment, and the recovery is also uneven, with many developing countries still suffering from the fallout. To address this, four areas need urgent attention: creating productive employment; reversing setbacks in progress towards the MDGs; improving emergency financing mechanisms; and strengthening international cooperation. In addition, there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach, and countries need to adapt their policies to their specific national circumstances.

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, noted that economic recovery has been deeply fragile and highly uneven. He presented six important aspects of the current situation: consumer demand remains constrained; there is little real financial recovery; stimulus spending has not resulted in job growth; the large stimulus has led to the expansion of public debt; an exit strategy from the current situation is needed; and more and better coordination is needed as the G-20 tries to devise an exit strategy. All of the above points could lead to structural shortcomings that will affect the rest of the world. In order to better the current situation and get back on track to MDG attainment, he noted that four things must be done. First, more resources must be mobilized for developing countries and supplementary sources of financing must be found. Second, inequalities must be addressed, in order to achieve inclusive growth. Third, the roles of the state and the market must be further defined and state institutions must be strengthened along with market liberalization. And finally, international cooperation should be enhanced to increase financial assistance, rebalance investment towards social and economic goals and increase aid coherence.

Mr. Reza Moghadam, Director of the Strategy, Policy and Review Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), agreed with the characterization of the current state of the recovery as uneven and fragile. He added that the world economy was on a precipice but was pulled back through multilateral action. The persistence in fragility, however, is due to concerns about the financial sector and fiscal sustainability, as well as uneven demand across the globe. While the crisis was severe, there has been no major increase in indebtedness and fragility on a scale with what had previously taken place in the past, but that increased investment is still needed to maintain economic growth. He added that the IMF is focusing on the current framework for building capacity to manage debt and investment in developing countries and that good global governance is needed for multilateralism to work in a more effective way.

Mr. Otaviano Canuto, Vice-President, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network of the World Bank, pointed to a convergence of views on a series of points about the crisis, including that multilateral action was at the core of success in dealing with the crisis and that the recovery has been fragile and uneven. He also noted that the appropriate path for a stronger recovery is still being researched and emphasized the considerable impact of the financial crisis on the poor. He offered four additional points: we must remain focused on the path to MDGs attainment without deviation; a mutual accountability compact towards the MDGs must be reaffirmed; there must be appropriate funding for low-income developing countries; and instruments and mechanisms must be developed to evaluate the impact of actions.

Mr. Clemens Boonekamp, Director of the Agriculture and Commodities Division of the World Trade Organization (WTO), agreed with the characterization of the recovery as fragile and uneven and further emphasized that growth is needed with jobs, without further stress on the fiscal situation. International trade allows a country to do both. Economic growth has been occurring through trade, and trade volume is expected to increase in 2010. Multilateralism is also important and has proven its value. The multilateral trade system, with its rules and discipline, has shown itself to be of real merit, as there has been remarkably little protectionism in response to the crisis. While trade is leading the way, trade alone will not be enough – coherent economic policies and strategies are an absolute must. The Doha Round of trade negotiations must be completed and could be as soon as early 2011.

During the informal exchange following the presentations, several related issues were discussed, including gender, international economic coordination through the G-20, bilateral and regional free-trade agreements, the effect of the crisis on the debt burdens of developing countries, remittances, the increases in poverty due to the crisis, continued sovereign debt and financial sector vulnerability, the importance of global institutions, secondary effects of the crisis and multilateralism.

The world economic recovery and the way forward⁹

BY MR. SHA ZUKANG

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations

According to our recently published *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, as of mid-2010, the world economy contracted by 2.0 per cent in 2009. It is expected to grow by 3.0 per cent in 2010 and 3.1 per cent in 2011. While this is encouraging, this pace of the recovery is far from sufficient. It cannot make strong dents in the employment sector. With so many people still without jobs, we cannot expect a quick recovery in private consumption and investment demand.

The recovery is also uneven. Growth prospects for some Asian developing countries are good but many other developing countries are still suffering from the fallout. Their economies are growing far below potential. Growth in most developed economies is lacklustre.

Fiscal stimulus measures by major economies are the driving force behind the recovery. The inherent fragility caused by these measures could become a source of renewed worldwide financial instability.

These factors and others conspire against a fast and sustainable recovery. Without addressing them, the world may be in for a protracted period of low economic growth and the risk of a “double-dip” recession.

How do we move forward? Our *World Economic and Social Survey 2010* report, published just this week, presents many ideas. Allow me to focus on four that need our urgent attention:

First, the highest priority should be given to dealing with the jobs crisis. Incentives are needed to create productive employment. Exit strategies from the stimulus measures need to be closely coordinated with labour market policies.

⁹ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 2 July 2010.

Second, greater efforts are needed to reverse setbacks in progress towards the MDGs. In this regard, we need to address official development assistance. The estimated shortfall against the Gleneagles commitments will be \$20 billion in 2010.

Third, the global crisis has highlighted the need for improved emergency financing mechanisms. We need to have liquidity buffers in place in the form of regional and international reserves that can be utilized in times of crisis.

Fourth, none of these efforts are likely to succeed without strengthened international policy coordination. Exit strategies from stimulus measures, for example, must be coordinated to ensure a sustainable recovery.

There are no simple recipes for development success. We have, however, learned so much over the last decades as development paradigms have changed and matured. Particularly over the last few years, we have seen that deregulated markets and private initiatives alone cannot solve the problem of widespread poverty. High-functioning government institutions and effective social policies are required.

In addition, we need to avoid the “one-size-fits-all” approach. Countries need to adapt and tailor policy measures to their specific national circumstances and they must own their development strategies.

Let us focus today then on how we can push for changes needed in jobs recovery, official development assistance, emergency financing and policy coordination. Please make your views on these issues known. I also welcome other priorities as you see them.

In closing, I would like to remind you that last December, the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene a Summit on sustainable development in Brazil in 2012. It will focus on how the international community can create a green economy and an institutional framework for sustainable development.

We need to keep the goals of this Summit in mind as we move forward. Let us remember that all of our ideas, initiatives and commitments must incorporate values and concrete plans that will protect our fragile environment. This perspective is central to the current development paradigm. It is our collective responsibility to advance sustainable development practices in all economic and social development plans, programmes and policies.

As Secretary-General of the Rio + 20 Summit, I am counting on you - at the national and international levels - to commit to exploring and implementing sustainable development. We need your help now in building momentum toward success in Rio.

Overcoming economic weaknesses and getting back on track to MDG attainment¹⁰

BY MR. SUPACHAI PANITCHPAKDI

Secretary-General

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

The economic recovery has been deeply fragile and highly uneven, driven by artificial demand created by the huge fiscal stimulus in response to the economic crisis. In order to craft policies to overcome persisting weaknesses, the right understanding of the crisis and recovery is necessary. In this regard, there are six important points:

- First, consumer demand remains constrained. Households and other economic actors are still managing excessive debts without outside facilitation, such as employment creation, which hampers their ability to pick increase spending.
- Second, there is little real financial recovery. There is some recovery but the linkages between the financial sector and the productive sector has not been re-established. Lending practices are not the same due to risk-aversion.
- Third, stimulus spending has been incurred in the hopes of a Keynesian “multiplier” effect; however, the net creation of employment has not been positive, since most of the spending has occurred in areas of non-productive activity, such as public health and welfare, which do not lead to job growth. If another round of stimulus spending is to occur, it should be aimed at productive investment.
- Fourth, the large stimulus has led to expansion of public debt. While an impact on the debt market and public finances were foreseen, it was not at the depth that is currently being observed. A fiscal crisis in Europe is

¹⁰ Ibid.

contagious and this could lead to another round of financial instability and crisis around the world.

- Fifth, an exit strategy from the current situation is needed. Thus far, trade has been leading the way in the renewal of growth. However, growth should not be propelled by trade growth only; it must also be balanced by domestic demand. It will also be necessary to caution against a rise in trade restrictions.
- Sixth, more and better coordination is needed as the G-20 tries to devise an exit strategy. The coordination of exit strategy is known to be more complicated. Currently, the “Sinatra syndrome”, where each country does it “My Way”, is visible in their approach, as some countries insist on deficit reduction and others on additional stimulus measures. To address this lack of harmony, commitments to the spirit of trade negotiations must materialize. One hopeful development in the G-20 meeting in Toronto was the promise to look at the analysis of the effect of trade liberalization on development, which would give a reason for the incorporation of development issues at the next summit and as a permanent part of the G-20 agenda.

All of the above could lead to structural shortcomings that will affect the rest of the world. Economic growth in developing countries is uneven and, in particular, for the least developed countries (LDCs), it does not measure up to past achievements of growth, making the achievement of MDGs extremely difficult. The ILO has recently concluded that a structural result of the crisis has been that most of the new jobs in the developing countries have been in the informal sector and there are 200 million more working poor.

To better the current situation and get back on track to the attainment of the MDGs, four things must be done:

- First, more resources must be mobilized for developing countries and supplementary sources of financing must be found. Remittances are one such option due to their significant role and consistency throughout the crisis. Domestic resources are another such option. South-South cooperation has also been a positive and growing trend.
- Second, inequalities must be addressed in order to achieve inclusive growth. Investments in small-scale producers, education that leads to employment, and in agriculture, especially in extension services, are needed.
- Third, the roles of State and market must be further defined, and state institutions must be strengthened along with market liberalization. In cer-

tain areas, such as agricultural investment, carbon-neutral policies and establishing a green economy, the government should lead the way.

- Fourth, international cooperation should be enhanced, in order to increase the level of financial assistance and rebalance investment towards social and economic goals. There also needs to be better aid coherence.

On this final point, from the recipient countries' perspective, there is a need for a central body to monitor, assess and audit development effectiveness of aid and make aid counter-cyclical. To this end, there needs to be a forum/commission to ensure that official development assistance actually assists countries in implementing their development strategies.

Panel discussion¹¹

Presentations

MR. REZA MOGHADAM

Director

**Strategy, Policy and Review Department
International Monetary Fund**

Mr. Moghadam stated that he agreed with Mr. Sha's characterization of the current state of the recovery as uneven and fragile. He added that the world economy was on a precipice but that it was pulled back through multilateral action, such as a coordinated stimulus, coordinated action by central banks, coordinated financial sector actions and a commitment to a free-trade regime. There has been no major increase in protectionism and continued financing for developing countries through the IMF, World Bank and other multilateral banks. There was multilateral action on many fronts.

Mr. Moghadam noted that the persistence in fragility is due to concerns about the financial sector and fiscal sustainability, as well as uneven demand across the globe. To address this, continued multilateral actions are needed. There are visible positive trends in this direction, as shown by the recent G20 commitment to put frameworks in place for multilateral action.

The good news for developing countries is that while the crisis was severe, there has been no major increase in indebtedness and fragility on a scale with what has taken place in the past. However, continued and increased investment is needed to maintain economic growth. Traditionally, this has been done through concessional lending but there is also a need for non-concessional financing. An increase in the capacity to manage debt is also needed in developing countries.

¹¹ Ibid.

Mr. Moghadam concluded by saying that the IMF is focusing on the current framework for building capacity to manage debt and investment in developing countries. He also stated that good global governance is needed for multilateralism to work in a more effective way.

MR. OTAVIANO CANUTO

Vice-President

Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network

The World Bank

Mr. Canuto referred to a convergence of views on a series of points about the crisis with the two previous speakers. He agreed that multilateral action was at the core of success in dealing with the crises. He also concurred that the recovery has been fragile and uneven, for the reasons mentioned by Mr. Supachai, and noted that the appropriate path for a stronger recovery is still being researched. He also emphasized the considerable impact of the financial crisis on the poor: 64 million additional people in developing countries are living on less than \$1.25 a day than if there had been no crisis. He also expressed the concern that their coping strategies will likely have long-term consequences.

Mr. Canuto then offered four additional points. He stressed that, first, we must remain focused on the path to the achievement of MDGs without deviation. Second, a mutual accountability compact towards MDGs must be reaffirmed. This will mean that developed countries keep their commitments to enhanced trade openness, aid and debt relief and, in turn, developing countries focus on good governance and all the elements in the compact since Monterrey. International institutions must become more representative of how the world is now and fairer and more responsive to the range of stakeholders. He observed that international institutions are making common effort to meet this compact. Third, to validate the previous points, he made a strong call for the upcoming replenishment of the International Development Agency (IDA) with appropriate funding for low-income developing countries. Fourth, instru-

ments and mechanisms must be developed to evaluate the impact of actions. He stressed the need to examine what works and what does not under different circumstances in developing countries. In this respect, he agreed with Mr. Sha that there is no “one-size-fits-all” policy and called for urgent action in this regard. Mr. Canuto concluded by informing the audience that the World Bank is making a large effort to collect information and learn from practitioners.

MR. CLEMENS BOONEKAMP

Director
Agriculture and Commodities Division
World Trade Organization

Mr. Boonekamp concurred with the previous speakers and began by focusing on the WTO Director-General's straightforward message: growth is needed with jobs, without further stress on the fiscal situation, and trade allows a country to do both. He emphasized that economic growth has been occurring through trade. Trade volume is expected to improve by 9.5 per cent in 2010 and may even exceed 10 per cent.

He also underscored the importance of multilateralism, stating that it has proven its value and that the multilateral trading system, with its discipline and rules, has shown itself to be of real merit. There has been remarkably little protectionism in response to the crisis. While there have been some increases, such as through tariffs and import bans, this is expected to affect only 0.4 per cent of world trade. This is, in fact, a type of “contingency protectionism” and is actually legal within the framework of the WTO. He believes that the WTO has demonstrated its worth in helping keep protectionism at bay.

Mr. Boonekamp noted that while trade is leading the way at the moment, trade alone will not be enough. He stressed that coherent economic policies and strategies are an absolute must. The Doha Development Agenda must be completed, which will allow \$300-700 billion worth of stimulus to the world economy. While the process is moving very slowly and has been frustrating, 80 per cent has already been completed. The negotiations have come to a po-

litical impasse. Countries now need to start exchanging concessions and be realistic about what can be done. Trade can help lead the way towards a more solid economic recovery but a conclusion of the Doha Round is necessary for sustainable results. Such a conclusion is possible with sufficient political will. He shared the view that the round could be completed by early-2011.

Questions and comments¹²

Ms. Patricia Francis, Executive Director, International Trade Centre, voiced her support for increased international cooperation through such initiatives as Aid-for-Trade and emphasized that the focus should be on efforts that would produce the greatest multiplier effect. She stated that the share of trade in economic recovery could be significant, especially in North and West Africa.

She also emphasized that 70 per cent of the world's poor are women and any solution that is sought must not only be inclusive but also proactive in addressing the challenges faced by women. In particular, the informal sector is dominated by women, as statistics show. She, therefore, supported a co-ordinated multilateral action that will improve the business environment to address access to finance by business, especially by female-owned enterprises.

Ms Francis concurred that a good understanding of markets and the international trade in goods and services is needed to address economic issues constructively. She expressed her support for balancing economic and social goals and emphasized the need for sustainable jobs to reduce poverty. She noted that this can only happen when countries take real ownership of their development objectives and have a coherent balance between development and trade objectives supported by financial resources.

Several Member States made comments or asked questions of the panelists. A Member State agreed that consumer demand is stagnant and called for the United Nations' engagement with international financial and trade institutions. Concern was expressed about "bad" assets, currently estimated at \$2.3 trillion, and about a decrease in real estate prices and its negative impact on balance sheets. It called for a reassessment of the model of growth of the leading economies and for a nexus between the G-8, G-20 and other for a, in order for relevant proposals to emerge and be evaluated.

¹² Ibid.

Another Member State complimented the speakers on the enriching debate but noted the lack of results in the Doha Development Round and its effect on international trade. Pointing to the current existence of 461 bilateral and/or multilateral free-trade agreements (FTAs), the delegate queried whether these agreements would fit in the structure of the Doha Round. The need for a better structured multilateral system and speedy results was also emphasized but it was noted that negotiations have been occurring for nine years without conclusion and that the number of FTAs may increase even more. The question was asked of how the FTAs can be made compatible with the international trade system or whether the trend of increasing FTAs will become an obstacle to the Doha Round.

A third Member State noted that global economic growth of about 3 per cent is expected in 2010 but also stressed that challenges in fiscal consolidation and the sovereign debt crisis could be potentially contagious. The economic recovery has been elusive and fiscal space has been limited. The need for new sources of growth, stimulating trade and investment, to complement demand was also highlighted as was the desire to see economic growth and employment creation as outcomes of the Doha Round. The representative recommended structural reform to reduce fiscal deficits and a balanced approach between short-term recovery and long-term economic sustainability and called for country-specific approaches. The representative also noted that global problems require global solutions addressed in an inclusive manner and pointed to the need for effective coordination to develop a mechanism to address such challenges – one that would become part of the international agenda.

A delegate enquired whether domestic sources of financing and remittances can, indeed, be relied upon, as those sending funds from abroad have also been affected by unemployment. With regard to domestic services and savings mobilization, it was pointed out that the private sector in many developing countries is limited and, therefore, domestic savings and investment often remain an elusive goal. Clarification was also requested regarding Mr. Moghadam's remarks, expressing skepticism about the IMF's assessment that vulnerability will not increase for indebted countries. An inquiry was also directed to the WTO on whether the agro-industry and agro-processing are included when the agricultural sector is discussed or just the export of raw materials.

A Member State noted that the financial crisis is still evolving and that developing countries are suffering disproportionate effects, even though they were not responsible for the crisis. The crisis has pushed over 100 million

more people into hunger and the total number of people suffering from hunger in the world is now close to 1 billion. An additional 60 million people are now poor. These effects are especially visible in developing countries, which lack the fiscal space and social safety nets to address such challenges. Economic gains have been reversed and require a renewed commitment to overcome implementation gaps. Efforts must be delivered and scaled up and emphasis must be put on MDG 8. The representative also expressed concern about the \$20 billion shortfall from the OECD-DAC countries with respect to their Gleneagles commitments and reaffirmed her commitment to a beneficial outcome of the Doha Round by calling for the elimination or substantial reduction of export subsidies, since this would make the greatest contribution in addressing funding shortfalls. The representative also called for a comprehensive and durable solution to the debt crises through coordinated and coherent policies.

Another Member State highlighted that, in general, the prospects for growth for Europe and the rest of the world were improving despite the recent turbulence. The major down-side risk is sovereign debt and financial sector vulnerability but sovereign debt distress is not derailing economic recovery. In Toronto, the G20 showed that it is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. A coordinated fiscal exit strategy requires credible fiscal policies with country-specific adjustment paths. She expects consolidation to begin in 2011 or even earlier and in combination with structural measures to support long-term economic growth. Consolidations will need to be properly sequenced within a strengthened budgetary framework. It was noted that such fiscal consolidation will support economic growth. The representative acknowledged that open trade is good for growth over the medium term but trade policy cannot be the main instrument in tackling social policy issues. Social policies are needed to address short-term risks and must be complemented by educational policies in a mutually-supportive policy framework.

A Member State noted that the great recession will only be over when employment has been regained and people who had fallen into poverty have climbed out. With respect to the MDGs, the exhortation to increase domestic resources and ODA will not be the solution, especially in LDCs and heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs). The representative stated that \$250 billion in special drawing rights (SDRs), such as what was approved in 2009, would increase liquidity. He stated that the situation is not merely one of political impasse and lack of political will but rather a structural crisis, with such characteristics as too rapid globalization, too dominant markets, too weak states, too profitable speculation, too short-term investment, too weak regulation, too

unstable a global reserve currency and too concentrated political power. Globalization without global institutions is leading the world into chaos. It was pointed out that multilateral cooperation goes beyond G-8 and G-20, as these groups lack the authority to decide for the rest. Noting that multilateralism is instead found at the General Assembly and ECOSOC, the representative called for greater authority for these bodies.

A Member State stressed that the secondary effects of the financial crisis – a decrease in tourism and demand for goods and services – are having a heavy impact on developing countries, in particular, sub-Saharan countries. Remittances are insufficient and will not grow significantly to contribute to further economic development and domestic resource mobilization is also untenable. The representative expressed his country's desire for more support from developed countries, as well as clear measures and direction to sustain the momentum of recovery.

A Member State agreed with the comments by the panelists on multilateralism, which must be transparent, inclusive, and UN-centric and also concurred with calls to improve the development cooperation network and aid effectiveness. People-centred approaches were called for, as well as full ownership of national development plans, adequate and predictable aid flows, full and effective accountability on the part of both developing and developed countries, and a comprehensive understanding of country vulnerabilities. The representative concluded that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach.

Responses from panelists¹³

Mr. Supachai, in response to the question about regional trade agreements (RTAs), said that efforts are being made in the Doha Round to come to terms with RTAs but that the committees that were set up to review them are often not very effective because the parties to the RTAs are not required to disclose full information and often choose not to. He stated that he does not see the rise in such agreements as regrettable, as they contribute to South-South cooperation and integration. The inclusion of countries from different development areas, however, will decrease the effectiveness of such agreements.

In response to the question concerning remittances, Mr. Supachai noted that currently, remittances are double the size of ODA and are also predict-

¹³ Ibid.

able and non-cyclical. He remarked that their amount has not dropped much during the recession; therefore, remittances can support ODA efforts although they cannot compensate for them.

Regarding domestic resource mobilization, Mr. Supachai clarified that he was referring to saving for investment from corporate and private sector retained earnings. He noted that domestic demand can be enhanced by investment as well as by consumption.

Mr. Boonekamp noted that there is currently agreement in the Doha Development Round in the area of regional trade agreements. Because such agreements are often perceived as posing a threat to the multilateral trading system and are, thus, contrary to the principle of non-discrimination, they must be net trade-creating, in order to support international trade. He noted that there is no consensus on how to monitor RTAs to ensure that they are consistent with WTO rules. He emphasized that, while trade is currently leading the way for the recovery, it is not a magic bullet either and must be part of a coherent economic package and called for a strategy to complete the Doha Round.

Mr. Moghadam, in response to the remark concerning debt vulnerability in developing countries, acknowledged the presence of large debts and also noted that the low-income countries fared better during this crisis than other countries although, of course, negatively affected themselves. Most developing countries had also created fiscal space through, for example, debt reduction via HIPC, and were able to use this fiscal space to respond to the economic problems of the past two years.

Mr. Canuto, augmenting the comments on gender, noted that a gender dimension is mainstreamed into all World Bank activities. He added that the lack of infrastructure in low-income countries is not gender neutral, as it disproportionately affects women in a very negative way.

In response to the question on remittances, **Mr. Canuto** pointed out that the flip side of remittances is migration, which has increasingly become a South-South issue. Therefore, there is an increased interest from both home and destination countries on policies affecting migration, which has become one of the big issues facing the global community.

In addition, in response to the comment on debt vulnerability, **Mr. Canuto** pointed out that the ability of many developing countries to escape even more negative consequences of the financial and economic crisis has been due to the soundness and quality of previously implemented macroeconomic policies and management.

Chapter 3

Thematic Discussion: “Current Global and National Trends and Challenges and Their Impact on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women”

Special Policy Dialogue: “The Role of Women in Countries in Special Situations”

OVERVIEW

Countries in special situations – such as the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing states (SIDSs), and post-conflict and post-crisis countries – are disproportionately affected by climate change, natural disasters and economic downturns, such as the recent global financial crisis, which are undermining the development prospects, especially of the most vulnerable segments of their population. Women are among the most vulnerable and their special needs and vulnerabilities need to be factored into the development planning and programmes of these countries. Women are also agents of change and can play a critical role in formulating an effective response to crises, as well as in promoting sustainable economic growth and development. The empowerment and inclusion of women in the political, economic and social decision-making processes of countries in special situations are, thus, critical to promote the respect of women’s rights and ensure effective and sustainable solutions to crises.

The round table session on “the role of women in countries in special situations”, which was chaired by H.E. Mr. Octavio Errázuriz (Chile), Vice-President of ECOSOC, focused on the challenges that women face in countries in spe-

cial situations and the roles they play or can potentially play in different policy areas, such as governance, economic development and social development. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Carla Koppell, Director of the Institute for Inclusive Security, and four panelists presented their views: Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Executive Director, Women in Peace and Security Network - Africa; Ms. Frances Stewart, Director of the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, Department for International Development, University of Oxford; Mr. Jan Egeland, Director of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs; and Ms. Graciana del Castillo, Senior Research Scholar, Columbia University.

Mr. Patrick Hayford, Director, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, speaking on behalf of Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Africa and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OSAA/OHRLLS), opened the session with some introductory remarks. He noted that, while the important role of women in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction is now widely recognized in international frameworks, women remain marginalized in the resolution of conflict and in peace processes. He commended the important role of regional organizations and, in this regard, noted that the African Union will launch the Africa Women Decade in October 2010, and has declared 2010 as the Year of Peace. Both events offer an important opportunity to promote the advancement of women in post-conflict situations. The Pacific Islands Forum Regional Security Committee was another important effort to promote peace in the region.

The session highlighted the following key messages: (1) despite the considerable progress made at the inter-governmental and regional levels to recognize and promote women's rights and political and economic empowerment in crisis and post-crisis situations, women's reality on the ground continued to be one of extreme vulnerability, human rights abuses, and marginalization; (2) gender equality and empowerment of women in crisis and post-crisis situations need to be achieved through women's participation in all stages of peacemaking and peace-building, including reconstruction and long-term development; (3) mechanisms, institutions and programmes promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women can be effective, only if they are allocated sufficient financing; (4) a gender perspective needs to be mainstreamed in all humanitarian and development programmes, in order to address women's specific needs in crisis and post-crisis situations, especially security needs; and (5) improving women's condition in crisis and post-crisis situations requires an integrated approach, in order to exploit potential synergies among different interventions.

The role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations¹⁴

BY MS. CARLA KOPPELL

Director

The Institute for Inclusive Security

Women's inclusion in decision-making in crisis and post-crisis situations is justified by three different factors. First, women are the majority in most post-conflict societies and have often held communities together through generations of conflict. They have frequently suffered disproportionately from war or natural disasters. It is, thus, their fundamental right to have a voice in post-conflict development, so that their historical vulnerabilities and disparities in education, health care and income can be addressed in the reconstruction phase. Second, it is a legal obligation, as there is a myriad of international, regional, and national resolutions, declarations, policy statements, and action plans calling for women's inclusion in decision-making and greater attention to their priorities and needs. Among them, United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889, which obligate Member States to attend to the needs of women, especially as victims of sexual violence and to elevate the role of women in all stages of the peace process. Finally, there is a growing body of evidence confirming that women's marginalization undermines efforts to resolve and rebuild conflict stricken-societies, as it deprives these efforts of women's experience, expertise, and perspectives to deliberations, programme design, and implementation. Moreover, since women represent the majority of the population in post-conflict situation, failing to capitalize on the skills and views of this majority is simply poor practice and bad policy.

So far, a great deal more attention has been focused on the needs of women – as victims of conflict and as the majority of the impoverished and disadvantaged – than on their role as agents of change and developmental growth.

¹⁴ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 30 June 2010.

Women's inclusion in decision-making, on the other hand, is likely to benefit the broader development agenda. Where women's representation in parliament has increased to a critical mass, the result has often been a shift in development priorities and investments in favour of family health and human welfare. Women's legislators have generally been found to ascribe greater importance to issues of women's rights and child welfare and the introduction of related legislation, as in the cases of India and Rwanda. When encouraged to play a role in governing, women have generally proved to be instrumental in addressing many of the core challenges inhibiting improvements in the status of women and progress in social and economic development. Since women are generally excluded from government, increasing their presence in post-conflict governance can help rebuild citizen faith in government, as women are perceived as less tainted by the shortcomings of the previous administration during reconstruction. Similarly, they can help rebuild the government's legitimacy, as they are generally perceived as less corrupt and more trustworthy.

On the economic condition of women, women represent 60 per cent of the world's working poor, some 70 per cent of the poorest of the poor, and often face daunting legal, institutional, and cultural barriers to economic empowerment. At the same time, women are the greatest untapped resource for economic growth and revitalization in developing countries. They represent over 40 per cent of the global labour force and the fastest growing economic work force globally. In Africa, women are responsible for 70 per cent of the food production, half of farm labour, and 80-90 per cent of food processing, storage, and transport. The potential return on investment in women's economic well-being could, thus, be extraordinary. Improvements in women's economic well-being, in turn, could have a commensurate impact on social investment, as women tend to invest a higher percentage of personal income in family welfare than men, essential to achieving the MDGs and provide a basis for potent economic stimulus in some of the poorest countries.

Women can also be important partners in community reconciliation and rebuilding processes, as they can often tap into their role in the local communities during conflict and draw on their authority as mothers in helping former combatants and victims of conflict to successfully return and reintegrate into peaceful society. By the same token, women have proven to be important partners in transitional justice efforts. Frequently, they are the only stakeholders able to structure processes that can solicit testimony about sexual violence during conflict. It is, therefore, in the interest of the international community to capitalize on women's skills, authority, and propensity to build bridges within

society and promote development. But, despite the rhetorical recognition of this role in the decade since Resolution 1325 was passed by the Security Council, the international community has not yet been able to leverage women's influence and potential impact. A series of reports by the Secretary-General to the Security Council and to the Economic and Social Council, as well as internal analyses completed by a range of entities within the United Nations system document important gaps, outline critical strategies for bridging those gaps, and provide important recommendations for action. If implemented, they would result in significant progress for the world's women and for the post-conflict development process. Unfortunately, rhetorical progress has not been matched by implementation on the ground. Women are still vastly under-represented in all decision-making fora. They are fewer than 5 per cent of the signatories to peace accords; a vast minority of those consulted in post-conflict needs assessments; a small share of the participants in post-conflict donor conferences; and an insufficient share of the beneficiaries of most assistance programmes, particularly those aimed at advancing political and economic opportunities and influence. This is a loss not only for women but also for all those dedicated to ensuring peaceful and prosperous post-conflict societies.

There are a number of actions that ECOSOC could take to elevate the status of women and draw the attention to their needs in post-conflict development. Such actions should focus particularly on addressing the legal impediments to women's land ownership, employment, inheritance, banking, as well as agricultural extension services and on promoting the systematic collection of sex disaggregated data to track, monitor and evaluate programmes and their impact on women's rights and well-being. ECOSOC can also draw the attention to the need: (a) for all peacekeeping missions, as well as all mediators, special representatives of the Secretary-General, and resident coordinators to consult regularly with women and involve them in all planning and program design; (b) to couple efforts to revise legislation with vast public outreach to inform people of their rights; (c) to work with women leaders to shape programmes and to overcome legal and cultural constraints, as women are critical partners for progress; (d) and to recognize and address particular challenges women face in post-conflict situations, such as the risk of being displaced from the labour market by returning former male combatants.

A broader, long-lasting transformation in the international approach to post-conflict development, however, requires a broad, consistent, global political will. Where women have been brought effectively into decision-making, it has always involved an assertion of political will by the international and

national leaders helping steer the process in combination with a home-grown push by women leaders themselves and male allies willing to push this agenda. Real change also requires the recognition that women are not only victims but also critical allies who can help ensure stability and prosperity. Enhancing women's political and economic influences is, thus, a means for achieving the development objectives. It also requires that efforts to address women's needs are appropriate to the local context and the best way to ensure that is by designing solutions in partnership with local women and men. Finally, change requires bridging the gap between policies/guidelines and implementation. Too often, well-meaning legal declarations do not translate into concrete change. Implementation must be driven by specific programmes and initiatives; broad outreach and public education; commitments of financial and human resources; and enforcement through court systems and the security sector. The discussion of women's role in post-conflict development is not fundamentally about women. Rather, it is about how to create a framework for development and post-conflict reconstruction that fully draws on all the resources within a society. If we do that, the likelihood of success increases dramatically.

Women as agents of change: Women's participation in post-conflict governance, decision-making and planning¹⁵

BY MS. LEYMAH GBOWEE

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Advocacy efforts for women's full and active role in decision-making have increased considerably over the last decade, as evidenced by the passage of numerous international and regional resolutions, instruments and protocols on women's rights and roles in decision-making. They gear towards giving women the voice and prominence they deserve during and after conflict, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Platform for Action; MDGs 3; United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1880, and 1889, among the international instruments; and the African Union Charter on Human and People's Rights and the Rights of Women; African Union Constitutive Act; Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality; African Union Gender Policy; and Declaration of 2010 -2020 as the "Decade of the African Women", among the regional (African) instruments.

Such instruments advocate for: (a) greater attention to women's needs in post-conflict humanitarian efforts, since women bear the greatest brunt of conflict; (b) women's involvement in all post-conflict processes - e.g. peace talks; pre-assessment missions; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and related processes and post- conflict electoral process; and (c) women's leadership positions in the local community, as a recognition of their role in community-based peace-building processes. These instruments, however, have not yet translated into women's greater participation in post-conflict processes and in the prioritization of women's issues because their implementation

¹⁵ Ibid.

depended on three main assumptions: (i) legislations and policies promoting women's rights will be passed without question on the basis of women's roles in the peace process; (ii) women's issues and concerns will be given priority in funding decisions and allocations; and (iii) grassroots women's efforts will be encouraged, supported and strengthened. The reality is that women are still far from attaining 30 per cent of women parliamentarians in most post-conflict contexts, which is the first step to resolve women's problems. In Africa, there are only two key successful examples of women's participation in governance: Liberia, with a female president and Rwanda, with 50 per cent of female parliamentarians. Nonetheless, the legal recognition of women's rights has led to greater awareness, advocacy and mobilization around the general understanding that women's involvement in political processes is key to the empowerment of women, which is a major gain for political governance.

In the security, justice, and education sectors, women's roles at the decision-making level are very limited and advocacy, awareness and mobilization in these sectors is virtually non-existent. In Liberia, for example, of the over 2,000 enlisted men and women in the restructured army, only 79 are women and only one is a senior officer. In Côte d' Ivoire, according to a police survey done in March of 2010, there are 1,887 women in the police, representing 11.14 per cent of the overall number, while in the national *gendarmerie*, there are no women. In Sierra Leone, there are 303 women in the army out of 8,528, 6 women in the maritime (navy) out of 271, and 1 woman in the air wing force out of 40. As it relates to education, the number of women in senior level positions at universities and higher institutions of learning is very low. Of the 29 instructors of a high school in Liberia, for example, only 2 are females. The situation is similar, when it comes to women in the justice sector, which is also a barrier for women to access justice in post-conflict situation.

Despite the numerous instruments adopted over the last decade, the implementation of women's rights continues to face significant challenges. Current instruments to protect the rights of women are not backed by resources and accountability mechanisms or supported by appropriate and more equal laws (e.g. sexual harassment in the workplace) and policies (e.g. girls' education). Moreover, the continuous portrayal of women as victims as a means to call the attention to the conflict and access donor's funding contributes to maintain the stereotype for the female role, undermining women's empowerment and participation. The "cross-cutting" approach to gender in planning for peace missions and other post-conflict, peace-building processes has also often been used as an excuse to avoid consulting women and it has not served

well their cause. Women see themselves as agents of change and this needs to be emphasized, in order to enlarge their choices and access to a broader range of activities in both the political and economic spheres.

The realization of women's rights requires countries to start investing time and resources in the implementation of some of the action points of existing instruments. Research, consultation, partnership and funding are essential to promote women empowerment, especially in post conflict situations. Financial support should be directed towards early interventions and local initiatives aimed at promoting women's participation and empowerment and appropriate strategies should be designed to increase the number of women in governance and decision-making. The time has come to move beyond rhetoric.

Women in conflict and post-conflict situations¹⁶

BY MS. FRANCES STEWART

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Women in countries in special situations are often portrayed only as victims. In large part, they are as women, more often than men, subject to sexual assault and rape, suffer most from decay of social sectors, and resort to prostitution to support their families. Women are abducted into the army itself, or as army “wives”. Moreover, women are the most affected by HIV/AIDS in conflict areas, suffer the loss of incomes, as men fight and frequently become widows e.g. in countries like Angola, Kosovo and Mozambique and widows accounted for as much as half of adult female population when conflict ended.

Yet, women are also agents. In situations of violent conflict, women are active participants in war, either as fighters or as supporters (e.g. cooks, messengers, arm carriers, etc); as men join the fight, leaving jobs unfilled and losses in family incomes, women take on new economic roles, often as heads of household, in sectors that are traditionally dominated by men, such as agriculture and the informal sectors. Women are also actively engaged in informal peace negotiations, as they are often very active in civil society peace movements. Despite the active roles that women play during conflict and in peace movements, however, when peace occurs, women become invisible and largely neglected. Women rarely participate in formal peace negotiations, demobilization programmes and post-conflict reconstruction, where they are often neither represented nor consulted – e.g. in 2008, UNIFEM estimated that women count for less than 10 per cent of members in formal peace negotiations and less than 2 per cent of signatories to peace agreements and, too often, are ignored in post-conflict political and economic settlements.

¹⁶ Ibid

Women's involvement in peace negotiations and reconstruction, on the other hand, has the potential greatly to improve the peace process, enhance the sustainability of peace and post-conflict society, and make an important contribution to the economy. Post-conflict political settlements offer more opportunities to incorporate women in the political process and many political settlements have, indeed, been used for this purpose – e.g. steps to advance the position of women in political settlements were taken by Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa and Timor-Leste. In Rwanda, the Constitution requires 30 per cent minimum female representation in parliament and, in 2003, women accounted for 49 per cent of seats. Women, on the other hand, tend to be most neglected in post-conflict economic reconstruction. Economic settlements tend to place greater emphasis on macroeconomic stabilization and pro-market reforms, while gender issues are often ignored; economic infrastructure tends to be privileged before social; DDR schemes are largely targeted to men. Moreover, as men return from conflict, pre-conflict gender attitudes towards formal sector employment are typically resumed and women lose access to formal sector jobs. Women are also often discriminated against in post-conflict land settlements; in farming assistance, which often bypasses women especially in extension and credit; and in training and retraining, which is biased towards men.

While there is a wealth of United Nations resolutions recognizing women's rights and role in peace-making and the need to include women in the political systems of post-conflict countries, such recognition is much less advanced in relation to women's right to access economic opportunities, such as asset to ownership; employment; and formal sector medium-sized credit. The situation is much worse, in this regard, for women in deprived groups, such as indigenous women, who face a treble exclusion: (a) as indigenous people; (b) as women subject to general gender-based social inequalities; and (c) as indigenous women subject to gender-based discrimination within their group. Guatemala female indigenous women, for example, have just 1.3 years of schooling compared to 4.6 for non-indigenous females and 5.5 for non-indigenous males. Such massive deprivation is likely to perpetuate deprivation in the next generation, while it also encourages support for resistance and rebellion.

In so far as women are active in supporting conflicts, it is not enough just to say that women should have a greater role, politically, and assume that peace will result. It is also necessary to address the underlying grievances. This entails extending formal recognition to deprived groups, in general, and women, in particular, as an essential means to sustain peace.

Women's role in peace, development and humanitarian efforts¹⁷

BY MR. JAN EGELAND

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Tremendous progress has been made over the last decade - through a series of international norms, decisions and declarations - to declare, once and for all, that a gender perspective is a necessary precondition to succeed in promoting security, development and humanitarian principles - e.g. October 2010 will mark the 10th anniversary of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, while work towards the effective and comprehensive implementation of the provisions confronting sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1820 and 1888, is underway. The United Nations, irretrievably, has declared that we must have a specific focus on women in all its work in crisis and post-crisis situations, not only because it is in conformity with the ideals of the United Nations, but also with its interests. Peace, development and humanitarian efforts will fail unless we focus on the needs and resourcefulness of women. In a few post-conflict situations, from Burundi to Nepal, he noted, that this has resulted into a considerable increase in the representation of women in political decision-making, since peace agreements were signed and the peace process started. In many development programmes and capacity building efforts inside and outside the United Nations, there is greater, better and more effective focus on empowering women. Over the last decade, women and girls in most countries have achieved greater access to healthcare and education. In many emergency operations, humanitarian workers have mainstreamed gender perspectives and relief groups provided more appropriate and effective aid for women and girls as well as men and boys. In OCHA, a stand-by gender capacity that can send experts anywhere

¹⁷ Ibid.

in the world on a short notice was established and operative gender experts have been deployed to improve humanitarian programmes in more than 20 countries.

However, all these important breakthroughs in the recognition of women's rights in the peace and security arena dwarf in comparison with the bitter realities of women in most crisis and post-crisis situations, where little has changed. In too many places, most women and girls continue to live in extreme vulnerability, suffer unbelievable human rights abuse and remain totally marginalized in all decision-making that affect their lives and their communities. Humanitarian crises, caused by conflicts or natural disasters, reinforce, increase and perpetuate social inequalities and discrimination, including gender inequalities and exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities. During humanitarian crises, we witness more sexual and domestic violence, as well as violation concerning housing, land and property rights, personal documentation and status rights. More often than not, it is women, girls and boys that bear a disproportionate brunt of these violations. Despite progress made in recent years in humanitarian operations to focus on women's specific needs, there is a need for a systematic integration of gender into humanitarian responses at all levels – policy development, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, needs assessment tools and, more than anything, operational tools and practices. The systematic collection and analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data and the integration of gender perspectives in appeals and planning tools related to disaster preparedness, responses and post-crisis reconstruction and peace-building are critical steps in the right direction. Humanitarian assistance cannot continue to be delivered as “business as usual”, as if it does only the strong will receive assistance and women will be excluded. There is a need to have systems in place that ensure that all women, girls, boys and men have equal access to, and benefit from, humanitarian assistance. Without a gender perspective in humanitarian work, the people who humanitarian assistance is supposed to benefit will be kept at arm's length. All humanitarian actors must be held accountable to ensure that they understand the different needs of women and men, girls and boys, and design their interventions, taking these differences into account. Furthermore, they must be held accountable to analyze data by sex and age, so that they know who received support. Humanitarian workers also need to know whether they are putting people at risk of sexual violence by increasing their vulnerability. For example, if a shelter provider does not make sure that the shelter is safe – and puts women at risk of rape – then, the shelter provider

did not do his/her job. If, again, latrines are not separated and women cannot access sanitation facilities safely – then, the provider of sanitation services did not do his/her job.

All humanitarian decision makers must ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to support gender programming. A new gender marker in the international Consolidated Appeals Process is the first effort to track resources and show how they are allocated. The use of resources must be grassroots oriented and operational, and advocacy should be more focused on the field level. Many of the good advocates for women's rights have, in recent years, been more successful in organizing seminars and studies in New York, Geneva, Nairobi or Oslo than in getting field projects, envoys and local action to make a difference on the frontlines. This is especially important to prevent rape. Rape is a crime of the worst kind and during war is a war crime. The first international trial declaring rape as a war crime took place in Europe in the 13th century – but women are still physically and mentally destroyed in war and crisis in all cultures and on all continents. It is essential to ensure that those military and civilian commanders, who condone or commit this abuse, belong in jail. Advocacy campaigns need to target the accountability of these individuals. Similarly, religious or administrative leaders who do not defend women subjected to local or tribal atrocities, including the so-called "honour murders", must be targeted and brought to justice. Authorities who tolerate systematic abortion of girls because local traditions prefer sons must be exposed for international condemnation.

The momentum for focusing on women's governance and political, economic and social rights is not and must not be lost. Many initiatives are already underway, although it has proven to be necessary to have longer-term perspectives on the implementation efforts of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 than it was originally hoped. Some clear goals for the next 10-15 years can, however, be formulated: (a) women should always be part of peace negotiations and peace processes; (b) no peace agreements should be endorsed unless women are either signatories or women's interests are catered for in the agreement; (c) when peace-building strategies, reconstruction plans, long-term development plans, etc., are made or negotiated, the United Nations country teams, international financial institutions and Member States must make sure that these consult with, involve and benefit women; (d) in addition to including women in the more general planning of governance, humanitarian and development strategies, separate funding should be set aside to women-specific projects – for example, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) aims

at having 15-20 per cent of the Peacebuilding Fund devoted to women's empowerment projects; (e) microfinancing has helped many women to get started with small, self-sustainable projects; more finances should be invested in larger schemes and more ambitious projects to help more women get to the markets to sell their products; many women experience that it might not be too difficult to get micro-loans but those who have larger ambitions have difficulties getting assistance; and (f) more importantly, best practices should be shared from between places that have empowered, promoted and protected women and girls to those that lag behind. Countries that have systematically attempted to promote equal rights for all have experienced a marked increase in human development and standard of living for all, also men. If women continue to be marginalized with a fraction of economic wealth, productive capacity, political influence and administrative positions, all - women and men, and society at large - will suffer stagnation, under-development and increasing international condemnation.

The role of women in countries in special situations – economic reconstruction¹⁸

BY MS. GRACIANA DEL CASTILLO

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When discussing countries in “special situations”, there is a need to draw a distinction between conflict- and poverty-affected countries. Countries emerging from conflict have distinctive characteristics and needs that cannot be ignored, especially when examining the conditions of women. Post-conflict countries, regardless the peculiarities of each particular case, confront a complex, multi-pronged transition, as civil war or other internal chaos end. Political crime and violence must give way to security for the inhabitants through the creation of civilian police forces under civilian control; lawlessness and political exclusion must give way to the rule of law, respect for human and property rights and participatory government; ethnic, religious or class confrontation must yield to national reconciliation, so that people can return where they came from and live in peace; war-ravaged economies must reconstruct and become functioning economies that enable ordinary people - both men and women - to make a licit and decent living. The fact that the transition from conflict to peace requires these multiple tasks makes economic reconstruction fundamentally different from “development as usual”. Reconstruction is a development “plus” challenge. In addition to the development challenges facing most developing countries, post-conflict countries also need to establish a process to manage the trauma of war and pave the way for national reconciliation. If war destruction was widespread, they also need to reestablish basic services and infrastructure, so as to ensure that education, health and other services address the needs of the population, including women. These factors pose significant fiscal pressure on post-conflict countries that do not exist in other developing countries.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Post-conflict countries also differ from “development as usual” situations - despite similarities in terms of poverty and low human development, poor governance, weak institutions and lack of respect for human rights, including gender equality - (1) in terms of their time horizon for economic planning; (2) the principles guiding their decision-making; (3) the level of technical and financial assistance required; and (4) the nature and extent of the international community's involvement are fundamentally different.

To elaborate, first, policy makers in post-conflict countries do not have the luxury to plan for the medium to long term so as to get it right. On the contrary, there is a sense of urgency that often leads to emergency policies, mostly of humanitarian nature, that will probably have unintended consequences in the medium and long term, unless they are appropriately and timely reversed. Second, political and reconstruction principles often take the precedent over equity or development principles, which justifies giving special treatment to groups that have been most affected by war - e.g. male and female combatants, but also women that have experienced violence during war, child soldiers, youth, returnees, and other groups. In this way, these groups will have a stake in the peace process, which will diminish the chances that the country would revert to conflict. Third, media attention to crisis countries often leads to a spike of short-lived aid flows right after crises, which put pressure on countries with low absorptive capacity to utilize them effectively and avoid corruption, something that has proved to be exceedingly challenging. And finally, the heavy reliance of post-crisis countries on aid to finance a large part of their economic and social needs, as well as needs related to governance, the rule of law and security, often leads to a large and intrusive political involvement of the international community in their internal affairs. This provides donors with leverage to promote women's rights, which would be inadmissible under normal development circumstances, even though these interventions have often backfired.

Ignoring the peculiarities and special needs of crisis countries has been a major factor in the dismal record with reconstruction of the last two decades. Roughly half of the countries that moved from conflict to a fragile peace - either through negotiated settlement or military intervention - have reverted to conflict within a few years. Such a record has led to more human tragedy, large numbers of refugees and internally displaced populations and huge costs in military intervention and peacekeeping forces. Failure at the country level has spread to the region and to the world, since failed states are an incubator for terrorism, trafficking of drugs and women, other violence against women, pi-

racy, and other illicit activities. Of the other half that has managed to keep the peace, the large majority ended up highly dependent on foreign aid - hardly a sustainable model in the context of the global financial crisis and the increasing need for resources to fund development and environmental protection elsewhere.

The best way to improve the condition of women in these countries is to seriously debate new ways to improve this record. In particular, the debate should focus on a number of areas: (a) aid delivery and execution; (b) DDR programmes; and (c) policy ownership.

- a)** Without a significant improvement in the use of aid, so that post-conflict countries can create dynamic and inclusive economies, there will be little chance of improving the condition of women. Current aid delivery and execution fails in three broad areas: (1) aid is wasted in the process and little reaches the targeted groups; (2) aid is provided outside the government's budget and priorities; and (3) aid is provided in a fragmented way rather than pursuant to an integrated approach that would exploit synergies among different interventions. The lack of such an integrated approach makes it more difficult to improve the overall condition of women as gain in one sector, e.g. education, would not be reinforced by commensurate gains in other sectors, e.g. women's health and employment. Women need to be educated but also need not to die of childbirth for lack of midwives and clinics or because of contaminated water.
- b)** A key aspect of the process of national reconciliation is the effective DDR of former combatants and other groups affected by the conflict. Because women have been involved as combatants, but have also played many other roles, and have been victims of specific violence during the conflict, DDR programmes are particularly important to address or redress some of these problems. Most reintegration programmes have provided some kind of temporary employment for groups in the process of disarming and demobilizing. However, the international community has failed in supporting countries coming out of war or chaos to create sustainable jobs in the private sector through entrepreneurship and new start-ups, so as to enable them to stand on their own feet. Adequate credit and technical support for these programmes have been lacking or inadequate. Most reintegration programmes have relied on short-term public employment for rehabilitating services or infrastructure, which are not fiscally sustainable. Others have relied on jobs provided by the non-governmental

organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies and bilateral donor communities, which are short term and unsustainable, since the spike in aid will not last. Although there is agreement that gender issues should be considered at each stage of the design and implementation of the DDR programmes, there is disagreement on how this should be done and whether specific gender provisions are likely to improve the situation of women or women would benefit more with more informal arrangements. The experiences of El Salvador and Guatemala - two countries that reached peace through UN-led negotiations few years apart - are an example of these two contrasting models. A serious problem with the effective reintegration of women involves countries in which women do not have a right to hold land or other assets. These women often find themselves returning from war to find out that, because their husbands or fathers have died, they have lost their land and often their homes. This is an area that deserves a serious debate on how to override or possibly eliminate these constraints.

- c) National policymakers' "ownership" is key to the successful implementation and sustainability of policies. Gender provisions in post-crises situations need to be broadly supported at the national level to have an impact. When changes in the national institutional and legal framework are resisted or ignored altogether, it is often better to think about ways to improve women's conditions in an informal and less confrontational way.

Finally, it must be emphasized that one of the most important premises for effective reconstruction is that the "peace" (or "political") objective should prevail at all times over the "development" one, with "development" defined in a broad sense to include not only the socio-economic dimension but also gender issues, other human rights, and environmental sustainability. It should be clear to all that, should the country revert to war - which happens half the time - there is no chance for development and the most affected would be women, who are victims of war violence, will lose their children and husbands in the fight, will have to fight themselves, and will see their dreams for better education and health for themselves and their daughters and sons shattered. Because DDR programmes have important financial consequences and need to be given priority in budget allocations, the peace and development objectives often clash. This is why optimal and best-practice macroeconomic policies are not usually possible or even desirable during the transition from war. Similarly, gender issues that will threaten the achievement of peace or result in

the recurrence of war should be put aside. Peace negotiations with the rank and file of the Taliban, for example, will most probably fail if Western concepts of gender are insisted upon. As with optimal economic policies, optimal gender provisions could be a luxury of peacetime. Avoiding the recurrence of war should be *the first and top priority of reconstruction. Women can hardly afford going back to war.*

Chapter 4

Annual Ministerial Review: “Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in Regard to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women”

Overview

The Government of Senegal hosted a regional preparatory meeting on the theme of ‘Women and health in Africa’, where progress on the MDGs concerning maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS remains weak. The Global Preparatory Meeting discussed the role of women in food security. The meeting sent a clear message that rural women are key stakeholders in sustainable development and a critical force in reducing poverty and hunger. If countries are to achieve their development goals, concerted and targeted action is needed to empower rural women and to redress existing levels of gender equality. The Economic and Social Council also addressed innovative partnerships through a special event on philanthropy. Representatives of various stakeholders discussed how to join forces to end violence against women and girls and to promote women’s economic empowerment. The reports of these preparatory events are contained in Part A below.

This year, 13 countries volunteered to make national presentations (NVPs). These countries - Australia, Brazil, France, Guatemala, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Congo, Republic of Korea and the United States - shared their valuable experiences

and engaged with the Council in exchanging views. The NVP reports integrate key perspectives on countries' actual experiences in implementing strategies and policies towards meeting the MDGs and offer an inside look into national efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. Part B offers the highlights of these NVP reports.

Part A

Policy messages from the Annual Ministerial Review Preparatory meetings

Africa Regional Meeting, Women and Health

Dakar, Senegal

12-13 January 2010

BY H.E. Ms. NDEYE KHADY DIOP

***Minister of Family, Food Security,
Gender Equality and Children Welfare***

Senegal

A regional preparatory meeting on the theme “Women and Health” was held on 12-13 January 2010 in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Senegal, in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The meeting served as part of the preparatory process for the 2010 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) on “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women”.

A broad cross section of regional stakeholders gathered to discuss challenges, trends policies and programmes on women and health in Africa, which faces some of the highest maternal mortality rates and HIV/AIDS rates in the world. Topics addressed by expert panelists included approaches to reducing maternal mortality; scaling up efforts to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS; and empowering women in the political, legal, economic and social spheres to improve their own health. A special session was also held to showcase best practices and new initiatives from across the region.

The meeting served as an opportunity for African countries to renew focus on female health care and stressed the relevance of ensuring greater gender equality and empowerment and of allowing women to integrate into society more harmoniously. The key priority areas included: reducing maternal and infant mortality; combating HIV/AIDS among women and girls; and empowering women to improve their health care. In addition, to achieve MDGs 4, 5,

and 6, the regional meeting found increased social spending on the most vulnerable, improved sanitary conditions and deployment of trained and skilled personnel, and strengthening of partnerships as requirements. At the conclusions and next steps section, the meeting recommended to: (i) strengthen the quality of healthcare services; (ii) increase financing for health care through improved coordination of regional and sub-regional policies; (iii) strengthen women's legal rights; (iv) ensure equal rights and independence of women when accessing jobs and property; (v) ensure female access to decent work; and (vi) increase female involvement in decision-making processes.

In the area of HIV/AIDS, the recommendations were to: (1) improve prenatal health care; (2) increase healthcare personnel during childbirth and strengthen the status of midwives; (3) create integrated basic services to address sexual hygiene and prevent HIV transmission from mother to child; (4) reduce and end physical and sexual violence and FGM; (5) provide sexual education to young people; and (6) close the gender gap when addressing HIV/AIDS issues. Other recommendations included: (1) the need for legal frameworks to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; (2) the integration of gender into healthcare plans and budgets; and (3) the build-up of capacities of healthcare professionals by reviewing recruitment and retention policies.

Global Preparatory Meeting: "Who feeds the world in 2010 and beyond? Rural women as agents of change and champions of global food security"

New York

22 April 2010

BY H.E. MS. FLORENCE CHENOWETH

Minister of Agriculture
Liberia

The purpose of the Global Preparatory Meeting (GPM) was to focus on the role of rural women in achieving the MDGs, and, in particular, MDG 1. It was convened, taking into account the growing shift in global attitudes regarding women's role in economic and social development - one that is not new but has been given insufficient attention. In recent years, there has been a tendency to portray women as a "vulnerable" group rather than see them as key

contributors to development. A study ordered by FAO, Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), and Haurou Commission documented the impacts of the food crisis and climate change on women farmers throughout the global South and showed convincingly the important role of female smallholder farmers. With the comprehension of a more correct perception of women comes the understanding for commensurate efforts to translate this new perspective into more robust action to support rural women's role as agents of change and drivers of economic and social development.

The dialogue held during the GPM was very encouraging and showed willingness among Member States and the United Nations system organizations to identify concrete actions to support rural women's contribution to reducing poverty, and improving food security and the right to food, among other goals. The meeting provided an opportunity for ECOSOC to call attention to the need for priority action in support of rural women's rights and empowerment and to facilitate coalition and partnership building toward this end. The panel was composed of a mixture of policy experts and practitioners, which assisted the meeting to find an answer to the question of who feeds the world in 2010 and beyond - women for sure - and arrived at practical recommendations to move towards concrete action.

Eleven key recommendations emerged from the discussion:

1. Investment in agriculture must be increased and support for rural women - prioritized. To win the fight against hunger and bring out the productive potential of half the global population, country-led investment plans, along with legal policy frameworks, must address rural women's specific needs.
2. Women must be recognized for what they are: stakeholders and not beneficiaries. In all national development and food security policies and programmes, women must be recognized as agriculture producers, entrepreneurs, and managers of natural resources. Accelerated growth cannot be achieved without first ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment are prioritized in the policies that drive the agriculture sector and the investments earmarked for it.
3. The contribution of women to the agricultural sector must be made visible. Improvements can be made in national data collection and analysis to account for rural women's work in the agricultural sector, including on-and- off farm production and the informal economy.

4. Women must be given their share. Investments in agriculture and rural development need to be country-led, and care must be taken to ensure that all levels correspond to the different contributions men and women make to agriculture and rural development. This will ensure that a larger share of programming resources reach women farmers and support their economic empowerment.
5. A move away from the one-size notion is needed. The "one-size-fits all" approach means that rural women are left marginalized. Policies and programmes must be holistic and address both the productive and reproductive roles of women, and incorporate social safety nets, nutrition, health, and action against gender-based violence, as well as take into account rural women's occupational diversity as farmers, fishers, herders and entrepreneurs, their ethnic identity and the value of traditional knowledge and practices.
6. Accountability must be promoted. Implementation of existing commitments in support of agriculture and rural development must be monitored and reports on their impact on rural women's economic empowerment must be evaluated.
7. It must be recognized that women's empowerment is not only about women. Rather, it is an important tool for enabling both poor men and women to overcome poverty while recognizing their different roles in society. Men need to be part of the dialogue and can be powerful champions for women's rights and gender equality.
8. Women must have tools to make their contribution more effective. These include a piece of land, equipment and personal credit. Legal frameworks must be strengthened to ensure gender equality and measures must be adopted to allow for women's equal access to productive resources, including training, markets and information.
9. New and more appropriate tools are needed. An agricultural research agenda that focuses on rural women's needs for agricultural technologies, labour-saving agricultural equipment, and modern means of communication must be supported.
10. Women have voices and they should be heard. Rural women must be enabled to make their voices heard, not interpreted, and room must be made for them to participate in decision-making. Concrete measures must be taken to facilitate women's organizations and their participation in local, national, regional and global fora related to food security, agriculture, rural development, environment and climate change.

11. Strength is still in numbers. United, rural women can be strong. Their organizations must be supported and concerted efforts must be made to promote women's leadership in farmer organizations as important means for rural women's empowerment and for increasing the capacity of those organizations to address gender issues.

Special event on engaging philanthropy to promote women's empowerment and gender equality

New York

22 February 2010

BY MS. GEENA DAVIS

Academy Award-winning Actor and Founder

See Jane

The special event on philanthropy was organized by UNDESA, UNOP and UNIFEM, in collaboration with the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP). The two priority themes were ending violence against women and girls and promoting the economic empowerment of women. Over 500 representatives from the private sector, philanthropic institutions, NGOs and academia participated in the discussions with Member States and experts from the United Nations system. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, observed that "Women are the weavers of society - the breadwinners, caretakers, and peacemakers. Realizing the MDGs depends fundamentally on the empowerment of women".

It was agreed at the meeting that it is critical to engage all sides and work hand-in-hand with governments, the United Nations, philanthropies, the private sector, and leading individuals and members of civil society groups to make progress in ending violence against women and girls and promoting their economic empowerment. It was also agreed that strong leadership is indispensable in both the public and private sectors, and CEOs should promote and inculcate a culture of respect for women and girls and encourage their leadership potential. Governments and international institutions should put in place and implement legally binding legislation to protect, prevent and prosecute those guilty of violence against women and girls. Lastly, it was agreed that there must be addi-

tional human and financial resources in support of good practices that work and that documenting these practices and sharing them through different platforms would be highly beneficial.

One such good practice is the “multifunctional centres” for women and girls, which should be scaled up in and across countries. Hasbro’s multi-service centres in Afghanistan and Sudan, run in partnership with NGOs, are specific examples in the provision of a range of services that help women and girls cope with violence while, at the same time, creating opportunities in the local economy. Investing in girls and empowering them as agents of change is crucial for ending violence against them and promoting their economic empowerment over the long term.

The involvement of men and boys in campaigns to end violence against women and in changing attitudes towards women’s traditional roles in the household and the economy at large is a “game-changer”. The White Ribbon Campaign, which has become the world’s single largest effort of men and boys to end violence against women in over 60 countries, is an excellent example of a successful civil society initiative. The recently formed Network of Men Leaders under the leadership of the Secretary-General is another solid example to build on.

On the issue of women’s economic empowerment, the meeting stressed the importance of enhancing their access to property and economic assets, including agricultural inputs, finance and markets, while initiating legal reform to protect their property and land rights. It was recommended that these opportunities be supported by local governments and recognized that education and training for women and girls is indispensable for making these opportunities viable. As more women are integrated into the workforce, increased efforts to implement decent working conditions, such as labour standards and freedom from harassment, will be critical for success. One example is “Business for Social Responsibility” (BSR), which provides advice to companies in developing countries on how to organize health awareness training in their factories. These companies have found results that help their bottom-line; declines in the rate of absenteeism among women have made it possible to meet production targets more easily.

Lastly, stark gender inequality and disempowering female images in television and movies aimed at children are a powerful force in shaping how women and girls are viewed in the world. Therefore, improving gender representation is a critical component of influencing and changing attitudes toward women and girls, especially in the media aimed at young children, who are just developing a sense of their role in society.

Part B

National voluntary presentations

OVERVIEW

Since 2007, the Economic and Social Council annually performs a Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One pillar of the AMR focuses on country-specific case studies, which are based on National Voluntary Presentations (NVPs) by a selected group of countries.

NVPs serve as a critical forum for a dialogue based on countries' experiences in implementing strategies and policies towards meeting the MDGs. In their presentations, countries show strategies and policies that have worked and those that have not, and identify practical measures to respond. The presentations are based on an analytical national report and national consultative dialogues. Each year, approximately eight to ten countries make a presentation. NVP links the discussion of policy options to specific country experiences, resulting in a more specific and hands-on approach and bringing the Council closer to bridging the divide between the normative and operational work of the United Nations. The objective is to speed up the implementation of development goals by strengthening accountability for commitments; providing a vehicle for a national review and renewal of commitments; encourage policy dialogue; encourage capacity building; and mobilizing actions and stakeholders.

NVPs not only serve to strengthen policy coherence (the horizontal coordination) at the intergovernmental, inter-agency and country levels, but also establish a link between policy and operational activities (the vertical coordination). Through the national presentations, each year, countries volunteer to share their development experience with the rest of the world during the High-level segment of the annual session of ECOSOC.

This year, 13 countries made NVPs: Australia, Brazil, France, Guatemala, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Congo, Republic of Korea and the United States. Many of them focused the presentation on this year's AMR theme, "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women". These presentations enabled the Council to engage in a much

more specific and hands-on debate on how to address the key obstacles to the implementation of the national development strategies. NVPs, coupled with the database which presents "Development Strategies that Work", provide an important opportunity to learn about, and benefit from, the experiences of the countries facing similar challenges. The following provides highlights of the 2010 presentations:

The key policy messages that emerged from the presentations and discussions include:

- Gender equality and the empowerment of women are not only human rights but also the key to economic and social development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the MDGs.
- The new United Nations gender entity should be equipped with adequate funding to address the gaps in the implementation of the gender commitments.
- The impact of the multiple crises and challenges, such as economic and financial crisis, food crisis, conflicts, climate change, and natural disasters, on gender equality and the empowerment of women requires collective global action.
- Women and girls tend to have limited or less access to resources and assets due to a myriad of socio-economic, cultural and religious factors, thus exacerbating their vulnerability.
- There is a need for an integrated, comprehensive and gender-responsive approach to the achievement of the MDGs that addresses the gender disparities in all fields of action, and aims to establish linkages across all the MDGs.
- Investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth. Increasing women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the MDGs and to the eradication of poverty. Adequate resources need to be allocated at all levels, mechanisms and capacities need to be strengthened and gender-responsive policies need to be enhanced to fully utilize the multiplier effect.
- There is need to take a holistic approach in addressing violence against women and girls by addressing issues across sectors, including health, education, employment and law enforcement.
- Men and boys have a critical role in the achievement of gender equality and need to be more involved in such efforts.

- There is a need to adopt and implement policies and programmes to ensure social protection, increased social benefits, and decent work for women. The burden of unpaid care work should be redistributed, in order to enable women to access the formal labour market.
- Rural women have a fundamental role in food production and support for women farmers and implementation of gender-sensitive agricultural policies, such as access to productive resources, land, credit, and training should be increased.
- Women play a vital role in preventing and resolving conflict and are key stakeholders in ensuring international peace and security. Therefore, they must be involved in peacekeeping and other peace processes. In this respect, upholding SC Resolution 1325 is crucial.
- There is a need for an integrated approach in which gender perspectives are mainstreamed into policies and budgetary processes across all areas, as well as national development strategies, poverty reduction strategies and other macro-level planning instruments and processes.

AUSTRALIA¹⁹

Australia is working to help developing countries accelerate their progress against the MDGs. Over the past six years, Australia's aid has increased by 70 per cent to \$3.8 billion. On current projections, it will more than double by 2015.

Australia is one of the few major donors located in an area of largely developing countries. Given this, the core of Australia's development assistance is devoted to helping Australia's neighbours in the Asia and Pacific regions. Australia is the largest bilateral donor to the Pacific region, providing \$1 billion in aid flows in 2009-2010. Australia is also responding to global efforts to accelerate progress toward the MDGs by expanding its aid programme further into Africa and into Latin America and the Caribbean.

Australia is helping developing countries to increase their agricultural productivity through research and development, by strengthening agricultural markets and by promoting enterprise development. Australia contributed \$50 million to the World Bank's Food Crisis Response Programme, which is building social safety net programmes in Cambodia, Kiribati, Senegal, Sierra

¹⁹ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 1 July 2010.

Leone, Solomon Islands, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Australia is also spending an additional \$464 million over 2009 – 2013 on agricultural development in Asia, the Pacific and Africa.

Australia is helping to narrow the gender gap through targeted assistance to address persistent barriers to gender equality. This includes making a substantial contribution to ending violence against women in the Asia-Pacific region by contributing to the evidence base for policy action and supporting a framework for implementation.

Australia strives to build partner country capacity and ownership of development, helping to ensure long-term sustainability and to provide more predictable aid commitments. In 2008, Australia made a five-year commitment of up to \$2.5 billion in aid funding to Indonesia. As part of this commitment, Australia is building or extending 2075 junior secondary schools and *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (Islamic junior secondary schools) in Indonesia through funding of \$387 million over five years. These schools are providing education to the poorest and most disadvantaged Indonesian children, particularly girls. The schools are creating an additional 300,000 places and helping the Indonesian Government to meet its target for all children to receive nine years of education by 2010.

The need to take into account the intersection of gender and disability is a guiding principle of Australia's strategy *Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid programme, 2009–2014*. Women and children with disability are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse (both within and outside conflict and humanitarian settings), and they face additional barriers to accessing basic services, achieving economic empowerment, pursuing educational opportunities, and being involved in decision-making and leadership roles. The *Development for All* strategy, developed in close consultation with people with disability, focuses on improving the quality of life and including people with disability in all aspects of the aid programme, including in planning, implementation and review processes.

BRAZIL²⁰

The second National Women's Policy Plan, which covers the period 2008 to 2011, takes Brazil's international commitments into account. Preparation of the Plan was coordinated by the Department of Women's Policies

²⁰ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

(SPM) in the Office of the President of the Republic, with the involvement of 22 national bodies and 300,000 Brazilian women, whose views were heard at national, municipal and state conferences. The initial poverty reduction target – a 25 per cent reduction over the 1990 level – was achieved in 2007. The Family Grant programme and other social programmes have reduced the proportion of the population classified as poor from 12 per cent in 2003 to 4.8 per cent in 2008. With respect to education, the enrolment rate is slightly higher for girls than for boys at all grade levels. The Gender and Diversity at School Programme is one of the initiatives aimed at overcoming gender and racial stereotypes. The maternal mortality rate declined from 140 to 75 per 100,000 live births between 1990 and 2007. The National Maternal Mortality Reduction Pact, the Infant Mortality Rate Reduction Plan for the Legal Amazon and North-East Regions, and other measures are being implemented, with a view to the achievement of Goal 4 of the MDGs. The National Violence against Women Pact includes the activities of 11 federal, state and municipal bodies. A network of services for women victims of violence, including a free hotline (“Llame 180”), has been established. Implementation of the National Plan for the Eradication of Trafficking in Persons (PNETP) includes prevention, staff training and treatment of victims. The National Decent Work Plan reflects the principle of work equity. Discrimination is combated through the Pro-Gender-Equity Programme, the National Family Farming Programme - Women (PRONAF - Mujer) line of credit and other initiatives. In order to increase the number of women in positions of power, the election laws were amended in 2009. The SPM, the Women’s Bench in the National Congress and the National Forum of Women’s Organizations in Political Parties encourage women to run for office and promote a change in social attitudes.

FRANCE²¹

In France, legal equality has been achieved and concrete progress has been made; however, challenges remain in terms of wage equality and women’s participation in decision-making posts (large corporations), violence against women, and gender stereotypes. The Government is developing an Inter-ministerial Gender Equality Action Plan and, on the international level, is an active supporter for the establishment of a new Human Rights Council mechanism, focusing on laws and practices that discriminate against women. In

²¹ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 30 June 2010.

2007, the country adopted a gender strategy paper, aiming to put reduction of inequalities at the heart of political dialogue and thus, improve women's legal status, promote their participation in public life, and ensure their economic independence.

Nationally, France has centred its efforts of promoting women's rights into four broad categories: *prevent and combat poverty and insecurity* among women; promote *gender equality in employment*; prevent and *combat violence against women*; and *combat gender stereotypes*.

The poverty rate for women in France (14 per cent) is still higher than the one for men (12.8 per cent). Women still hold less-qualified and lower-paid jobs, as well as 82 per cent of part-time jobs. Through various mechanisms, the Government strives to give women opportunities for professional growth, expand employment counselling services, and improve the recognition and identification of vulnerable populations.

In terms of equality in employment, major wage gaps remain between men and women. The Government seeks to remedy the trend by expanding girls' academic and career options at the primary and secondary school levels, promoting balanced participation of men and women in decision-making bodies of public and private enterprises, encouraging more women to start or take over a business, and promoting a work-life balance. In addition, it encourages social dialogue and, in 2006, it implemented the Law on Equal Wages for Women and Men.

(Domestic) violence against women still occurs, and an initial assessment of its economic impact has put its total cost at over 1 billion euros in 2004. To reduce instances of domestic violence, the Government has enacted legislation like the Divorce Act of 2004, which provides for the eviction of a violent spouse from the marital home under civil law, and the Act of 12 December 2005, which concerns repeat offenders and provides for their eviction under criminal law. In addition, "liaison" positions have been created at the local level to serve as an easily accessible point of contact for victims, and the Government has allocated additional resources to the 3919 helpline. Lastly, a three-year information and awareness-raising campaign has been in place since 2008.

To eradicate gender stereotypes, the country is placing a heavy emphasis on educating young people about the issue, and has made it a topic on school curricula.

Internationally, France has taken several actions to promote the rights of women by participating in intercontinental and European bodies to strengthen

women's role in society in the Euro-Mediterranean region and to protect children affected by armed conflict, especially young girls. The French Government is funding several initiatives that seek to address the latter problem in the Great Lakes region of Africa, as well as in Central and East Africa.

Lastly, France has launched an Action Plan on women and equality entitled, "Women as development stakeholders", which provides human and financial resources and emphasizes women's activity in the economic sector and the role of gender equality as a condition for growth and (social) development.

GUATEMALA²²

The attainment of the MDGs in Guatemala necessitates, above all, a commitment to reduce inequality and discrimination based on gender and ethnicity. Data from the past two decades show that Guatemalan women have made some strides forward in terms of increased voter registration, holding elected office, and greater public life involvement and political process participation. Progress has been gradual, albeit slow.

The availability of decent work is still limited and there is a large wage gap between genders. However, positive trends have been seen in terms of female education and improvement of maternal health. Women still have insufficient opportunities to take part or achieve decision-making positions, and the percentage of women in local governments is still very small. Legislative reforms that would open up the political arena to women have yet to be approved.

An encouraging development has been the establishment of the National Office for Women's Affairs, Office for the Defense of Women's Rights, and other national offices dedicated specifically to the needs of women. A National Women's Forum was established in 1997, and women's organizations have spread throughout the country since then. Their agendas have also expanded to include a broad array of key social problems affecting women. The National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women (PNPDIM) combines various cross-cutting and transversal policies to lay the foundations for institutionalization promoting the advancement of women. In addition, social expenditures for indigenous populations have risen, along with spending on health and education.

22 From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

Overall, Guatemala has directed state efforts towards reducing poverty, maternal and infant mortality, as well as providing food security and sufficient education coverage. However, progress has been slow, mainly due to institutional weaknesses and excessively low tax revenues as a result of the reluctance of the wealthiest sectors of society to provide more resources for the country's development. In addition, insufficient transparency in public management and lack of focus in certain programmes and actions have served as impediments.

The 2006 national report on MDG progress has identified several cost-effective policy measures, which have been incorporated into the country's poverty reduction strategies and have served as a basis of several programmes of the Council for Social Cohesion. A National Economic Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme, as well as a Programme for Rural Economic Development, have been designed to promote productivity and job creation and address the repercussions of the global financial crisis. Their purpose is to enhance rural and indigenous participation in the national economy, and 80 per cent of the beneficiaries are indigenous people.

Programmes addressing issues, such as violence against women and women's reproductive rights have been implemented and alliances have been made between women's organizations and public institutions, in order to enable the former to participate in State decision-making forums.

Guatemalan women are still in an unfavourable position and, although the country is generally moving in the right direction towards MDG achievement, progress has been slow with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment. Preliminary reports show that it will be difficult for Guatemala to achieve on time many of the goals set for 2015. To accelerate the pace of implementation, three things are needed: policies that promote inclusive economic growth, better patterns of wealth distribution, and expansion of policies aimed at universal social protection.

MOLDOVA²³

At the parliamentary level, trends seem more favourable for women following the 2009 parliamentary elections, with the number of women represented in the Parliament constantly increasing. Currently, about 30 per cent of seats are held by women, which was the target.

²³ Ibid.

Important achievements have been made in reducing child mortality as a result of regionalizing perinatal medical assistance, implementing *in vitro* transportation, establishing a national system of monitoring and observation of perinatal medical assistance and other measures implemented by the Government, with the support of country development partners. From 1990 to 2008, infant mortality dropped from 19 to 13.1 for each 1,000 live births. A similar trend occurred in the under-five mortality rate. *This shows that the targets for 2010 and 2015 for both indicators have greatly exceeded targets.* The accomplishment and sustainability of this MDG greatly depends on the implementation of national immunization programmes - the proportion of children immunized against measles in Moldova is among the highest in the world (94.4 per cent).

To encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among youth living in rural areas, the Government adopted the National Programme for Youth Economic Empowerment (NPYEE) for 2008 - 2010, which offers training and practical support for earning initial capital to start a private business. Additionally, the Government adopted the 2008 - 2009 Action Plan to encourage the Moldovan migrant workers, of whom many are young, to return to the country. A programme to coordinate reintegration assistance for voluntary returnees is being implemented with the support of the IOM. So far, return and reintegration assistance has been provided to some 460 people.

In just eight years, ICT penetration has surged to make the ICT sector account for nearly 10 per cent of GDP. This rate is considerably higher than in other countries in the region and is much higher than the EU average. The Republic of Moldova ranks fourth among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Member States in terms of the ICT development index. Virtually all of the strategic programmes of national importance contain actions in the area of ICT.

Landmark progress in fighting human trafficking was made with the adoption of the Law on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in 2005. The Criminal Code was harmonized with this Law to prescribe criminal responsibility for trafficking in human beings, trafficking in children, and the illegal removal of children from the country and pimping. The Code also upgrades safeguards for participants in criminal cases and hands out tougher prison sentences for human traffickers of up to life imprisonment. Since 2001, institutional efforts have been made, including the creation of a special anti-trafficking division within the Prosecutor General's Office and the establishment of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.

MONGOLIA²⁴

In order to achieve MDG targets related to gender equality and maternal health, Mongolia is striving to establish an enabling legal framework, eliminate disparities based on socio-economic differences, and strengthen national mechanisms that allow the participation of women at decision-making levels. The country has a strategic objective to adopt a separate law on gender equality in line with the MDGs-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy (NDS).

Despite its landlocked position and geographic isolation, Mongolia has managed to stabilize its economy (GDP p.c. reached \$1,649 in 2008) and develop its private sector, currently accounting for almost 70 per cent of GDP. However, weak infrastructure outside major urban centres persists, and so does poverty, especially in rural areas (46.6 per cent in 2008).

Mongolia's efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment fall into three categories: employment, political rights, and reproductive rights. The country has adopted a National Programme for Ensuring Gender Equality (NPGE) and established the National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE), with focal points in all ministries, in an attempt to provide women with equal access to both education at all levels and property possession.

With regard to *employment*, Mongolia has pursued the development of medium and small enterprises and nationwide provision of career counselling, professional and business training, and microcredits. It has adopted laws on supporting small and medium enterprises and on employment facilitation, and implemented an Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy, with support from the World Bank and IMF. Women currently account for about 51 per cent of the workforce, and have relatively higher rates of enrolment in employment facilitation services. However, they still lag behind men in terms of economic activity levels and most of the jobs they hold are informal. Women's salaries are still lower than those of men's, as women's employment is mainly concentrated in low-pay and low-productivity sectors. There is a noticeable development gap between urban and rural areas. To overcome such challenges, the Government is pursuing a cross-sectoral regulatory approach and seeking partnerships with civil society, the private sector, and the international community.

²⁴ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 1 July 2010.

In terms of *political rights*, Mongolia strives to achieve a 30 per cent representation of women in the National Parliament by 2015 (it is currently about 4 per cent) and implement permanent political participation quotas. Women's NGOs affiliated with political parties have been particularly active in raising public awareness on the importance of women's political participation and representation. However, due to lack of political will among high-level politicians and parties, as well as persistent economic inequality between men and women, this has proven the most challenging area of advancement for the Government. To combat this trend, Mongolia is seeking the cooperation of civil society and is undergoing a process of reforming the electoral system.

With regard to *reproductive health*, in 1989, Mongolia legalized abortion and allowed the use of contraceptives. The Government has worked systematically to introduce family planning services throughout the country and has depicted reproductive health as a basic human right. It has achieved a four-fold reduction in maternal mortality rates, to 50 per 100,000 live births. Under-5 mortality rates have been reduced by two times, antenatal care coverage now reaches close to 99 per cent of all women, and 99 per cent of all births are assisted by medical personnel. Mongolia now covers the full cost of healthcare for mothers and children and also subsidizes a certain portion of the reproductive health medicines and supplies. However, challenges presented by long distances, weak infrastructure, and poor access to health care in rural areas have slowed progress. To overcome such trends, Mongolia has set up maternal rest homes in remote provinces and implemented a "telemedicine" project to provide emergency professional services to women and children in sparsely populated territories. In addition, one-stop-service centres have been set up at three national hospitals to assist victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, thus providing women and girls with prompt and effective assistance.

NAMIBIA²⁵

National Development Plan 3, which is the country's key instrument for development, has identified HIV/AIDS along with a host of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as important challenges to the effort to achieve developmental goals. As a result, the Government put "primary health care" on the forefront in the fight to achieve and sustain a healthy nation. Thus,

²⁵ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 30 June 2010.

the Government has invested in construction of hospitals, clinics and other needed facilities – Namibia now has 34 hospitals, 34 health centres and 259 clinics.

The majority of the victims of poverty are women, hence, the emergency of several microfinance outfits. Koshi Yomuti - which means banking under a tree - has been successful. It is registered as a commercial bank, in order to provide one very important service that the 23,000 clientele base need: savings in addition to providing loans and credits.

There continues to be a rapid scale up of antiretroviral therapy (ART) services in Namibia, in order to achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS. Currently there are 141 centers, including all 34 state hospitals and 34 outreach sites offering ART services. The increasing annual trend in the numbers of people on Highly Active ART (HAART) attests to the success of the ART programme. As of 31 March 2009, 64,637 people (84 per cent in need) were receiving treatment (57,015 adults (83 per cent of in need) and 7,622 children (95 per cent of in need) in the public sector.

Namibia has and continues to prioritize academic training when budgeting, giving particular attention to secondary- school level, where the ratio of girls to boys decreased from 124 girls per 100 boys in 1992 to 117 girls per 100 boys in 2007. Available information also indicates that literacy and secondary education targets set for 2006 have been achieved, and it is highly likely that the 2012 primary and tertiary education targets will be realized, given their respective current progress status at 98 and 88 per cent - slightly falling short of the 2006 target: 100+.

THE NETHERLANDS²⁶

The Netherlands is one of the few OECD/DAC-donors that spend 0.8 per cent of GDP on development cooperation (ODA for 2009 amounted € 4.6 billion euros). More than 20 per cent of Dutch ODA is being channeled through non-governmental civil society organizations. The Government placed the MDGS at the centre of their international policy.

Financial incentives in the fiscal sphere have been established, making it more profitable for women to re-enter the labour market or expand their working hours. The Government has initiated a Taskforce Part-time Plus to

²⁶ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 28 June 2010.

stimulate women working less than 24 hours per week to increase their number of working hours. Recent data indicates a modest increase in female labour participation rates from 55 per cent in 2003 to 61 per cent in 2008.

The "1001 Strengths Programme" was designed in 2007 to get 50,000 women from ethnic minorities involved in paid or voluntary work. The use of female and male role models is employed to stimulate people to explore and use their options and opportunities. Men and fathers are encouraged to join in.

The Netherlands spends €592 million or 12.8 per cent of its development budget on education. Special attention is given to strengthening the participation of girls in basic, secondary and tertiary education. Support is provided through sector planning, for example, in the Education for All/Fast Track Initiative but also to regional NGOs as the Forum for African Women Educationalists.

The Development-related Infrastructure Facility (ORIO) is a Dutch fund with a budget of € 805 million in 2009 - 2013 for the design, implementation (construction), operation and maintenance of public infrastructure in developing countries. Gender equality is taken into account as one of the selection criteria. Dutch support includes building infrastructure, which will provide 50 million people with clean drinking water and 10 million people with renewable energy in several countries. The Netherlands is emphasizing that the specific needs of women are taken into account in the design and implementation of water programmes (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Suriname and Viet Nam). In Indonesia, a group of women have succeeded in arranging for investments earmarked for road-building and irrigation to be diverted to the construction of public lavatories and wash places.

NORWAY²⁷

Since 2006, women's rights and gender equality are at the core of international cooperation. Since 2007, nearly NOK 600 million a year has been earmarked for women's rights and gender equality. Gender-focused bilateral aid has increased via all budget chapters. In 2009, this amounted to NOK 5.2 billion. This is more than double compared to 2006 and represents an increase in the period from 20 per cent of total aid to 28 per cent.

²⁷ From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 1 July 2010.

Norway was the first country in the world to provide fathers a legal right to paid parental leave that is non-transferable to mothers (1993). The father quota contributes to changing the conception and understanding of the father's role, but also to the changing of stereotypical cultural attitudes. Paid parental leave and other parental benefits contribute to a more equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men. These arrangements not only contribute to equal opportunities but also to an equal output.

The Norwegian experience is that targeted and affirmative action and legislation in the field of gender equality is needed and lead to change. The use of quotas has proven itself to be a successful measure in leading changes in the society. Since 1991, all governments have kept the unwritten rule of at least 40 per cent gender balance in the Cabinet. Today, the gender balance in the Cabinet is complete, with 50/50 per cent representation of women and men.

In 2003, it was made mandatory by law for all State-owned companies, the inter-municipal companies and the Public Limited Companies to have at least 40 per cent gender balance in company boards. Today, women have taken more than 40 per cent of the boardroom positions in the companies affected by this regulation.

The third *Action plan against female genital mutilation* (2008-2011) was launched by the Government in 2008. This approach involves national, regional and local authorities in the health sector, the police, schools and educational institutions amongst others. The authorities have close cooperation with the diasporas organizations. Today, Norway offers counselling and voluntary genital examination to all girls and women who have immigrated to Norway from areas where the incidence of female genital mutilation is 30 per cent or more.

The Norwegian-funded capacity-building programme, "Training for Peace", has, for several years, supported the training of African civilian and police personnel for peace operations in Africa. Strengthening the participation of women in peace operations has been a key aspect of this work. Since 2006, funding for humanitarian projects from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been contingent on the gender perspective being mainstreamed into the project's activities.

During the period 2007-2009, Norway earmarked NOK 320 million of its humanitarian funds for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality and the fight against sexual violence. Norway has provided funding through the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict for several years.

In the Great Lakes region, Norway supports projects providing medical and psychological support and socio-economic rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence. In Liberia, Norway has supported the establishment of women and children protection units at the country's county police stations and in Monrovia since 2006.

PORTUGAL²⁸

The geographic focus of Portuguese aid is on the Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste. Portugal is also one of the international donors with the greatest geographical concentration of aid. The Portuguese Development Co-operation strategy has been designed with the goal of avoiding dispersion of resources and improving an integrated system for the sake of more rationality, efficiency and effectiveness of aid.

The "Healthcare for All" project in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) is an integrated intervention in primary and preventive healthcare all over the country, based on a strategy focused on community needs, within the context of a public/private partnership between IPAD, the Ministry of Health of São Tomé and the Portuguese DNGO *Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr*. This project has allowed for the great achievement of having São Tomé – that ranked 131st of 182 in the 2009 UNDP Human Development Index - declared as being on track to attain the MDGs in the health sphere.

The Portuguese Government, in partnership with the national NGO - *Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr (IMVF)* - and with the Government of STP have, over the past years, implemented a capacity-development project that has been crucial in assisting local authorities in transforming a highly inefficient healthcare system into a decentralized network covering the entire country through an integrated healthcare service package that promotes prevention and offers primary healthcare all over the country, placing STPs health indicators at the forefront of Sub-Saharan Africa

Portugal is active in generating and disseminating regular data and information disaggregated by sex. "Gender Equality in Portugal" is published every two years by the national mechanism for gender equality since 1980, with statistical data disaggregated both by sex and legislation for each policy area.

²⁸ Ibid.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO²⁹

In 2008, the Republic of Congo drafted, adopted and began implementing a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), which is the coherent, consensual and single umbrella for development policies, with the aim of effectively reducing poverty by 2015, in accordance with the MDGs. The Government has also adopted the National Gender Policy and Plan of Action 2009 - 2013, whose overall objective is to reduce gender inequalities by giving women greater economic, social, cultural and political power.

With regard to gender inequalities, progress has mainly been achieved in primary and secondary education, with a gender parity index of close to 1 at the primary school level. Indigenous children are still at a greater disadvantage and the school drop-out rate is high for both boys and girls due to parents' poverty constraints. To reverse the trend at the primary school level, the Government has distributed free textbooks, abolished school tuition, and recruited close to 10,000 teachers. In addition, it has resumed adult literacy activities nationwide.

Maternal mortality remains high, 781 per 100,000 live births in 2005, and is mainly due to lack of post-natal care, virtual non-existence of family planning services, and malnutrition in women of child-bearing age. The Government has promoted prenatal care, including free malaria treatment and the distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets to mothers, as well as systematic vaccination of pregnant women and children. However, current efforts will be insufficient unless strategies are scaled up.

In terms of equal participation in administrative and political lives, the distribution of power between men and women is very uneven. The percentage of seats held by women in Parliament was only 21.2 per cent in 2008, and overall female representation in the Government has held steady at 13 per cent since the early-2000s. Examples of positive trends include a rise in the number of women's NGOs and self-help groups, the development of a practical guide to elections for female candidates, and an overall increase in the number of female candidates in legislative and local elections. The established social order with existing stereotypes based on sex still persists, so changing attitudes will require social mobilization and political will. The Government aims to achieve a 3 per cent representation of women in Parliament by 2015.

²⁹ Ibid.

With regard to equal participation in economic life, despite favourable Congolese legislation, women in the informal sector still grapple with difficulties, such as limited access to credit (through the formal financial system) and overrepresentation (75 per cent) in the agricultural sector. An overhaul of national lending practices and commercial law is needed to achieve female financial independence.

As to violence, despite the existence of a legal framework, acts of aggression against women abound and are commonplace. Current action taken to combat this trend will be insufficient unless punitive legislation is enforced. The Government has established a violence hotline, as well as legal clinics to provide counselling and assistance to victims but such arrangements are often not known among the wider population.

To strengthen institutional mechanisms favouring women, the Congo has had a Ministry for the Advancement of Women and the Integration of Women in Development since 1992. However, policies, programmes, and projects must be mainstreamed. The Government has recently attained the completion point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), thus setting the stage for strategic partnerships with non-state actors, development experts, and donors in terms of technical support and financial assistance.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA³⁰

Women have played a significant role behind the Republic of Korea's (ROK) unprecedented economic development, evolving from a poverty-stricken country to a donor country. Due to its outstanding economic development, the ROK has been able to shed its status as one of the world's poorest countries in the 1950s, and has become a donor and a DAC member. The ROK has taken steps to develop the political and economic capacities of women by incorporating them in the process of socioeconomic development, reflecting their needs and interest in national planning, and establishing a systemic national machinery committed to advancing the status of women.

The Political Parties Act has been amended so that, for general elections and local council elections, political parties are required to include women in 50 per cent or more of their nominations for the proportional seats. It also recommends 30 per cent or more of the candidates up for election in local

30 Ibid.

districts to be women. As a result, the ratio of woman parliamentarians rose considerably - from 5.9 per cent in the 16th National Assembly (2000-2004) to 13.7 per cent in the 18th National Assembly (2008-2012).

The Korean Government encourages the economic independence of women by supporting those who wish to set up their own businesses, mainly through the Business Startup Subsidy Programmes for Women Engineers and the Business Startup Subsidy Programmes for Women Household Heads. The former provided women who possessed certified technical skills to start a business by drawing 10 billion Korean won from the Women's Development Fund from 2003 to 2006. The latter provided loans to women household heads to start their own businesses. 3 billion Korean won (equivalent to US\$2.6 million) was drawn from the Women's Development Fund from 2004 to 2006. Both programmes, supported by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, are geared at economically empowering low-income women and at enhancing self-capacity to help them grow their way out of poverty.

Targeting the women of APEC member economies, the ROK runs an information and communication technology (ICT) training programme that invites public officials in charge of ICT or gender policies, as well as education and training personnel, or assigns Korean experts to visit a member economy to deliver training on ICT and female leadership. Between 2003 and 2009, a total of 165 women from 17 APEC members completed the training programme in Korea. From 2007 to 2009, a survey on the demand for women's training was conducted in Indonesia, which formed the basis to develop a customized education programme that benefited 53 Indonesian public officials responsible for gender policies and ICT.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA³¹

The United States is committed to and has a long-standing history of working towards achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls through its humanitarian, development and diplomacy work. The Government also recognizes that gender equality and women's empowerment are necessary for the achievement of all MDGs. As a result, the Government integrates gender concerns in economic growth, agriculture, democracy and governance, education, global health and humanitarian assistance programmes. In addition,

31 From the 2010 ECOSOC High-level Segment, 30 June 2010.

the United States implements programmes on gender-based violence, women's legal rights, exploitive child labour and combating trafficking in persons.

New Presidential initiatives with a cross-cutting theme of gender integration have been created in two key priority areas for the United States: food security and health. In May 2009, President Obama announced a six-year, \$63 billion comprehensive Global Health Initiative (GHI). The GHI will improve the health of women and girls by increasing support for global health programmes that focus on the health of women and children. This includes supporting antenatal care, immunization, nutrition, water and sanitation, infectious disease control, and family planning, among other health interventions. Maternal health programmes will contribute to saving hundreds of thousands of lives by reducing maternal mortality across assisted countries. By addressing an unmet need for contraception, family planning and reproductive health programmes will prevent 54 million unintended pregnancies; seek to achieve a modern contraceptive prevalence rate of 35 per cent, reflecting an average 2 percentage point increase annually; and reduce the number of first births by women under 18 by 20 per cent.

The new, \$3.5 billion Presidential Initiative on Global Hunger and Food Security, known as "Feed the Future" (FTF), includes a focus on the economic empowerment of women. The Initiative acknowledges that reducing gender inequality is an important contributor to eradicating global hunger and recognizes the fundamental role that women play in achieving food security. FTF will strive to: (1) ensure women producers have equal access to assets, inputs and technology; (2) develop agricultural interventions and practices that target both men and women; (3) prioritize labour-saving technologies that benefit women and girls in the home and allow girls to stay in school and in the agricultural arena as producers, processors and marketers of agricultural goods; (4) expand the involvement and participation of women in decision-making at all levels and in all institutions so that they may help lead the formulation of policy, investments, programme design and implementation; (5) improve access to financial services for women in farming and agribusiness; and (6) help women move beyond production by opening up opportunities to engage in the investment-oriented and transformational sides of value chain production.

Support for microfinance and enterprise development has been a cornerstone of the Government's foreign assistance for more than 25 years. As the largest bilateral donor in microenterprise, the United States annually provides over \$200 million for programmes that create large-scale, effective, and sustainable microenterprise services for the poor to reduce poverty and promote

economic growth. Each year, the United States supports microenterprise development programmes in over 70 countries worldwide, through hundreds of implementing partners, to make markets work for more than six million households and microentrepreneurs - nearly two-thirds of them are women.

The United States recognizes that, while ODA is just one part of a successful development strategy, it is an important source of development finance. The United States' ODA in 2009 was at the highest level for any country in history, totalling \$28.7 billion in the calendar year 2009 - a \$1.8 billion, or 7 per cent increase from the previous year. The Government continues to look for ways to make development assistance more effective and development gains more sustainable by working with partner countries in the spirit of mutual responsibility and accountability.

The ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum: Phase II (2009-2010)

I. Background

The biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) is one of the principal new functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was created by the UN 2005 World Summit³², which mandated ECOSOC to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum that will review trends in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing, and promote greater coherence among the development activities of different development partners.

It was decided that the Forum would be open to participation by all stakeholders, including the organizations of the United Nations, the international financial and trade institutions, the regional organizations, civil society and private sector representatives.

ECOSOC convened the first biennial DCF in July 2008. This first DCF established ECOSOC as a principal forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on international development cooperation at global level. It had an impact on the outcome document of the Doha Follow-up Conference on Financing for

³² A/RES/60/1

Development in November/December 2008. The conference emphasized the importance of the DCF as the focal point within the United Nations system for holistic consideration of issues of international development cooperation. It recognized the efforts of the forum to improve the quality of ODA and to increase its development impact.

II. Preparations for the 2010 DCF

Following the first DCF in 2008, the global economic landscape changed dramatically. A confluence of crises threatened to derail the development process. Yet, there are stories of progress and the MDGs can, and must, be achieved. Accountability on commitments made and a focus on turning pledges into implementation are key, if acceleration of progress is to happen. In this new landscape, the DCF has a unique value as a universal and authoritative forum, where the various stakeholders can come together.

Against this backdrop, the overarching objective of preparations for the 2010 DCF was to promote development cooperation and improve its impact in realizing national development and the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

The DCF examined recent trends in development cooperation and the impact of the current crises. The preparations also focused on a series of mutually reinforcing activities to promote national development and the achievement of MDGs in three areas: (i) policy coherence; (ii) mutual accountability and aid transparency; and (iii) South-South and triangular cooperation. Special attention was given to issues of quality and impact of aid in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Preparatory activities consisted of a series of independent comprehensive analytical studies which aimed to produce sound practical results and policy recommendations in key areas of development cooperation. Analytical work included two studies on accountable and transparent development cooperation. These partly built on a country-level survey conducted by DESA with support from UNDP to take stock of status and progress of accountability mechanisms at the country level. One study was conducted on South-South Cooperation.³³ Work was also conducted with UNU-WIDER on policy coherence and on aid effectiveness.

³³ The studies can be downloaded on the main page of the DCF website: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/dcf/index.shtml>.

The studies served as critical input to a series of high-level symposia and other meetings, which were designed to facilitate comprehensive, multi-stakeholder dialogue processes. The outcome of these consultative processes constituted an important input into the report of the Secretary-General to the 2010 DCF.³⁴

The High-level Symposia and preparatory events provided important opportunities for stakeholders to engage in the DCF preparatory process:

A. *The Asia-Pacific Regional Forum: Trends and progress in triangular and South-South cooperation*

A Regional Forum was co-organized with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in Bangkok on 21-22 October 2008. The forum concluded with a joint statement reiterating the growing importance of South-South and triangular cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. It called for all partners to scale up and replicate experiences in triangular cooperation in the region and exchange them with other regions, in order to maximize synergies with all relevant actors. The need for developing effective, nationally-owned and inclusive monitoring and evaluation systems to measure the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation was also emphasized. In this vein, participants underscored the growing need for strengthened data collection and analysis, for example through national coordination agencies. Also, the important role of the United Nations system in actively supporting South-South and triangular cooperation at all levels was reiterated. The DCF was also seen to have a role to identify best practices and keep the United Nations system focused on mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation.

B. *First High-level Symposium: Accountable and transparent development cooperation*

The first High-level Symposium to prepare for the 2010 DCF, organized jointly with the Government of Austria, took place in Vienna on 12-13 November 2009. As a true multi-stakeholder event, the Vienna Symposium on “Accountable and transparent development cooperation: Towards more inclusive framework”, brought Southern and Northern policy makers together with civil society, parliamentarians and local governments. It discussed key challenges in making mutual accountability mechanisms more effective at the

³⁴ The Report of the Secretary-General can also be found on the DCF main page: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/dcf/index.shtml>.

global and at the country levels and possible common principles in mutual accountability and aid transparency. Mutual accountability is a process by which two (or multiple) partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other. The discussions also identified steps to strengthen global and national mutual accountability mechanisms, as well as to improve information sharing and make aid more transparent. The Vienna Symposium also had a first exchange of views on the upcoming work of the DCF on South-South development cooperation and policy coherence.

The following key policy messages emerged from the Vienna High-level Symposium:

Making development cooperation more accountable and transparent

- (a) More effective systems of accountability and transparency in development cooperation are needed at the national and international levels to encourage more timely delivery on commitments.
- (b) To ensure systematic and practical behaviour change in development cooperation policies and practices, efforts should be made to strengthen a sense of *mutuality* in the complex accountability relationships between all providers and recipients of aid. This would respond to the needs of programme countries to monitor provider performance, as well as assist them in their efforts to strengthen existing or create new accountability mechanisms that draw on national development priorities.
- (c) The effectiveness and credibility of a mutual accountability mechanism depends on the existence of an agreed national development and/or aid policy with clear objectives and performance targets, including on gender-specific issues. Regular and well-informed consultative processes at a high political level are critical to agree on programmes of action and indicators for monitoring and evaluation.
- (d) The creation of effective and nationally-owned accountability mechanisms depends on the full recognition of the role of oversight bodies, in particular national parliaments, and their early involvement in decision-making processes. Participation of civil society organizations is also essential. They should be seen both as advocates and as development partners to be held accountable.
- (e) The lack of technical and institutional capacity among all stakeholder groups is a common obstacle in developing well-functioning mutual accountability mechanisms. To further empower government agencies as

well as parliaments and civil society, predictable resources are required to strengthen technical expertise, notably in fragile and aid-dependent states.

- (f) As transparent information on aid is required for all stakeholders to make well-informed decisions in development cooperation, significant effort should be made to provide high-quality and consistent information on aid flows, agreements and policies, with a special focus on qualitative information from all providers on priorities, conditionalities, tied aid and impact.
- (g) Regional initiatives and platforms are critical in lending impetus to national efforts to adopt workable mechanisms to assess aid delivery. If resourced adequately, they can provide an important space for evidence-based regular dialogue on national experiences and the definition of flexible principles for more accountable development cooperation.
- (h) Global mechanisms need to be strengthened to promote more systematic change in behaviour. This can be done by ensuring representation of all stakeholder groups and the inclusion of independent mechanisms into official ones.
- (i) The DCF needs to further develop and refine guiding principles and performance targets for mutual accountability and aid transparency for consideration by all stakeholders, in accordance with global targets on aid quantity and effectiveness.
- (j) Starting in 2010, the DCF will conduct an independent and comprehensive review of status and progress in this area, in close collaboration with UNDP and engagement of OECD-DAC.

Strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation

- (a) South-South cooperation should not be seen as a way to compensate for the potential decline in North-South cooperation.
- (b) Equal importance must be given to supporting and promoting South-South cooperation, including through triangular cooperation.
- (c) Information on South-South cooperation should be improved as a way to increase awareness and understanding about the scope and role of this type of cooperation.
- (d) While developing a common definition and improving data on South-South cooperation is desirable, it must be borne in mind that South-South cooperation cannot be analyzed using the same criteria as North-South cooperation.
- (e) The principles of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action are important references for South-South cooperation.

Policy coherence

- (a) Aid front-loading is key to the success of policy reforms aiming at mobilizing financing for development.
- (b) Policy coherence is closely linked to the DCF mandates and should be on the Forum's agenda.
- (c) The DCF is poised to address some missing dimensions in the current "Policy Coherence for Development" agenda, including donor-recipient coherence;
- (d) Donors should adjust their focus on technical cooperation and capacity building towards more emphasis on infrastructure and productive sector development, in order to create an enabling environment for generating financing for development.

C. *The Global Preparatory Meeting*

The Global Preparatory Meeting for the 2010 High-level Segment of ECOSOC served as an opportunity to discuss the expectations for the second biennial DCF with Member States and other non-executive stakeholders.

Discussions reiterated the importance of the DCF as a multi-stakeholder platform for frank dialogue on international development cooperation with participation of all relevant actors. The expectations placed in the Forum as a leading platform in the aid and development effectiveness debate were equally underscored by participants. Special emphasis was placed on the role of the DCF as a global forum for accountability and policy coherence in development cooperation.

D. *Second High-level Symposium: Coherent development cooperation*

The second High-level Symposium to prepare for the 2010 DCF, organized jointly with the Government of Finland, took place in Helsinki on 3-4 June 2010. The goal of the event was to promote pragmatic solutions to make development cooperation more coherent. Against the backdrop of multiple crises, it aimed to foster discussions among a wide range of stakeholders on issues that can significantly improve the impact of development cooperation on the internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), including the MDGs.

The Helsinki High-level Symposium highlighted ways to promote policy coherence for development to ensure synergies between development objectives and other policies. The challenges in building coherence in the range of policies affecting development are multifaceted. Stakeholders shared experi-

ences on how different policies can have a significant impact, either positive or negative, on development.

The Helsinki High-level Symposium also highlighted the significant role of foundations, civil society and the private sector in development cooperation. This raises the question of how to ensure coherence in their work. The symposium also discussed the positive impact that national mutual accountability mechanisms can have on effective aid delivery and development partnerships. It promoted a more concerted effort in achieving gender-related development goals and identified key elements that need to be present in national and development cooperation strategies to achieve a greater impact on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The following key policy messages emerged from the discussions:

- (a)** It is increasingly recognized that policies in all sectors and areas should be coherent with development objectives and that “non-aid” policies have an enormous, underdeveloped potential for contributing to the MDGs.
- (b)** Policy coherence must be promoted within and between donor countries, between donors and recipients and within recipient countries.
- (c)** The existence of a strong nationally-owned development strategy is an important factor enabling alignment and coherence among donor/provider countries. Policy space and the capacity to implement national development strategies are thus essential to foster policy coherence in programme countries. Simplifying aid delivery channels, increasing predictability and flexibility of aid, and using country systems also bolster coherence in development assistance.
- (d)** In many countries, development prospects are hindered by incoherencies in the area of trade policies, as well as between the trade and financial system. Coherence between aid and other flows of finance must also be enhanced. For instance, ODA should be used to strengthen tax systems and address the skewed distribution of foreign direct investment flows. Coherence should also be strengthened within the global economic governance architecture.
- (e)** More evidence should be collected on the impact and the cost of policy incoherencies affecting development.
- (f)** In the current fragmented aid environment, national ownership and leadership are more relevant than ever. Better coordination and partnerships among civil society organizations, foundations, local governments and other development cooperation actors are critical to reduce duplication of efforts

and ensure sustainable development assistance. The DCF should serve as a forum to promote such partnerships, including among foundations.

- (g) There is a need to have a frank debate on why accountability mechanisms still have not been able to change providers and recipient countries development cooperation behaviour on the ground. While the ingredients for effective accountability are increasingly evident, development results are still lagging behind. The definition of time bound aid targets under national leadership, sustainable capacity building and better involvement of relevant non-executive stakeholders in development planning and monitoring are key pillars to strengthen answerability *vis-à-vis* citizens and development partners.
- (h) The DCF has a role to discuss what has worked and not worked in mutual accountability, in particular, in the context of the wider agenda for effective and coherent development cooperation. It is a platform where countries may be held accountable for progress in meeting their development cooperation commitments. It can also facilitate better coordination among other international mutual accountability mechanisms.
- (i) More needs to be done to ensure that women and men benefit equally from aid. While commitments are there and solutions are known, new laws, policies and strategies need to be enacted and concrete steps need to be taken to keep girls in schools, give women access to productive assets and leadership, improve reproductive health, use special temporary measures and protect vulnerable groups.
- (j) National statistical capacities need to be strengthened and indicators to track progress need to be formulated. Transparent information on the use and impact of gender-related aid and prioritizing gender equality concerns in national mutual accountability mechanisms are also critical to promote better development results. The importance of adequate resources and of an enabling environment with adequate space for civil society organizations cannot be overemphasized in this regard.

E. The Secretary-General's Report to the 2010 DCF³⁵

Following the consultative processes, the following key trends in development cooperation and the main policy approaches and orientations for the future have been identified:

³⁵ See full report of the Secretary-General in Annex 2

- Since the last DCF in 2008, multiple crises have created numerous obstacles for the achievement of the IADGs, including the MDGs. For this reason, the need for stronger and more effective development cooperation is greater than ever.
- Overall development cooperation is estimated to have exceeded US\$170 billion in 2009. Official development assistance (ODA) of DAC donors increased by 0.7 per cent in real terms. This is in stark contrast with sharp falls in flows of foreign direct investment (FDI), trade and remittances.
- Non-DAC sources of financing, such as South-South cooperation and private philanthropy have risen sharply. South-South Cooperation has a great potential in complementing North-South cooperation. It increased to \$US16.2 billion in 2008, up from around \$US10 billion in 2006.

Recommendations for better development cooperation:

- ODA remains central for the timely achievement of the MDGs. All OECD-DAC providers should be encouraged to set ambitious targets for 2015 and put in place five-year plans for scaling up disbursements.
- The funds generated by foundations and private philanthropy, which have risen to nearly 1/5 of the global development cooperation flows, must be tapped. Innovative financing mechanisms are also highly promising. However, better monitoring and more alignment with the MDGs are required.
- Gaps in financing can be better bridged if aid is effectively used to leverage other forms of development financing. The DCF can lead the process to develop principles and best practices for this.
- Geographical aid allocation remains largely performance-oriented rather than needs-based. Since 2006, the positive trend in the proportion of aid going to low-income countries has reversed, falling from 67 per cent to 61 per cent, coupled with the declining share of vulnerable country groups in development cooperation.
- Asymmetries in sectoral allocation continue to prevail notwithstanding the regained focus on productive sectors, with resources being shifted away from education and health. Measures must be taken to balance the skewed sectoral allocation and reduce earmarking of specific initiatives, while respecting national priorities.
- With relatively little progress on policy coherence for development, more impact analysis and systematic political engagement by OECD countries is required. Programme countries must engage fully on “beyond aid” poli-

cies in partnership with developed countries, in order to adequately address all aspects of MDG 8.

- It is critical to have country ownership of national development strategies that will help developed and developing countries engage fully towards greater aid effectiveness.
- Mutual accountability and transparency between provider and programme countries and between governments and civil society need to be strengthened. Providers must commit to individual targets to improve aid quality in each programme country, giving priority to country groups that are lagging behind on progress towards the IADGs.
- Mutual accountability processes need to be led by programme country governments with engagement of parliaments and civil society organizations. It is critical to ensure that such processes change actual behaviour on the ground.
- Improvements must also be made by programme countries in public financial management, procurement and evaluation

Despite the setbacks experienced in the fight against poverty due to the global economic crisis, the developing world is still on track to meet the key United Nations goal of halving the number of people living on less than US\$1 a day by 2015.

III. The 2010 Development Cooperation Forum

Against the backdrop of the comprehensive multi-stakeholder consultations, the Second ECOSOC DCF was successfully held on 29 and 30 June 2010, in New York. The level of engagement of Member States from South and North was among the salient features of this year's DCF, with a large number of Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Director-Generals present. Non-executive stakeholders were also well represented in this truly multi-stakeholder forum through the Inter-Parliamentary Union; NGOs such as CIVICUS, ActionAid, the International Trade Union Confederation and others, as well as the Organization United Cities and Local Governments.

Building on the deliberations during the DCF preparatory process, the programme of the 2010 DCF was structured around the following themes:

- Promoting greater coherence: how can all policies be geared towards development goals?

- Accountable and transparent development cooperation: how can we build more equal partnerships?
- The role of various forms of cooperation including South-South and triangular cooperation
- Impact of multiple crises: Allocating resources among competing needs; and
- Achieving the MDGs by 2015: An agenda for more and improved development cooperation.

The debates confirmed the deep concern that aid commitments are not being met, although several speakers reiterated their government's commitments to increase aid. Considerable attention was paid to the catalytic role of aid in increasing other sources of development finance. It was underscored that all policies of developed countries need to be coherent with development objectives. Alignment with developing countries' national development strategies was seen as critical in ensuring policy coherence. There was a concern that a greater share of aid should go to countries with the greatest development needs and financing gaps.

Several speakers encouraged to engage more countries and stakeholders in processes on aid effectiveness and mutual accountability. Better use of country systems, more aid predictability and reporting of aid on budget, require more balanced aid relationships with more robust government systems to process aid monies. It was felt that the aid effectiveness agenda should be broadened to include concerns such as conditionality or flexibility to combat exogenous shocks. On South-South cooperation, a number of positive experiences were shared.

Speakers pointed to the role of the DCF to continue addressing issues, such as policy coherence, trends in development cooperation and mutual accountability, among others.

The following are key messages from the Summary of the President of ECOSOC of the 2010 DCF.

1. Promoting coherence for development

- There is need to accelerate progress in ensuring coherence between development cooperation and "beyond-aid" policies on trade, investment and technology, through more analysis and systematic political engagement by provider and programme countries.
- Policy coherence for development must also focus on national development strategies of programme countries. ODA should be better used to

foster innovation in these strategies and to leverage domestic resources, and other innovative sources of financing for development.

2. Aid quantity and allocation

- Aid providers need to set ambitious targets for 2011-15 at the High-level MDGs meeting in September, put in place five-year plans for scaling up disbursements in line with national MDG Acceleration Plans and financing gaps, and live up to their promises. More DAC ODA needs to reach country programmes and future donor progress should be assessed based on country programmable aid.
- Providers of development cooperation should set concrete annual targets to increase the proportion of aid going to countries with the greatest development needs, financing gaps and structural vulnerabilities to external shocks - notably LDCs and fragile states.
- Public funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation needs to increase far beyond current commitments. It also needs to be 100 per cent additional (making maximum use of innovative financing), and to be spent in pro-poor ways so as not to divert funding away from reaching the IADGs.

3. Aid quality

- Aid effectiveness processes need to fully engage programme countries and non-executive stakeholders. They also need to improve the way progress is measured on issues related to untying aid, capacity development, predictability and mutual accountability.
- Aid quality assessments need to be broadened to include additional key concerns of non-OECD stakeholders, on issues such as use of programme country evaluation systems, flexibility to combat exogenous shocks, and reducing policy and procedural conditionality.

4. Mutual accountability

- Mutual accountability is best exercised through high-level programme country-led processes, with full inclusion of parliaments, civil society organizations and decentralized governments. Providers should support dramatic strengthening of such processes, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and fragile states, by committing to individual targets, to ensure change in development cooperation behaviours.
- The international community should insist that global and regional accountability mechanisms use more inputs from programme country gov-

ernments and non-executive stakeholders and improve country-level relevance to change behaviour. It should assess progress of these mechanisms annually, create a focal point to share best practice lessons, and fully fund the best mechanisms.

- Greater transparency on development cooperation results should be strongly promoted, by including more detailed and timely analysis of a wider range of actors, with information coming from wider sources and easily accessible to parliaments and citizens.

5. *South-South, triangular and decentralized cooperation*

- South-South cooperation exemplifies solidarity among developing countries. Its specific features are often lack of conditionality, horizontal relationships and complementarity between parties.
- The international system needs to capitalize fully on the comparative advantages of South-South cooperation, in providing appropriate and cost-effective support and enabling peer learning. It should fully mainstream support for South-South cooperation in multilateral institutions' (including the United Nations) programmes and increase funding for triangular cooperation.
- South-South providers should develop their own ideas on how to assess the quality and impact of their cooperation.
- There is need to channel a greater share of development cooperation to building the capacity of decentralized governments to deliver basic services for the MDGs, and to conduct detailed analysis of the scope, quality and impact of decentralized cooperation.

6. *Finally, the DCF should:*

- Strengthen its work on policy coherence by identifying best practices for policies which go "beyond aid" to cover all of MDG8, and for aid to promote wider finance for development.
- Continue to conduct regular assessments of trends in development cooperation (especially quantity, allocation and quality), and of progress on mutual accountability and transparency.
- Enhance its role in the development cooperation architecture as the legitimate apex for policy dialogue and norm-setting, by continuing to strengthen the multi-stakeholder nature of its work.

The key messages of this second DCF contributed to the September 2010 United Nations High-level plenary meeting on the MDGs and to other proc-

esses on development cooperation and aid. The Outcome document of the MDG Summit specifically “encouraged continued efforts of the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council as the focal point within the UN system for a holistic consideration of issues of international development cooperation, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.”

IV. The International Development Cooperation Report

The International Development Cooperation Report, entitled “Development Cooperation for the MDGs: Maximizing results” draws together the analysis produced for the 2010 DCF, with a particular focus on the views of various stakeholders and independent analysts. This independent report, which places a focus on accountability and transparency, is in itself a tool for accountability. Its launch at the MDGs Summit reinforced the position of the DCF as a key forum for accountability in development cooperation.

The report states that most developing countries are off track for most of the MDGs, and have been blown further off course by the recent “triple crises” of sharply rising food prices, the volatility in oil prices, and the global financial and economic crisis - to which is being added the growing challenge of climate change. One key reason for this is that most OECD countries have not met the development cooperation promises of 2005; another is that much of the cooperation provided has had little impact on the MDGs.

The report assesses what all stakeholders in development cooperation - providers, recipients and other actors who can hold them accountable - need to do to maximize its impact and reach the MDGs. It looks, in turn, at four challenges facing development cooperation.

The first challenge is to mobilize more development cooperation, improve its allocation and increase its impact. Development cooperation is currently woefully insufficient, poorly allocated and having too little impact: the report suggests practical solutions to these problems.

The second challenge is making development cooperation accountable and transparent. Accountability and transparency have recently become buzzwords in development cooperation circles, with the risk that the processes might become ends in themselves. This report explains how they could work better to deliver results.

The third challenge is to “de-fragment” development cooperation. In the fragmented environment of international cooperation, the “OECD agenda” of

pledges on quantity and effectiveness is not accepted by all countries. This is the case notably for countries providing South-South Cooperation. Yet they have been sharply increasing their flows, and the report shows us that many lessons about value-for-money and results can be learned from South-South cooperation.

The fourth challenge underlies all the others. Coherence of developed and developing country policies going “beyond aid”, broader progress on the global partnership embodied in MDG 8, and a coherent global architecture for governing development cooperation, are all essential to maximizing results.

V. Side event at the MDG Summit on mutual accountability and aid transparency

As part of the General Assembly's High-level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs, the Office for Economic Support and Cooperation (OESC) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized a side event, entitled “Accountability and transparency to reach the MDGs: Key mechanisms and initiatives”. Co-sponsored by the Government of Switzerland, the event featured an introduction by the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-agency Affairs to the International Development Cooperation Report and inputs by Ministers from the United Kingdom, Canada and Liberia, as well as the Director-General of the Swiss Development Cooperation, MDG Advocate Sir Bob Geldof, and the Director for National Planning from Mozambique.

Participants emphasized the vital role of strong mechanisms to ensure mutual accountability in development cooperation. These were seen as critical to bring development partners on a level playing field, instill peer pressure and enhance compliance with commitments. More accountable development actors are also expected to maximize the impact of aid in terms of development results, value for money and progress towards the MDGs. Northern governments showcased initiatives to make their development programmes more transparent to the public, as well as efforts in promoting international accountability on aid issues. Developing country representatives, meanwhile, highlighted challenges and improvements in achieving aid effectiveness targets on the ground. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for more resources to make mutual accountability an integral part of aid management. A strong call was made for better empirical tools and country statistical systems to gather evidence on progress and on compliance with commitments made. Parliaments and NGOs were seen as key players in holding donors to account for their promises, while more focus

needs to be placed on accountability of decentralized development actors. Going beyond aid issues, participants also called for more investment in the reform of national financial sectors, more transparent procurement systems under the leadership of line ministries and more emphasis on accountable use of income from natural resource revenue flows.

The DCF was viewed as the adequate global forum to continue inclusive and balanced global policy dialogue on aid quantity, quality and effectiveness issues, with special focus on mutual accountability and aid transparency at the national and global levels.

In the context of mutual accountability, a number of key references were made by Member States at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, recognizing that “the commitments made by developed and developing countries in relation to the Millennium Development Goals require mutual accountability”. Member States urged to build on progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively and welcomed the contributions of the DCF to efforts to improve the quality of ODA and to increase its development impact. In this regard, they stressed the importance of accountability in international development cooperation, “in both donor and developing countries, focusing on adequate and predictable financial resources as well as their improved quality and targeting”, as well as improved aid transparency by providing data on aid effectiveness. They also encouraged stronger transparency and accountability of the United Nations system.

Bearing in mind this important message set out for the DCF in the above resolution, entitled “Keeping the promise: United to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”³⁶, the DCF, in 2010-2012, will aim to promote development cooperation and improve its quality and results. As 2015 draws near, it is imperative that efforts are made to ensure that developing countries are able to accomplish their national development priorities and the IADGs, including the MDGs. Development cooperation partners, provider and recipient countries alike, along with civil society organizations, local governments, parliamentarians and the private sector must ensure that the support that is provided towards development delivers maximum results with minimum waste. The DCF is well positioned to facilitate open policy dialogue to ensure that the international community maximizes the effectiveness of the support provided, be it financial or other, in going forward to the 2015 MDG deadline.

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Chapter 6

The High-level Segment Ministerial Roundtable Breakfasts

OVERVIEW

The Ministerial Roundtable Breakfasts were sponsored by United Nations agencies as part of the ECOSOS High-level Segment from 29 June - 2 July 2010. The breakfasts provided an informal forum for key stakeholders to mobilize and discuss this year's theme of the Annual Ministerial Review on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Issues considered at these meetings were multidimensional and complex. Topics included women's roles and challenges in health, the economic crisis, basic needs, human rights, climate change, and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The rich discussions that took place at these high-level roundtables, and which are reflected in this chapter, demonstrate the Council's ability to focus on, and highlight, the many efforts underway in support of the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Women, girls, gender equality and HIV recognized challenges gender inequalities present because of the HIV epidemic. Such challenges hinder progress towards achievements of the MDGs and push women and girls into poverty and increase their exposure to HIV. To overcome such challenges, participants rec-

ommended continued empowerment of women and girls, an integrated multi-sectoral approach, a multi-stakeholder response and to learn from past experiences to replicate good practices.

The Global Jobs Pact: Crisis recovery through women's economic empowerment focused on the importance of gender-sensitive economic development strategies, the promotion of entrepreneurship and micro enterprises, the necessity of providing social protection, skills training and employment creation, and addressing the gaps between stated commitments and necessary actions of Member States.

Women's and girl's education: A development imperative stressed the inextricable link between education as a tool to foster and strengthen development goals that will bring to fruition wealth creation, improvement in family health, and nutrition. While there had been strides made in ensuring women's and girls' right to an education, some barriers, such as school fees, gender discrimination, and lack of teachers in rural areas still exist.

A catalyst for success: Addressing the gender dimensions of climate change emphasized the need to make policies that recognize the linkages between climate change and gender equality. The dialogue also called for the inclusion and empowerment of women as active agents of change in addressing climate change.

Women at the frontline of service delivery: Accelerating achievement of the MDGs brought attention on the two key conditions necessary for the achievement of the MDGs: good governance and gender equality. In order to ensure gender parity, it was recommended that the prestige of working on women's issues needed to increase, as well as women's representation at the decision-making levels. Changing recruitment and retention and retrenchment policies, creating incentives that promote gender-responsive public service delivery, and increasing accountability from the public sector were also key recommendations.

The role of ICTs in empowering women with disabilities focused on the use of ICT as an effective tool in advancing the rights of women with disabilities by empowering them and enhancing their quality of life. The discussion looked at particular obstacles, which were impeding universal access to ICT, as well as what needed to be done to ensure social equality that was inclusive of women with disabilities, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Improving women's health: Addressing the challenges looked at what needed to be done to make health systems work for women. It highlighted the need for policy change within the health sector and beyond, and for building stronger leadership and a coherent institutional response. The foundations of better information about women and health needed to be strengthened, so as to achieve

an effective knowledge base and partnerships, particularly with the private sector, were critical, in order to ensure that services were accessible to women.

Empowering women, powering trade: Integrating women into global value chains examined how the promotion of international trade can benefit women. There is a necessity to move beyond the informal sector and micro enterprises, so that opportunities for women are greatly increased. The discussion also noted the importance of utilizing a dual track approach that promotes trade and gender equality as being integral to women's empowerment, while also having a great potential for contributing to poverty reduction. It also noted the importance of strengthening public-private partnerships as being key to integrating women into the production value chain.

Economic opportunities for the empowerment of women in Africa and LDCs: Access to credit, land and markets noted that, while women are increasing their representation in the business sector, such representation is still uneven and unbalanced. The dialogue called for the development of specific policies and programmes in Africa and LDCs to empower women's socioeconomic standing, in addition to the scaling up existent, effective programmes. Such policies would have to be holistic and provide access to credit, markets, land rights, etc.

Bridging the urban gender divide: An imperative for achieving the Millennium Development Goals noted the demographic shift to a more urbanized world and the need to draw attention to the gap in gender equality in urban areas, where women and girls face far greater challenges and have less access to resources that enable less social mobility than their male counterparts. The dialogue also stressed the need to create longer and more sustainable urban-rural linkages.

Women, girls, gender equality and HIV³⁷

BY THE JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
AND THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM)

A. Issues Paper

Nearly 30 years into the HIV epidemic, persistent power imbalances, unequal opportunities, discrimination and violations of human rights put women and girls at greater risk of HIV. In spite of the many commitments that countries have made to address gender inequality and violence against women, these

³⁷ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "Women, girls, gender equality and HIV," 29 June 2010.

persist worldwide. For example, globally, women make up 50 per cent of the global epidemic and in sub-Saharan Africa, 60 per cent of the people living with HIV are female.³⁸ In Asia, the proportion of women to men living with HIV rose from 19 per cent in 2000 to 35 per cent in 2008.³⁹ In the Caribbean, women account for around half of all new HIV infections and prevalence is especially high among adolescent and young women, who tend to have infection rates significantly higher than males their own age. Globally, violence against women and girls is widespread; evidence suggests that experiencing violence increases the risk of HIV infection by a factor of three.⁴⁰

Gender inequality and HIV are undermining achievements in the MDGs. MDG 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment is not just a goal in itself but a driver for all the MDGs, and is intimately linked and causally connected to the MDGs on child mortality, maternal mortality and HIV⁴¹. For example, maternal mortality would have been 22 per cent lower in a world without HIV⁴². In 2008, 45 per cent of HIV-positive pregnant women received anti-retroviral prophylaxis to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), up from 9 per cent in 2004. However, only one-third of these women are assessed for their own ART needs to continue treatment after the pregnancy. Despite progress in PMTCT, around over 400,000 children worldwide were still infected with HIV in 2008, 50 per cent of whom would die in the first two years of life without treatment⁴³. There is a clear need to invest in addressing the linkages between the MDGs by linking services and building on partnerships that will improve the situation for women and girls.

To help address the specific needs and rights of women and girls in the context of HIV, UNAIDS has developed a UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Action on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV, with the help of the high-level Global Task Force. The Agenda was endorsed by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in December 2009, and subsequently launched in March 2010, during the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

³⁸ UNAIDS AIDS Epidemic Update 2009. Geneva. 2009

³⁹ Ibis

⁴⁰ UNAIDS, Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, Stop Violence Against Women, Fight AIDS, Issue 2 (2005). Citing amfAR, "Gender-Based Violence and HIV Among Women: Assessing the Evidence," Issue Brief no. 3 (June 2005)

⁴¹ www.thelancet.com Vol. 375, 5 June 2010.

⁴² Hogan et al. Lancet, April 12, 2010 See Online/Comment: DOI:10.1016/S0140-6736(10)60547-8

⁴³ Report of the Secretary General. A/64/735.

Outcomes

The roundtable aims to re-energize political leadership and commitment to accelerate action on women and girls in the context of HIV. In this regard, following issues will be discussed:

- How can key aspects of gender inequality in the context of HIV be addressed, with a focus on country-level action?
- How can we better link comprehensive HIV, maternal and child health and sexual and reproductive health services for women?
- What practical steps can be undertaken to address MDGs 3 to 6 as a package, in order to achieve progress for women and girls?
- How the UNAIDS Agenda for Women and Girls can help address MDGs 3 to 6 in a comprehensive holistic manner?
- How can women living with HIV be empowered to provide leadership in ensuring women-centred approaches for the achievement of the MDGs?

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 29 June 2010, and was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Nilcea Friere, Minister of the Secretariat of Policies for Women, Brazil, and Ms. Jan Beagle, Deputy Executive Director, UNAIDS.

The following recommendations were proposed as a result of the discussions.

1. Empowerment of women and girls and human rights-based approach

Participants reiterated the importance of empowering women and girls, eliminating social and economic discriminations against them, and protecting and promoting their rights, in order to reduce their vulnerability to HIV (i.e., reducing poverty among women, through microcredit and other income-generating programmes; ensuring their property and inheritance rights; eliminating violence against them; ensuring access to education etc). Wider use of female condoms was noted as a means to promote autonomy of women in sexual and reproductive matters. It was also suggested that empowerment of girls should start from an early age, by promoting age-appropriate knowledge on sexual and reproductive health.

It was highlighted that the rights-based approach in the AIDS response is essential to eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination and ensure uni-

versal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for all, including women and girls, and other groups that are vulnerable to HIV. Engaging and empowering people living with HIV, especially HIV-positive women, is of particular importance, as they can provide critical contribution to various programmes and policies aimed at improving the livelihoods of their communities. The need to ensure adequate investments in programmes for women and girls was underscored.

2. *Integrated multi-sectoral approaches*

Participants agreed that there is a clear need for integrated programmes to address gender equality, HIV, maternal and child mortality, and strengthen health systems. Multi-sectoral approach is necessary to deal with inter-related issues of poverty, education, sexual and reproductive health that cut across several MDGs. Such holistic approach will be more efficient and cost effective. Examples included: health system strengthening platforms in HIV response with linkages to maternal and child health (i.e., in programmes by the Global Fund, PEPFAR and several other donors); combining programmes for violence against women, micro credit and HIV; integration of HIV with services for sexual and reproductive health and family planning. Special attention was called to PMTCT, which holds a significant potential to advance progress on HIV, maternal and child health, while dealing also with related issues of gender equality, education, violence etc (i.e., addressing cultural attitudes that prevent women accessing healthcare services, empowering women and creating an enabling environment for violence-free disclosure (i.e., engaging men, providing accurate information about HIV to avoid misconceptions about its transmission, etc.).

3. *Working together in a multi-stakeholder response*

Participants noted the progress made due to mobilization and engagement of various stakeholders (i.e. contribution of civil society, including organizations of women living with HIV, in implementing various HIV programmes; engaging religious communities to help address culturally-sensitive issues about HIV prevention; efforts by the First Ladies of Africa to raise HIV awareness; role of families in addressing violence against women and providing support and care to HIV-positive women and girls; etc.). Participants reiterated the need to further strengthen and build on the partnerships. For example, there is much potential in harnessing the energies of women's and AIDS movements.

4. Evidence-based response

Participants reiterated the need for evidence-based response, in line with the principle of “know your epidemic” and tailoring interventions to address specific needs on the ground (i.e., different programmes in urban and rural settings, or services offered to different populations, etc.). A call was made to learn from past experiences of what has worked and replicate good practices (i.e., low-cost prevention interventions). In this regard, it was highlighted that the UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Action on Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV offers a valuable tool to help planning country action to address needs and vulnerabilities faced by women and girls in the context of the HIV epidemic in a particular country or community.

The Global Jobs Pact: Crisis recovery through women's economic empowerment⁴⁴

BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) AND THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

A. Issues paper

The global economic crisis has slowed the pace of poverty reduction in developing countries and is hampering progress toward the MDGs, including those MDGs related to gender equality and it will continue to affect development prospects well beyond 2015.

Determined to take decisive and urgent actions to cope with the multiple facets of the crisis, in April 2009, the Chief Executives Board (CEB) of the United Nations system agreed to implement nine joint initiatives designed to assist countries and the global community to accelerate recovery and build a fair and inclusive globalization, allowing for sustainable economic, social and environmental development for all.

Following this CEB decision, in June 2009, Heads of state and government, ministers of labour, worker and employer representatives and other leaders adopted the *Global Jobs Pact* during the 98th session of the International Labour Conference. In January 2010, the UNDP Executive Board adopted a

⁴⁴ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, “The Global Jobs Pact: Crisis recovery through women's economic empowerment,” 29 June 2010.

decision, entitled “UNDP response to the economic and financial crisis: Promoting the Global Jobs Pact” that requests UNDP to integrate the Pact into its operational activities.

The Pact is designed to guide national and international policies aimed at stimulating economic recovery and providing social protection to working women and men and their families. It explicitly recognizes the importance of giving equal voice to women and men and the need for gender equality policy responses, and states that “*The current crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to shape new gender equality policy responses. Recovery packages during economic crisis need to take into account the impact on women and men and integrate gender concerns in all measures. In discussions on recovery packages, both regarding their design and assessing their success, women must have an equal voice with men*”. The Pact also urges measures to retain persons in employment, to sustain enterprises and to accelerate employment creation and jobs recovery combined with social protection systems, in particular, for the most vulnerable, integrating gender concerns on all measures.

The breakfast offers an opportunity to share experiences from a wide range of actors in the world of work and to learn of successes on the ground of responses to the crisis inspired by the Pact.

Objectives

- Showcase examples of how the Global Jobs Pact has been, or could be, applied and its socio and economic impact on women.
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of building a gender-responsive social protection floor, including access to health care, income security for the elderly and persons with disabilities, child benefits and income security combined with public employment guarantee schemes for the unemployed and working poor.
- Catalyze further partnerships on the Global Jobs Pact to scale and integrate the Pact into broader MDG planning.

B. Summary of Discussions

This breakfast, which took place on 29 June, 2010, and was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Moushira Mahmoud Khattab, Minister of State for Family and Population of Egypt and Ms. María Angélica Ducci, Executive Director of the Office of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, offered an opportunity to share experiences from a wide range of actors in the

world of work, learn of successful national responses to the crisis inspired by the Pact, and demonstrate the effectiveness of building a gender-responsive social protection floor combined with public employment guarantee schemes for the unemployed and working poor.

The **Global Jobs Pact** was designed to guide national and international policies aimed at stimulating economic recovery and providing social protection to working women and men and their families. The Pact can be used as a road map to analyze the impact of the crisis on women and men, identify areas where job opportunities could be created and where skills development training for women is needed, and develop policies that lead to sustainable and durable development, highlighting the importance of involving all social partners throughout. It explicitly recognizes the importance of giving equal voice to women and men and the need for gender equality policy responses, and emphasizes the paramount importance of including women in crisis initiatives. Failing to do so has proven in the past to have a high social and economic cost, including growth in child labour rates.

In **Egypt**, the Government has made substantial efforts to limit the impact of the crisis on women by developing and implementing programmes with a strong gender component, including initiatives to encourage companies to avoid sex discrimination in recruitment and during employment, *ad hoc* interventions for female-headed households, and stimulus packages for the poorest. An emergency fund had been set up by the ministry responsible for labour and the labour unions in those industries that have high rates of women employees, such as textiles, electronics and food industries, so as to continue paying workers during the crisis. The new Social Security Act proved a useful buffer for the most marginalized groups, including women. Training is a key element of the Egyptian response, including skill upgrading for women in the informal economy. Women's entrepreneurial development had also been encouraged through programmes run by the Ministry of Manpower and Migration, which had also contributed to the Cairo Platform of Action for Women Entrepreneurs (African Development Bank/ILO, 2010). The gender sensitivity of such measures could be traced back to the fact that a parliamentary quota for women was ensuring that the gender dimension was heard when policy debates and decisions were underway.

The impact of the crisis on women in **Australia** has not been too severe, thanks to the prompt and efficient action taken by the Government in developing and implementing stimulus programmes, since the very early stage of the economic downturn. Such programmes focused on enhancing family spend-

ing capacities through increased pensions, income paid to care takers of the elderly and the sick, first home-owner grants, building of schools, extensive capital works programmes, tax benefits and a one-off direct cash payment to all low tax income bracket families. To this, the Government added skills upgrading measures (e.g. financing of more training places,). In a second package, the Government gave a direct cash grant to all residents so as to stimulate consumer spending. However, since a large number of women are 'hidden unemployed', they are not reflected in official statistics and thus, not eligible for some of the stimulus related initiatives. The existence of a strong gender machinery within the Government and social partner involvement had facilitated political thinking on the gender implications of the crisis and its different impact on women and men and had led to the development of gender-sensitive strategies to overcome it.

The **employers** view the Pact as a very important policy document and its adaptability makes it a tool that can be used at all levels and regions of the world. Moreover, the Pact recognizes the importance of entrepreneurship and the key role played by skills development and training to meet technological challenges in time of economic crisis.

The **workers** believe that the crisis might be seen as a means to redistribute justice and that social dialogue can provide an effective and sustainable response to serious economic difficulties. Cash transfers and other initiatives contained in the Global Jobs Pact can surely help to shorten the time lag between growth recovery and labour market recovery but employment creation and decent work must be the common goals. The ILO Resolution on Gender equality at the heart of decent work, adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2009 complements the Global Jobs Pact in eliminating sex discrimination at work and promoting gender equality.

Bearing in mind that decent work is what really empowers women and that active labour market policies are crucial to create decent work for women, **employment guarantee policies and cash transfers** can be, and are often, used by governments as a short-term response to economic crises. India and South Africa had been implementing such policies on a longer term. In India, about 40 million rural households had been given the right to paid work for 100 days per year and the Government is planning to extend the number of days to 150 a year in the second phase of the programme. Monitoring proves that women, in particular, have benefited from the scheme. Providing income for households enhanced the capacity to contribute to economic growth. Moreover, the importance of focusing on both physical infrastructure and social services (e.g.

home-based care and early childhood education) was emphasized. In fact, it has been estimated that investments in the social sector promotes a win-win situation for economic growth, employment and women's empowerment.

In Chile, the Government's main priorities are women's economic empowerment and reconciliation between work and family. A gender-sensitive social protection floor has been created, that includes recognition of women's unpaid work, a specific focus on female-headed households, the promotion on women's entrepreneurship, measures to enhance women access to social security, maternity and pension benefits for all women and health care for all. Moreover, the programme "Chile Solidario", created in 2002 to combat extreme poverty, is now providing access to cash transfers and connections to the public and private networks of social services to the most vulnerable segments of the society, including early childhood care that enables women to seek paid employment or undertake income-generating activities.

Canada's commitment to overcome the global economic and financial crisis is two-fold. On the one hand, the Government is working on three levels: (a) food security and support to small-scale farmers, both women and men; (b) access to finance, especially for women entrepreneurs, as part of sustainable growth strategies; and (c) education and health to increase opportunities for children and youth to escape poverty. On the other hand, in order to provide support to those countries which are, now even more than before, counting on the help of external donors, Canada is committed to implement the G8 accountability framework to address the gap between stated commitments and necessary actions to put the MDGs back on track.

Nicaragua recognizes that a shift of priorities due to the current crisis can pose a threat to job creation and to the promotion of decent work. A solution that can increase decent work opportunities for women is the creation of micro and small enterprises. In Indonesia, the "Business in a Box" initiative has generated 1600 new micro enterprises that count 93 per cent of women employees. The immediate benefit for the families is a significant increase in income and at the community level, these entrepreneurs were able to generate employment for other women. But stakeholders need to hear of good practices on how crisis response packages, such as extended social protection, are actually working in the various national circumstances.

This debate demonstrated that, to date, a big part of the responsibility to overcome the current crises has rested on States that also have the legal obligation to protect the rights of women, including equal opportunities and treatment in employment. It is important to consider the synergies between

employment creation and state provision of education and health services and pension schemes. In this regard, further efforts need to be made to evaluate the impact of social sector interventions on poverty reduction and development overall, and the development of a monitoring system of the Global Jobs Pact - foreseen in the ILO and UNDP's commitment to promote the Pact described below - could help both in the evaluation and in the programming phase. Corporate social responsibility and public-private partnership initiatives can support governments in their efforts to overcome the current economic and financial crisis and achieve recovery through the economic empowerment of women.

Moreover, following a decision of the UNDP Executive Board in 2010, the ILO and the UNDP have been working together to implement the Global Jobs Pact. UNDP and ILO are currently developing an action plan, which recognizes that, particularly at the country level, the Pact can have a visible impact on the lives of women and men and their families. In the development and implementation of the action plan, the outcome of this discussion will be taken into high consideration.

Women's and Girl's Education: A Development Imperative⁴⁵

BY THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
(UNESCO) AND THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

A. Issues Paper

Purpose

The education of women and girls is central to development. In line with the 2010 ECOSOC focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, this forum provides an opportunity for global leaders, assembled for their Annual Ministerial Review, to assess the current situation of women and girls' education. It is expected that these leaders will, in turn, exercise positive influence on national and international legal, policy, financing and public information processes to promote and support women's and girls' education. This breakfast meeting will also inform arguments presented by Member States during the general ECOSOC high-level debate in support of education for women and

⁴⁵ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "Women's and girl's education: A development imperative," 30 June 2010.

girls. UNESCO and UNICEF, therefore, will call on world leaders to renew and accelerate the implementation of their commitment to gender equality and to fulfill women and girls' right to education.

Why invest in women's and girls' education?

A specific focus on women's and girls' education is an urgent development imperative. Investing in women's and girls' education delivers high returns, not only for female educational attainment and women's empowerment, but also for poverty reduction, income growth, economic productivity, social justice and democracy. Evidence shows a strong correlation between educating women and girls and increases in women's earnings, improvements in child and family health and nutrition, increases in school enrolment, protection against HIV infection, higher maternal and child life expectancy, reduced fertility rates and delayed marriage. No other policy intervention is likely to have a more positive multiplier effect on progress across the MDGs than the education of women and girls.

Where we stand

Progress has been made in narrowing gender gaps in education over the past decade, in particular, at the primary level.⁴⁶ However, girls' secondary school enrolment has increased at a much slower rate and, in some regions, gaps are actually widening. Disparities are deepest in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, Central Asia and the Arab States. Even within countries, nationwide averages can mask significant inequalities, with enrolment rates much lower among girls from poor families, from rural areas or urban slums, or from ethnic and linguistic minorities. Of the 72 million children who are not in school, 54 per cent are girls. Not only are girls less likely than boys to be in school, they are more likely than boys never to enroll. In 2007, a quarter of sub-Saharan Africa's primary school age children were out of school. Of these, almost 12 million girls are expected never to enter school, compared with 7 million boys. These girls have little or no chance of acquiring basic knowledge and skills on which to base lifelong learning, enter the world of work, and contribute to societal development. In addition, girls are more likely than boys are to drop out of school before acquiring basic literacy and less likely to benefit from non-formal education. The gender disadvantage persists, as children progress through the education system. Social, cultural and economic factors interact to weaken the chances of

⁴⁶ Unless otherwise cited, all figures are from the 2010 UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report. Paris.

girls completing primary school and making the transition to lower secondary education. The legacy of such exclusion, coupled with poor education quality, is seen in the high levels of illiteracy among young and adult women. Of the 759 million adults who cannot read or write, around two-thirds are women - a proportion unchanged since 2000. The recent economic crisis threatens to deepen these inequalities. Girls are often the first to be pulled out of schools, as households cope with declining income. National budgets in poor countries are under pressure, weakening the government's capacity to expand access and protect the most vulnerable. Sub-Saharan Africa alone faces a potential loss of around US\$4.6 billion annually in education financing in 2009 and 2010. International aid commitments to education are also stagnating, and remain far below the level needed to achieve education goals.

What needs to be done

Holistic approaches to women's and girls' education that meet the specific conditions of each country context, aimed at increasing access and enhancing relevance and quality, include:

- removal of financial barriers to education, particularly direct and indirect costs of education and bringing schools closer to marginalized communities;
- provision of appropriate safety nets (school feeding options, cash transfers, etc);
- provision of gender-friendly basic services in teaching and learning environments (water, sanitation, safety);
- eradication of gender stereotypes in curricula and teaching practices and all aspects of education;
- recruitment of female teachers and educators and their deployment to rural areas as role models;
- provision and expansion of relevant non-formal education opportunities for women and girls throughout their life-cycle;
- development of equivalency frameworks that enable women and girls to take advantage of formal and non-formal opportunities;
- ensuring that women's and girls' education is responsive to individual needs and supports their ability to exercise their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights; and
- increased national and international funding for education, and better targeting of resources towards the most vulnerable.

Points for discussion

- **Financing women's and girls' education to minimize the impact of the financial crisis on education** - successful policies/good practices and lessons learned from government, bi-lateral donors, private sector and private (household level) initiatives.
- **Different levels of education and their contribution to women's empowerment** - implementing holistic approaches to women's and girls' empowerment.
- **Women's access and excellence in mathematics, science, technology and innovation for development.**

B. Summary of discussions

The event, which took place on 30 June 2010, and was co-chaired by **Mr. Anthony Lake**, Executive Director of UNICEF and **Ms. Irina Bokova**, Director General of UNESCO, brought together over 50 ministers, policy-makers, senior United Nations officials and representatives of civil society to assess the current state of women's and girls' education worldwide and determine what needs to be done to achieve gender equality by 2015.

Many success stories were highlighted. Female education stipends in Bangladesh, targeted efforts to train and deploy female teachers in rural areas in Egypt, and safety nets to support girls from the poorest families in Morocco were among the innovative strategies mentioned as helping to expand educational opportunities for young women and girls, in particular, the most vulnerable and marginalized. Expanding quality teacher training and promoting scientific careers for women was also signaled as having had a profound effect on gender diversity in Brazil.

However, significant obstacles remain. Poverty continues to be a major force for exclusion. "There is a direct correlation between the level of education in a country and the level of poverty", stated the Ambassador of **Mauritius**, who moderated the discussion. Speakers drew attention to gender stereotypes and cultural attitudes as among the greatest barriers to gender equality, and called for stronger efforts to engage community and religious leaders behind girls' education and, more broadly, in the words of one speaker, "elevate the value of the girl in society". Violence against girls, child labour and early child marriage were also mentioned as major challenges, as was the need for much greater action to protect women and girls in situations affected

by conflict. Girls' education must be an international priority and thus, a joint commitment is required to link the macro and micro welfares of families.

Participants advised against seeing girls as victims and urged the importance of focusing instead on how education can be a powerful vehicle for empowerment, not just for the individual but the whole community. Emphasis was also placed on the need to find positive entry points to overcome cultural barriers and to also seek to work with boys and men, and to engage fathers, brothers and uncles, who are often the decision makers in families to make better decisions for girls' education, if gender discrimination was to be effectively addressed. Improving the access to health education, HIV-AIDS education and prevention and life skills should be prioritized for adolescent girls.

In moving forward, participants defined what needed to be done to ensure the attainment of MDGs 2 and 3. They stressed the need to mobilize local communities to promote education, to improve teacher quality, and to scale up funding to support education, especially in emergency situations, to focus more on girls in conflict and post-conflict regions. As pointed out by one participant, focusing on girls was the "single most effective investment". Finally, noting that six of the MDGs are directly related to children, participants urged the need for a special event on the 'MDGs and children' during the MDG Summit later this year as a concrete and necessary step forward to continue the momentum of the discussions.

In conclusion, there was a call for a stronger focus on equity when working towards international development goals, as even when making progress globally, gaps between the rich and the poor are growing. The prevailing view was that without greater efforts to meet the needs of the poorest and disadvantaged, the international community risks facing a "statistical success that masks a moral failure". The discussion stressed a greater focus on girls who are marginalized, girls living in indigenous areas and children with disabilities. There was an emphasis on the importance of an integrated approach, bringing together health, gender and educational initiatives, as the most effective way to accelerate progress towards 2015.

A Catalyst for success: Addressing the gender dimensions of climate change⁴⁷

BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

A. Issues paper

Issues for discussion

- What are some good practice examples of how the gender dimensions of climate change can be addressed in national and international policy making and implementation?
- How can governments and other stakeholders take action in the run up to the climate change conference (UNFCCC COP-16) in Mexico at the end of the year and beyond?
- How can the responses to climate change and the accompanying financial mechanisms be catalyzed to contribute to the achievement of MDG3?

Background

The threat of climate change to development is well known. Up to 600 million more people in Africa could face malnutrition as agricultural systems break down, an additional 1.8 billion people, especially in Asia, could face water stress, and over 70 million Bangladeshis, 22 million Vietnamese, and six million Egyptians could be affected by climate-related flooding. Allowing such statistics to be realized could erase decades of effort to eradicate poverty and could unravel progress towards the MDGs.

Responding to these projections, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recognized that climate change will magnify existing patterns of inequality, including gender inequality. As the primary fuel gatherers, water providers, staple food producers and family caretakers in the developing world, poor women will be disproportionately impacted and will face increasing challenges as the climate changes. Though their experiences and traditional knowledge can be utilized to identify successful adaptation and mitigation strategies, effective approaches require financial and technical resources that poor communities - and poor women in particular - often lack.

⁴⁷ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "A catalyst for success: Addressing the gender dimensions of climate change," 30 June 2010.

To address this shortcoming, countries and organizations around the world are mobilizing billions of dollars to deal with emerging mitigation and adaptation needs. If administered wisely, this new source of funding could represent an enormous opportunity for development and for reducing inequalities between women and men. However, current approaches to financing the response to climate change largely ignore climate change's differential impacts on women and men by failing to incorporate these differences into strategies, funding priorities, operational frameworks, or project/ programme evaluations. Rather, climate change policy and finance largely reflect the principles of the broader global finance establishment, where gender-blind decision-making has led to resource allocations that often disadvantage women - and poor women, in particular.

There are deep repercussions for failing to consider gender differences in the response to climate change. Missed opportunities for capacity building and economic empowerment will serve to perpetuate inequalities between men and women and entrench and deepen the structures and barriers to women's economic opportunities. This is important, as the resources being used for mitigating and adapting to climate change over the coming years will exceed the total that is currently being spent on development.

UNDP's Africa Adaptation Programme, a partnership programme with Japan, which works to implement integrated, comprehensive and gender-responsive adaptation actions and resilience plans in 20 African countries, provides one excellent example of a programme which seeks to identify the differential impacts of climate change on women and men and build a response, which considers women's and men's specific capacities to contribute to the response.

Unfortunately, such concerted attention to the different needs, perspectives and contributions of women and men remains the exception rather than the rule. Moving forward, it is imperative that women are afforded the maximum opportunity to contribute to, benefit from, and influence all aspects of mitigation and adaptation efforts in climate change programming. In addition, it will be critical to build the capacity of women and women's organizations to fully participate in the design and implementation of policies and programmes.

Women must also have equal access to, and control over, the resources being mobilized and must have the ability to integrate their needs and perspectives into the establishment of funding priorities and the structuring of climate change finance mechanisms. Doing so will make climate change programming more equitable and effective, while simultaneously increasing the impact of the funding used. It also has the potential to increase development benefits and support the achievement of the MDGs overall.

At this point in time, when resources are limited and time is of the essence, mainstreaming gender in climate change responses is an opportunity that the world cannot afford to miss.

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 30 June 2010, and was co-chaired by Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Director of UNDP's Gender Team and H.E. Ms. María del Rocío García Gaytán, President of Mexico's National Institute for Women. H.E. Ms. Ritva Koukku-Ronde, Under-Secretary of State, Finland, and H.E. Ms. Ingrid Fiskaa, State Secretary of International Development, Norway, co-hosted the event.

Background

Climate change is inextricably linked to human development and is a threat to MDG achievement. The science is clear: if immediate action is not taken to slow down - and soon reverse - the growth of greenhouse gas emissions, the consequences for the planet and the world's people will be catastrophic.

But, climate change is not gender neutral. Women's traditional role as the primary users and managers of natural resources, primary caregivers, and unpaid laborers means that they are intimately involved in, and dependant on, resources that are put most at risk by climate change. Furthermore, women lack rights and access to resources and information that are vital, if they are to overcome the challenges posed by climate change. Yet, as participants pointed out, women are not only victims; they are also innovators and powerful agents of change, making their involvement in decision making and policy development critical for identifying appropriate responses.

Climate change finance

The amount of money required to adapt to, and mitigate, the effects of climate change is unprecedented. The World Bank, for example, estimates that US\$450 billion per year is needed to help developing countries address the problem of climate change alone; but there is currently a large gap between the resources that are needed and the resources that are available. Resources to address the climate change challenge are currently being raised from both the public and private sectors, and discussants noted the importance of ensuring that traditional assistance for gender equality and women's empowerment is not negatively impacted, as a result of interventions that are being made to finance the response to climate change.

Participants also emphasized, however, that climate finance is not only about how to raise the money; it is also imperative to consider who has access to it. If directed properly, these resources offer a major opportunity to drive sustainable development forward and can provide a key new funding source for catalyzing MDG achievement, including the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. However, this requires gender equity in emerging climate financing mechanisms and political will and capacities for integrating gender-equality principles into programmes and policies for adaptation and mitigation.

Responding to this need, it was noted that UNDP is leading global research on gender and climate change finance and is currently engaged in dialogue with the governance bodies of climate finance mechanisms, such as the Adaptation Fund Board and Climate Investment Funds' Trust Fund Committees, seeking to introduce gender-equity guidelines into these mechanisms' operational frameworks and decision-making. At the national and regional levels, UNDP is also working with other members of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance to build a cadre of experts that can provide technical support to develop gender-responsive funding proposals, policies and strategies.

Initiatives already underway

There are already positive examples of national climate change strategies and initiatives that are taking gender into account. For example, Mozambique has developed a national climate change adaptation programme, a gender and climate change strategy, and a five year plan of action, which aims to empower women and communities. Likewise, Mexico has a legal framework that can help ensure the involvement of women in climate change initiatives, including a line in their national plan, which links gender and climate change and a specific budget line on gender, disasters and climate change within their disaster risk reduction office.

Donors have also been increasing their attention to incorporating gender equality and women's empowerment principles into their climate change assistance. Finland, for example, has been working with UNDP and allies in the Global Gender and Climate Alliance to enable women from developing countries to participate in the climate change negotiations. This support has resulted in a wider understanding of the relationship between gender and climate change, brought a gender perspective into the new agreements, and strengthened women's capacity to engage effectively in the global climate

change dialogue. Likewise, Norway, one of the world's strongest supporters of REDD+, will pay special attention to ensure that women benefit from opportunities brought by new REDD+ programs.

The gap between the recognition of the issues and action to address them is large and there is still great need to translate awareness into political will and action. And, while many governments believe strongly in the need to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment principles into climate change policies and financing, not all can bring gender issues into the ongoing negotiations. Bolder action to bridge the gap between policies and action to incorporate gender equality and women's empowerment principles into the global climate change policy framework were called upon.

Moving forward

History has shown that societies that address gender equality tend to perform well in terms of sustainable economic growth, and that attention to gender equality is a key factor for getting out of poverty. Moving forward, policies and resources mobilized to combat climate change must be equally accessible and beneficial to women and men. To further this goal, participants made a number of specific suggestions, including:

- utilizing climate finance to create employment for women to keep natural resources and protect the environment in and around their communities (e.g. from nursing seedlings);
- developing and piloting innovative programmes that demonstrate the potential for climate finance to contribute to gender equality, women's empowerment, and MDG achievement worldwide;
- increasing investment in research and analysis and ensuring that best practices, knowledge and information are widely available and shared;
- ensuring that large-scale mitigation interventions in areas, such as energy, transport and construction - where a bulk of resources flow - adequately consider gender differences;
- increasing the financial resources and technology transfer available to developing countries;
- focusing attention on population growth and advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- increasing attention to gender-specific opportunities and bridging gender gaps in REDD+ programmes;

- recognizing that post-conflict countries face special challenges that require additional efforts to address climate and development issues; and
- engaging with the Global Gender and Climate Alliance to build capacity to incorporate gender into climate change policies and programmes at the global, regional and national levels.

Gender and Democratic Governance: Accelerating the Achievement of the MDGs⁴⁸

BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM)

A. Issues paper

Gender-responsive governance matters

With five years left in the MDG timetable, it has become clear that there are two key conditions for accelerating their achievement: good governance and gender equality. These two conditions can be brought together in specific gender-responsive governance reform efforts that seek to improve public service quality and delivery to address the needs of women and girls. This is the subject of this ECOSOC roundtable. Gender-responsive governance requires states to ensure that mandates, targets and funds are in place to incentivize public sector actors to respond to women's needs and ensure that appropriate public services are available to them.

Women at the front line of service delivery

An essential element of gender-responsive governance is the participation of a critical mass of women at all levels of the public service. Women public servants engaged in policy design, financial allocation but, above all, in the “front line” of delivering services have been proven to be more responsive to the needs of women clients of public services than men are. This finding, of course, is subject to qualifications; there has to be a sufficient number of women in the public service in question (generally more than 30 per cent of personnel), and a range of other conditions have to be in place to provide the incentives and requires to encourage responsiveness to women and girl clients.

⁴⁸ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, “Women at the frontline of service delivery: Accelerating achievement of the MDGs,” 1 July 2010.

In the absence of a critical mass of women, patriarchal norms and stereotypes about women can be pervasive in service delivery institutions and can have a developmentally negative influence on the way that services are designed and delivered. For example, a perception that women are not farmers has meant that women have often been ignored as target groups in the organization of agricultural extension services, to the detriment of productivity in the agrarian economy.⁴⁹ Similarly, inherent gender biases may lead to police not investigating cases of rape and judges treating perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence with leniency, greatly to the detriment of the credibility of the rule of law.

There is concrete evidence that women's participation in the design and delivery of services results in more gender-responsive and pro-poor service delivery outcomes in several ways:

- the presence of female professionals at the front line reduces access barriers to service delivery in countries where cultural and social norms limit engagement of female beneficiaries with male service providers;
- female professionals have been shown to be more likely to identify and advocate for specific needs of women and girls; and
- there is evidence that female professional have a significant “role modeling effect” that inspires other women to seek public sector employment, contributing to the “feminization of public space” and to the overall goals of more gender- and poverty-responsive public sector performance.

The evidence

Access to basic services such as education, health, water and sanitation

Access to basic services, such as education, health, water, sanitation and a range of livelihood support services are essential for the achievement of the MDGs. The argument for having more women at the front line for delivering these basic services has been made repeatedly: there is a strong correlation, for instance, between high numbers of female teachers and the retention of girls in school. Likewise, the presence of female health workers is associated with a decrease of maternal and infant mortality rates. Water and sanitation services

⁴⁹ E.g. E-choupal, a much celebrated ICT based intervention initiative of a multinational company in India. Their agriculture extension efforts in India, seeks to improve the productivity of agriculturists from whom ITC sources raw material. Women are not seen as intended beneficiaries of this initiative.

are generally more effective, if women take an active role in the various stages involved in setting them up, from design and planning, through to the ongoing operations and maintenance procedures required to make such initiative sustainable.⁵⁰

Access to services for economic empowerment

In light of the increasing feminization of poverty, the economic empowerment of women is critical to the achievement of MDG 1. It is also recognized that lack of access to support services, such as agricultural extension services or credit services is behind the continued economic disempowerment of women. When women are the agents delivering such services, there is a greater likelihood of increased access for women: female agricultural extension agents are an important factor in encouraging the participation of female farmers in extension activities.⁵¹

Access to justice and security services

Access to justice and security are fundamental to the empowerment of women and realization of basic rights. The fact that women's presence in the justice and security sectors has positive consequences for gender-responsive service delivery is well documented. The presence of female police officers increases the likelihood that women and girls - and even men - will report rape and other cases of SGBV. Female judges are more likely to rule in favour of the plaintiffs in cases of sex discrimination and sexual harassment than their male colleagues.⁵²

Recommendation

In spite of the evidence cited above, there is a dearth of women across the service delivery chain, from civil servants responsible for designing and managing the delivery of services to frontline professionals responsible for the delivery of services. This is particularly true for service areas, such as agriculture, where a prevalent bias often prevents recognition of women as farmers.

⁵⁰ Gender and Water Alliance (2006) "For Her - It's the Big Issue: putting women at the centre of water supply, sanitation and hygiene, <http://www.genderandwater.org/page/5124>

⁵¹ Pandolfelli, Lauren and Agnes Quisumbing (2008). "Promising Approaches to Address the Needs of Poor Female Farmers

⁵² Peresie, Jennifer L., "Female Judges Matter: Gender and Collegial Decision-making in the Federal Appellate Courts", *The Yale Law Journal* (Volume 114: 1759- 1790) , March 2005 <http://www.yalelawjournal.org/pdf/114-7/peresie.pdf>

A rapid infusion of female professionals - as civil servants, as leaders of service user communities and at the front line of service delivery would enhance the delivery and increase the uptake of basic services for women. This effect is likely to be most marked in post-conflict settings, where employment of women at the front line of service delivery will have the double effect of accelerating MDG achievement and of improving intra-household distribution of income of public sector employees. UNIFEM calls on all Member States to design policies and allocate resources that increase the number of women in service delivery chains in various sectors, including the police, agricultural extension services, schools and health clinics, election management bodies etc. In addition, the conditions under which these women can work effectively must be identified and fostered.

Issues for discussion

- What other evidence exists to show that increasing women's presence at the frontline of service delivery ensures better outreach to women and girls, thereby accelerating the achievement of the MDGs?
- What are the conditions under which women public service providers are able to respond effectively to the needs of women clients and how can these conditions be fostered as part of mainstream governance reforms?
- What are the specific policies and mechanisms that will ensure recruitment and retention of more women at the front-line of service delivery?

A. Summary of discussions

This ministerial roundtable breakfast was held on 1 July 2010, and was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Hawa Ghasia, Minister of Public Service Management, Tanzania, and Ms. Ines Alberdi, Executive Director of UNIFEM.

Ensuring gender parity within the public sector

An essential element of gender-responsive governance is the participation of a critical mass of women at all levels of the public administration. Women public servants engaged in policy design, financial allocation, but above all, in the 'front-line' of delivering services have been proven to be more responsive to the needs of women clients of public services than men are. The evidence shows that globally women continue to be insufficiently represented within the public service, in particular in leadership and decision-making positions. Overall, the target of having 30 percent of women in these positions, set by the Beijing Platform of Action, has not been met by public sectors around the world. How-

ever, even if women are present within the public administration, they may not be effective unless they are supported by an enabling policy and institutional environment. The participants discussed several conditions that need to be met for women public servants to be effective as change agents.

Increasing the prestige associated with working on women's issues

Participants at the roundtable agreed that in many public sectors, specifically health and education, women already comprise a large percentage of employees. Unfortunately, these women tend to be situated at the bottom rungs of the professional ladder, and face limited salary and career growth prospects. More importantly, the work performed in sectors which are feminized, such as teaching or antenatal health care, is often not seen as being equal or as prestigious as the work performed by male public servants in other sectors. Increasing the prestige of such work through appropriate reward and recognition mechanisms and ensuring wage parity are necessary for making sure that women public servants are able to make a difference.

Increasing women's representation to decision making levels

One way to ensure that priority is given to the needs of women and girls while designing service delivery systems is to appoint more women to decision making levels within the public administration. However, the positive trend of increased number of women in the public sector has not automatically translated into an increase in representation at decision-making levels. Most women remain at the lower end of the hierarchy, usually at entry level or non-career positions, such as teachers and healthcare workers.

One of the most effective and widely employed methods for improving female representation at higher levels of public administration is by instituting quotas. But making quotas effective needs a strong political commitment by political leaders, particularly male leaders, of the country. It is equally important for civil service reform programmes to set targets and policies for fast-tracking women to senior level positions.

Changing recruitment and retention and retrenchment policies

The most important policies that influence the numbers of women in the public sector relate to hiring and transfer practices. Public sector employment is governed by civil service rules and procedures on recruitment and transfers. Yet, in many instances these do not take into account the difficulties encountered by women in accessing jobs and retaining them. Affirmative actions can bring

significant positive impact on recruitment of women public service professionals. However, in order to harness the full potential of these measures, a holistic approach is required that addresses legal, policy and operational constraints beyond the recruitment stage. It is critical in to review and where necessary address related issues such as staff retention, flexible working hours, part-time employment arrangements, work-life balance, pay levels, targeted training programmes, sexual harassment at work, etc.

Furthermore, in an effort to reduce public expenditure, governments tend to outsource administrative and service delivery function, which often entails job losses for 'frontline' workers in government services, who tend to be predominantly women. Public Sector Reforms, therefore, need to have mechanisms in place to ensure that women are not disproportionately affected by downsizing initiatives.

Targeted capacity building for women civil servants

Women's inclusion isn't only about guaranteeing women's representation, rather, it is also about recognizing the unique leadership women offer and training them to participate effectively in governance at all levels. Thus, another essential element of efforts to boost the presence of women in public service while preventing ghettoization of the sector in which they are concentrated is to implement capacity building programs that ensure women stay competitive within the public service sector. For example, the Tanzanian civil service has in place capacity building programs intended to build the competency of women in various fields and to promote their upward mobility.

Creating a gender-responsive public sector

Public administration is responsible for providing equal access to services for all citizens, including women, the poor and minorities. The meeting participants felt that, although promoting women's representation in public sector employment is an important goal in itself, it is not enough to ensure that quality services reach women and girls. In addition to gender parity in public sector employment, a comprehensive strategy needs to be put in place to transform the way that services are designed and delivered.

Incentive systems that promote gender-responsive public service delivery

Participants at the roundtable also highlighted the importance of incentives, such as salaries, rewards, recognition or sanctions to motivate public sector

employees to deliver improved services for women and girls. Discussants also emphasized that reducing disincentives or perverse incentives that perpetuate gender biases in the public sector can be as important as introducing new incentives. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), UNDESA, highlighted the important role that the United Nations Public Service Awards have been playing in recognizing the contribution of public servants to development. It announced a new collaboration between DPADM and UNIFEM to establish a new category of public service awards for gender-responsive service delivery.

Increasing public sector accountability

Stronger accountability systems have to be developed to ensure that the gap between policy and implementation towards gender-responsive service delivery is bridged. Gender-responsive budgeting is one of the key processes that can be instituted to ensure governance reforms addressing public service delivery for women are adequately funded. Also, funds have to be made available for bringing about gender parity within the public sector. Gender-responsive budgeting can aid in the understanding of how women are and are not supported. Similarly, engagement of women and women's organizations in the delivery and oversight of services is critical for ensuring better accountability for service delivery. This can be achieved through putting in place adequate feedback mechanisms, such as citizen report cards, social audits, etc. Another possible accountability mechanism to aid disenfranchised women to voice their concerns and opinions about government services is the use of e-government tools.

Capacity building for public servants

All public servants, male and female, have to be equipped with the capacity to promote policies that incorporate an understanding of the different needs of women and men and boys and girls. Enhancing public administration with knowledge and skills to analyze governance of basic service delivery through a gender lens is critical.

Participants agreed that an equitable and gender-responsive public administration is central to the achievement of the MGDs. This requires a concerted action from various actors backed up by strong political commitment to put in place policies and procedures that will address gender equality both within the public administration and in the delivery of quality services.

The Role of ICTs in empowering women with disabilities⁵³

BY THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND DEVELOPMENT (UN GAID) AND THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR INCLUSIVE ICTs (G3ICT)

A. Issues paper

Disabled persons represent 10 per cent of the world's population, more than two-thirds of which live in developing nations, most of the time, in extreme poverty. Women with disabilities face significantly more difficulties - in both public and private spheres - in attaining access to adequate housing, health, education, vocational training and employment, and are more likely to be institutionalized. They also experience inequality in hiring, promotion rates and pay for equal work, access to training and retraining, credit and other productive resources, and rarely participate in economic decision-making. Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women is essential to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Accessible and assistive information and communication technology (ICT) solutions can help women with disabilities benefit, on an equal basis with others, from education, employment opportunities, health and cultural and leisure activities. To address this relevant topic, the GAID-G3ict roundtable, inclusive of women living with disabilities, experts in ICT applications for persons with disabilities, will illustrate the role of ICTs in empowering women with disabilities.

Issues for discussion

1. The role of accessible Internet resources for work, health, education and social networking
2. How accessible mobile phones change the lives of women with disabilities
3. Breaking disabled women's isolation with ICTs
4. Accessible workplaces and accessible financial services
5. Success stories, pending issues, and new solutions offered by industry and service providers

⁵³ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "The role of ICTs in empowering women with disabilities," 1 July 2010.

B. Summary of discussions

Co-chaired by Mr. Sergei Kambalov, Executive Coordinator of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) and H.E. Mr. Luis Gallegos, Ambassador of Ecuador to the United States, past chair of the United Nations *Ad hoc* Preparatory Committee of the Convention and G3ict Chairman, this ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 1 July 2010, and focused on the effectiveness of ICTs as an effective tool in advancing the rights of women with disabilities by empowering them and enhancing their quality of life.

Acknowledgement of the importance of ICT for work and social progress of women with disabilities

The outcomes of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were emphasized. Indeed, the Convention entered into force on 3 May 2008, and marked a “paradigm shift” by enabling women with disabilities to be considered as “subjects” with rights. However, women with disabilities face particular disadvantages in various areas of life compared to men and have to live with multiple discriminations in many cases, being women, with disability and in poverty from a developing country.

ICT transformed the world and, today, an adequate use of it makes it possible to transform disabilities to abilities, and empower women. The use of specific IT instrument can help enjoy human rights and make persons with and without disability able to work side by side. ICT tools for the professional carrier of persons with disabilities would give them the opportunity to work in an integrated way and the possibility to compete, as well in a competitive economy.

Case studies and success stories

In 2004/2005, Scotiabank partnered with IBM to develop the IT accessibility roadmap to address challenges that the disabled have to face at work. As a social bank involved in development, they want to integrate accessibility requirements in the development of all applications and services. Several other examples were mentioned, such as “Women Connect” in Zambia that trained women to use Internet and the UNDP/UNDESA E-discussion on Women and Poverty that brought together 154 women from all over the world, thanks to a virtual platform. Finally, the Society for Economic and Basic Advancement (SEBA) Project in India stands for a successful example on how e-Discussion about political issues may enable women with disabilities from developing countries to commit and build alliance.

However, many people dismiss the concern for disability and accessible ICT in developing countries on the basis that development should deal with basic needs first. However, it is not a choice between one and the other. ICT can be an indispensable tool in meeting women's basic needs and can provide access to resources to lead women out of poverty.

Pending issues

Participants emphasized the issue of the division between the haves and the have-nots and the huge digital divide that is still at stake. Disabled women represent 10 per cent of the world population, more than two-thirds of which live in developing nations, most of the time, in extreme poverty. In that perspective, ICT can be a double-edged sword if the limited access exacerbates inequalities and the marginalization of women from economic, social, and political development.

Moreover, there remain patriarchal issues and stereotypes that prevent women from the possibility to use ICT. Women's subordination, marginalization and gender stereotyping are still important hurdles to universal access for ICT needs to be addressed. In a more general view, the impact that culture, religion and politics play in the ability for women with disabilities to have access to ICT must not be underestimated. We must leverage the main communication channels to better serve them and make it more accessible, considering their level of literacy, their comprehension and usability.

Through collaborative work, GAID is providing a global platform regionally oriented to gather all the ICT solutions for development and make them known to people who need it.

New perspectives and solutions offered

Although significant progress can be observed in terms of women with disabilities and ICT, there needs to be a focus on the future, in order to foster the application of the Convention, as well as to create a society based on social equality and diversity. Since it takes vision and stewardship from all to move forward addressing the digital divide, it is crucial to share best practices and to create connective platforms.

Furthermore, partnerships and collaboration would enable all stakeholders to translate ideas into concrete actions and to implement ICT in an integrative and inclusive way. The tools, designs and policies already exist and they should be made available and implemented, respectively.

Improving women's health: Addressing the challenges⁵⁴

BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF), AND THE UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES (UNFPA)

A. Issues paper

1. Despite progress, societies and their health systems continue to fail women at key times of their lives.
2. There are widespread and persistent gender inequalities between men and women and among and within countries.
3. A fair start for all girls is critical for the health of women.
4. Sexual and reproductive health is central to women's health and are key to the attainment of MDGs 4 and 5.
5. Chronic diseases, mental ill-health and injuries take a high toll and addressing the needs of older women is a challenge

Child mortality rates are highest in households where the education of the mother is lowest. Despite impressive gains in female enrolment in primary education between 2000 and 2006, girls still account for 55 per cent of the out-of-school population. Over 580 million women are illiterate (twice the number of illiterate men) and more than 70 million girls are not in school.

Essentially all (99 per cent) of the half a million maternal deaths every year occur in developing countries. Despite the increase in contraceptive use over the past 30 years, significant unmet needs remain in all regions. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, one in four women who wish to delay or stop childbearing does not use any family planning method.

Girls are far more likely than boys to suffer sexual abuse, and up to one in three women worldwide will experience violence at some point in her life, which can lead to unwanted pregnancy and abortion, among other things. Violence is prevalent in all cultures and most violence against women is perpetrated by an intimate male partner.

For women in their reproductive years (15-44), HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death and disease worldwide, while unsafe sex is the main risk factor in developing countries. Biological factors, lack of access to information and

⁵⁴ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "Improving women's health: Addressing the challenges," 1 July 2010.

health services, economic vulnerability and unequal power in sexual relations expose young women particularly to HIV infection.

Women face higher health costs than men due to their greater use of health care, and they are also more likely than their male counterparts to be poor, unemployed or engaged in work which offers no health benefits. The ratio of female-to-male earned income is well below parity in all countries for which data are available. Because they are less likely to be part of the formal labour market, women lack access to job security and the benefits of social protection, including access to health care. Furthermore, they risk falling into poverty if they have to pay for health care themselves. Out-of-pocket payments for health care currently force 100 million people into poverty each year and prevent many others from seeking care.

The barriers to access health services are many, including women's lack of decision-making power, the low value placed on women's health or lack of control over health resources, such as education, transport, time or money. For instance, the ratio of female-to-male earned income is well below parity in all countries for which data are available.

Solutions

Making health systems work for women

Health systems need to be better geared to meet the needs of women in terms of access, comprehensiveness and responsiveness. This is not just an issue in relation to sexual and reproductive health: it is relevant throughout the life course.

Policy change is needed within the health sector and beyond

Policies - within the health sector and beyond - that positively impact on the determinants of exposure to risks, disease vulnerability, access to care and the consequences of ill health among women and girls are needed - from targeted action to keep girls in school, to promoting later marriage and to increase opportunities for older women. Broader strategies, such as poverty reduction, increased access to literacy, training and education, and increased opportunities for women to participate in economic activities will also contribute to making sustainable progress in women's health.

Building strong leadership and a coherent institutional response

National and international responses to women's health issues tend to be fragmented and limited in scope. Identifying mechanisms to foster bold, participa-

tory leadership and a clear and coherent agenda for action will be critical for making progress. The involvement of women's organizations and women is essential.

Building the knowledge base and monitoring progress

While much is known about the health of women and girls, many gaps remain in our understanding of the dimensions and nature of the special challenges they face and how these can be effectively addressed. The foundations of better information about women and health need to be strengthened by the collection and use of age- and sex-disaggregated data on common problems. These data are essential for programme planning and evidence-based policy. Research must incorporate attention to sex and gender in the design, analysis and interpretation of findings.

Partnerships

Building strong leadership and a coherent institutional response is critical to making progress. This includes:

- **more collaboration** among sectors and institutions to develop support structures, incentives and accountability for improving the health and well-being of girls and women;
- **identification of mechanisms** to foster bold leadership and a coherent agenda for action: this includes addressing gender discrimination, bias and inequality that permeate the organizational structures of governments and organizations - including health systems; and
- **involvement and full participation** of women's organizations, advocates and leaders: their meaningful engagement at all levels of assessment, priority setting and implementation should be championed and their ability to bring decision makers to account strengthened.

Some issues for consideration

- What are successful best practices where countries have made strides in building health systems to deliver on women and girls and, in particular, MDGs 3, 4 and 5? How can these best practices be adapted and applied in other settings?
- What role should various stakeholders, including governments, donor agencies, United Nations entities, international organizations, the private sector and civil society organizations, play in supporting national effort in

policies/strategies/actions at local, national, regional and international levels and in ensuring sufficient allocation of resources (human, financial)?

- How can the gains be safeguarded while, at the same time, adequate levels of support be sustained in the face of the financial crisis?
- What is the role of policy and dialogue to action and what are some concrete next steps that can be taken at global, regional and country levels?
- How can we move forward together to address challenges?

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 1 July 2010. The discussion was co-moderated by Ms. Daisy Mafubelu, Assistant Director General, Family and Community Health, World Health Organization, Ms. Mari Simonsen, Deputy Executive Director (External Relations, United Nations Affairs and Management) UNFPA, and Ms. Cecilia Lotse, Director of United Nations Affairs and External Relations, UNICEF.

Recommendations and a way forward

Making health systems work for women

Health systems need to be better geared to meet the needs of women in terms of access, comprehensiveness and responsiveness. Health system reforms need to incorporate gender analysis and women's participation into the process of national health plans. There is strong evidence that removing financial barriers increases access, coverage and has positive health outcomes for all. There is need for a more comprehensive and holistic approach to women's health, while maintaining focus on maternal health as an indicator of women's health and societal development as a whole, with attention to the huge burden of women's ill health and disability, Women's education is very important and must be emphasized.

Policy change is needed within the health sector and beyond

Policy approaches to health systems need to be comprehensive rather than only vertical in approach. Policies - within the health sector and beyond - that positively impact access to care and the consequences of ill health among women and girls are needed. Changing norms needs to be supported by legislation and driven by communities. Broader strategies, such as poverty reduction, increased access to literacy, training and education and increased opportu-

nities for women to participate in economic activities will also contribute to making sustainable progress in women's health. Bilateral and multilateral policy dialogue has a role here, as well as the global policy agenda to support it.

Building strong leadership and a coherent institutional response

National and international responses to women's health issues tend to be fragmented and limited in scope. Identifying mechanisms to foster bold, participatory leadership and a clear and coherent agenda for action will be critical for making progress. It remains important to keep the MDG 3 linkage to the other MDGs and not look at each MDG in isolation. MDG 3 needs to be linked to the success of the other MDGs at the upcoming MDG Summit in September 2011. There is a lot of global interest, commitment and investment for maternal health, in particular, but coherence of development efforts are lacking. Donor coherence is particularly critical.

The knowledge base and monitoring progress

We know the countries that make up 65 per cent of the maternal mortality around the world. There are a number of country examples and best practices of what works. The case of Bangladesh and other such examples are cited in the Countdown 2010 document, which provides a road map for the countries with the highest burden of maternal mortality. The foundations of better information about women and health need to be strengthened by the collection and use of age- and sex-disaggregated data on common problems. These data are essential for programme planning and evidence-based policy. Best Practices and evidence-based documentation of success is important. Experience from the Caribbean has targeted MDG 6 (HIV/AIDS) and the Government of Bahamas has focused on the prevention of mother to child transmission and reduced transmission by 20 per cent.

Partnerships

Private sector is a critical partner and needs to see the business case for the linkage between health and well-being. Private sector provides often more than 50 per cent of health services outside of the public sector, so they are also a critical part of the solution to ensure that services are accessible to women. Engaging men as partners as part of the process and solution is critical for success. Civil society and labour-markets engagement and leadership are fundamental to bring about change. United Nations agencies have a critical role to play to define what needs to be done and provide leadership in forging a coherent

approach to improving maternal health, in particular, and women and girls health, in general. The United Nations should also develop mechanisms to guide investment and mechanisms for collective accountability.

Empowering women, powering trade: Integrating women into global value chains⁵⁵

BY THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (ITC), THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISOR ON GENDER ISSUES AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (OSAGI) AND THE PERMANENT MISSION OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

A. Issues paper

Background

Governments and international organizations recognize that empowering women is a catalyst for achieving gender equality and the internationally agreed goals and commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals. Over the last several decades, there is greater understanding that improving the status of women is one of the most critical levers of international development. When women are educated and can earn and control income, a number of good results follow: infant mortality declines, child health and nutrition improve, agricultural productivity rises, population growth slows, economies expand and cycles of poverty are broken.

The impact of trade on facilitating women's economic empowerment is contingent on women's ability to access the resources and opportunities needed to trade; to accumulate assets and overcome poverty; and the elimination of gender inequalities more broadly. Women's economic empowerment, therefore, cannot be realized without equitable regulatory frameworks, legal protections, supportive domestic institutions and policies, governance accountability, democratic participation, social protection and security. Women's export success can also be promoted through proactive corporate and government policies, such as preferential procurement policies setting targets for sourcing from women-owned enterprises.

When women are successful in trade, they can contribute to economic growth through export earnings, as well as human and social development, contributing concretely to the realization of the MDGs.

⁵⁵ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "Empowering women, powering trade: Integrating women into global value chains," 2 July 2010.

Issues for consideration

1. What concrete actions can corporations take to foster women's export success?
2. What kinds of trade readiness or capacity-building programmes and projects enhance the export success of women-owned and operated businesses?
3. What government policies and practices have helped women export?
4. Women in the coffee sector have successfully established national and international alliances of producers, exporters, importers, roasters and other key actors in the value chain. Can the good examples from coffee be replicated in other sectors in developing countries? To what extent should these be linked to existing organizations, institutions and ministries?
5. What initiatives enhance educational and networking opportunities for women in international trade and business?

Members of the International Women's Coffee Alliance will join the debate and lead a taste test of coffees produced by women in different geographies.

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 2 July, and was co-chaired by Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Patricia Francis, Executive Director, International Trade Centre, and H.E. Dr. Ruhakan Ruganda, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, New York.

Women's pattern of participation in global value chains differs from that of men's and the benefits derived are not on par. While women-owned businesses represent 25-33 per cent of all private businesses in the world and women perform two-thirds of the world's work, they receive 10 per cent of the world's income, and own 1 per cent of the means of production. He further underlined the utility in removing constraints to women's participation in trade, such as property and inheritance rights and access to education, jobs and markets, in particular, international markets. In this way, opportunities to improve their economic and social conditions and to lift themselves and their families out of poverty could be extended to women, who constitute 70 per cent of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty worldwide. There was a call for an innovative approach to growth and poverty reduction strategies if the MDGs were to be achieved.

Good practice – government

In 2009, Uganda became the first country in the world to have mainstreamed a gender perspective into a national export strategy. The Uganda National Export Strategy Gender Dimension crystallizes commitment in the Uganda National Gender Policy and the Trade and Industrialization Policy, to address gender issues in the social and economic activities of the country. Specifically, the National Export Strategy focuses on improving women's participation in trade through, *inter alia*, promoting opportunities for women to acquire business management and export-development skills. It also identifies measures the Government and trade institutions can adopt to improve service provision to women entrepreneurs, who, in many countries, are left out of transport loops, trade missions and key decision-making fora. The inclusion of representatives of women's business organizations and associations in consultations that shaped the development of the strategy is one of the keys to its success.

The discussion also stressed the importance of enhancing economic competitiveness, while promoting gender equality and development. This can be achieved through an analysis of a value chain not only in terms of product but also the people who are engaged as entrepreneurs and employees. Women are concentrated in different parts of the value chain. In agriculture, for example, typically at the farm-end, women are less likely to be in possession of a lucrative export license. The dialogues underlined the importance of listening to the actual situation in the field, in order to define a plan for action. This having been achieved in development of the Uganda National Export Strategy, evidenced by the International Women's Coffee Alliance – a network of women largely drawn from the private sector – to assist the Government of Uganda implement the strategy. The initial focus is on establishing women's coffee grower associations to, *inter alia*, improve their negotiating power, attract technical assistance and set up savings and loans facilities. The goal of the project is to improve the economic benefit derived from their participation in the coffee value chain, including by assisting women move up the value chain.

Participants identified a great variety of determinants, concerns and vulnerabilities, as well as desirable approaches and good practices in promoting women's access to international value chains. Representatives of the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA) shared how progress made in Latin America to network women across the value chain (from seed to cup) has generated incomes for families, and to build schools - an example of trade-enabling development. There have also been spillover effects in other key sec-

tors, such as tourism, from which some women are now earning additional income through making and selling gift packages similar to those distributed by IWCA at the breakfast event.

The value of networks was underscored by the representative of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, whose network spans the globe, with 33,000 members across developing and developed countries. One factor that inhibits institutions from connecting women to global value chains is not knowing in which sectors women are active. To provide clarity, the President of BPW International announced they would be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with ITC today to survey BPW members, with a view to linking select groups in developing countries to the supply chains of multinational corporations.

The representative of WEConnect International underscored the importance of finding a buyer first and understanding the buyers' needs. To foster opportunities for women business owners to link into global supply chains, the organization encourages multinational corporations to source from women-owned enterprises. WEConnect International has established a network of over 40 corporate members actively engaged in sourcing from women-owned enterprises. Their combined annual procurement is approximately USD700 billion. It was announced that WEConnect would be signing a Memorandum of Understanding with ITC today, to jointly organize a Senior Executive Round-table on Sourcing from Women Vendors, as the next step in the strategy to define a framework through which women business owners can better link to global supply chains.

It was also noted that mentoring and capacity development are critical not only to benefit women in terms of productivity but also to enhance women's leadership and managerial skills. Businessmen could play a critical role as mentors and partners for women's businesses. Men were still predominant in business and their knowledge could be imparted and networks opened to assist women in business.

Listed below are summarized main messages and issues that had been raised from the discussion as follows.

a. *Promote international trade that benefits women*

- The involvement of women in export-oriented production has the potential for generating an improved operating environment with enhanced productivity and more efficient functioning of the value chain leading to reliable supply of inputs.

- Women tend to be adversely integrated into multilateral trading systems and global value chains. The quality of their integration must be improved.
- Expansion of access to productivity assets and economic opportunities for marginalized groups and for organizations of women are opportunities for women to create synergies, gain bargaining power and create a critical mass for the participation of women on an equal basis.
- Regional integration and public-private partnerships should be enhanced as a means to better incorporate women into global value chains. Diasporas are a significant source of trade opportunities.

b. To achieve women's economic empowerment move beyond the informal sector and microenterprises

- It is essential to focus not only on business women but also on poor women. Make sure that there are real opportunities for gender equality for all women.
- It is important to create real opportunities to grant women's access to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and other sustainable growth opportunities.
- Women's access to markets, including local and global procurement opportunities, should be increased.
- Women should also be provided with better access to business models for growth, including role models and mentors, as well as skills and tools to scale up their businesses, both for real job creation and for measurable economic impact.
- There is also a need to enable women entrepreneurs to work and trade from wherever they are in the world to help reduce the environmental pressures of urbanization and travel.

c. Extend responsibility beyond policy makers

- Governments, civil society organizations and other development actors can help create the conditions for market women to unleash their potential, including by linking rural producers to urban markets.

For policy makers

- While trade agreements set trade rules, governments have taken on other international legal obligations that address (or could potentially address) gender issues in trade, including the Beijing Platform for Action, the

MDGs, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on Biological Diversity and Conventions on migrant workers rights.

- A dual track approach that promotes trade and gender equality is integral to the empowerment of women and it has a great potential to contribute to poverty reduction.
- A specific recommendation to policy makers is to mainstream the gender perspective into the trade agreements and the respective policies and strategies.
- It is important to apply international labour rights and core labour standards to women's work, in particular, when the majority of the world's working women are active in the informal sector.

For the private sector and civil society organizations

- The examples presented have shown that public-private partnerships provide opportunities for women to be integrated into the production value chain.
- One such suggestion involved “ranking” enterprises based on their compliance with labour standards.
- Successful examples from around the world have demonstrated that initiatives from civil society could make a big difference in the lives of women workers and vastly improve their ability to do business.
- Non-profit organizations and women's organizations are instrumental in providing support to women-owned businesses to compete in the global value chain, thereby improving sourcing options and facilitating sustainable economic growth.
- Through networking, all businesses are exposed to relevant information on target markets, financing options, business management tools, quality control resources and best practices for scaling up operations.
- The use of “state of the art” technology can compress the procurement cycle and overcome some of the traditional barriers to trade.

d. Accountability is at the heart of a successful strategy

- It is important to enhance the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, in order to ensure that trade projects and trade strategies address gender issues, which would lead to the integration of women and other marginalized groups into global value chains and multilateral trading systems.

- Governments can promote enabling regulatory and policy frameworks for women's economic empowerment.
- The donor community and the international community at large should pay attention to the impact of trade negotiations on women and the possible compensatory mechanisms.

Donors and the multilateral organizations play a significant role in promoting better working conditions for women.

Economic opportunities for the empowerment of women in Africa and the LDCs: Access to credit, land, and markets⁵⁶

BY THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (OHRLLS), THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISOR ON AFRICA (OSAA), AND THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM)

A. Issues paper

Background

As has been reiterated at the Beijing Plus 15 review process, the 30th anniversary of the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), subsequent reviews of the Millennium Development Goals and ECOSOC Ministerial Declarations, the economic empowerment of women is a critical factor for sustainable development and the attainment of MDGs. Women in Africa and least developed countries (LDCs) create wealth, generate employment, and reduce poverty through their engagement in formal and informal trades, their role in food production, their entrepreneurship in various sectors of the economy, and their “unpaid” work in the care economy to sustain the livelihood of their families and communities.

While women have always represented an important and growing proportion of formal and informal business owners in Africa and LDCs, their productive capacity and contribution to economic and social development are severely constrained by gender disparities in economic power sharing, as evidenced by their unequal access to, and control over, support services, credit

⁵⁶ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, “Economic opportunities for the empowerment of women in Africa and LDCs: Access to credit, land and markets,” 2 July 2010.

facilities, land, capital, technology and other factors of production. Other serious challenges facing them include their lack of access to education, training, information and legal aid, and their minimal participation in decision-making processes in their respective countries. Mainstream economic and trade policies still neglect the informal sector, where most economic and trading activities of women in Africa take place. For instance, research on women informal cross-border traders conducted by UNIFEM in Africa showed numerous challenges facing women traders, ranging from invisibility and lack of recognition of their economic contribution to weak trade-related institutions, services and resources in support of their activities, deficient implementation of regional trading agreements and protocols, violence, stigmatization and harassment and lack of information on the opportunities provided by regional trading protocols and agreements.

Likewise, agricultural policies have failed to adequately address the predominant role of women in the sector, who are at the forefront of food production, processing and distribution in Africa and the LDCs and represent most of the agricultural workforce and of the rural population. Rural women especially continue to face daunting discrimination with regard to access to and control over productive assets, such as capital, land, labour-saving technology, equipment, extension services, infrastructure, labourers, livestock, water and irrigation and agricultural inputs.

Furthermore, the Africa regional Beijing Plus 15 Review showed a significant negative impact of the recent global downturn on women in terms of leaving them with even fewer job choices than their male counterparts, while declining remittances and tightening of microfinance lending are further restricting funds available to women to run their businesses.

Thus, there is a need to develop and implement specific policies and programmes in Africa and LDCs to promote women's economic empowerment, including through supporting women's entrepreneurial capacities and initiatives, with the aim of ensuring sustainable and adequate income generation. There is, for example, evidence that microfinance, in particular microcredit, and other financial instruments, have especially benefited women and have contributed to the achievement of their economic empowerment. Another promising practice is land and agricultural inputs allocation to women farmers to increase their productive capacity and income. Other African and LDCs have embarked in support to women entrepreneurs to take better advantage of trade fairs, skills building opportunities, trade-related services and "one stop shop" for business registration.

One important part of such strategies is the review and upscaling of existing programmes that aim at increasing women's access to economic opportunities, such as credit, land and markets and mainstream gender targets in their national budget allocation. In order to speed up the process of structural transformation, better access to risk capital for activities with competitive potential is needed and such new funds should be accessible, especially for women.

Such policies need to be complemented by skills development for women in technical and managerial subjects, access to technology, provision of specific infrastructure and access to inputs and strengthening of women rights to land, in order to achieve women's economic empowerment.

Issues to be discussed:

- What innovative approaches, successes and lessons can we learn from different parts of the world in ensuring women's access to, and control over, credit, land and markets in Africa and LDCs?
- How can support to women's entrepreneurship and production be prioritized in national development strategies, policies, plans and budgets?
- How to ensure that women get the "best" services in support of their economic activities?

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 2 July 2010, and was co-chaired by Mr. Patrick Hayford, Director of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, and Ms. Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of UNIFEM. H.E. Mr. Samura Kamara, Minister of Finance and Development, Sierra Leone, served as moderator and Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, served as lead discussants. The discussion focused on developing practical and manageable solutions to the issues surrounding women's entrepreneurial pursuits, especially as it relates to achieving the MDGs by 2015 in Africa and LDCs.

Political empowerment interlinked with economic empowerment for women

One of the key points stressed by participants was the importance of engaging women, who make up 50 per cent of the world's population, in the political processes and institutional and social structures of their countries to ensure economic empowerment of women. Educating women on legal practices and their legal rights was highlighted as an essential strategy for accomplishing this goal.

Success stories on political empowerment of women were shared with the group. For example, following the setting up of quotas in Rwanda, more than 50 per cent of Parliament members are female, which represents one of the highest ratios in the world. It was agreed that higher female representation was needed at all levels of government's institutional set-up to advocate for the protection of women's rights to land and equal access to credit and markets.

Leadership at the highest level brings results

Participants pointed to the need for governments to acknowledge that women are key contributors to national economic growth and poverty reduction. Moreover, the need to involve men in gender mainstreaming efforts was highlighted. Women in countries such as Mozambique and Rwanda have benefited from leadership at the highest level that is committed to gender equality and women's empowerment. Prioritizing the gender agenda in every ministry of government, putting in place a supportive legal framework and improving collection of gender-disaggregated data were highlighted as measures that have brought results.

Mahatma Gandhi's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNR-REGA) was provided as an example of how political support can contribute substantially to women's economic empowerment. Under the Act, 30 per cent of the beneficiaries of guaranteed 100-day wage employment are women. This case study supported the suggestion for collaboration in the international community to brainstorm best practices of encouraging gender equality.

Women's involvement in agribusiness - need to address the effects of climate change and exploitation of natural resources

Emphasis was placed on supporting women's efforts in agribusiness and protecting women from the negative impact of climate change. Some participants pointed to the need to increase the share of ODA going towards agricultural development, which had decreased from 17 to 4 per cent over the past two decades. Ministers and NGO representatives called for guarantee funds that provide supplies (e.g. access to fertilizer) that female entrepreneurs need to sustain viable enterprises. The link between environmental issues and economic development was also stressed, with a request for greater efforts by government officials to collect data on the effects of erosion and climate change on the agriculture sector. UNDP demonstrated its commitment to this agenda, highlighting its recent support to forestry preservation.

Integrated approach - provide access to credit, markets, land rights, combined with infrastructure and training

Many speakers concurred that granting land titles to women was complicated by cultural customs and regulations enacted by the governments of LDCs. For instance, recent FAO study found that less than 20 per cent of land owners in LDCs are women. It was also found that less than 10 per cent of credit is awarded to female farmers in LDCs. Land was seen as the most vital asset for women, since it can be used as collateral against loans granted to female businesses.

Practices leading to increased support to female farmers included Mozambique's recruitment of successful female entrepreneurs, who provide consultations to women aspiring to enter the agribusiness sector and serve as examples of opportunities for female ventures to achieve significant success.

Some participants called for enhanced support by the United Nations system for human resource development. Recommendations ranged from facilitating training in business and finance to providing support services in health and well being, especially for families coping with HIV/AIDS. Examples of the support of the United Nations system were highlighted, such as the UNDP partnership with MASHAV in Israel to promote women's entrepreneurship, and the help of UNESCO with training teachers employed in Africa.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), which is the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, introduced its approach to ensuring women's access to formal banking services. Through its Women in Business initiative, IFC has worked with institutions, such as the Access Bank in Nigeria, to ensure at least 30 per cent of credit provided by the formal banking sector is accessible to women. IFC is launching projects in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique.

Through a partnership with Ecobank, the Sirleaf Market Women's Fund was able to lower interest rates on lines of credit to women in Liberia. Sirleaf has also encouraged the development of savings programmes and is working on rebuilding and renovating markets to generate greater engagement from women in rural and urban areas.

Participants brought up the need for wellness support systems in addition to increased access to land, credit and markets. Suggestions included AIDS education, water purification systems, and the development of schools and day-care centres for parents. Men were also encouraged to be a part of the debate of gender equity, including discussions between husbands and wives on financial decisions within the household.

Bridging the urban gender divide: An imperative for achieving the Millennium Development Goals⁵⁷

BY THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME (UN-HABITAT)

A. Issues paper

Today, half the world's population lives in urban areas and, by the middle of this century, all regions will be predominantly urban.⁵⁸ According to current projections, virtually the whole world's population growth will, over the next 30 years, be concentrated in urban areas⁵⁹. The number of urban dwellers is expected to triple in Africa and double in Asia.⁶⁰ Cities are economic powerhouses of national and international economies but, at the same time, they are an ever-increasing location of global poverty⁶¹. An important dimension of urban life is the condition of women in towns and cities; it is a condition marked by historical exclusion and multiple deprivations.⁶² The urban advantage, in terms of opportunities, employment and access to services, keeps excluding some specific groups and women, in particular.⁶³ Girls and young women living in poverty in cities consistently face greater challenges than their male counterparts, when it comes to acquiring knowledge and skills they need to live healthy, productive lives.

Cities have the ability to make countries rich, turn urban centres into poverty fighters, if benefits and opportunities are distributed through adequate policies.⁶⁴ However, in many cities, especially in developing countries, wealth and poverty co-exist in close proximity. Well-serviced neighbourhoods and gated residential communities are often situated near densely populated inner-city or peri-urban slum communities that lack the most basic services.⁶⁵

⁵⁷ From the Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast, "Gender equality and sustainable urbanization," 2 July 2010.

⁵⁸ State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide – Overview and Key findings, 2010, UN-HABITAT, p. 4.

⁵⁹ State of the World Cities Report, 2010/2011, Bridging the urban divide, UN-HABITAT, p. 5.

⁶⁰ A Guide to municipal finance, UN-HABITAT, 2009, p. 10.

⁶¹ "Critical gender and women's issues in human settlements: Policy implications, Constraints and Strategies for Action", in *Expert Group Meeting on Gender and Women's Issues in human settlements*, 2002, UN-HABITAT, p. 49.

⁶² Gender Equality for Smarter Cities, 2010, bridging the urban divide, UN-HABITAT, p.iii.

⁶³ State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide – Overview and Key findings, 2010, UN-HABITAT, p. 15.

⁶⁴ State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide, UN-HABITAT, p.x.

⁶⁵ State of the World Cities Report 2008/2009: Harmonious Cities, UN-HABITAT, p. 10.

The urban poor and under privileged, especially women and the youth, are exposed to various types of inequality and exclusion, such as lack of adequate housing and basic services, decent employment, education, health, nutrition, as well as civic and political freedoms and opportunities⁶⁶. This is mainly as a result of poor urban planning and governance, and gender neutral land and housing policies. If urbanization is to bring about more equitable benefits and opportunities for everyone, enhanced awareness of, and positive action on, gender equality are necessary.

The majority of excluded groups in slums and informal settlements are poor and uneducated, migrants or from ethnic minorities, and are mostly female.⁶⁷ For women, as well as men, the city's primary attraction is the possibility of economic opportunities unavailable to them in rural areas. Women migrate from rural to urban areas mainly in search of employment and in order to escape from poverty, gender-based violence, gender discrimination and disinheritance. Exclusion of women from land ownership can push them out of rural areas towards the cities, where they join the ranks of the increasing number of women-headed households and slum dwellers.⁶⁸ Women in slums suffer disproportionately from multiple deprivations, including lack of access to basic services - water, sanitation, housing and infrastructure. This, coupled with the current food and economic crises, can drive women and girls to engage in transactional sex for economic survival, putting them at heightened risk of unwanted pregnancies, human trafficking, contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases.⁶⁹ Women in slums become sexually active about three years earlier, compared to their counterparts in non-slum parts of the city.⁷⁰ In the case of HIV/AIDS, they are less likely to abstain, stick to one partner or zero graze, and use a condom.

Regrettably, slum areas remain invisible parts of cities with respect to policy interventions, job creation,⁷¹ and provision of basic services by central and local governments, public utility companies, formal land and labour markets, and other service providers. Slums are often not formally recognized by

⁶⁶ State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide, UN-HABITAT

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.xvi.

⁶⁸ Rights and Reality: Are women's equal rights to land, housing and property implemented in East Africa?, 2002, Marjolein Benschop, UN-HABITAT, p. 13.

⁶⁹ Gender Equality for Smarter Cities, 2010, UN-HABITAT, p. 1.

⁷⁰ Sexual Risk Taking in the slums of Nairobi, Zulu et al, 2002, pp. 311-323.

⁷¹ State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide – Overview and Key findings, 2010, UN-HABITAT, p. 15.

local or central authorities, although globally, slums are growing faster than the visible areas of the city.⁷² This situation should change, if the Millennium Development Goal 7 targets (c) water and sanitation and target (d) improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers are to be achieved. Failure to recognize slum dwellers systematic marginalization is tantamount to denial of their right to the city.

Women in cities, in general, and women in slums, in particular, are, for example, not on the agenda for the Commission on the Status of Women. There are also gaps in monitoring gender equality and the empowerment of women at the country level by various organizations, including national women machineries, as emphasis is placed on capturing the situation of women at national level and, where urban and local level information is provided, it fails to capture the disparities between women in slums and those in non-slum parts of the city. While the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) explicitly address rural women, there is no specific focus on poor urban women living in slums. Since urbanization is inevitable, particular attention should be given to the plight of women in cities and informal settlements at all levels.

Women in cities tend to have more access to land and housing compared to their counterparts in rural areas, as market rules applied in urban areas allow any person- man or woman who can afford - it to buy immovable property.⁷³ In spite of this, progress on women's human rights, the rights to land and security of tenure are not equally enjoyed by women and men in many parts of the world. This goes against international human rights standards, and also impacts negatively on households and the economy. Gender issues related to land are complicated. They involve sensitive social and cultural territories and challenge deeply-rooted power structures. One of the difficulties associated with developing effective laws and policies on land rights originates from the immensely complex and diverse ways by which land is accessed (through inheritance, land markets, etc.), and the often gaping expanse between the position of formal laws and the reality of women's lives. Even though most countries have constitutions that speak of equal rights for both men and women, and some have enacted laws favourable to women's rights to land, millions of women are still denied the right to land and adequate housing and, as a result,

⁷² State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide, UN-HABITAT,

⁷³ Rights and Reality: Are women's equal rights to land, housing and property implemented in East Africa?, 2002, Marjolein Benschop, UN-HABITAT, p.13.

millions of women are homeless and landless. The gap between law and reality arises from the existence of gender neutral laws, which do not always recognize the special circumstances of women.⁷⁴

Member States have agreed upon a series of commitments towards the establishment of security of tenure, for example, through MDG 7, target (d) on the improvement of the living conditions of slum dwellers. Women's security of tenure through equal rights to land, property and inheritance is further promoted through the elaboration of MDG 3 and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, where women's land, property and inheritance rights are seen as an important indicator of women's empowerment and human development.⁷⁵ However, at present, there is little systematic information on existing gendered land tools or even an adequate methodology of making existing land tools gender responsive. There are good examples of gendered tools at community levels but these are yet to be fully documented, replicated and made affordable.

It is widely estimated that women represent an important proportion of those who are inadequately housed.⁷⁶ Women, the poor, children, ethnic and other minorities are the worst affected by tenure insecurity caused by natural and human-made disasters, armed conflict and civil strife.⁷⁷ While forced evictions have an impact on both men and women, the latter tend to be disproportionately affected. Women are often exposed to violence and intense emotional stress before, during and after an eviction, because of their close ties to the home and their role as caregivers for the entire family.⁷⁸ Quite often, evictions occur in areas with the worst housing conditions - slums and informal settlements.⁷⁹ Most evictions take place during the day when most men have gone out to work. Women who resist being evicted often suffer violence, including

⁷⁴ "A culture of silence on women's rights to housing and land", by Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Adequate Housing, 2005, Habitat Dabe: Women in cities, UN-HABITAT, p. 8.

⁷⁵ General Assembly in Resolution A/RES/60/1, 2005 World Summit Outcome, paragraph 58 (b).

⁷⁶ The Rights to Adequate Housing Fact Sheet No. 1 (Rev.1), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and UN-HABITAT, p. 18.

⁷⁷ Global Report on Human Settlements: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security, 2007, UN-HABITAT, p.xxx.

⁷⁸ The Rights to Adequate Housing Fact Sheet No. 1 (Rev.1), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and UN-HABITAT, p.18.

Women, slums and urbanization: examining the causes and consequences, 2008, Center for Housing Rights and Evictions, p.2.

⁷⁹ Global Report on Human Settlements: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security, 2007, UN-HABITAT, p. xxix.

beating, rape, torture and even murder.⁸⁰ This situation poses serious consequences for women's and girls' safety and security in cities.

Crime and the fear of crime curtail women's ability to exercise their freedom of choice to live and work in certain areas. It affects their mobility, security and full participation in urban life. Crime can limit a realization of women's rights to the city. Women are at greater risk of gender-based violence in urban areas "because of the breakdown in cultural mores that govern relations between the sexes and the lower likelihood that neighbours would intervene."⁸¹ Women and girls have security concerns on and off the streets, in and around their homes, neighbourhoods and other public spaces. The separation between private and public spheres, especially residential, commercial and recreational areas, further complicates women's safety in public spaces. The site for water sources and public toilets, markets, public lighting, health facilities and schools, bus and train stops are a challenge to women's safety and security.

Risk is influenced by urban design choices and the organization of public services including transport and energy.⁸² This raises the need for ensuring gender responsiveness in urban design, planning, governance and management, including provisions of basic services, regulation of public spaces, zoning, and transport. Land-use planning is a particularly effective instrument that city authorities can employ to reduce disaster risk by regulating the expansion of human settlements and infrastructure.⁸³

In most societies, women have primary responsibility for management of household water supply, sanitation and health. However, efforts geared towards improving the management of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, in general, and in urban areas, in particular, quite often overlook the central role of women in water management. The importance of involving both women and men in the management of water and sanitation has been recognized at the global level through a number of internationally agreed commitments.⁸⁴ Access to

⁸⁰ "Ticking Time bombs: Low income settlements", Rasna Warah, in *State of the World Cities Report: Globalization and Urban Culture*, 2004/2005, UN-HABITAT, p.117.

⁸¹ *State of the World Population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth*, UNFPA. p. 23.

⁸² *The Global Assessment on Women's Safety*, 2008, UN-HABITAT, p.3.

⁸³ *Global Report on Human Settlements: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security*, 2007, UN-HABITAT,

⁸⁴ Starting from the 1977 United Nations Water Conference at Mar del Plata, the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade (1981-90) and the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin (January 1992), which explicitly recognizes the central role of women in the provision, management and safeguarding of water. Reference is also made to the involvement of women in water management in Agenda 21 (paragraph 18.70f), Habitat Agenda,

safe drinking water is a basic human right and essential for achieving gender equality, sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Providing physically accessible clean water is essential for enabling women and girls to devote more time to the pursuit of education, income generation and other productive activities. Equitable access to water for productive use can empower women and address the root causes of poverty and gender inequality. However, lack of access to, and ownership of, land also contribute to women's limited access to water.

Sanitation is more than a toilet. Women and girls require safe, private spaces with sufficient water for personal use and washing, and better drainage to make sure that waste water does not remain around their homes.⁸⁵ Unhygienic public toilets and latrines, which are common in slums, are threats to women's health, as poor sanitation makes them more susceptible to reproductive tract infections.⁸⁶ Lack of sanitation facilities and poor hygiene cause water-borne diseases, such as diarrhea, cholera, typhoid and several parasitic infections. A focus on gender differences is of particular importance with regard to sanitation initiatives and gender-balanced approaches should be encouraged in sanitation plans and structures for implementation. Simple measures, such as providing schools with water and latrines and promoting hygiene education in the classroom can enable girls to get an education, especially after they reach puberty and reduce health-related risks for all. Moreover, the design and the location of latrines close to home may reduce violence against women and girls, which may occur when women have to relieve themselves in the open after nightfall, which is a common practice in slums.

Women are under-represented in the "water world", with careers and training in water management dominated by men. If water management is to be democratic and transparent - and represent the needs of the people - both men and women must have an equal say. A start has been made through the increase in the number of women serving as ministers of water and environment but the empowerment of women as water managers must also be felt at the local level.

article 26 (d, e) where a commitment was done by 171 governments participating at Habitat II, Istanbul 1996 "... to integrate a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, ... and to formulate and strengthen policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision making". Reference is also made to the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation² (paragraph 25). Moreover, the resolution establishing the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life" (2005-2015), calls for women's participation and involvement in water-related development efforts.

⁸⁵ Gender Equality for Smarter Cities, 2010, UN-HABITAT, p.15.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Discussion questions for consideration at the Ministerial Roundtable

1. What practical measures can be taken at the national, regional and global levels, in order to accelerate implementation of national laws and policies which guarantee women's human rights, especially the right to land, housing, and access to finance, water and sanitation?
2. Despite the evidence that the fastest growing economies in the developing countries have embraced urbanization, it still remains not a priority for most countries in the south. This situation poses serious consequences for the urban poor, especially women and young people living and working in slums and informal settlements. What policy recommendations would you make to encourage governments, civil society, the private sector to effectively tackle urban poverty and the plight of women living in slums? What policy and strategic changes can turn this situation around?
3. The urban poor are excluded and marginalized because of spatial inequality and failure by both central and local authorities to recognize slums and informal settlements and, therefore, provide basic services, water, sanitation and security of tenure and promote safety and security for the urban poor. Please provide examples of good practices and measures including, where available, public, private partnerships in improving the living standards of the urban poor women and men through access to services.
4. How gender responsive and women friendly is your city?

B. Summary of discussions

The ministerial roundtable breakfast took place on 2 July 2010, and was co-chaired by Ms. Nilcea Friere, Minister of the Secretariat of Policies for Women, Brazil, and Ms. Axumite Gebre-Egziabher, Director of the Global Division, representing the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT.

There is demographic shift towards a more and more urbanized world: 70 per cent of the world population will be more urbanite by 2050 and gender equality in the rapidly growing cities of the developing world is more intertwined with the undesirable consequences of rapid urbanization, urban poverty and deprivation. UN-HABITAT's *State of the World's Cities Report 2010* reveals that, in spite of opportunities offered by education and urban life, poor urban girls suffer from low enrolment, attendance and completion rates in, due to poverty, unsafe school environments and inadequate sanitary facilities. Poor urban women also face severe health challenges, as the lack of access to health services is compounded by poor living environments and they are more vul-

nerable to crime and violence as they have less access to security and policing services. Access to security of tenure, land and housing, critical to achieving gender equality, women's rights and the advancement of women, both in the rural and urban areas, also eludes poor urban women. This is mainly due to unfair laws and customary practices of succession and inheritance which still prevent women from enjoying their rights to land and adequate housing, and to their exclusion from land markets and their lack of access to credit.

To address the above challenges, UN-HABITAT, guided by its gender policy, a gender equality action plan, and the United Nations systemwide strategy on gender mainstreaming, has significantly strengthened gender mainstreaming in both normative and operational activities, in partnership with other United Nations agencies, governments, and the Habitat Agenda partners. Facilitated by UN-HABITAT, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), aimed at supporting systematic, innovative, pro-poor, affordable, and gender-sensitive land tools, has empowered women and grassroots organizations and increased their knowledge and confidence to negotiate their land rights with their respective governments. UN-HABITAT supports women land access trusts in a number of African countries, and is promoting the safety and security for women and girls through the use of women safety audits and support for local authorities to address violence against women in public spaces. The agency has also raised awareness of gender and women's issues in urban water and sanitation among policy makers, built skills for programme implementers and various stakeholders, including women in a number of regions.

UN-HABITAT called on governments, policy-makers, gender experts and activists to embrace and pay more attention to urbanization to ensure that cities and towns are properly planned with adequate provision of services, infrastructure and security for all. She also highlighted the critical role of cities and local authorities in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women.

The Brazilian Government is very involved in promoting gender equality and the involvement of women in urban issues by working with various organizations, agencies, and councils. The Government has also adopted policies on the rights to land and water that considers women's rights. There is a need for practical measures at the local, national, region, and global levels to accelerate initiatives regarding gender equality, as well as policies that will encourage government, civil society, and the private sector to address women's issues. Gender-responsive and women-friendly cities can be, and provided the example of Women for Peace programme in the *favelas*, which has provided a medium through which women work on peace and mediation issue, especially involving youth.

It was also noted that local urban management without the voices of women delivers poor results, and that the voices of women can represent the needs of 80 per cent of the population, including children, the elderly, and the disabled. Morocco has set up initiatives to fight against disparities in the poorest communities, half of which are on the outskirts of the city, and focuses on equality and equity in all communities. These initiatives include income-generating activities that contribute to improving the provision of basic services. NGOs also cooperate with local government to develop priorities for development.

It was noted that Africa is facing challenges related to housing and climate change, including flooding, which is a major issue, as it affects all social services, such as water supply and food security, and it also weakens the achievements of MDGs.

A number of key issues were highlighted during the discussion, including:

- Women in the favelas have played a major role in the successful transformation of the city. In the Santa Marta favela, the police force, managed by a woman, efficiently address issues on a daily basis.
- Women in positions of leadership serve as role models in society and are effective agents of change.
- Families should be strengthened by working with women, as they are the centre of the family.
- Access to knowledge and information is important in informing community groups and improving communication between community groups in urban areas: the installation of public phones in poor communities is an example.
- It is important to create spaces in urban areas where women can come together, discuss, and plan collectively. Women and children centres in Eastern Europe and post-disaster situations where women were able to find a place to meet on their own terms and organize themselves, in order to have a collective voice are such examples.
- Adequate investment is important in urban areas, especially in housing targeted to poor women is key to achieving gender equality and women empowerment. The creation of grassroots funds facilitates the distribution of funds that can be used by grassroots organizations working on issues in urban areas.
- Sustainable development in rural areas is linked to sustainability in urban areas as food production in rural areas helps feed urban areas, and women play a crucial role as producers of food.

- The need for decent work for women, perhaps mainly in the provision of services, was also highlighted.

In conclusion, it was noted that people move to cities for more opportunities and an improved quality of life. The urban divide means that access is the issue, and availability does not necessarily mean access. In slums and favelas, many people, including women, do not have access to basic service. There is a need for change in policies at the local, national, regional, and global levels to push for equality and inclusiveness across a city. Any sustainable and equitable development needs to address urban-rural linkages. Currently, in African countries like Benin, to help strengthen the capacity of local authorities, UN HABITAT is providing building materials and developing building codes to support Member States. Land-use policies and building codes used have been the same since colonial times and need to be changed to relate to the current situation. Strategic development plans and necessary tools are needed and are being developed with NGOs, local communities and local authorities. UN HABITAT has a presence in Haiti immediately after the earthquake, where the agency is supporting the Haitian Government in developing community-based housing and basic infrastructure. Its work was informed by past experiences in countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Chapter 7

Contribution of Non-governmental Organizations

OVERVIEW

In the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women, it is well known that civil society has an important role in mobilizing resources, developing new practices and working in conjunction with multiple stakeholders to support the achievement of the gender-related goals.

This year, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) made a significant contribution to the dialogues through multiple channels. These channels were the side events organized to discuss and provide new perspectives on the 2010 theme of the Council “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women”. Their input was coordinated by the NGO Branch, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

During the 2010 ECOSOC High-level segment (HLS), a total of 16 NGOs delivered oral presentations during the four days of the meeting, in which multiple stakeholders got together to discuss the progress made and the steps needed to improve gender equality, in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, 90 NGOs submitted written statements, which were distributed among all participants and available on-line as part of the official ECOSOC documentation. In comparison with NGO participation in the 2009 ECOSOC High-level Segment, where only 8 NGOs delivered oral presentations and 33 NGOs submitted written statements - NGO participation in the year of 2010 experienced a 50 per cent increase in delivering oral presentations and a 37 per cent increase in submitting written statements.

In addition to their formal participation, NGOs organized several side and preparatory events around the AMR theme. In this chapter, we highlight three of them, which added value to the intergovernmental discussions.

Finally, it is important to highlight that 2010 saw the launch of a new ICT platform for civil society. With the large number of organizations that today enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC, it is essential to facilitate a networking platform among these groups, in order to build sustainable partnerships and to better project the efforts being made by the civil society community into the work of the United Nations system and the society at large.

In this regard, the NGO Branch this year launched a web portal devoted to NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and to representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in order to share and promote best practices in the field of economic and social development, as well as for the purpose of establishing collaborative development solutions and partnerships among these groups.

Through the web portal, called CSO Net - the Civil Society Network, NGOs and United Nations entities may submit best practices, publish news feeds, engage and moderate discussion groups and publish and manage events and meetings. Furthermore, the portal is intended to host capacity building and training modules, in order to increase the awareness of development issues and to bring technical cooperation within the development community.

World Family Summit + 5 Istanbul Declaration

ISTANBUL, 4-7 DECEMBER 2009

Families in balance

We, Ministers and Representatives of Governments, CSOs, NGOs, Academia, Parliamentarians, Private Sector, Media and Families, 300 participants coming from 54 countries representing all continents participating in World Fam-

ily Summit +5, having accomplished the Agenda with fruitful discussions in all Plenary Sessions,

Having considered the theme to be discussed at the Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum of ECOSOC 2010 – “Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering the Women,

Recalling the outcomes of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico City 1975; the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women held in Copenhagen, 1980; the World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, Nairobi 1985; World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, Five-year Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Beijing + 5 held in the General Assembly, 2000 and the Ten-year Review and Appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly held during the forty-ninth session of the CSW, 2005.

Noting the outcomes of the preparation and celebration of the International Year of the Family, 1994; and the outcomes of the Panel Discussion at the United Nations in celebration of the Tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2004;

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Summit held in 2000, the Millennium Declaration adopted and the commitments done by the nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets - with a deadline of 2015 - known as the Millennium Development Goals;

Considering the recommendations and the declarations from the World Family Summit, Sanya 2004; World Family Summit +1, Aracaju 2005; World Family Summit +2, Dead Sea 2006; World Family Summit +3, Warsaw 2007 and the World Family Summit +4, Cairo 2008;

Having into account Fifteen-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action Beijing+15 to be held in New York 1-12 March 2010;

Recognizing that reducing inequality and empowering the woman are very powerful tools to reduce poverty and achieve high levels of well-beings of families in all cultures and societies around the world;

Recognizing that Gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched attitudes, societal institutions and market forces, therefore, political commitments at the highest international and national levels, and especially, actions at the local level are essential;

Affirming that Political commitments can allow the adequate establishment of policies that can target social changes and the allocation of the necessary resources to achieve Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Recognizing that Gender is social construct defining and differentiating the roles, rights, power, responsibilities and obligations of women and men, forming the basis of social norms that define behaviours for women and men and determine their social, economic and political power;

Concerned that many obstacles, especially violence against women prevent the achievement of the equality, development and peace as recognized in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women;

Convinced that the document presented by the UN Task-Force on the MDG 3 reflects the real needs for a MDG 3 plus approach;

Welcoming the results and recommendations of the Plenary Sessions held in the World Family Summit +5 on the seven strategies mentioned on the document presented by the UN Task-Force on the MDG 3;

We adopted the following declaration:

Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women is a problem that has solutions, and there is no better space than the family to start the dialogue about these solutions.

There are many practical steps that can reduce inequalities based on gender which restricts the potential to reduce poverty and achieve high levels of well-being of the family in society all over the world.

Leadership and political will are the first and most important steps to be taken to achieve the MDG 3 in its plus approach. Because gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched attitudes, political commitment at the highest international, national, regional, local and family levels is essential to establish, implement and exercise policies that can trigger social changes.

We all agree that it is imperative to allocate adequate resources necessary for gender equality and women's empowerment at international, national, regional and local levels and to guarantee that the next decade to provide new and wider opportunities to take action globally to achieve gender equality and empower women essentially to strengthen the family and meet all the Millennium Development Goals.

We all agree that it is essential to promote a deep transformation in the way societies conceive and organize men's and women's roles, responsibilities access to resources and control over them.

It is a common agreement of the delegates that to ensure the achievement of the Goal 3 + approach by 2015 there are seven interdependent priorities to empower women and alter the historical legacy and female disadvantage that remains in the family and in most societies of the world.

I. Education – while sustaining the commitment to universal primary education to boys and girls equally, to strengthen opportunity to post-primary education is a must. Evidence suggests that secondary and higher level of education have the greatest pay off for women's empowerment including increased income-earning potential, ability to bargain for resources within the household, decision making autonomy, control over fertility, participation in public life and strengthening the family.

II. Reproductive health, rights and sexual education – without guarantee of reproductive health and sexual education for girls, boys, women and men the Goal 3 + approach cannot be achieved. Reproductive and sexual health and rights are central to women's ability to build their capabilities inside the family and take advantage of economic and political opportunities and an effective control of their destinies. The implementation of efficient and effective public services on these areas in special at local level and in the family is strategic for achieving gender equality and empowering women.

III. Infrastructure – The lack of appropriate basic infrastructure, such as transport systems, water and sanitation, energy systems, nursery system as well as sharing the household division of labor assignments and the responsibility of daily maintenance tasks limits gender equality and empowerment of the women. Increasing women's participation in the design and implementation of family oriented infrastructure policies and projects certainly will help to overcome gender equality obstacles.

IV. Property and inheritance rights – Ensuring women property and inheritance rights empower women both economically and socially and rectify a fundamental injustice. Secure tenure to land and home improves women's welfare, provide economic security, incentives for taking economic risks that lead to growth, and important economic returns, including income. Gender-equal land rights improve women's rights to credit strengthening the assets of the family.

V. Employment – Gender inequality exists in entering to work, conditions at work and in exit from the labor market. Women's work, both paid and unpaid, is critical for the survival and security of the family and important route through which families escape from poverty. It is also critical to women's empowerment. Expansion of national policies and programs supporting the

elimination of inequality in the labor legislations, market, gaps in earning and unemployment encompassing the implementation of the Decent Work Initiative in rights, protection and dialogue will promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Expansion of national policies and programs to provide support for care of children, people with disabilities, and the elderly is an important intervention to enable women and men to participate equally in paid employment and women and family empowerment as well as reinforcing the role of the men in the family life to allow conciliation between professional and family responsibilities.

VI. Participation in national parliaments and local governmental bodies – Equality of opportunity in politics is a human right. Lack of women’s participation in political bodies and the decision making levels suggests societies less inclusive, less equalitarian and less democratic. Strengthening women’s participation directly in the decision making bodies improves the quality of governance and it is an important condition to improve the family focused policy formulation at the economic, social and political fields. Gender parity at the parliaments, elected or nominated, national, regional and local governmental bodies empowers the women and improves the quality of public services delivered to the families.

VII. Domestic violence – Gender inequality perpetuates violence against women and violence against women restricts women’s ability to use their capabilities. The economic, social and the health related costs of domestic violence and violence against women is extremely high. We recognize that the scale and complexity of gender-based violence means there are no uniform global solution and a multi-sectoral strategy is needed. National, local and family interventions initiatives play an important role in defining solutions. Combating domestic violence is one of the most relevant instruments to achieve the MDG 3 + approach.

Recognizing all the above mentioned affirmations we delegates of the World Family Summit +5 – “Families in Balance” – Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women – The MDG 3 + Approach compromise ourselves to promote practical actions that can be taken within each strategy above mentioned to bring about gender equality and empowerment of women and strengthening of the family by:

- Promoting political commitment to mobilize a large group of change agents at different levels within countries and international, national, regional, local institutions who seek to implement the vision of the world.

- Ensuring technical capacity to implement change.
- Empowering institutional structure and processes to support the transformation, including structures that enable women and men to successfully claim their rights.
- Demanding adequate financial resources to sustain the change implementation.

Demanding accountability and monitoring systems to ensure that fundamental changes are broad-based and lasting.

We express our unwavering resolve to implement the present declaration.

7th Solidarity Society Network Multi-Stakeholder Forum (SNNMF) – 4th Innovation Fair

BRAZIL, ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY, 12 – 26 MARCH 2010

Recommendations to promote gender equality and empower women

1. To ensure a greater inclusion of women in the national development process by encouraging the creation of policies and specific measures for achieving this purpose;
2. To disseminate national and international normative frameworks in which women's rights are protected;
3. To devise incentives that increase the participation of women in all levels of deciding processes;
4. To devise a national scientific agenda that prioritizes research in the gender area, ensuring financing and the divulgation of the results especially among the creators of public policies;
5. To establish public policies on women's complete health care that give priority and resources to gender and ethnicity issues, in accordance with the local needs, managing policies in the health area, in order to enforce their application in the national health system;
6. To qualify health professionals to deal with gender and ethnicity issues, ensuring appropriate assistance for women in the puerperium and for those who have suffered any form of sexual violence;
7. To establish continuous formation process in gender issues within the state functionalism, with an emphasis on the areas of law and public safety;

8. To increase women's access to credit, to productive resources, to information and professional qualifications, as well as encourage entrepreneurship;
9. To implement policies that enable enrollment and permanence in educational institutions for young mothers living under a situation of social vulnerability;
10. To incorporate the subject of gender into the curriculum of teacher training courses as a transversal topic; create recycling courses on this theme for graduated professionals;
11. To improve labor and social security legislation in a manner that it encompasses the unpaid work done by mothers and caretakers of their relatives who are elderly or have health problems;
12. To devise specific measures to protect household workers, especially the immigrants;
13. To increase the number of police stations that are specialized in caring for women;
14. To structure the means to ensure the eradication of violence against women, especially when it occurs in situations of armed conflicts and when it occurs due to ethnic, social and economic, religious, marital status, sexual orientation discrimination or any other form of discrimination;
15. To increase the use of new technologies by women living under a situation of poverty, by means of professional training and an easier access to equipment and connection networks;
16. To replicate the experience of the Brazilian Government with the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law and the National Plan to Face Violence Against Women that have established a new legal landmark in dealing with this matter.

5th Conference of NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific

XINING CITY, CHINA, 2 APRIL 2010

Women Empowerment in Development of Outlying Regions

The 5th Conference of NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific on the theme "Women empowerment in development of outlying regions" was held in Xining City, Qinghai Province, China on 2 April 2010, under the sponsorship of China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE). The Conference was attended by about 50 delegates, representing about 30 non-governmental organizations

from 10 Asian countries, namely, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey and Uzbekistan. The participants had extensive discussions on the three sub-themes: “Present situation of women in the outlying regions”; “Empowering women for economic and social development in the outlying regions”; and “Tapping the NGO resources for women’s development in the outlying regions”.

Considering that “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments with regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women” has been established as the theme for the Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum of ECOSOC 2010;

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Summit held in 2000, the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set in the Millennium Declaration and Goal 3: “Promote gender equality and empower women”, in particular;

Acknowledging the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in the outlying regions plays a key role in accomplishing Goal 3 and the eight 8 MDGs, in general;

Noting the master set of data in The Millennium Development Goals Report 2009”, compiled by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, in response to the wishes of the General Assembly for periodic assessment of progress towards the MDGs;

Affirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly on the Five-year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 10-year Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the 15-year Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

Referring to the Secretary-General’s report, “Keeping the Promise”, which serves as the basis for Member States’ deliberations on the outcome document for the Summit to be held in New York on September 20-22, 2010, to boost progress towards the MDGs;

Recalling the documents concluded in the previous four annual conferences of NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific held in Beijing, under the co-sponsorship of CNIE and the NGO Branch of UN DESA;

Welcoming the efforts made by governments, intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations, civil society organizations and private sector at

international, regional, national and local levels to empower women in terms of political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, educational and other rights, as well as to improve their health care, sanitation, water supply and security conditions, while noting insufficiencies and gaps in some areas and urging governments to redouble their efforts in this regard;

Recognizing that, although the Asia-Pacific region has been established as an economic powerhouse and experienced rapid economic growth, inequalities have grown in many countries and women in the outlying regions face most severe challenges of poverty and discrimination, especially in the wake of the recent world financial and economic crises;

We, participants of the 5th Conference of NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific, would hereby conclude the following recommendations to the Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC 2010:

I. Concerted efforts at international, regional, national and local levels should be intensified to guarantee the full and effective implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly;

II. Governments should provide sufficient political, financial, institutional and other relevant support to ensure the participation of women on an equal basis with men at all levels of decision-making processes;

III. More intensive efforts should be made by the governments, civil society and private sector to ensure full employment and the generation of decent work for women;

IV. Partnerships among the governments, civil society and private sector should be enhanced to promote gender equality. The NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific, as a network having effectively operated for five years, should be encouraged to strengthen its role as a platform to coordinate and assist both regional and national NGOs to move further toward gender equality and help the implementation of Goal 3 as well as other MDGs.

V. Enterprises and corporations should adopt appropriate strategies to promote the rights, welfare of and equal pay for women workers, in particular women workers from the outlying regions with a family living on their remittance;

VI. The stereotypical attitudes and behavior toward women and girls should be changed, and men should be encouraged to bear equal responsibilities with women in areas such as domestic and caring work;

VII. With public education, vocational education and skill training becoming more accessible and affordable for girls and women in urban areas, girls and women in rural and outlying regions should have equal access to public education, vocational education and skill training at all levels, as well as other public and social services, so as to improve their productivity and abilities for making a living;

VIII. Governments should make sufficient investments into physical and social infrastructure, in particular in energy and water resources, to alleviate the burden of unpaid work that typically involves women;

IX. All women should have the rights to enjoy high-quality, affordable and accessible health care, education and services, so as to reduce maternal mortality, increase births assisted by skilled attendants, have access to safe and effective family planning and contraceptive methods and reduce the risk of diseases;

X. Comprehensive strategies and efforts should be made to eliminate violence against women and girls, to combat all forms of trafficking in women and girls, and to prevent sex-selective abortion. Efforts should also be made to protect women and girls victimized by or living under the threat of violence, to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence, and to engage communities and civil society organizations in eliminating violence against women and girls. Shelter should be provided to them when necessary;

XI. Governments should improve conditions of livelihood of women living under conflict situation or being internally displaced;

XII. In light of the special difficulties encountered by women in outlying regions in their empowerment of economic and social rights, governments and social organizations at all levels should adopt concrete measures to initiate and support projects dedicated to improving their chances of participation and building their capacities.

Annex 1

Report of the Secretary-General*

Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Outcomes of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly and its Contribution to Shaping a Gender Perspective Towards the Full Realization of the Millennium Development Goals

SUMMARY

The present report is a review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals, as mandated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15.

In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 33/56 and 50/206 on the consolidation of reports, the present report is also submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9, which requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme, and as an input to the 2010 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in compliance with Council agreed conclusions 2002/1 and General Assembly resolution 61/16.

* Excerpts from the document E/2010/4 (Pages 1-2; and 83-104). Full report is available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2010/4.

III. Linkages between implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

A. Introduction

Following the adoption of the Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit in 2000, eight Millennium Development Goals were established. The Goals are a sub-set of the goals and commitments of the United Nations global conferences and summits of the 1990s, which provided comprehensive frameworks for action in the areas they cover. Together with their time-bound and measurable targets, the Millennium Development Goals present valuable and effective benchmarks for monitoring progress and achieving concrete results.

It is increasingly recognized that gender equality and empowerment of women and girls is essential for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals, and efforts are made to incorporate gender perspectives in the implementation of all goals at the global, regional and national levels. In the declaration adopted at the 10-year review and appraisal in the Commission on the Status of Women in 2005, Member States emphasized that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.⁸⁷

The global normative and policy framework on gender equality and the empowerment of women is contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as subsequent intergovernmental outcomes, such as resolutions of the General Assembly and agreed conclusions of the Commission. The Millennium Development Goals represent an opportunity for increasing the focus on national-level implementation of the Platform for Action, and — through the specific targets and indicators established — for measuring progress and outcomes. It is also increasingly recognized that the implementation of the Platform for Action is essential for the achievement of all the Goals.

The global framework on gender equality and empowerment of women — the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination against Women — provides comprehensive guidance for effectively mainstreaming gender perspectives in all areas covered by the Millennium Development Goals.

⁸⁷ See E/2005/27.

B. Linkages between implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

While important advances have been made globally, progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is currently falling short of expectations. Multiple global crises, including the economic and financial crisis, the food and energy crises and the challenge of climate change, have led to significant setbacks for several goals, including those relating to poverty and hunger, health and decent work. Progress for women and girls in many areas covered by the Millennium Development Goals lags behind overall gains. This outcome is indicative of the insufficient attention given to the gender equality dimensions in national development policies and strategies related to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The diagnosis and strategic objectives and actions outlined in many of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action are instrumental for clarifying the gender perspectives in the Millennium Development Goals, as well as for addressing the gender-specific constraints and challenges faced by women and girls in efforts to achieve them.

This section illustrates the linkages between the Platform for Action and the gender equality dimensions of each Millennium Development Goal, presents the current status of progress for women, and points out gender-specific causes of lack of progress, as applicable. Opportunities for accelerating gender-sensitive progress on the Millennium Development Goals, using the guidance set out in the Platform, are also indicated.

Eradicate poverty and hunger

The Platform for Action recognizes that poverty is a complex and multidimensional problem and highlights the fact that women, especially in developing countries, are disproportionately affected by poverty. It notes that macro- and microeconomic policies and programmes have not always been designed to take gender perspectives into account, including their impact on women living in poverty. In the context of efforts to eradicate poverty and foster economic growth and development, the Platform provides strategic objectives and actions that seek to remove gender inequalities from economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources, employment, markets and trade. It highlights a range of measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in their access to, and opportunities in, employment.

These actions and measures are central for the achievement of Goal 1, which aims to eradicate poverty and hunger, with three targets: halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day; achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people; and halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. Progress is monitored through nine indicators: the proportion of population below \$1 (purchasing power parity) per day; poverty gap ratio; share of poorest quintile in national consumption; growth rate of GDP per person employed; employment-to-population ratio; proportion of employed people living below \$1 (purchasing power parity) per day; proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment; prevalence of underweight children under five years of age; and proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption.

While the Millennium Development Goals target of reducing poverty could be achieved overall, some regions will fall short and as many as 1 billion people are likely to remain in extreme poverty by 2015.⁸⁸ Figures disaggregated by sex are not readily available. Data on consumption expenditure and income collected at the household level, however, reveal that women and girls tend to be disproportionately represented among the poor. Some female-headed households are among the poorest and most disadvantaged of all households. In such households, women and/or girls assume primary responsibility for both productive and reproductive work and face constraints in accessing economic and financial resources.⁸⁹

The recent combination of higher domestic food prices, lower incomes and unemployment has substantially increased food insecurity. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that around 1.02 billion people in the world are hungry in 2009, which is the highest number since 1970. Women are more likely to be undernourished than men in many countries, as they have less access to food within the household, especially when it is scarce.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

⁸⁹ See United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the impact of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (Geneva, November 2009).

⁹⁰ See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World* (FAO, Rome, 2009).

As indicated in section II of the present report, access to labour markets and to decent work remains particularly limited for women,⁹¹ and women are disproportionately represented in informal work and concentrated among lower-quality jobs within self-employment.⁹² At the global level, the share of vulnerable employment in total female employment was 52.7 per cent in 2007, compared with 49.1 per cent for men. There has been no significant increase in the sharing of unpaid work, including care giving, between women and men, which affect women's employment choices and other opportunities.⁹³

Achieving universal primary education

The Platform for Action reaffirms that education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. It notes that literacy is important for improving health, nutrition and education in the family and empowering women to participate in decision-making. The Platform outlines a number of strategic objectives and actions that seek to ensure women's and girls' equal access to, and opportunities in education. It recommends measures to eliminate discrimination against girls in education, provide skills development and training, and ensure that the content and delivery of education and training are non-discriminatory and contribute to the promotion of gender equality.

The Platform offers a comprehensive approach for accelerating achievement of Goal 2, which aims to achieve universal primary education, with the target of ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. Progress is monitored through three indicators measuring the net enrolment ratio in primary education, the proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary and the literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men.

Globally, progress is being made towards achieving universal primary education for all children. During the past decade, for example, school infrastructure and facilities have been expanded significantly in most of the developing world. However, more than 10 per cent of children of primary-school age

⁹¹ See International Labour Organization, *Global employment trends for women* (ILO, Geneva, 2008).

⁹² See International Labour Organization, *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges* (ILO, Geneva, 2007).

⁹³ See United Nations, *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: Women's Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, including Microfinance*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (New York, 2007).

are out of school, millions of children start school but eventually drop out,⁹⁴ and global figures mask disparities between and within regions and countries.

Girls gained both greater access to and participation in primary education. The ratio of girl to boy first-graders increased globally from 92 girls per 100 boys in 1999 to 95 girls per 100 boys in 2006, and nearly two thirds of the 187 countries for which data was available had achieved gender parity in primary school enrolment by 2006.⁹⁵

At the same time, disparities persist. Girls who live in poverty, in rural areas or in urban slums, or who belong to a minority group, as well as girls with disabilities, are less likely to be enrolled. Existing evidence indicates that out-of-school girls are more likely than boys to never enrol in school.⁹⁶ In many developing countries, school systems are underfinanced and under-resourced and often fail to deliver a high quality education. As a result, many girls and boys leave school without having acquired the most basic literacy and numeric skills.⁹⁷

Limited progress has been made on the literacy indicator and the sex ratio of illiterate adults has not changed over the past 20 years. Women continue to account for nearly two thirds of illiterate adults in the world (see sect. II).⁹⁸

Promote gender equality and empower women

Through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Platform for Action, Member States have set global standards for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Platform sets out strategic objectives and actions towards the practical realization of equality between women and men, including, inter alia, the elimination of de jure and de facto discrimination; the adoption, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes in all areas of public and private life; and the provision of services and support to women. It highlights the need for collection, dissemination and use of sex-disaggregated data and information and gender-specific research to support planning and evaluation of public policies.

⁹⁴ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: why governance matters* (UNESCO, Paris, 2008).

This framework should guide work on Goal 3, which aims to promote gender equality and empower women, with the single target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015. Progress is monitored through three indicators measuring ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education, the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament.

Progress towards this goal, as measured by the three indicators, has been limited. The early target date of 2005 for eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education was not met. Estimates for 2006 show that, worldwide, there were as many countries with more girls enrolled in secondary school as countries with more boys enrolled; however, global-level data hide differences between and within regions and countries.⁹⁹ The total number of girls who enrol in and complete secondary and tertiary education remains low in many parts of the world.

A gender division of labour persists, as reflected in the disproportionate concentration of women in vulnerable forms of work; occupational segregation and wage gaps; and the unequal division of unpaid domestic labour. While women have continued to move out of the agricultural sector in all regions of the world, 2007 estimates suggest that, overall, women are still overrepresented in that sector. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the agricultural sector makes up more than 60 per cent of all women's employment.¹⁰⁰

Progress on the third indicator has been very modest. As of November 2009, women held 18.8 per cent of seats in single/lower chambers of parliament globally,¹⁰¹ compared to 11.3 per cent in 1995. The 2009 figure remains well below the 30 per cent target set in the 1990s.¹⁰² Gains are not spread evenly across regions and regional aggregates mask the large number of countries where women have little presence in national decision-making.

Reduce child mortality

The Platform for Action provides a comprehensive assessment of the specific disadvantages faced by girls and outlines strategic objectives and actions to

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹⁰¹ See Inter-Parliamentary Union 2009 (www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm).

¹⁰² See Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15, para. 7, recommendation VI.

eliminate all forms of discrimination against girls, including with regard to practices and conditions that contribute to child mortality. It highlights circumstances that have an impact on child mortality, emphasizing, for example, the importance of eliminating discrimination against girls in food allocation, nutrition and access to health services, and addresses early pregnancy as a cause of higher levels of maternal and child morbidity and mortality. It suggests various actions that could contribute to reducing child mortality, particularly among girls, including eliminating negative sociocultural attitudes and practices against girls and discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.

The Platform's assessment and actions can significantly enhance progress for girls in regard to Goal 4, which aims to reduce child mortality with the target of reducing by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate. Progress is measured through three indicators: under-five mortality rate; infant mortality rate; and proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles.

While under-five mortality declined worldwide from 93 to 67 deaths per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2007, many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, have made little or no progress on this indicator.¹⁰³ Although no global sex-disaggregated data are available, evidence indicates that discrimination against girls and unequal sharing of food and resources within households have a significant impact on girls' mortality. Improving women's health and enhancing reproductive and maternal health and services (Goal 5) will directly contribute to attaining Goal 4.¹⁰⁴

Considerable progress has been achieved across the developing world in controlling several major diseases, including measles, and in reducing child mortality, particularly during the post-neonatal period. Disparities continue to exist within and between developing countries, however. Reducing neonatal deaths requires the provision not only of appropriate care before, during and after birth, but also of adequate nutrition and health care for women and girls from birth through childhood and into adolescence and their potential childbearing years.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹⁰⁴ See United Nations Children's Fund, *State of the World's Children 2009* (UNICEF, 2009).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

Improve maternal health

The Platform for Action confirms women's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as their right to appropriate health-care services to enable them to experience safe pregnancy and childbirth. It notes particular risks and vulnerabilities related to women's sexual and reproductive health, including those linked to lack, or inadequacy, of health services and information, discriminatory attitudes and practices towards women and girls and women's limited decision-making roles. The Platform's strategic objectives and actions seek to increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services. It highlights a range of measures to enhance women's sexual and reproductive health, including in relation to family planning, maternal and emergency obstetric care and the accessibility of such care through the primary health-care system, as well as measures to address the health impact of unsafe abortions. It outlines measures to strengthen preventive programmes in the area of sexual and reproductive health, allocation of resources and monitoring.

The Platform provides a strong foundation for achieving Goal 5, which aims to improve maternal health, with two targets: reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio; and achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health. Progress is measured through six indicators: maternal mortality ratio; proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel; contraceptive prevalence rate; adolescent birth rate; antenatal care coverage; and unmet need for family planning.

Progress towards achieving Goal 5 lags behind all other goals. Every year, over 500,000 women and girls die as a result of complications during pregnancy, childbirth or the six weeks following delivery, the majority in developing countries. Pregnancy early in life contributes to the estimated 70,000 maternal deaths among girls aged 15 to 19 every year.¹⁰⁶ Most maternal deaths are related to obstetric complications and complications from unsafe abortion that can be readily addressed by skilled health personnel and through the availability of key drugs, equipment and referral facilities, as well as access to maternal health services, including emergency obstetric and newborn care.¹⁰⁷ Overall, the proportion of births attended by skilled health workers in developing re-

¹⁰⁶ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹⁰⁷ See World Health Organization, *Women and Health: Today's Evidence, Tomorrow's Agenda* (WHO, Geneva, 2009).

gions increased from 53 per cent in 1990 to 61 per cent in 2007. However, in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, more than half of all births still take place without the assistance of trained personnel.¹⁰⁸

Additional underlying factors contributing to high maternal mortality rates include lack of education and knowledge, inadequate maternal and newborn health practices and care-seeking, insufficient access to nutritious food and essential micronutrients, poor environmental health facilities and inadequate basic health-care services. Poverty, social exclusion and gender-based discrimination underpin both the direct and underlying causes of maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity.¹⁰⁹ While access to contraception has expanded globally, the unmet need remains high, especially in countries with the highest fertility.¹¹⁰

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

The Platform for Action acknowledges that women are affected by many of the same health conditions as men, but notes that they experience these conditions differently. The Platform draws attention to the particularly devastating effect of HIV/AIDS on women's health, especially the health of adolescent girls and young women, and its impact on women as caregivers. It draws attention to the link between violence against women and women's increased risk of HIV/AIDS infection. Strategic objectives and actions to strengthen prevention, as well as initiatives to address sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, are outlined. Measures set out in the Platform aim to empower women to protect themselves against infection, to participate in decision-making on policies and programmes in this area and to access care and support services.

Goal 6 aims to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, with three targets: have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS; achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it; and have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases. Progress is measured through 10 indicators, including on HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years; condom use at last high-risk sex; HIV/AIDS knowledge; ratio of school attendance of orphans to non-orphans aged 10-14 years; the proportion of population with advanced

¹⁰⁸ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹⁰⁹ See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

¹¹⁰ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs, as well as indicators to measure reduction in malaria and tuberculosis.

The number of people newly infected with HIV peaked in 1996 and has since declined, to 2.7 million in 2007.¹¹¹ However, 33 million people worldwide still live with HIV/AIDS. Globally, about half of all people living with HIV are women, with variations within regions, countries and communities. In low- and middle-income countries, rates range from a low of 31 per cent in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to approximately 60 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. Young people generally, and girls in particular, are increasingly vulnerable to HIV, with approximately 45 per cent of all new infections occurring among those aged 15-24 years.¹¹² Throughout the world, women's susceptibility to HIV infection is shaped by a complex interaction between socio-economic and sociocultural relations, as well as biological factors associated with sexual transmission of HIV, and many women and girls lack the social and economic power to control sexual and reproductive decision-making.

Access to antiretroviral treatment in poorer countries has increased significantly since the early 1980s, resulting in the first decline in the number of AIDS deaths since the epidemic was recognized. By December 2007, 3 million people in the developing regions had access to antiretroviral drugs, a 47 per cent increase since December 2006. Globally, women have equal or greater access to antiretroviral drugs than men. In 2007, about 33 per cent of pregnant women who tested positive for HIV received antiretroviral treatment to prevent transmission of the virus to their babies.¹¹³ While tuberculosis co-infection is debilitating to both women and men, women face serious barriers to tuberculosis treatment and have higher tuberculosis mortality rates compared with men.¹¹⁴

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has drawn attention to the importance of care work, including the weaknesses and insufficiencies of public policies and institutions created to address the care needs created by the disease, as well as the gender division of labour in provision of care. It has been estimated that, globally, women and girls provide up to 90 per cent of the care needs generated by the illness.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² See United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic* (UNAIDS, Geneva, 2009).

¹¹³ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹¹⁴ See UNAIDS Action Framework: Addressing Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV (August 2009).

¹¹⁵ See E/CN.6/2009/2.

Environmental sustainability

The Platform for Action highlights women's role in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management. It draws attention to the potential disproportionate impact of environmental risks on women's health, and the impact of environmental degradation, in particular on rural and indigenous women whose livelihoods and daily subsistence depend directly on sustainable ecosystems. Strategic objectives and actions are outlined to strengthen women's participation in environmental decision-making at all levels and to integrate gender concerns and perspectives into policies and programmes for sustainable development. The need for adequate mechanisms to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women is also raised.

The Platform provides opportunities for increased attention to gender equality perspectives in respect of Goal 7, which aims to ensure environmental sustainability and has four targets: integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources; reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss; halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; and by 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. Progress is monitored through 10 indicators, including: the proportion of land area covered by forest; CO₂ emissions; the proportion of population using an improved drinking water source; the proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility; and the proportion of urban population living in slums.

While sex-disaggregated data for a number of these indicators are not available or are difficult to compile, there are significant gender perspectives in the causes and implications of the issues covered. Women are, for example, disproportionately vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation as they make up a large number of the poor in communities that are highly dependent on local natural resources for their livelihood. Women's limited access to resources and decision-making processes increases their vulnerability to climate change. In particular, women in rural areas in developing countries have the major responsibility for household water supply and energy for cooking and heating, as well as for food security, and are negatively affected by drought, uncertain rainfall and deforestation.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ See Commission on the Status of Women issues paper on the theme "Gender perspectives and climate change" (2008).

Although the world is ahead of schedule in meeting the 2015 drinking water target, 884 million people worldwide still rely on unimproved water sources for their drinking, cooking, bathing and other domestic activities. An additional 1.4 billion people will require improved access to sanitation if the 2015 target is to be met.¹¹⁷ Women and girls continue to bear the main responsibility for water and sanitation in both rural and urban areas in many parts of the world and are negatively impacted by unreliable provision.

Develop a global partnership for development

The Platform for Action emphasized that only a new era of international cooperation among Governments and peoples based on a spirit of partnership, *inter alia*, will enable the world to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. It recognized the importance of mobilization of resources from all available funding mechanisms for implementation of global commitments, especially on gender equality. The need to find effective development-oriented and durable solutions to external debt was also emphasized. The Platform seeks to ensure that a gender-sensitive approach is taken in development cooperation and economic activities, including trade agreements, to avoid adverse impacts on women.

These expectations, as set out in the Platform for Action, should inform efforts towards the achievement of goal 8, which aims to develop a global partnership for development, with six targets pertaining to issues such as the trading and financial system; the special needs of the least developed, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States; the debt problems of developing countries; access to essential drugs; and new technologies. Progress is monitored through 16 indicators, including those related to official development assistance, market access and debt sustainability. The gender equality dimensions of this goal include, *inter alia*, the availability of resources for the promotion of gender equality, access of women entrepreneurs to trade and markets, and the share of women users of new ICT. While sex-disaggregated data are rarely available, some examples of the gender equality implications of the targets are provided below.

Total aid remains well below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income.¹¹⁸ Investment in gender equality and women's empowerment is vital for improving economic, social and political conditions in

¹¹⁷ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

developing countries in the framework of sustainable development. Bilateral assistance to sectors focused on activities that had gender equality as a principal or significant objective between 2000 and 2005 was limited. Two thirds of the \$5 billion allocated was directed to the social sectors, mainly health and education, and limited funds were allocated to promoting gender equality in areas such as agriculture, infrastructure or finance.¹¹⁹

The debt service ratios have declined, and by the end of March 2009, 35 of 41 eligible countries had qualified for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.¹²⁰ Debt burdens can have negative impacts on women and girls if debt servicing leads to cuts in public spending in the areas of health and education, reduces access and increases care giving burdens.¹²¹ Debt cancellation can be beneficial to women if resources can be diverted to financing for gender equality and women's empowerment. Some countries, for example, have used debt relief to help fund education programmes on nutrition and family planning.¹²²

Trade policies have gender implications because women and men have differential access to, and control over, resources and play distinct roles in the market economy and at the household level. Protecting and enhancing women's economic opportunities and rights should be a key element of equitable trade strategies, with gender analysis systematically used in the design and monitoring of trade agreements to prevent or offset negative consequences for women.¹²³

IV. Accelerating gender-sensitive Millennium Development Goal performance

Fifteen years after the adoption of the Platform for Action, and with the target dates for the Millennium Development Goals fast approaching, it is opportune to reconsider and modify policies, strategies and actions to ensure a more equitable, gender-sensitive and sustainable pattern of growth and development. There is a need to create an enabling environment at all levels to ensure that women and girls can equally contribute to, and benefit from, development processes.

¹¹⁹ E/CN.6/2008/2.

¹²⁰ See *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹²¹ E/CN.6/2008/2.

¹²² See Jubilee Debt Campaign, "Debt and Women", Briefing/07, London.

¹²³ E/CN.6/2008/2.

Gender equality perspectives are poorly reflected in the current formulation of many of the Millennium Development Goals and are not explicitly outlined in strategies and plans for implementation of the Goals. Reviews of Millennium Development Goal reports in 2003 and 2005 revealed that gender equality perspectives were not adequately mainstreamed into national reports.¹²⁴ The failure to address the links between the Platform and the Millennium Development Goals and their targets and indicators reduces opportunities for identifying and addressing potential causes of slow progress.

The lack of progress for women in relation to the Millennium Development Goals suggests that the global policy framework on gender equality and empowerment of women, in particular the Platform for Action, is still insufficiently used as a basis for policymaking and programming aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Further work is needed to strengthen the understanding of the linkages between the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and to translate this awareness into concrete action for improved and accelerated performance on the Goals. Actions to ensure more gender-sensitive implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should build on the major trends in implementation of the Platform for Action at the national level outlined in this report.

A. Participatory processes and strategic partnerships

Participation of a diverse range of stakeholders — both women and men — in the design, implementation and monitoring of strategies aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals should significantly increase opportunities for enhancing attention to the gender perspectives of the Goals and for channelling experiences and good practices in the implementation of the Platform for Action into policy development, implementation and monitoring of the Goals.

Increasingly, national mechanisms for gender equality participate in national Millennium Development Goal processes, including monitoring and reporting. Consultative processes involving women's groups and networks, and other civil society actors, contribute to the formation of strategic partnerships and collaboration across sectors. Such partnerships can support the establish-

¹²⁴ See United Nations Development Fund for Women, *Making the Millennium Development Goals Work for All* (UNIFEM, New York, 2008).

ment of links between existing policies, plans and strategies for implementation of the Platform for Action and those aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

B. Strengthened political commitment and leadership

Strengthened political commitment and leadership is required to explicitly articulate gender equality as a goal in all areas in the Millennium Development Goal framework. Greater priority must be given to gender equality and empowerment of women in policies, strategies, programmes and actions for implementation, monitoring and reporting on all Millennium Development Goals.

Gender equality and women's empowerment have been prioritized and included as principles in the development cooperation policies and programmes of a number of donor countries, as well as in the EU Agenda for Action on the Millennium Development Goals, adopted in 2008. Further efforts are needed to ensure that development cooperation provides support to the incorporation of gender equality perspectives in all areas of the Millennium Development Goal framework.

Efforts to mainstream gender equality perspectives in national Millennium Development Goal monitoring and reporting have intensified, in some cases with the assistance and support of international organizations.¹²⁵ Some countries, for example, have added gender-sensitive targets and indicators to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals at the national level, including indicators on violence against women. Increasingly, countries are endeavouring to use available data disaggregated by sex to measure progress. Such efforts should be expanded and applied more systematically in all Millennium Development Goal monitoring and reporting processes.

C. Improved analysis, monitoring and reporting

In order to strengthen attention to the gender equality perspectives in all the Millennium Development Goals, and to develop and implement effective policies and strategies that respond to gender-specific challenges and constraints, there is a need to systematically collect and use sex-disaggregated data and to strengthen the effective use of gender analysis across all the Goals.

¹²⁵ See United Nations Development Fund for Women, *Making the Millennium Development Goals Work for All* (UNIFEM, New York, 2008).

Increased gender-sensitive research and analysis needs to be generated, especially at the national level, to inform the work of policymakers and key stakeholders involved in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

D. Financing for gender equality and empowerment of women

Increased attention must be given to the way in which women and men can benefit from, and have access to, economic and financial resources. There is also a need to increase resources, both human and financial, to support the implementation of policies and programmes, as well as institutional mechanisms promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. To this end, gender equality perspectives must be fully integrated in all economic decision-making, including as they relate to public sector expenditures, private sector investments and official development assistance.

The need for improved tracking and monitoring of expenditures allocated for gender equality has been recognized. Gender-responsive budgeting has emerged as an effective tool in promoting change in budget policies, allocation and outcomes to ensure that resources are provided for the implementation of commitments on gender equality. Over the past decade, gender-responsive budgeting initiatives have been launched in more than 70 countries,¹²⁶ marking progress towards greater recognition of the gender-specific implications of fiscal policies.

The success of initiatives on financing for gender equality and empowerment of women is reliant on the active involvement and collaboration of a broad range of stakeholders, including ministries of finance and planning, national mechanisms for gender equality, parliamentarians, research bodies and women's organizations.

V. Priority areas for further action

To accelerate progress in implementation, strengthened efforts are needed to address persistent gaps and challenges and emerging obstacles, as well as to build on achievements, lessons learned and good practices in implementation in relation to all critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action. A number of priority areas for further action were identified.

¹²⁶ E/CN.6/2008/2.

A. Actions across all critical areas of concern

Cross-cutting issues

In addition to specific gaps and challenges and areas needing action in each critical area of concern in the Platform for Action, a number of cross-cutting issues were raised in relation to all critical areas of concern.

Governments highlighted the importance of further action to identify and address gender stereotypes, which constrain progress in achieving the goals established in the Platform for Action. Combating stereotypes requires a range of strategies, such as curriculum revision and teacher training in the education sector; measures to combat attitudes that assign girls an inferior status and legitimize discrimination and violence against them; campaigns and training programmes to dispel stereotypes on women's leadership roles; and awareness-raising campaigns for the general public and through educational programmes in schools on zero tolerance for violence against women.

Violence against women was consistently addressed as an obstacle to implementation in many areas and the need for significant further action across sectors, including health, education, employment and law enforcement, was highlighted. In the education sector, for example, strategies required include improving safety en route to schools and ensuring safe sanitary facilities in schools; and adopting measures to address impunity for sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations were highlighted.

Across all critical areas, the importance of increasing the participation of women in decision-making processes was emphasized, both as a right in itself and as a means to ensure the incorporation of gender perspectives and to facilitate positive outcomes in decision-making processes at all levels. Women's exclusion, for example, from economic decision-making and from the management of natural resources must be urgently addressed. Measures need to be identified to increase women's participation in political decision-making at all levels, including in political parties and parliaments. The absence of women holding decision-making positions in peace processes contributes to the limited attention to gender perspectives in peace agreements and the neglect of women's human rights. Reliable and comparable statistics are needed on women's access to decision-making in other areas such as academia, the judiciary and the media.

Many Governments explicitly recognized the critical role of men and boys in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The need to strengthen their involvement was raised, in particular in

the context of combating violence against women; ensuring women's human rights; creating a non-discriminatory environment for girls; and increasing women's participation in decision-making. Measures required include information and awareness-raising campaigns, inclusion of gender equality in education curricula and materials and development of positive male role models for boys and youth.

There is emerging recognition that the unequal distribution of unpaid work between women and men is a major obstacle to gender equality, limiting progress across critical areas of concern, in particular in education, employment and participation in public life.

Common strategies across critical areas of concern

A number of key findings were made in relation to common strategies utilized to support implementation across critical areas of concern.

Comprehensive legal frameworks, which provide specific legislation on gender equality and ensure attention to gender equality perspectives in all other legislation, were recognized as a critical foundation for implementation in all areas. The need for legislation to both prevent and respond to gender discrimination and inequality was acknowledged. Increasingly, action was taken on awareness of the critical importance of enforcement of legislation. Measures required to ensure effective implementation include broad dissemination of legislation, awareness-raising for women themselves and other key stakeholders, training for all relevant officials involved in implementation, funding and effective monitoring and reporting.

The adoption of comprehensive national policies and action plans on gender equality is an important element in the implementation of all critical areas of concern. The effectiveness of such instruments is dependent on the incorporation of measurable goals, targets and timetables; establishment of monitoring and accountability mechanisms, including for impact assessments; costing of implementation and provision of necessary funding for implementation; and clear designation of roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. Responses from Governments also pointed to the importance of targeted strategies and/or action plans on specific areas. The contribution of such plans was particularly clear, for example, in relation to addressing violence against women and in implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Particular attention was focused in all areas on the need to strengthen implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy to ensure that the needs

and priorities of women and girls are systematically and effectively taken into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies, plans and resource allocations across all policy areas. Actions highlighted included strengthened political will and visible leadership, enhanced capacity-building at all levels, increased allocation of specific resources for the implementation of the strategy and further development of practical methodologies and tools. Gender perspectives should be fully incorporated into critical national instruments, such as national development strategies, poverty reduction strategies, Millennium Development Goals reports and strategies and plans on sustainable development.

The importance of addressing the gap between policy and normative development and its translation into concrete action was recognized. Improvements in monitoring and reporting on progress and impacts are needed in all areas. In cases where Governments reported on general measures taken without specifying efforts made to ensure a gender-sensitive approach, for example on poverty eradication, health or environmental sustainability, it is critical to systematically monitor progress and impacts from a gender perspective.

It was recognized that accelerated implementation of all critical areas of concern — including, for example, poverty, violence against women, women's human rights and the girl child — requires a multisectoral approach, with strong cooperation and coordination across all relevant sectors.

The limited availability of reliable, comparable statistics was raised as a significant obstacle to accelerated implementation in all critical areas of concern. Improvement of statistics is crucial to allow policymakers to undertake effective legislative and policy reforms, ensure development of relevant strategies and actions, monitor trends and progress and assess the impact of measures taken. Measures are needed to improve the collection, compilation, analysis, dissemination and use of data disaggregated by sex and age, and to further develop quantitative and qualitative indicators to increase capacity to assess progress on elimination of discrimination in all areas. The further development of methodologies and tools for improving data collection and dissemination on women's representation in decision-making positions across all sectors, for example, is one area where urgent attention is needed. The capacity of national statistics offices to measure gender-specific access to economic and financial resources and to undertake time-use surveys is also important in accelerating implementation of the critical areas of concern regarding poverty and the economy. Increased data on women's access to, and use of, new ICT is another important priority.

Despite progress made, further research is needed in many areas. Priority areas identified included research on barriers to women's access to decision-making and the positive impact of women's increased participation in decision-making; the access of women and girls to ICT; and the specific needs and priorities of vulnerable groups of women, such as migrant women, older women and women with disabilities, in relation to many of the critical areas of concern.

The value of continuing or strengthening a life cycle approach was evident in many areas, including in relation to health, education, employment, poverty and the situation of the girl child. Greater attention needs to be given, for example, to the impact of life cycle factors — such as women's interrupted employment histories because of unequal responsibilities for care giving — on efforts to promote access to employment and social welfare programmes, in particular unemployment benefits, health insurance and pensions.

The importance of awareness-raising was highlighted by Governments across many critical areas of concern. Information campaigns are needed to facilitate public awareness; empower women through knowledge of their rights and increase their capacity to claim them; and strengthen societal condemnation of discrimination and inequality in all areas. The importance of awareness-raising initiatives in areas such as violence against women, women's human rights, the girl child, and women's role in decision-making was highlighted as a means to end societal tolerance of, and complicity in, discrimination and inequality for women and girls.

Governments also noted the effective use of the education system to raise awareness of important issues and combat gender stereotypes. The education system has particular potential for changing attitudes in areas such as violence against women, human rights of women, the role of men and boys, access to ICT, and the situation of the girl child.

Institutional development

Considerable attention in responses was given to the challenges and required action in relation to institutional development in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across the critical areas of concern.

Strengthening political will and leadership is a critically important priority action. Leadership at all levels — local, national, regional and international — and across all sectors is critical for generating sustained action in support of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

A number of Governments called attention to the importance of increasing the involvement of national mechanisms for gender equality across all sectors. The need to significantly increase capacity and resources in these mechanisms to allow them to play a strengthened role must be addressed, however.

The value of a broad range of partnerships and the active involvement of, and collaboration with, all relevant stakeholders for effective and sustained implementation of the critical areas of concern was acknowledged. In particular, a number of Governments highlighted the importance of partnerships with non-governmental organizations. The potential for increasing the involvement of the private sector in relevant areas should also be utilized.

The importance of capacity development for a range of stakeholders was highlighted in all critical areas of concern. The effectiveness of targeting capacity development to the needs of particular groups of actors was noted, such as teachers, media professionals, health professionals and law enforcement officials.

Increasing resource allocations for the promotion of gender equality in general, and the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy in particular, must be a priority. The crucial role of development assistance for supporting the acceleration of implementation was noted in many critical areas of concern. Gender-responsive budgeting was highlighted as an effective strategy for increasing coherence between policy commitments and resource allocations and for strengthening transparency and accountability.

Many Governments raised the issue of the potential impact of the current economic and financial crisis on efforts to accelerate implementation of the critical areas of concern. Action must be taken to avoid negative impacts, such as the withdrawal of girls from school, women's increased involvement in precarious forms of labour to compensate for loss of family income, and an increase in women's unpaid work to compensate for reduced basic services. The impact of the economic and financial crisis on women should be taken into account in economic policies and programmes at all levels. Stimulus packages in response to the financial crisis should include gender-sensitive investments both in physical and social infrastructure and in employment generation, which take into account both paid and unpaid work.

B. Strategies and actions on specific critical areas of concern

In addition to the cross-cutting issues discussed above, specific priority areas for further action were identified for each of the 12 critical areas of concern.

Gaps and challenges in relation to each of the critical areas of concern have already been outlined in section II of the present report. The following section highlights some of the priority areas for further action under each area.

Women and poverty

Inequality and discrimination in access to resources has implications for the well-being of women, their families and communities, as well as for economic growth and development. Priority must be given to identifying and addressing women's unequal access to economic and financial resources, including employment, social security and productive resources such as land, property and natural resources.

The constraints faced by women in accessing formal financial services, including savings, credit, insurance and money transfer services, should be explicitly addressed. Particular attention needs to be given to the obstacles faced by poor women in accessing microfinancing.

Women's access to social protection schemes, including unemployment benefits, health insurance and pension schemes, should be increased throughout the life cycle. Social security systems must take into account women's employment histories and recognize leave periods for care giving in the calculation of benefits. Efforts are needed to strengthen and expand social protection to meet the needs of women living in poverty, taking into account the impact of the unequal sharing of unpaid work.

Legislation and policies should be adopted/reviewed to ensure women's equal access to, and control over, land and property, including through inheritance and land reform programmes. Measures are needed to address the discriminatory elements of customary law in relation to land and property rights and to build on gender-sensitive and progressive aspects. The judicial system must be more accessible and responsive to women, and provide legal aid to women seeking to claim their rights.

Gender perspectives must be fully incorporated into poverty reduction strategies and related actions. Monitoring and evaluation processes should consistently address the extent to which policies, programmes and activities effectively address the needs, priorities and contributions of women and men.

Education and training of women

Targeted interventions are needed to address continuing inequality in access and achievement at all education levels, in particular to narrow disadvantages

caused by factors such as poverty, geographic location, language, ethnicity and disability. Good practices in measures that can be more widely replicated to increase the enrolment of girls include the provision of school feeding programmes and financial incentives such as scholarships.

Greater efforts are needed to improve the safety of girls at and on the way to school, including by providing infrastructure such as separate toilets and improved lighting, conducting awareness-raising initiatives in schools and communities and establishing and enforcing sanctions for violence against girls.

Measures to promote non-discriminatory education and broader career choices, including through curriculum revision, teacher training, and encouragement and support for girls to participate in science and technology, should be scaled up.

Efforts are needed to ensure that the educational achievements of women and girls translate into employment opportunities. This requires a better understanding of the political, economic and social factors that impact the school-to-work transition for girls and boys in different regions.

Illiteracy remains a serious constraint for many women. Greater attention must be given to ensuring access to education across the life cycle. The potential of ICT should be harnessed to increase access to adult education and vocational training.

Women and health

Further measures, including increased resources, are needed to ensure affordable and accessible quality health services for women, including primary health care and reproductive health services.

Particular attention should be given to the health priorities and needs of vulnerable groups of women, such as those living with HIV/AIDS, women with disabilities, older women, women in poverty and women in remote and rural areas.

Given the slow progress on achievement of goal 5 on maternal health, there is an urgent need to significantly increase attention and resources in this area, including through improved access to reproductive health services and access to skilled care during pregnancy, delivery and after birth, as well as access to emergency services in the event of life-threatening complications.

Increased attention should be focused on the needs and priorities of women as caregivers, in both formal and informal contexts, and in particular in the context of HIV/AIDS.

There is an urgent need to strengthen health systems to make them more responsive to women's health needs, including in terms of access and comprehensiveness. Particular efforts are needed to expand health services for women related to mental health, violence against women and non-communicable diseases.

Violence against women

In addition to establishing provisions for penalizing and punishing perpetrators, legislative frameworks on violence against women should mandate support and protection for victims/survivors, prevention measures, training for relevant officials, funding and the creation of mechanisms to monitor implementation.

Persistent impunity for violence against women requires urgent action to ensure increased reporting, prosecution and sentencing. A range of measures is required, including awareness-raising, training for law enforcement officials and gender-sensitive processes and procedures, with due attention to the security of victims/survivors of violence.

Victims/survivors of violence should have access to adequate and coordinated services. The provision of services, including counselling, shelter and medical and legal services in one location has proven to be a promising practice which can be effectively replicated across regions. Extension of services to rural and remote areas needs further attention.

Effective advocacy campaigns are critical for increasing public awareness of the unacceptability of violence against women and girls. Such campaigns should also extend to rural areas. Educational curricula at all levels should promote gender equality and women's human rights and condemn violence against women.

Effective use should be made, at national and local levels, of the Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to end violence against women, 2008-2015" to significantly increase momentum. The campaign calls for action in five main areas: adoption and enforcement of legislation, adoption and implementation of multisectoral action plans, data collection and analysis, national and/or local campaigns and systematic efforts to address sexual violence in conflict situations.

Women and armed conflict

Stronger action is needed to address gaps and challenges in women's full and equal participation at all levels of policy- and decision-making, including as mediators and negotiators, and to systematically consult women's groups and networks, in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Strengthened and coordinated action should address all forms of violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, including sexual violence. An urgent priority is to end impunity, including through the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009). Increased resources are needed to provide adequate assistance and redress to survivors of sexual violence and other human rights abuses.

Women's political, social and economic empowerment in post-conflict settings must be given increased priority. The window of opportunity for positive change in governance structures, rule of law and infrastructure development must be used more effectively to eliminate inequalities and discrimination in law and in practice and guarantee equal access to resources and opportunities.

Women's access to the resources and opportunities available through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes should be increased, supported by measures to strengthen data availability on women associated with armed forces and groups.

The 10-year anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) provides an important opportunity to create new momentum and accelerate action on women, peace and security, including through measures to increase the participation of women, address violence against women, increase gender responsiveness in post-conflict reconstruction, improve data availability and enhance accountability for implementation.

Women and the economy

Efforts are needed to ensure women's equal access to full employment and decent work. Legislative and policy measures should address discrimination and inequalities such as horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. Specific measures are required to target the constraints women face through their disproportionate representation in the informal sector, including measures to ensure that work in the informal sector is covered by labour regulation and social protection.

Stronger measures are required to protect the rights of, and ensure decent work conditions for, domestic workers, including migrant women, in relation to working hours, conditions and wages, access to health-care services, and other social and economic benefits, as well as to eliminate sexual exploitation and violence.

Support to women entrepreneurs, and particularly to successful women entrepreneurs wishing to expand their businesses, should be increased,

including through greater access to formal financial instruments, training and advisory services, access to markets and facilitation of networking and exchanges.

Increased efforts are needed to address the constraints to women's labour market participation posed by unequal sharing of unpaid work, including care giving. Interventions should include provision of infrastructure and services, establishment of flexible working arrangements for both women and men and measures to encourage more equal sharing of unpaid household work between women and men.

The reconciliation of work and family responsibilities should be facilitated through increased flexibility in working arrangements, such as part-time work, and efforts to ensure that both women and men have access to maternity, paternity, parental and other forms of leave, and are not discriminated against when availing themselves of such benefits.

Women in power and decision-making

Based on the wide recognition of the usefulness of quota provisions in the public sector and other areas, quota systems should be further strengthened and expanded. Their effective implementation requires the establishment and enforcement of sanctions for non-compliance.

Specific measures to encourage and support women to seek and gain political office and other senior leadership positions should be enhanced, including management and leadership training, formalized mentorship programmes and sustainable financial support.

Innovative strategies are needed to promote changes in organizational culture, rules of procedure and working methods of institutions such as parliaments, political parties and corporate boards to ensure gender-sensitive responses to the needs and interests of both women and men.

Obstacles to women's participation, such as stereotypes, low levels of education and training, limited access to financial resources and constraints related to lack of time, and lack of personal security, must be identified and addressed.

More systematic efforts are needed to address and overcome negative stereotypes about women's leadership potential. Measures need to be targeted at a variety of stakeholders, including the private sector, political parties, traditional and religious leaders, the educational system, media and the general public.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Further efforts are needed to ensure that national mechanisms for gender equality have the necessary political support, a clear mandate, capacity to coordinate and collaborate with different stakeholders, and human and financial resources to implement their mandates consistently and effectively.

The potential of the increased diversity of national mechanisms for gender equality, including ministries, committees, focal points in line ministries, ombudspersons and networks in parliaments, should be fully utilized through development of effective collaboration and coordination mechanisms.

National gender equality policies and strategies, which provide the overall framework for a comprehensive approach to the promotion of gender equality, need to be reviewed and strengthened to ensure clear goals, targets, timelines and accountability and reporting mechanisms, and adequately resourced to ensure implementation.

National mechanisms for gender equality should continue to play a key role in advocating for, monitoring and supporting the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Capacity development of staff at all levels of Government remains a key priority to ensure the necessary awareness, knowledge and skills to effectively mainstream gender perspectives in all sectors.

As critical users of statistics and indicators, national mechanisms for gender equality should strengthen their role in advocating for, and supporting further developments in, this area. This requires enhanced collaboration with national statistics offices and statistical offices in line ministries, and support for capacity development in these institutions.

Collaboration with civil society, including non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, should continue to be strengthened at all levels.

Human rights of women

Discriminatory laws/provisions should be repealed and legal and policy reforms continued to ensure full compliance with States' international obligations, in particular those under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.¹²⁷ Steps should be taken to ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems comply with international human rights standards, including the principle of non-discrimination.

¹²⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Greater efforts are needed to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of non-discriminatory legal frameworks by public officials and other agents of the State, and to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise. Efforts to strengthen the capacity of State and non-State actors to comply with such laws must be sustained.

Measures to guarantee access to justice must be enhanced. Effective, affordable and accessible means of recourse and redress for violations of women's rights must be made available to all women, including through gender-responsive courts/tribunals.

Steps are needed to strengthen women's knowledge of their rights and legal literacy, as well as measures to empower women to effectively claim their rights, and targeted measures are necessary for women affected by multiple grounds of discrimination. Men and boys should be actively involved in legal literacy programmes focusing on human rights and women's rights.

Greater use must be made of temporary special measures as a necessary element in strategies to accelerate the practical realization of the principle of equality of women and men.

Women and the media

Enactment of legislation, as appropriate, as well as voluntary action or other self-regulatory mechanisms are essential to combat discrimination and gender stereotyping in the media. Exchange of good practice and lessons learned would enhance progress in this area.

Further emphasis is needed on education and training of journalists and other media professionals, including through gender equality modules in the curricula of media studies at all levels, to increase attention to gender equality issues in the media, provide a more balanced and realistic portrayal of women, including those in leadership positions, and reduce discriminatory and stereotypical coverage.

Significantly strengthened measures are needed to improve women's access to ICT, particularly in poor, rural areas. The specific constraints women face in utilizing public access centres need to be identified and addressed. Ways and means of increasing access to relevant content for women in rural areas need to be developed.

Actions to increase women's equitable access to employment in all areas of media and ICT, including at management levels, should be strengthened.

Women and the environment

In the context of climate change, measures to increase rural women's access to, and control over, natural resources, in particular land, water and energy sources, must become a priority area for action, and attention must also be given to improving women's access to the infrastructure, services and technologies necessary to effectively utilize these resources.

Women's active involvement in the management of natural resources, including through community-level user groups managing common pool resources, such as water and forests, must be assured.

Research on the gender perspectives of climate change needs to be further strengthened to effectively inform responses to climate change, including in relation to mitigation and adaptation activities, technological innovations and resource allocation.

The girl child

Ending discrimination and violence against the girl child requires comprehensive strategies that create an enabling and supportive environment for girls. This should include enhanced programmes and services for girls to ensure their equal rights, protection and opportunities, including in education, health and participation in public and community life.

There is an urgent need to improve the reproductive health of adolescent girls, including with regard to the prevention of HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy.

More attention should be focused on the importance of developing social networks for girls. Peer groups, girls clubs and mentorship programmes can help girls access information, develop communication skills and increase self-confidence, with important implications for their personal development. Such measures are particularly important for isolated girls, including out-of-school girls and domestic workers.

Greater momentum must be built to increase girls' participation in post-primary education. Education and training, both in secondary schools and in non-formal settings, should impart relevant knowledge and skills. Financial literacy and ICT skills are particularly important for girls' empowerment.

Increased efforts are necessary to tackle child labour, including forms of labour involving girls that are particularly disempowering and exploitative, such as domestic work. Urgent attention should be given to improving working conditions, ensuring access to social protection, and promoting and protecting their rights, including the right to education and leisure.

Annex 2

Report of the Secretary-General*

Trends and Progress in International Development Cooperation

SUMMARY

The present report is submitted for the consideration of the Development Cooperation Forum, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/16.

The global economic environment has changed fundamentally since the last Development Cooperation Forum, with a deep economic and financial crisis, increased food insecurity, oil price volatility and climate change. As a result, the crucial development gains made over the past decade or more are beginning to erode. In such circumstances, effective development cooperation becomes even more vital.

The present report summarizes progress in the implementation of certain aspects of the global partnership for development and discusses coherence in policies in both developed and developing countries. It also reviews trends related to the delivery of commitments on aid quantity, the impact of recent global crises, aid allocation practices, the framework for aid effectiveness, mutual accountability in development cooperation and the role of South-South

* See the document E/2010/93

and triangular cooperation. The report concludes with a set of messages and recommendations aimed at enhancing development cooperation.

The report emphasizes the need for national ownership of national development plans, as well as for transparent, equal and responsible partnerships built on trust among programme and provider countries, as key to enhancing the impact of development cooperation on the ground. It emphasizes the importance of including all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the private sector, parliamentarians, foundations and local governments, in enhancing the effectiveness of development cooperation.

I. Introduction

At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders decided that the Economic and Social Council should convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum to review trends and progress in international development cooperation, promote greater coherence in the development activities of different development partners and strengthen the link between the normative and operational work of the United Nations.

The Development Cooperation Forum has also been mandated to identify gaps and obstacles in international development cooperation and to make recommendations on practical measures and policy options. In its 2007/08 cycle, the Forum became a key mechanism for inclusive global dialogue and policy review on development cooperation issues, which was recognized in the outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (Doha, 2 December 2008).

Preparations for the 2010 Development Cooperation Forum have involved the analysis of overall trends in development cooperation, especially the impact of recent crises and climate change-related financing, aid allocation for achieving the internationally agreed development goals and aid effectiveness. Preparations have also focused on a few priority issues for improving the results of development cooperation: its coherence with other development policies, its accountability and transparency and developments in South-South and triangular cooperation.

The discussions at the 2010 Forum, based on the present report, are intended to contribute forward-looking and innovative recommendations to inform the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, to be held in September 2010. They should also feed into the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, to be held in Seoul in 2011.

II. Global partnership for development: mixed progress¹²⁸

Without progress across the board, development cooperation can have only limited impact

The global economic environment has changed fundamentally since the last Development Cooperation Forum, with the worst economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression, increased food insecurity, volatile oil prices and climate change. The world economy shrank by 2.0 per cent in 2009, and recovery will be fragile in 2010. Earlier growth did not necessarily translate into poverty reduction; as a result, large parts of the world remain far from meeting the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The crisis has driven more than 60 million people into poverty and more than 100 million people into hunger, further reducing the prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It has also reduced the scale of private flows and demonstrated once again the volatility of such flows and the need to enhance their contribution to development. Despite progress in some areas of the global partnership for development, most areas are not living up to expectations, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries. In such circumstances, development cooperation becomes even more vital, but without progress across the board on all aspects of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, development cooperation will have a limited impact.

Private flows are volatile, and more efforts are needed to enhance development contribution

Private capital flows will be essential in helping many countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals by 2015. They are highly procyclical, however, and vulnerable to external shocks. It may be desirable for countries to further explore measures that mitigate excess volatility, such as appropriate capital controls and financial regulation and supervision, especially with respect to short-term capital flows.

At the global level, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows are expected to fall from \$1.7 trillion in 2008 to below \$1 trillion in 2009, and a slow recovery is expected in 2010. The development contribution of FDI is as important as its quantity. There is strong evidence that FDI is increasingly reaching the

¹²⁸ For a more comprehensive analysis on the global partnership for development, please see the *Millennium Development Goal Gap Task Force Report 2010*.

poorest countries. While it remains concentrated in the extractive industry in the poorest countries, it is increasingly diversifying into other sectors. In many instances, however, FDI is not reaching the poorest regions within countries, owing to a lack of infrastructure, and there is little evidence that FDI flowing to these countries is leading to a significant upgrading of skills or technology transfer, or to strengthening links to local industries. Most profits continue to be repatriated, and many investors are tax-exempt. Much more needs to be done to enhance the development contribution of FDI, in particular by implementing multilateral tax information exchange agreements and requiring transnational corporations to report profits on a country-by-country basis so that tax revenues from investment can fund crucial development expenditures.

Cost reductions and diaspora bonds could channel remittances to investment in the internationally agreed development goals

Migrant remittances represent a significant portion of the gross domestic product (GDP) of many countries and a vital income support for many poor households. They have increased fourfold since the early 1990s, and have fallen less sharply than other flows during the global crisis. Channelling more remittances through the banking systems of programme countries, reducing the costs of transfers, and channelling them into public investment through “diaspora bonds” could increase their developmental impact considerably.

Trade rebounding from crisis but no progress on development round

The global crisis sparked a 13 per cent contraction in global trade, the largest decline since World War II, and was accompanied by some protectionist measures, albeit ones of low intensity. Trade is set to rebound by 7.6 per cent in 2010, but persistent unemployment could intensify protectionist pressures. Trade among developing countries is rebounding even more sharply, and looks set to continue to grow.

Trade remains a key driver of growth in the poorest countries, but the extent to which it supports sustainable human development depends on its rules and the capacity of countries to boost economic growth and job creation through trade. The successful completion of the Doha Round, with a strong pro-development and pro-poor outcome in agriculture, non-agriculture market access and services, is urgently required to help countries make the most of trade opportunities and to foster increased investments in the internationally agreed development goals. Particularly vital will be market access for agricul-

tural exports, requiring the elimination of agricultural subsidies in developed countries, and initiatives to build the capacity of programme countries to trade by improving infrastructure and productive capabilities, including through support of the Aid for Trade Initiative.

Debt relief falls sharply; urgent need for a workout mechanism

Debt relief fell sharply in the period 2007-2009, with the declining impact of both the heavily indebted poor countries debt initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative and the end of exceptional packages for Iraq and Nigeria. These initiatives have helped some of the world's poorest and most heavily indebted countries mobilize resources for investment in poverty reduction and development. Much of the debt relief funding was not additional to existing aid, however, but rather represented accounting transfers among creditor agencies to clear arrears.

The global economic and financial crisis has contributed to higher debt burdens in most developed and developing countries, eroding part of the progress made since the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative and the Millennium Summit. The risks of unsustainable debt in low-income countries have increased considerably, and debt service in many programme countries remains unacceptably high, preventing Governments from scaling up investments in the internationally agreed development goals. In particular, insufficient attention has been paid, including in the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative, to the debt burdens of middle-income countries and small and vulnerable economies, and to private sector and domestic debts. Additional debt relief will be required to reduce the burdens of other countries to sustainable levels and to foster economic recovery. This could take the form of an interest-free moratorium on debt service payments for all developing countries with moderate to high debt burdens, in order to release extra funds for investment in achieving the internationally agreed development goals. Efforts should also be made to extend the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative to include all low-income countries and lower-middle income vulnerable countries.

Fears over new rounds of unsustainable debt in the wake of the global recession have increased the urgency of reaching an international agreement on a fair and transparent international debt workout procedure, ideally under the aegis of the United Nations for the sake of legitimacy and credibility. Such a mechanism would restructure unpayable sovereign debt in a fair, predictable and orderly fashion, thereby lowering costs for creditors, ensuring burden shar-

ing among them and reducing the likelihood that economic crisis and spending cuts would be damaging to the development prospects of debtor countries.

Urgent requirements for development-oriented financial regulation

The crisis has added urgency to the appropriate regulation of international financial markets. Complex globalized financial instruments continue to develop, exacerbating risks in the world economy and requiring reforms to strengthen regulatory and supervisory frameworks, national and international financial standards and taxation of financial institutions and transactions. In particular, developing countries continue to have very little voice in the formulation of global financial regulations, which therefore remain less adapted to their needs and capacities, let alone to their development aspirations. It is essential to enhance the representation of developing countries, especially low-income countries, in regulatory standard-setting bodies such as the Financial Stability Board in order to increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of such bodies.

Increased voice and participation are needed

Progress has been achieved since the previous Development Cooperation Forum on the global financial architecture, with increased voice and participation of some developing countries in international financial decision-making and norm-setting. Reflecting the growing economic weight of large emerging economies, this has included the gradual transfer of decision-making with regard to the international financial system and changes in voting rights in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. It is vital that changes in the voting rights in the Bretton Woods institutions be made more substantial in order to reflect changes in global economic power. It is also essential that the legitimate role of the United Nations in leading global economic discussions continue to be enhanced. Such reforms, especially if reflected in more balanced global governance of development cooperation, have the potential to bring fundamental improvements in the prospects for attaining Millennium Development Goal 8 and the internationally agreed development goals as a whole, and for overcoming the crises.

III. Policy coherence for increased impact of development cooperation

Development cooperation alone cannot produce results. It needs to be reinforced by a diverse yet consistent range of policies in developed and developing countries geared towards supporting national development priorities and ac-

completing the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Greater policy coherence for development means ensuring that all policies are formulated with development objectives uppermost, and that those policies which undermine development objectives are avoided. To ensure that policies “beyond aid” deliver development, progress is needed on two fronts. Developed countries need to ensure that all policies support progress towards the internationally agreed development goals. Developing countries need to engage more effectively with “beyond aid” issues by designing comprehensive policies and strengthening implementing institutions.

For countries providing and receiving development cooperation, policy coherence spans four dimensions: coherence between development cooperation and the other policies of each provider or recipient country (the “whole of government” approach); coherence within development cooperation programmes of several donors; coherence of aid and non-aid policies among all provider and recipient countries; and coherence (or “alignment”) between provider policies and the development strategies of programme countries. The present report focuses on the first aspect, the “whole of government” approach, and looks at both provider and programme countries.

Provider countries: mixed progress reflects low political will and points to limited evidence

Donor country development policies are concentrated mainly on official development assistance (ODA) and do not take into account the major impact of other policies in areas such as trade, the environment, climate change, security, agriculture, fisheries, the social dimensions of globalization, employment and decent work, migration, research and innovation, the information society, transport and energy, international finance and investment and the policies of multilateral institutions. This vast range of policies is driven by different agendas, priorities, bureaucracies and conceptions of the developmental process, along with a diverse set of actors whose perspectives, priorities, time horizons and interests may not coincide.

Nevertheless, donor countries are beginning to take measures to increase coherence. The European Union agreed in 2005 to advance a new Policy Coherence for Development framework based on five themes and has since worked to strengthen Policy Coherence for Development procedures, instruments and mechanisms in Member States, resulting in at least 12 Member States introducing or reiterating legislation committing them to Policy Coherence for Development. Nevertheless, each Member State identifies its own pri-

orities, fixes its own targets and decides on its own mechanisms (legislation, institutional arrangements and assessment tools) for making policies coherent.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has assessed progress in three phases. While some (especially European Union) members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee have set and prioritized objectives through policy statements and a few have given Policy Coherence for Development a central place in a whole of government approach to development, some have yet to make any policy commitments. Most members of the Development Assistance Committee with policy statements have informal mechanisms for coordinating policy and resolving conflicts or inconsistencies. Only a few systematically screen legislative proposals for development impacts, and just one has a dedicated policy coherence unit. Five European Union members have in place systems for monitoring, analysis and reporting to parliament and the public, but most Development Assistance Committee members do not.

Progress by members of the Development Assistance Committee on Policy Coherence for Development has been mixed because development is not at the top of the political agenda. There should also be more systematic evidence about the benefits of coherence and the costs of a lack of coherence. Better evidence from developing countries, including mapping the influence of external factors on development, needs to be gathered, working with organizations based in developing countries. Improved analytical work in provider countries focusing on specific policy issues such as migration, trade or climate change could also give Policy Coherence for Development a higher priority. More systematic political engagement will also be vital to convince stakeholders of the benefits of coherence, to change political views and drive progress.

Programme countries need to accelerate initial efforts to develop “beyond aid” policies

Programme countries need to ensure that policies are coherent, and they also need to bring together all Government ministries and agencies to design integrated policies. Almost all programme countries do not have clear “beyond aid” coherence policies. For example, they have not defined clearly the role they foresee for different types of external and domestic development financing in supporting their national development strategies. As a result, they also do not have clear coordination structures or monitoring and reporting requirements linked to policy statements. These gaps are partly explained by a lack of capacity, best practice documentation and national coordination mechanisms.

In the case of programme countries, coherence applies to two sets of issues. First, it means being consistent across the range of issue areas in which they engage with external stakeholders, covering the whole of the Millennium Development Goal 8 partnership. This would imply dealing with, at the very least, trade, agriculture, FDI, other sources of finance and debt, regional integration and globalization, migration and remittances, climate change and the environment and technology transfer. Examples of key policies here might include avoiding tax exemptions for investors and development cooperation providers, whenever possible, so as to maximize tax revenues for development and reduce dependence on development cooperation for budget financing. Such policies would be facilitated by the existence of an international tax cooperation framework.

Second, it means making sure all aspects of their own policies relating to external engagement and impacts on development are consistent with the core focus of their national development strategies. For example, trade and investment policies need to be pro-poor, focusing on enhancing employment and livelihoods for the poorest households and regions (especially women farmers and entrepreneurs). Similar efforts could be made with financial sector development policies, in order to emphasize the mobilization and investment of domestic savings and the enhancement of foreign investment and links to global markets, or with investment in more efficient energy use in order to increase export competitiveness.

Need for greater “aid coherence” for reducing aid dependence

Programme countries and other stakeholders have also expressed concerns about two other types of policy coherence specifically linked to the impact of development cooperation, highlighting the need for what might be called “aid coherence”. The first of these is that lack of coherence in provider policies can undermine the impact of development cooperation on growth and sustainable development. To reverse this, providers of aid need to actively pursue policies that will make their aid more effective.

The second is the need to develop indicators and best practices for development cooperation that is designed to promote other forms of financing for development, i.e., ways for development cooperation to reduce long-term aid dependence. Rapidly growing shares of development cooperation are being provided to promote trade (“aid for trade” for capacity-building for trade and infrastructure), foreign and domestic private sector investment (through investment climate reform, infrastructure and co-financing of private sector projects), financial sector reforms, domestic savings and investment, revenue

mobilization or enhanced public financial management and expenditure efficiency. No authoritative studies exist of best practices in these areas, however.

The ideal route in developing policy coherence would be for each programme country to develop a coherent “beyond aid” strategy for Millennium Development Goal 8, for providers to endorse this strategy and for both groups to commit to actions and indicators of their implementation of the strategy, which could be monitored annually. Several programme countries, including Uganda and Viet Nam, are beginning such a process. The Development Cooperation Forum will continue to assess these processes with a view to establishing best practices for policies that go “beyond aid” to all aspects of cooperation.

IV. Recent trends in international development cooperation

A. Aid quantity: continuing diversification but more needs to be delivered

As at the end of 2009, international development cooperation in a broad sense is estimated to have exceeded \$170 billion. Within this total (see figures I and II), the share of bilateral assistance from members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee has continued to decline, from 51 per cent in 2006 to 45 per cent in 2008, while Development Assistance Committee contributions to multilateral aid have remained the same. There has been a continuing rise in the importance of non-Development Assistance Committee (including South-South) cooperation (to 10.5 per cent) and global funds and private philanthropy (to 17 per cent).

There has been a substantial increase in development cooperation flows since 2005; however, while Development Assistance Committee aid rose by 20 per cent during the period 2006-2008, South-South cooperation rose by 63 per cent and private contributions by at least 62 per cent.

In 2009, Development Assistance Committee donors were providing less ODA in real terms than they did in 2005. Compared with pledges of \$126 billion, or 0.37 per cent of gross national income (GNI), made in 2005, Development Assistance Committee donors are likely to fall short by \$18 billion (0.04 per cent of GNI) globally by the end of 2010, and by \$14 billion for sub-Saharan Africa.¹²⁹ On the other hand, because debt relief has declined sharply in recent years, a considerably higher proportion of aid flows now represents country programmable aid, which represents real additional transfers to developing countries.

¹²⁹ Dollar figures are at 2004 prices and exchange rates.

Figure I
International development cooperation, 2006

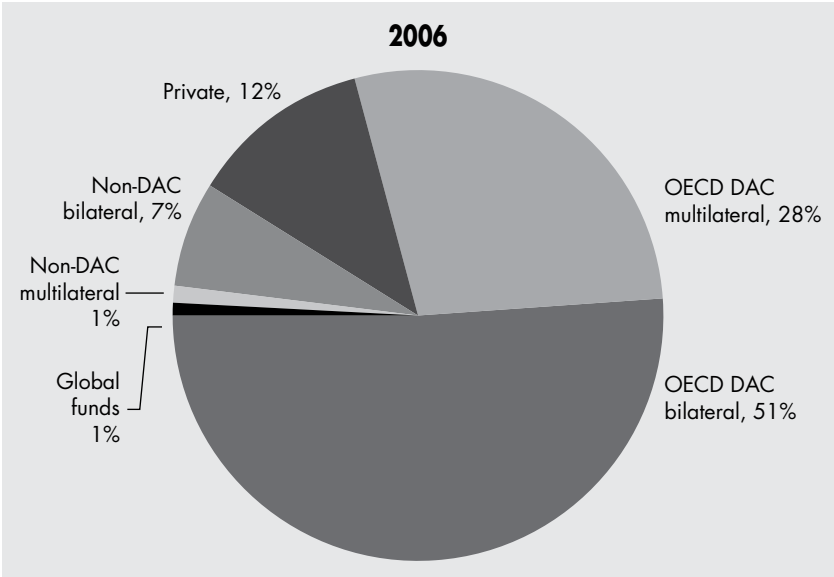
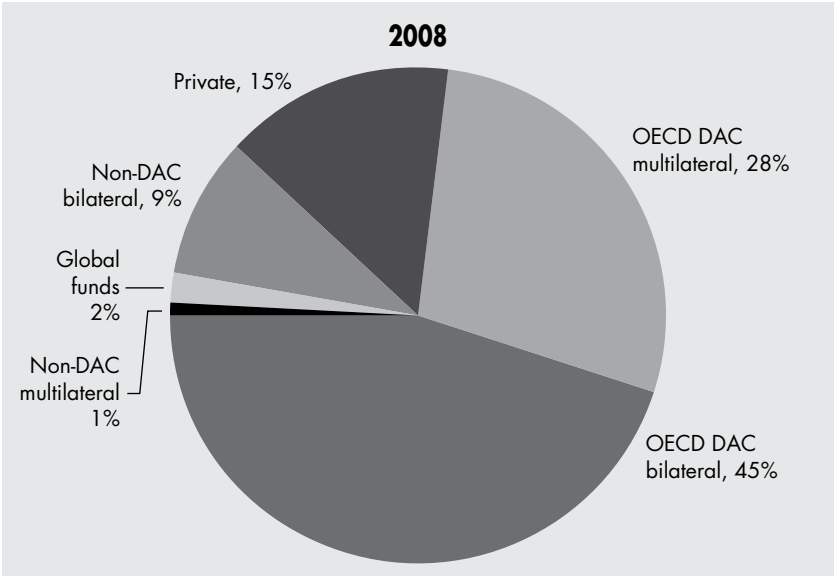


Figure II
International development cooperation, 2008



The ability to meet targets has been fundamentally determined by the ambitiousness of firm budgetary plans set by providers, and by improved planning of disbursements as a result of the increased use of programme-based support.

Looking ahead, 15 European Union members remain collectively committed to their ODA reaching or staying above 0.7 per cent of GNI by 2015. Norway is also expected to continue to contribute 1 per cent of GNI. There is an urgent need for other OECD donors to, at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, set deadlines for reaching 0.7 per cent of GNI by 2015, and for all donors to put in place immediately plans for scaling up disbursements via the enhanced use of programme-based aid in order to ensure that aid levels rise sufficiently to fund the internationally agreed development goals. Meeting ODA commitments requires that all Development Assistance Committee donors integrate their commitments into budgetary planning.

B. Impact of the crises: higher needs, some additional financing, less aid

The multiple global crises during the period 2006-2009 have had four major impacts on development cooperation.

First, they have increased programme country financing needs considerably, for food and energy security as well as for filling budget and balance-of-payment financing gaps. Most programme countries had to increase subsidies in order to smooth out rises in food and fuel prices and in spending on food security programmes, as well as increasing wages and other transfers, in order to offset the impact of higher inflation. Recent analysis has shown that neither food nor petroleum prices have decreased significantly for developing country consumers during 2009 and 2010. The global financial crisis sharply increased unemployment and poverty in many countries, requiring increased spending on retraining and social safety nets and creating a huge “fiscal hole”, exceeding \$64 billion in low-income countries in 2009 and 2010.

Second, the crises resulted in more analysis of the financing needs of programme countries, highlighting underlying problems related to the internationally agreed development goals that have not been tackled and identifying preferred channels for mobilizing or providing financing, including innovative mechanisms for financing development.

Third, the food and financial crises resulted in large pledges of financing, but only small proportions of these were additional. Only \$6 billion of the \$22 billion pledged for food and nutrition at the G20 Pittsburgh Summit in 2009 are likely to be additional. The financial crisis resulted in pledges of \$240 billion for programme countries at the G20 London Summit, but only around \$100 billion of this was additional (issuance of special drawing rights, higher IMF lending for low-income countries and some additional trade finance). The rest represented the frontloading of disbursements by multilateral development banks and bilateral trade finance agencies.

Fourth, the global financial crisis has reduced the aid budget plans of some donors. While the impact on actual flows in 2009 was marginal, virtually all Development Assistance Committee donors decreased their nominal aid disbursement plans in line with the fall in their GNI. This impact should not be exaggerated. As at May 2010, only nine Development Assistance Committee providers had reduced or slowed their percentage GNI commitments for 2010-2012. In addition, although a few Southern providers have reduced their cooperation, many more have increased it, notably Brazil, China, India and Saudi Arabia. Similarly, private philanthropy (both Northern and Southern) has continued to increase.

C. Climate finance: urgent additional innovative funding needs for spending on the internationally agreed development goals

The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Copenhagen in 2009 thrust the issue of climate finance centre stage, with commitments by OECD countries to provide \$10 billion a year during the period 2010-2012 and \$100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of programme countries for adaptation and mitigation spending against climate change. These commitments fall well short of needs, which are estimated at \$170 billion to \$275 billion a year over the next 20 years.

The main current mechanisms being used to fund mitigation measures are the Clean Development Mechanism and other market-based mechanisms. There are major questions, however, about whether these genuinely promote sustainable development by sponsoring projects and delivering funding that are additional, as well as about their capacity to approve and assess projects rapidly enough and their concentration of funding in large emerging economies, with very little in low-income countries or least developed countries.

Therefore, if additional financing sources are not found, ODA may be diverted away from funding the internationally agreed development goals to climate finance instead. This is exacerbated by the failure of almost all Development Assistance Committee Governments to pledge that their climate financing will be additional to ODA and the fact that already around 4 per cent of ODA is going to climate-impacting programmes and projects. In addition, if such diversion occurs, it is likely to move ODA away from sub-Saharan Africa to other regions, and away from health, education and agriculture to water and energy. Evidently, the poor and most vulnerable in programme countries need both traditional ODA funding and climate financing, allocated holistically in ways that help countries with the highest development and climate funding needs.

Another concern related to climate finance is how such monies will be spent. The lesson from ODA is that, in order to have the maximum impact on reducing poverty and fighting climate change, such monies will be most effectively spent by and for poor and vulnerable people in programme countries, through programmes coordinated by their Governments and integrated with their national and community sustainable development programmes, not through global vertical funds with programmes running parallel to Governments or by the private sector through market mechanisms. Nevertheless, most of the funding currently spent on adaptation and mitigation has been spent in middle-income countries and by the private sector, and many of the current innovative financing proposals risk creating new vertical funds.

Consequently, there has been a series of recent proposals for innovative sources of climate financing, including global carbon taxes, taxes on international transport emissions, taxes on international financial or currency transactions, improved or wider market mechanisms and the establishment of “green funds” funded by IMF special drawing rights, gold sales or the sale of “green bonds” in global capital markets.

D. Aid allocation and progress towards the internationally agreed development goals

A key problem continues to be that the allocation of international development cooperation is not sufficiently conducive to maximizing progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. This applies to allocation among developing country groups, regions, individual countries and regions within countries, as well as to allocation among channels, sectors and types of aid.

1. Country allocation: aid is not going to the countries that need it most

Since 2006, the positive trend in the proportion of aid going to low-income countries has been reversed, falling from 67 per cent to 61 per cent. Much of this reversal reflects a decline in debt relief. At the same time, the proportion of aid going to the most vulnerable country groups also fell: for least developed countries from 38 per cent to 29 per cent, for landlocked countries from 23 per cent to 17 per cent and for fragile States from 40 per cent to 35 per cent. Among vulnerable groups, only small island States received a slightly larger share (an increase of 0.5 per cent). As a result, in 2007 and 2008, lower-middle income countries received a higher proportion of aid than the least developed countries, and had higher ratios of ODA to GNI and ODA per capita than low-income countries.

According to the 2005 pledges, Africa's share of global aid was supposed to rise from 30 per cent to 40 per cent. Nevertheless, the regional shares of aid from Development Assistance Committee members have not changed significantly in recent years and, while aid to Africa may rise to 35 per cent by 2010 as a result of some donors making enhanced efforts, this is still well below the target, owing to a major shortfall in aid to Africa by Development Assistance Committee donors. The latest Committee forecasts of country programmable aid indicate no major change in these shares.

The other allocation problems highlighted in the report to the 2008 Development Cooperation Forum continue. Large amounts of aid still go to countries with relatively small numbers of poor citizens, and allocations are not correlated with measures of multidimensional poverty or needs that go beyond per capita income, nor do they take into account the amount of poverty reduction that can be achieved per dollar of aid. Most donors still have to establish an objective and transparent basis for allocating aid among countries, and continue to allocate bilateral aid based on political, strategic and economic interests. Some have adopted models to allocate aid or preselect recipients, based largely on donor-conducted assessments of "performance" and the quality of policies and institutions in programme countries. These undermine the principle of national ownership, because of a lack of Government and civil society involvement, and are neither transparent nor objective in showing a clear link to objectively measurable development results. Other donors take country needs, outcomes and results, or the amount of aid a country is receiving from other donors, into account to a greater degree and are therefore more likely to allocate aid in ways conducive to attaining the internationally agreed development goals.

A considerable number of countries continue to receive more aid than would be expected on the basis of need or performance (“donor darlings”), and an almost equal number receive less than would be expected (“donor orphans”). The countries receiving more aid per capita or as a percentage of GNI than would be expected according to their needs in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals tend to be those with small populations, those affected by conflict and some middle-income countries. On the other hand, fragile States that are not in post-conflict situations but that nevertheless face severe internal pressures, as well as African and Asian countries with larger populations, receive much lower aid per capita or as a percentage of GNI.

Aid allocation would ideally combine maximizing progress in achieving the internationally agreed development goals with the principles of effectiveness and equity in a transparent framework, taking into account the structural vulnerability of countries to external shocks. There is an urgent need for bilateral and multilateral agencies to review their allocations and reorient them more towards needs and vulnerability. Finally, it is essential that there continue to be regular assessments of allocations and strong recommendations to change allocations in order to ensure that their patterns are conducive to maximizing progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals.

Within countries, aid does not necessarily go to the poorest regions or the poorest groups. Many programme countries continue to indicate that donors tend to concentrate on regions or groups that are closest to the capital or to decent infrastructure, that are perceived as being the poorest or with which individual donors have long-standing ties. Donors indicate that some national development strategies do not focus on regions or groups with the most acute needs. As a result, within countries aid does not necessarily go where it will make the most difference to achieving the internationally agreed development goals.

2. Channels: multilateral aid share stagnant, rising earmarking must be reversed

Twenty-nine per cent of development cooperation is occurring via multilateral institutions. Development Assistance Committee donors have increased multilateral aid from 26 per cent to 30 per cent of disbursements (though some provide only 10 per cent multilaterally).

The United Nations experienced a 13 per cent real increase in contributions between 2006 and 2008, to \$22 billion. Sixty-two per cent of this came from Development Assistance Committee donors, with contributions from

non-Committee Governments rising from 7 per cent to 12 per cent and contributions from non-governmental sources rising from 13 per cent to 26 per cent. Almost 71 per cent of this funding was “non-core”, however, with varying degrees of restriction on its use. Non-core funds rose by more than 300 per cent, compared with only 5 per cent for core resources, between 2006 and 2008.

This is part of a wider trend of earmarking 40 per cent of aid and more than 50 per cent of multilateral funds for financing particular initiatives, sectors or themes by allocating them to “vertical” (sector or issue-specific) global funds or trust funds in multilateral institutions or by providing earmarked bilateral project or programme funding at the programme country level. This severely undermines freedom of programming by multilateral institutions and ownership by programme countries. Many funds are off-budget or fragmented, thereby increasing transaction costs and reducing the advantages of pooling funds via multilateral channels.

3. Sectoral allocation: sharp rise for infrastructure, smaller rise for governance and agriculture

The 2008 report highlighted a dramatic rise in the share of Development Assistance Committee aid going to social sectors and governance compared with during the 1980-2005 period, which was mirrored by a sharp fall in the share going to economic infrastructure and production (including agriculture). Between 2006 and 2008, Development Assistance Committee aid allocated to governance continued to rise, from 10 per cent to 12 per cent, while aid allocated to social sectors declined from 30 per cent to 26 per cent and aid allocated to infrastructure and production rose from 19 per cent to 26 per cent (with infrastructure accounting for almost all of that rise and agriculture the rest).

These trends are welcome in that they respond to the major infrastructure (transport, energy, water, and information and communications technology) and agricultural development needs contained in national development strategies but previously underfunded by providers, and which are crucial to attaining the income, poverty and hunger components of Millennium Development Goal 1. Southern providers have been particularly responsive, but more recently multilateral development banks and Development Assistance Committee donors have begun to refocus aid to these sectors. This move accelerated during 2009 and 2010, as donors channelled more funding to the private sector, infrastructure and agriculture in order to combat the impact of the global crises. Nevertheless, the share of total aid allocated to infrastructure is still below what it was in 2000.

The rise in aid allocated to governance is of uncertain benefit, however. While it potentially enhances the transparency and accountability of public financial management in programme countries, its long-term impact requires fuller analysis, especially because such aid is dominated by large technical assistance programmes.

Daunting needs for the Millennium Development Goals on education, health, water and nutrition.

The fall in the share of aid going to education and health is worrying. Equally concerning is the skewing of education aid away from Education for All to tertiary scholarships in donor countries, and of health aid away from overall support of health systems and maternal and child health to “quick wins” relating to combating major diseases. Major increases are required in aid allocated to basic education and to basic health systems in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, aid allocated to water and sanitation continues to be penalized; it is well below its share in 2000 and falls far short of the needs for achieving Millennium Development Goal 7. As already discussed, food security assistance needs to rise by \$12 billion a year by 2012 if the nutrition target of Millennium Development Goal 1 is to be reached.

Similarly, a far higher amount of aid needs to be explicitly directed to achieving the gender-related internationally agreed development goals (Millennium Development Goals 3 and 5). A clear gender focus should also be present in all other programmes to attain the wider internationally agreed development goals. The proportion of aid with this aim is still not effectively tracked (OECD tracks only 64 per cent of Development Assistance Committee ODA for its degree of gender focus). During the period 2000-2002, around 6 per cent of this aid was gender-specific and 6 per cent had an indirect gender impact. Thereafter, gender-specific aid fell; only in 2008 did it exceed 7 per cent of total aid for the first time.

4. Types and modalities of aid

Too little official development assistance reaches country programmes.

The proportion of bilateral ODA from Development Assistance Committee providers to developing countries for development purposes, as measured by country programmable aid, rose from 47 per cent in 2005 to 58 per cent in 2008. This reflects a 17 per cent fall in the share of debt relief, offset by a 1 per cent rise in emergency and food aid and a 5 per cent rise in costs for administra-

tion, scholarships and refugees in developed countries. Of ODA provided by multilateral institutions, more than 90 per cent goes to country programmes.

Budget support is more effective, efficient and sustainable but is growing too slowly.

Within overall (multilateral and Development Assistance Committee bilateral) country programmable aid, projects continue to represent more than 50 per cent and technical cooperation more than 30 per cent of such aid; budget and sector programmes have risen to 14 per cent. Studies continue to show that general and sector budget support is more effective, efficient and sustainable in producing development results, because it increases national ownership and accountability, disbursement speed and the distributional and operational efficiency of public expenditure. It also reduces the marginal transaction costs of scaling up, and has no greater risk of corruption or reduced budget revenue mobilization. This is why an increasing number of donors are turning to budget support, and several programme countries now receive more than 50 per cent of their aid in budget support.

E. Strengthening the aid quality and effectiveness framework

The quality and effectiveness of aid is a critical factor in achieving sustainable development and results with respect to the internationally agreed development goals. The present section looks at current processes for improving aid quality, as well as at progress on key indicators, both in Development Assistance Committee processes and in the additional priorities of key stakeholders.

1. From Paris to Accra: more behaviour change and multi-stakeholder representation needed

The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, in which 12 indicators were designated for monitoring, marked the first time that Development Assistance Committee donors and multilateral institutions had agreed collectively to improve aid quality by changing behaviour. The process of monitoring progress on these indicators since 2005 has focused attention on aid effectiveness at the country level and spurred the development of action plans by many OECD donors and multilateral agencies.

Progress in implementing the Paris Declaration has been disappointing, however. Overall, programme countries have made much more progress than providers in meeting targets, especially with respect to improving public financial management.

While some providers have taken fundamental steps to reshape their relationships with programme countries, the aid effectiveness agenda has not convincingly demonstrated an ability to change the behaviour of most donors. This is especially true in countries that receive lower levels of aid, which exacerbates aid allocation distortions by making aid less effective as well as insufficient, and in fragile States and low-income countries, meaning that aid is less effective precisely where its results need to be maximized.

The negotiation process for the Accra Agenda for Action engaged stakeholders more fully than did the negotiation process for the Paris Declaration. Building on a commitment in the Accra Agenda, the Development Assistance Committee Working Party on Aid Effectiveness has made enhanced efforts to involve other stakeholders since Accra.

2. Beyond the Paris Declaration: monitoring key aspects of the Accra Agenda for Action

The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda did not set clear enough indicators for several issues of key concern to programme country Governments, parliamentarians and civil society organizations (such as untying, capacity-building, predictability, accountability and transparency). They set no indicators for other issues (such as flexibility, conditionality, concessionality and cross-cutting themes such as gender, human rights and the environment). The present report has therefore drawn on other sources to monitor progress in these areas.

Tying of aid to purchases of goods and services in donor countries increases costs by 25 to 60 per cent, reducing value for money. In 2001, Development Assistance Committee donors agreed to untie aid (except food and technical assistance) to least developed countries. Many donors have gone further, increasing untied bilateral aid to 73 per cent in the period 2005-2007, up from 50 per cent during the period 1999-2001. Nevertheless, at least 30 per cent of technical cooperation and 50 per cent of food aid remain tied. In addition, informal distortions in procurement methods tend to favour suppliers from the provider country.

Progress in transforming technical assistance so that it genuinely builds capacity continues to lag. The Paris indicators do not track the impact of technical assistance on developing national capacity. Programme countries indicate that only around one quarter of such assistance builds capacity. There is an urgent need for tighter monitoring of the capacity-building results of technical assistance, for programme country leadership in the design and management of assistance and for the procurement of programme country expertise.

3. *Ensuring predictability while maintaining flexibility*

Predictable aid enables developing countries to plan long-term development strategies, medium-term expenditure frameworks and annual budgets.

Predictability has improved for some programme countries.

Aid continues to be much more volatile than budget revenue, and only 65 to 70 per cent of aid flows are disbursed by donors in the fiscal year for which they are scheduled. The Accra Agenda for Action did strongly urge donors to increase multi-year predictability by supplying multi-year indicative projections to programme countries. This has resulted in a sharp increase in multi-year projection reporting to OECD but a much smaller increase in reporting to programme countries (from only 40 per cent to 50 per cent). Only a little more than half of aid even has specific disbursement schedules included in agreements. A few advances have been made in increasing in-year predictability and raising multi-year predictability, however.

More flexibility is essential to fund changing priorities and counter exogenous shocks.

Flexibility is essential to respond to the changing priorities and mandates of Governments and to counter exogenous shocks, whether macroeconomic or related to natural disasters. Although donors have taken steps to increase flexibility in recent years by providing more budget support and improving IMF and United Nations mechanisms for countering shocks, this remains one of the poorest-performing aspects of aid, with more than 80 per cent of aid inflexible.

4. *Policy and procedural conditionality*

Policy conditionality remains a key cause of unpredictability and inflexibility.

A key cause of unpredictability and inflexibility is policy conditionality. Most Development Assistance Committee donors and multilateral organizations continue to disburse aid based on the implementation of negotiated policy measures, even though research has shown that policy-based conditionality is generally ineffective and unduly restrictive of policy space. Conditions are also too numerous and detailed, leading to long delays in disbursing aid to help counter shocks and exacerbating the negative effects of shocks on budgets and development.

There has been little progress in reducing conditions in recent years, because incentives within agencies continue to encourage this practice. Rather,

there has been a continuing shift towards conditions on “governance”, which are seen by programme countries as even more intrusive when they are not limited to public financial management and fiduciary issues. Some donors have reduced their conditions sharply, requiring only strong development strategies and public financial management and respect for international agreements on democracy and human rights. Nevertheless, they still endorse joint policy conditions with other donors for budget and sectoral support, which keeps conditions excessively numerous. Some programme countries have managed to increase budget support predictability by reducing the number of conditions and introducing high shares of guaranteed upfront annual disbursements and more transparency and flexibility in interpreting compliance in order to limit arbitrary suspension of disbursements.

The global financial crisis has increased conditionality by forcing many programme countries to borrow from IMF and multilateral development banks. While IMF showed greater flexibility in allowing programme countries to adopt fiscal stimulus measures in 2009, this is being reduced in 2010, and its streamlining of structural conditionality is not perceived by programme countries as being a major change. Programme countries also indicate that World Bank development policy lending conditions are still excessive in number, though they have become less intrusive by being based more on results than on policy measures.

The move to outcome- and results-based conditions is part of a wider global trend, pioneered by the European Union and many of its Member States, to replace detailed policy conditions with conditions based on results. This can provide programme countries with much greater policy space to choose their own policy measures for attaining national development goals. Other providers, however, have preselected eligible countries based on multiple policy indicators, defined “results” as applying to narrowly earmarked subsectoral indicators or monitored the results intrusively or inflexibly, relying principally on external actors such as auditors. This type of results-based conditionality, especially if it delays disbursements in order to provide “payment by results”, can represent a step backward.

Procedural conditionality also continues to delay disbursement, especially of project aid. Some providers (especially South-South cooperation providers) have a record of fast disbursements, and others have streamlined procedures and decentralized their execution to the country level in recent years. For the worst performers, however, financial, institutional and appraisal preconditions can delay the start of disbursements by 18 months, and disbursement and pro-

curement procedures by 21 months. The cumbersome procedures of some programme countries can also have the same effects, delaying compliance with donor conditions and project execution.

Overall, disbursement delays undermine the execution of key projects, waste resources that could be dedicated to achieving the internationally agreed development goals and lead to a false perception that programme countries are experiencing problems in absorbing aid. The Paris Declaration ignores many key delaying factors.

5. Increasing official development assistance is essential to keep debt sustainable

Between 2006 and 2008, in a reversal of earlier trends, the concessionality of ODA fell somewhat, whether measured by the proportion of grants or the grant element of loans or by total ODA. The international community has put in place frameworks to encourage prudent new lending and borrowing, which were made slightly more flexible in 2009, allowing more borrowing for countries with lower debt burdens and for high-return projects. Multilateral lenders also continue to provide large shares of grants to the most indebted countries, and IMF has reduced the cost of its lending to low-income countries during the crisis. There is not as yet a major risk of a new developing country debt crisis, but debt service is increasingly diverting programme country budgets away from development spending, and during the financial crisis many programme countries had to borrow expensively on domestic financial markets because external financing was delayed or unavailable. The crucial factor determining whether programme countries can finance their development while keeping debt sustainable will be the availability of adequate highly concessional ODA grants and loans, especially for low-income or vulnerable countries with foreign exchange earnings or budget revenues that are modest and volatile. Therefore, continuing commitments to increasing concessional ODA are essential to debt sustainability. Emphasis should be on grant financing and on ensuring an increasing role for debt relief.

6. Fragmentation and division of labour

One additional key concern has been the proliferation of providers and the fragmentation of aid into multiple projects, which has accelerated in recent years and could potentially rise further if new vertical climate financing funds are established.

Programme countries prefer a relatively diversified donor base, in order to enhance the stability and predictability of flows by diversifying risk, to provide more diverse perspectives on development issues and to increase funding for underfunded sectors, such as infrastructure and production. They prefer to have a reasonable number of “effective” and like-minded donors present across a range of sectors, and therefore regard fragmentation with much less concern than providers. Excessive fragmentation has many disadvantages, however, including conflicts over development priorities and conditionalities, increased earmarking and increased transaction costs per dollar of aid. It also undermines the capacity of programme countries by diverting staff to work as counterparts to or for providers, by resulting in aid being spent on technical assistance or implementation units to manage projects and by increasing the costs of aid coordination.

To offset proliferation and fragmentation, donors have tried to take the following actions:

- (a) Cut the number of developing countries regarded as priority partners and receiving significant amounts of aid. Between 2004 and 2010, 11 Development Assistance Committee donors reduced priority partners, whereas only 5 expanded them (generally because they were sharply increasing aid flows). This has accelerated the concentration of aid in “donor darling” countries, however, and reduced stability and predictability in “donor orphan” countries;
- (b) Reduce the number of donors in a country or particular sectors in a country through a division-of-labour exercise. Recent evaluations indicate that these have been successful in mapping donor presence and nominating lead donors for sectors, but less effective in assessing comparative advantage and reprogramming flows on that basis. Similarly, in terms of impact, while transaction costs may be declining, the quality of sector dialogue is not improving and the number of donors is not being rationalized enough, delaying improved aid effectiveness. The main reason for slow progress is that in many programme countries division of labour is driven by groups of donors (and opposed by others that want to stay in multiple sectors) rather than by a programme country analysis of which donors perform best in which sectors and which sectors need more donors.

F. Mutual accountability and transparency on development cooperation

Mutual accountability and transparency are two key factors with the potential to strengthen the impact of development cooperation on the internationally agreed development goals. Mutual accountability among providers of devel-

opment cooperation, programme country Governments and non-executive stakeholders in provider and programme countries has the potential to ensure that all development cooperation targets clear results that are aligned with the national development strategies of programme countries and with the internationally agreed development goals in the most cost-effective, high quality and sustainable ways. Transparency in fully disseminating information and documentation on intended and actual results, as well as other aspects of development cooperation, is a key underpinning of accountability, providing the information that all stakeholders need to analyse results.

The present section sets forth the results of an independent review of progress in mutual accountability and transparency at the national and international levels. This review, conducted in preparation for the Development Cooperation Forum, included comprehensive surveys of existing mechanisms and processes and their effects on behaviour change by programme countries and providers of development cooperation. These were based on best practices agreed by stakeholders at the November 2009 high-level symposium in Vienna. The analysis in the present section focuses on factors determining progress and the quality of mechanisms, as well as on further steps needed to accelerate progress, while underlining that precise steps need to be adapted to the circumstances of each country.

1. Improving accountability and transparency at the national level

Limited progress but strong foundations in a few countries.

Progress on mutual accountability is limited. In most developing countries, there is no shortage of forums for dialogue between provider and programme countries on national development programmes and their funding needs. The challenge, however, lies in making these into effective mutual accountability platforms. National mutual accountability mechanisms are those in which programme countries, as well as being held accountable for development results and their aid management, hold providers to account for their aid. Programme countries are already highly accountable to providers through multiple performance matrices that monitor their overall and sectoral progress and improvements in development strategies, public financial management, procurement and monitoring and evaluation. Providers are much less accountable to programme country Governments. The accountability of both providers and programme countries to other stakeholders (e.g., parliaments, audit offices and civil society), especially in programme countries, is very

limited, as is the accountability of civil society organizations and foundations to programme countries.

Programme country national aid policies that include targets for individual providers and regular annual reviews of progress in meeting such targets are essential to accelerating progress on mutual accountability. The international community should prioritize supporting the efforts of recipients to develop such strategies and to conduct annual independent or programme country-led analyses of provider performance. This process should reach at least 30 countries by the end of 2011, in order to show much faster progress towards the Paris Declaration target of all Paris signatories having effective mutual accountability mechanisms by the end of 2010. Key providers should also commit to agreeing on and implementing national-level targets that are consistent with their global undertakings.

Need for annual global assessments of progress and the filling of information gaps.

There is a strong need for annual global assessments of progress on mutual accountability at the national level, in order to learn lessons and create pressure for the acceleration of behaviour change by both programme countries and providers. The Development Cooperation Forum could conduct these assessments, which could be discussed at high-level and technical-level meetings, to identify how the international community can accelerate progress. There are also many information gaps with respect to what constitutes best practice on mutual accountability at the national level. This makes it urgent to establish a focal point at the international level to facilitate the sharing of best practice, especially among programme countries.

Improving participation by non-executive stakeholders is a top priority.

The international community should define mutual accountability as meaning that parliaments and other domestic stakeholders hold not only their own executive Government but also development cooperation providers responsible for aid and its results. Parliaments, decentralized Government agencies and civil society organizations should routinely be included in the governance of mutual accountability forums and produce independent analytical inputs, which should be given sufficient space for full discussion at top-level national mutual accountability meetings.

Policies, targets and mutual accountability processes must focus on the gender impact of aid.

Despite the prominence of gender in the internationally agreed development goals, aid effectiveness at the national level has not sufficiently focused on gender. To give a clear lead, the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul in 2011 should have as a top priority the setting of gender-related targets.

Sub-Saharan African and fragile countries face particularly strong challenges.

Most sub-Saharan African and fragile countries are considerably less advanced with respect to national mutual accountability than other groups, exacerbating the tendency of less effective aid to be concentrated in these countries. It is urgent that the international community establish strong programmes to build capacity and strengthen institutions for aid management and mutual accountability processes for these countries. Fragile States should be treated on the same basis as other countries by requiring increased mutual accountability and improved performance by programme countries and providers in such countries.

Transparency at the national level is needed to assist accountability.

Transparency at the national level with respect to aid information is essential in order to improve accountability at the national level. It must be sharply improved, with a focus on steps that assist accountability, including the following: ensuring that national aid information systems track aid effectiveness targets; making these systems more accessible to non-State actors; making a wider range of information (especially on disbursements, aid forecasts, progress on achieving internationally agreed development goals and gender issues) available so that stakeholders can use it for accountability purposes; encouraging a wider range of providers to submit data at the national level, especially on results and progress towards internationally agreed development goals; and assisting non-executive stakeholders (especially parliaments) to build capacity to analyse such information.

Like-minded donors need to be even more proactive in leading mutual accountability at the national level.

Global-level policy changes, individual provider targets and peer pressure have been the key factors promoting behaviour change by providers of development cooperation. Like-minded donor leadership has been essential to give programme countries the space to set targets for individual providers. Therefore, to ensure balanced progress among providers, peer pressure needs to be exerted strongly for targets at the national level and policy changes at the global

level, especially in countries where fewer providers are strongly committed to mutual accountability. Like-minded donors should assess national aid effectiveness progress not just by their own performance but also by the progress of mutual accountability among members of the wider donor group.

Non-Development Assistance Committee providers should be strongly encouraged to participate in national mutual accountability processes.

Non-Development Assistance Committee providers (Governments, global funds, non-governmental organizations and private foundations) should be encouraged to participate in mutual accountability at the national level. For this to be achieved, these providers will need to facilitate their own processes for developing their own targets for improving quality that reflect the comparative advantages of their development cooperation clearly. Such targets may need to be discussed in international forums such as the United Nations.

More analysis is needed of accountability in provider countries and institutions.

This Development Cooperation Forum cycle has not analysed accountability on aid in provider countries and institutions. It could be a priority aim of the next Forum cycle to identify best practices in the accountability of aid providers, working closely with organizations and coalitions representing non-executive stakeholders.

Much stronger connections are needed between international and national processes.

Much more effort is needed to connect mutual accountability and transparency processes at both the international and national levels. Useful findings from international mechanisms on provider or programme country comparative performance should be systematically presented to national mutual accountability forums, helping to set benchmarks for further progress and to suggest how they can be achieved.

2. Improving international transparency

Information provided by international transparency initiatives needs to be broader ...

Information provided in the context of international transparency initiatives should include projected disbursements, current indications and pledges and funding gaps for programmes and projects. It should clearly distinguish off-

budget and off-plan aid, in order to make such information useful for planning and budgeting by programme countries and providers. Such information should also include compliance with national and international aid effectiveness targets, results in achieving internationally agreed development goals and gender orientation, in order to allow much closer tracking of whether results are being achieved. In addition, it should include information on non-Development Assistance Committee Governments, civil society organizations and foundations, in order to make coverage more comprehensive, and it should further include comprehensive documentation, including loan and grant agreements, conditions, procurement documents and provider country strategies, in order to facilitate more in-depth analysis by stakeholders.

... more timely and aligned, and from wider sources ...

Information also needs to be more timely and aligned, and from a wider variety of sources. This implies the following: real-time information, with providers updating disbursement transactions immediately so that it is possible to track aid from provider to ultimate beneficiary; inputs from programme country Governments and stakeholders to ensure that provider inputs are accurate and aligned with programme country budget, plan and monitoring and evaluation cycles and systems; and, in particular, input from grass-roots stakeholders on tracking aid spending and results.

... and more accessible and systematically disseminated.

It is also essential to widen dissemination of information to a much broader range of stakeholders, to disseminate documentation that assists inexperienced users in accessing key elements essential for transparency at the national level, and to monitor any problems that stakeholders (especially programme countries) are having accessing or interpreting information.

The International Aid Transparency Initiative needs to be accelerated and widened.

Stakeholders need capacity to use the information to enforce accountability.

The top priority is to ensure that stakeholders, especially in programme countries, have the capacity to use the information for accountability purposes. This means producing an overall guide to where to find and how to access key information needed for transparency and accountability. Transparency and data access and analysis issues should also be included prominently in

capacity-building programmes for programme country Governments and non-executive stakeholders.

The International Aid Transparency Initiative aims at addressing many of the problems discussed above, but its progress has been slow and it needs to cover a greater proportion of global development cooperation flows.

3. *Improving international mutual accountability*

International mutual accountability for development and humanitarian aid should be combined.

A complex range of mechanisms exists at the international level to assure accountability on development cooperation. They include official processes through which programme countries and providers assess one another (mostly based on the Paris Declaration survey) and official “peer review” processes. There are also many independently managed assessments that have varying degrees of access to and impact on official discussions. Most of the mechanisms are globally based, but some have a specific regional focus, mainly on Africa.

There are entirely separate mechanisms for mutual accountability on development and humanitarian aid, as well as an additional parallel system for assessing donor engagement in fragile States. The international community should work to end the separation of mutual accountability mechanisms for development and humanitarian aid and for different categories of countries. This could be done by including humanitarian aid performance targets in the outcomes of the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and in national mutual accountability mechanisms, and by integrating the process of assessing fragile States with that of overall discussions on aid effectiveness.

International mutual accountability needs to improve its sources and design, in order to be more relevant.

There is a strong need to strengthen inputs from programme country Governments and non-executive stakeholders to international mutual accountability mechanisms. This would make the content of international mutual accountability more relevant to national-level concerns by including indicators relating to transparency and multi-year predictability at the programme country level, as well as indicators on the degree to which providers are participating in mutual accountability and transparency mechanisms at the national level. It would also include indicators of key concern to these stakeholders, such as conditionality, capacity-building, flexibility, anti-corruption measures and gender focus.

It also needs to improve coverage, mutuality, timeliness, cooperation and country-level utility.

Additionally, the coverage of international mutual accountability mechanisms needs to be improved by further enhancing efforts to engage non-Development Assistance Committee providers, civil society organizations and foundations. Such mechanisms should assess the performance of individual providers at the individual programme country level. Their assessments should ideally be updated annually, preferably building on national-level annual assessments as much as possible in order to avoid a duplication of efforts. Greater cooperation should be pursued among international mutual accountability mechanisms by ensuring that official mechanisms and processes (such as communities of practice and capacity development programmes) use independent analysis to the maximum degree. International mechanisms should also track indicators that are relevant to national-level mutual accountability targets and goals.

It must enhance the impact on programme country and provider behaviour.

All of these steps should help international mutual accountability to enhance its impact on the behaviour of provider and programme countries, but additional steps are needed to ensure accelerated progress. These would include the following: assessing the behaviour of individual providers in the Paris Declaration survey reports; ensuring that independent assessments are presented to the Development Cooperation Forum and the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness; making sure that programme countries, along with non-executive stakeholders, continue to enhance their role in setting the agenda and defining norms and targets in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and the Development Cooperation Forum; and surveying potential users of international mutual accountability mechanisms on their key needs in order to make international mechanisms more effective in supporting mutual accountability processes at the national level. The development of peer review mechanisms engaging developing countries should also be supported within international mutual accountability mechanisms, including the Development Cooperation Forum.

Annual progress assessments and more funding for priority mechanisms are needed.

It is important that the Development Cooperation Forum continue to assess progress on international mutual accountability and transparency, though the frequency of these assessments should ideally be made annual in order to track progress more closely. The assessments should also be extended to pre-

senting publicly the progress of individual mechanisms in implementing the above recommendations. Based on these assessments, the international community should prioritize for additional funding four or five key mechanisms that most closely fulfil the criteria described above (especially systematic assessment of individual providers by programme countries and independent sources, and strong non-executive stakeholder voices) in order to overcome their shortcomings and increase their impact on behaviour change at the international and national levels.

G. South-South and triangular development cooperation

South-South and triangular development cooperation continues to grow in importance, rising from 8 per cent to 10 per cent of total development cooperation between 2006 and 2008. In many other respects, however, its characteristics and comparative advantages have remained the same as those reported to the Development Cooperation Forum in 2008. The High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, held in Nairobi from 1 to 3 December 2009, emphasized that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but is complementary to North-South cooperation and that South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development.

1. Scale and scope of South-South development cooperation¹³⁰

South-South development cooperation rose sharply to \$16.2 billion in 2008 ...

Continued rapid economic development in a number of developing countries, their more rapid recovery from global economic crisis and a growing awareness of their role in the global economy led to a 63 per cent rise in South-South development cooperation between 2006 and 2008, owing mainly to sharp increases in flows from China and Saudi Arabia. Of this total, around 25 per cent was provided through multilateral organizations.

... and is provided mostly as project aid and technical assistance, but with a growing humanitarian focus.

Most South-South development cooperation (around 90 per cent) continues to come in the form of project finance and technical assistance, with only around 10 per cent in balance-of-payment or budget support. Some contributors are

¹³⁰ In order to distinguish it from other South-South flows, which are also growing rapidly, development cooperation discussed in the present report covers only flows that match the definition of official development assistance used by the Development Assistance Committee.

planning to move to more programme-based approaches in future. In addition, there is an increasing focus on humanitarian assistance, which exceeded \$1 billion in 2008, especially by Arab providers (with Saudi Arabia being the third largest global provider of humanitarian assistance).

Many contributors to South-South cooperation have programmes that are co-financed by triangular cooperation, whereby Development Assistance Committee donors finance projects executed by Southern institutions. The focus of triangular development cooperation is primarily technical cooperation, because Southern institutions are seen as having expertise relevant to meeting the needs of developing countries. Among 23 Development Assistance Committee donors, 16 have participated in triangular cooperation projects. Multilateral development banks, United Nations organizations and Southern providers of development cooperation are also increasingly using this modality. There is a need for more information to quantify the amounts and to conduct a detailed analysis of the scope, quality and impact of triangular development cooperation.

Contributors to South-South development cooperation continue to allocate most assistance to countries with which they have close political, trade and investment ties. This includes a strong concentration in nearby regions, reflecting cultural and language links, a better understanding of needs, trade and investment opportunities and lower administrative costs. The concentration also allows Southern contributors to focus strongly on regional projects, which are a priority of many programme countries. Such concentration has accelerated since 2006, with new initiatives such as the creation of an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) infrastructure development fund and the Banco del Sur. There has also been an expansion of cooperation among regions, especially with Africa by Brazil, China and India and with Asia by Saudi Arabia.

2. Salient features of South-South development cooperation

Concessional lending for South-South cooperation carries less risk of making debt unsustainable.

Around two thirds of Southern assistance is provided as loans and approximately one third as grants. For most low-income countries, these loans carry little risk of making debt unsustainable, because they are concessional, in line with programme country policies. There have been some notable exceptions, however, for large infrastructure or minerals projects, raising concerns about the sustainability of debt for a few countries.

Programme countries see South-South cooperation as aligned with their priorities in a relatively balanced way, providing considerable funding for infrastructure and productive and social sectors (see paras. 119 to 121 below). Some contributors pass almost all aid through the budget of the programme country, while others channel virtually all aid in an extrabudgetary manner.

South-South development cooperation continues to balance flexibility and predictability.

Contributors to South-South cooperation are also seen as being responsive to changing priorities in programme countries and to natural disasters, even though they do not have formal contingency allowances or facilities specifically designed to combat exogenous shocks.

South-South development cooperation is seen as relatively predictable, because around three quarters of it is disbursed within the scheduled financial year, a process which facilitates fiscal planning. Many projects are also executed more rapidly than those of Development Assistance Committee providers, although some contributors have been less predictable than others and some projects have run into execution delays.

Policy conditionality is largely absent, and procedures are more flexible.

One reason for the predictability of South-South cooperation is that policy conditionalities are largely absent, making it more attractive to programme countries. A second reason for predictability is that such cooperation is relatively unencumbered by procedural and administrative delays. This is because most South-South cooperation providers use their own relatively uncomplicated financial management and procurement procedures and a few use national financial management procedures.

South-South development cooperation is mostly tied to procurement of the goods and services from the provider country, especially for technical cooperation and emergency aid. This does not necessarily mean it is of a high cost or poor standard, because Southern goods are often of good value and cost-effective. Some contributors, in particular Arab contributors, give preference to bidders from programme countries.

3. Coordination and interaction at the country level

South-South development cooperation is subject to relatively little evaluation beyond scrutiny of the timeliness and completion of projects. This reduces missions and studies, lowering transaction costs for the Governments of pro-

gramme countries, but it also means that there will be a reduced longer-term perspective on the sustainability and development impact of the project. This cooperation also includes much less evaluation with respect to the environmental and social impact, particularly in the case of infrastructure projects.

South-South cooperation providers could enrich national development cooperation dialogues.

Most South-South development cooperation providers do not participate in harmonization initiatives with other providers, except through some regional and country-led forums. An interesting exception is the high degree of procedural harmonization among Arab contributors through the Arab Coordination Group, whose members usually co-finance projects. Similarly, most South-South providers are not involved in national dialogues or accountability processes led by programme countries.

Greater involvement on the part of South-South providers could vastly enrich the dialogue in-country by suggesting new ways to assess the quality and impact of development cooperation, including speed of delivery, value for money, appropriate technology transfer and sustainable capacity development. It would also allow programme countries to have a better overview of development cooperation, as has been seen when they have participated in dialogues among South-East Asian programme countries, and should therefore be encouraged.

4. Key sectors: scope for high impact in infrastructure, medicine and agriculture

Infrastructure development accounts for a large share of South-South cooperation. In Africa, it is estimated that non-OECD countries made \$2.6 billion of infrastructure commitments annually between 2001 and 2006, and that this financing continued to grow in 2007 and 2008. China, India and the Arab States have been the major Southern contributors to Africa's infrastructure. There are significant complementarities between non-OECD and OECD providers, with non-OECD providers assuming an important role in roads, water supply, power systems, electrification and telecommunications. Analysis is being undertaken to identify the comparative advantages of South-South infrastructure cooperation more clearly.

South-South medical cooperation has expanded rapidly in recent years. Bilateral cooperation focuses on health delivery (human resources development, the building of health systems and the provision of medical facilities and infrastructure). Scientific and technological collaboration and joint research on

health problems are increasing, albeit mainly among technologically advanced Southern providers. Various collaboration networks exist to facilitate South-South cooperation, with a strong focus on problems specific to developing countries, such as malaria and other tropical infectious diseases. The private sector has also played a catalytic role in developing, marketing and distributing lower-cost health inputs. Nevertheless, the level of South-South cooperation remains low, owing to a lack of supporting public sector resources and the predominance of multinational corporations in global procurement. Analysis is continuing to identify prospects for public resources and more open procurement in order to expand the provision of lower-cost health inputs to low-income countries.

Regarding agriculture, South-South cooperation has a long history of offering policy experiences and appropriate technologies to boost agricultural productivity (given similar soil and climatic and ecological conditions) and has recently also focused on creating new investment and market opportunities for the output of programme countries. China and India have both recently announced large expansions of agricultural cooperation. Technical cooperation, notably technology transfer and local capacity-building, remain the main forms of collaboration, with the Arab States, Brazil, China, India and South Africa as primary providers, mostly in partnership with Africa. Nevertheless, South-South cooperation in agriculture can only maximize development impact if it tackles broader issues such as market access to developed countries and trade finance and facilitation.

V. Policy messages and recommendations

Most areas of the global partnership for development are not living up to expectations and, without progress across the board, development cooperation will have a limited impact. Measures need to be taken to reduce volatility and increase the development impact of private flows (FDI and remittances), complete a strong pro-poor Doha trade round, broaden debt relief, establish a fair and transparent debt workout procedure, develop pro-development global financial regulations and further enhance the voice and participation of developing countries in the international financial architecture.

There has been relatively little progress on policy coherence for development. More impact analysis and systematic political engagement by OECD countries, publication of annual reports by providers of development cooperation on their progress on Millennium Development Goal 8 and development by programme countries of “beyond aid” partnership policies that cover all Mil-

lennium Development Goal 8 aspects could help provider countries to pursue policies that will make their development cooperation more effective. There is also an urgent need to develop norms and best practices for improving the quantity and quality of aid intended to promote other types of financing for development (e.g., FDI, trade, domestic savings and tax revenue).

Overall development cooperation exceeded \$170 billion in 2009. In spite of a large rise in real terms, the share of OECD Governments is declining, while South-South cooperation and private philanthropy have risen sharply. There is a need for further monitoring and analysis of flows from Southern foundations, as well as decentralized cooperation. All OECD providers need to set ambitious targets for 2015 and put in place five-year plans for scaling up disbursements, which will be most effectively achieved by increasing their programme-based aid flows, including budget support. The Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness will be a good opportunity to indicate these commitments.

The multiple global crises (food, oil and financial) during the period 2006-2010 have increased the financing needs of programme countries dramatically and resulted in the enhanced application of innovative mechanisms to fulfil financing needs. Such mechanisms have produced relatively little additionality of funding, and some cuts in future OECD aid budgets, however. Greater efforts will be needed to scale up development cooperation using innovative financing mechanisms, thereby reversing the negative impact of the crises on progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals.

The 2009 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen resulted in major commitments of climate finance. These fall well short of the public sector finance needed for adaptation and mitigation, which would equal 50 to 80 per cent of ODA flows, and there is major concern about diversion of funding, especially away from reaching the internationally agreed development goals in Africa. Provider Governments should pledge that all climate financing will be additional to the ODA amounts needed to reach the internationally agreed development goals, make maximum use of innovative financing (taxes and special drawing rights) and ensure that climate finance is spent in pro-poor ways that maximize its impact on progress towards the internationally agreed development goals.

Allocation of development cooperation among developing country groups, regions, countries and regions within countries continues to be suboptimal for making progress on the internationally agreed development goals. It is vital to increase the proportion of aid going to those countries with the greatest needs, financing gaps and structural vulnerabilities to external shocks (i.e., the least

developed countries, landlocked countries and fragile States, especially in Africa). To achieve this, bilateral and multilateral agencies need to review their allocation formulas, set concrete annual targets and make plans to scale up aid to such countries.

Allocation in terms of channels, sectors and types is also suboptimal. Multilateral institutions need to receive greater shares, but with less earmarking for specific sectors or initiatives. Gender, food security, education, health, water and sanitation all need sharp increases. Infrastructure and wider aid for trade need to continue their recent rises in line with national development strategies. More Development Assistance Committee ODA needs to reach country programmes, and future donor progress should be assessed based on this. General and sector budget support needs to rise much more sharply in order to increase ownership, accountability and efficiency.

Progress on Paris Declaration targets for aid effectiveness (especially by providers) needs to accelerate dramatically, especially in fragile States. The Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 needs to be led much more by programme countries and non-executive stakeholders. It also needs to lead to improvements in the way progress is measured (on untying, capacity-building, predictability and accountability) and to broaden targets to include additional key concerns of stakeholders (use of programme country evaluation systems, flexibility to combat exogenous shocks, reducing policy and procedural conditionality, maintaining concessionality levels, having a more nuanced approach to the division of labour among providers of development cooperation, targeting aid to gender, human rights and protecting the environment, and combating corruption).

Recent attacks on global development cooperation have shown the need to focus, through a coordinated campaign, on publicizing the major internationally agreed development goals and the sustainable development results being produced by development cooperation, as well as its low levels of corruption compared with other sectors. The High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010 should support such a campaign by enhancing the capacity of United Nations organizations for real-time monitoring and dissemination of results in achieving the internationally agreed development goals and improving aid effectiveness. It is important to focus on maximizing results, building on best practices relating to budget support that give programme countries greater policy space and avoiding the preselection of countries based on conditionality, earmarking, intrusive or inflexible monitoring and disbursement delays.

Mutual accountability and transparency are two key ways to strengthen results in achieving the internationally agreed development goals. Providers need to commit to individual targets to improve aid quality in each programme country, giving priority to country groups such as sub-Saharan Africa and fragile States that are lagging behind on progress towards the internationally agreed development goals. Programme countries need to continue their improvements in development strategies, public financial management, procurement and evaluation. Mutual accountability processes need to be led by programme country Governments, with the engagement of parliaments and civil society organizations, and to focus more on the gender impact of aid. Providers need to be proactive in promoting progress at the national level, and non-Development Assistance Committee providers should be encouraged to contribute their own ideas for targets to improve aid quality.

The international community should set high standards for international mechanisms to ensure mutual accountability between providers and recipients of development cooperation on commitments made. It should assess progress annually, create a focal point to share best practices and lessons learned and fully fund the most useful international mechanisms. Transparency mechanisms need to broaden information on aid and its sources, make such information more timely and aligned with programme country systems, ensure that it is systematically disseminated and build stakeholder capacity to use such information to enforce accountability. Official global mutual accountability mechanisms should be rationalized, input by programme country Governments and non-executive stakeholders increased, and coverage, mutuality, timeliness and country-level relevance improved, in order to enhance the impact on the behaviour of programme countries and the providers of development cooperation.

South-South cooperation could increase its use of budget and programme support to enhance leadership by beneficiary countries, and it could use more detailed evaluation to demonstrate results. The international development cooperation system needs to capitalize fully on the comparative advantages of South-South development cooperation in providing appropriate and cost-effective medical and agricultural technology and infrastructure expertise. South-South cooperation providers could vastly enrich national development cooperation dialogues by suggesting ways to assess quality and impact (including aspects such as speed of delivery, value for money, technology transfer and capacity development).

Finally, the Development Cooperation Forum should strengthen its work on policy coherence by identifying best practices for countries to develop poli-

cies that go “beyond aid” to cover all aspects of Millennium Development Goal 8, and for aid to promote other types of financing for development. The Forum should continue to conduct regular assessments of trends in development cooperation (especially allocation and gender issues) and of progress on mutual accountability and transparency. The Forum should also increase its monitoring and analysis of decentralized cooperation and Northern and Southern foundations, and continue to strengthen the multi-stakeholder nature of its consultations, especially at the Forum itself.

Ministerial Declaration*

Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in Regard to Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

“We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2010 of the Economic and Social Council, held in New York from 28 June to 2 July 2010, whose annual ministerial review had as its theme ‘Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women’,

“Having met three months before the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, to be held from 20 to 22 September 2010, which will focus on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015,

“Have adopted the following declaration:

“1. We reaffirm that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action¹³¹ and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,¹³² the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹³³ by States parties, our

¹³¹ Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹³² General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

¹³³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

* See the document A/65/3

commitments under the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,¹³⁴ the outcomes of other relevant United Nations summits and conferences, and relevant resolutions, is part of an interconnected framework that underpins the work undertaken to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and produces essential contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.¹³⁵

“2. We reaffirm that gender equality, the empowerment of women, women’s full enjoyment of human rights and the eradication of poverty are essential to economic and social development, including the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. We also reaffirm the vital role of women as agents of development.

“3. We emphasize the commitment made by the Economic and Social Council to contribute to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

“4. We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to be known as UN Women, and pledge our full support to its operationalization, which will strengthen the ability of the United Nations to support the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide.

“5. We express deep concern at the negative impact of the ongoing global crises, such as the financial and economic crisis, the food crisis and continuing food insecurity, and the energy crisis, as well as the challenges presented by natural disasters and climate change to the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and the Millennium Development Goals. We call for enhanced cooperation and concerted action to address these crises and challenges. We recognize that women are disproportionately affected by many of these crises and challenges, but we also recognize that women have a key leadership role to play, including in decision-making, when responding to them.

“6. We commit ourselves to taking the necessary steps to achieve all the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, by 2015.

¹³⁴ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

¹³⁵ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

“7. While noting that, in the past decade, some progress has been achieved in realizing the Millennium Development Goals, we express concern at the unevenness of the progress towards achieving the goals and targets both regionally and thematically, in particular Goal 3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women, Goal 5 on improving maternal health, including achieving universal access to reproductive health, and Goal 6 on combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, as well as the objectives encompassed within the gender equality-related dimensions of all the other Millennium Development Goals. We stress that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth and that achieving Goal 3 is essential to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals.

“8. We call for integrated, comprehensive, multisectoral and gender-responsive approaches to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, which are based on strong coordination and cooperation across all sectors. We commit ourselves to ensuring that national development plans, poverty eradication strategies, strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other macrolevel planning instruments and processes systematically contribute to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. We underline the critical role of the global partnership for development in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. We therefore call upon all countries to strengthen efforts in this regard.

“9. We recognize that action on a number of cross-cutting issues will positively enhance the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals and commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals. Towards this end, we:

“(a) Stress the need for efforts to tackle discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes which perpetuate discrimination against women and stereotypical roles of men and women, and recognize the important role of the media and education in addressing negative portrayals of women and girls;

“(b) Emphasize the need for a holistic approach to ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls across all sectors, including through initiatives designed to prevent and combat gender-based violence, to encourage and support efforts by men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, especially gender-based violence, and to increase awareness of their responsibility in respect of ending the cycle of violence;

“(c) Also emphasize the need for effective measures at all levels to ensure the full empowerment of women in all areas, including equal participation of women and men at all levels and in decision-making processes in all areas;

“(d) Further emphasize the critical role of men and boys, and call for measures aimed at fostering their greater involvement in efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women;

“(e) Emphasize the need to strengthen the full integration of women into the formal economy, in particular into economic decision-making, and to improve our ability to measure, in quantitative and qualitative terms, unremunerated and informal work that is not reflected in national accounts in order to more accurately assess and reflect its value in such accounts as well as in economic and fiscal policies, so that women’s time can be valued and women and men can enjoy equal treatment, pay and economic power, including through the sharing of paid and unpaid work;

“(f) Also emphasize the need for measures to ensure that women and girls with disabilities are not subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination or excluded from participation in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, and in this regard further emphasize the need to ensure their equal access to education at all levels, including technical and vocational training, and adequate rehabilitation programmes, health care and services and employment opportunities, to protect and promote all their human rights and to eliminate existing inequalities between women and men with disabilities;

“(g) Further emphasize the crucial role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in respect of enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating poverty, and we stress the need for concerted action at all levels to support rural women’s economic empowerment by, inter alia, ensuring women’s equal access to productive resources, financing, technologies, training and markets and facilitating rural women’s participation in planning and decision-making, so that they can realize their full potential.

“10. Recognizing that implementation gaps in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women persist, we stress the importance of implementing the following strategies across all areas so as to close those gaps:

“(a) Strengthen the political commitment and leadership of all stakeholders, at all levels and across all sectors, in support of gender equality, the empowerment of women, women’s full enjoyment of human rights and the eradication of poverty;

“(b) Implement comprehensive national policies and action plans on gender equality and the empowerment of women, including for the achievement of the internationally agreed goals and commitments, which include measurable goals, targets and timetables; establish monitoring and accountability mechanisms; and assess the costs of and provide necessary funding for implementation;

“(c) Promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres to ensure that the needs and priorities of women and girls, and men and boys, are taken into account;

“(d) Strengthen the capacity of national mechanisms for gender equality and the empowerment of women and, where they exist, national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, so as to enable them to play a stronger role across all sectors;

“(e) Enact and strengthen comprehensive legal frameworks that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and prohibit discrimination against women and girls, including, as appropriate, by reviewing existing legal frameworks, and ensure the full and effective enforcement and monitoring of those comprehensive frameworks, as well as take appropriate measures to ensure equal access to justice;

“(f) Design and implement programmes, including educational and awareness-raising programmes, that promote the active involvement of men and boys in eliminating gender stereotypes as well as fostering respectful relationships with women and girls; encourage men and boys to become agents of change in promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women across the life cycle; and combat stereotypic attitudes concerning women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the family and society at large;

“(g) Intensify national efforts, including with the support of the international community, to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls; develop measures that encourage and support the efforts of men and boys to take an active role in this regard, as part of strategies of zero tolerance for violence against women and girls; address the consequences of violence against women and girls, including by providing adequate short- and long-term support for victims of violence; and enhance judicial capacity in this regard;

“(h) Develop and implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment, including by enhanc-

ing their access to full and productive employment and decent work and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and at supporting women's technical, managerial and entrepreneurial capacities and initiatives, with a view to ensuring sustainable and adequate income-generation and empowering women as equal partners with men in these domains;

“(i) Promote and protect women's equal access to adequate housing, property and land, including rights to inheritance, and enable them to secure access to credit, through appropriate constitutional, legislative and administrative measures;

“(j) Facilitate access by women to affordable microfinance, in particular microcredit, which can contribute to poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of women;

“(k) Ensure women's access to social protection schemes; provide adequate social safety nets; and strengthen State- and community-based support systems as an integral part of social policy, in order to enable women and girls, particularly those living in poverty, to withstand adverse economic environments and so as to contribute to their well-being;

“(l) Develop and strengthen policies, strategies and programmes designed to address the inequality affecting women and girls in respect of access to and achievement of education at all levels and commit to eradicating illiteracy, to ensuring, by 2015, access to and completion of free and compulsory quality primary education and, in this regard, to reaffirming the Dakar Framework for Action¹³⁶ on education for all;

“(m) Ensure access of women and girls to formal and non-formal education and vocational training, including lifelong learning and retraining and adult and long-distance education, including in information and communications technology and entrepreneurial skills, in order to promote the empowerment of women, inter alia, by enhancing and facilitating women's access to full and productive employment and decent work;

“(n) Improve access to health systems for women and girls, including through gender-sensitive national strategies and public-health policies and programmes that are comprehensive, affordable and better geared to meeting their needs and that encourage women's active participation in their design and implementation. In this regard, we recognize the increasing incidence of

¹³⁶ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

non-communicable diseases and their impact on women, and stress the need for multisectoral responses and the integration of cost-effective interventions aimed at combating these diseases;

“(o) Reaffirm that gender equality and the empowerment of women cannot be achieved without promoting and protecting the right of women to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health. We reiterate our commitments in this regard, including the commitments relating to sexual and reproductive health, and the promotion and protection of all human rights in this context. We emphasize the need for the provision of universal access to reproductive health, including by integrating family planning, sexual health and health-care services into national strategies and programmes;

“(p) Strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from HIV infection, in view of the feminization of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and ensure that HIV/AIDS programmes address the specific vulnerabilities and needs of women and girls, taking into account local circumstances. We also emphasize that gender inequality is one of the major drivers of the HIV/AIDS epidemic;

“(q) Increase, where necessary, the resources, both human and financial, required to support the implementation of gender-sensitive policies and programmes and for improved tracking and monitoring of expenditures allocated for the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming, including by undertaking gender-responsive budget planning, allocation and revenue raising, and encourage the integration of gender perspectives in aid modalities and efforts to enhance aid delivery mechanisms;

“(r) Improve and systematize the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data; enhance capacity development in this regard; and develop gender-sensitive indicators to support legislative developments, policymaking and national systems for monitoring and reporting on progress and impacts;

“(s) Pursue and strengthen a broad range of partnerships at the national and international levels in a sustainable manner, including among members of the international community, Governments, civil society, including women's organizations, and the private sector, and the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, in particular in supporting the efforts of national authorities to effectively plan and implement their commitments towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.

“11. We underline our commitment to strengthening national efforts, including with the support of international cooperation, aimed at addressing the rights and needs of women and girls affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts, other complex humanitarian emergencies, trafficking in persons and terrorism, within the context of actions geared to the realization of the internationally agreed goals and commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the Millennium Development Goals. We also underline the need to take concerted actions in conformity with international law to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the rights of women and girls living under foreign occupation, so as to ensure the achievement of the above-mentioned goals and commitments.

“12. We urge developed countries that have not yet done so, in accordance with their commitments, to make concrete efforts towards meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries and the target of 0.15-0.20 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and to help them, inter alia, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

“13. We request the Economic and Social Council to take appropriate action to promote and ensure effective and systematic gender mainstreaming in all areas of its work, including in its subsidiary bodies.

“14. We reaffirm the importance of the equal participation of women and men at all levels in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding processes, and commit ourselves to intensifying our efforts in this regard. We note the upcoming tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We urge the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in pursuance of their relationship as established in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,¹³⁷ to explore ways of strengthening the contribution of women towards this end.

“15. We recognize the important role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of Member States to implement their commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women, and also recognize the importance of strengthened coordination, coherence, efficiency and accountability within the United Nations system as well as enhanced partnerships with rel-

¹³⁷ “ See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

evant stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, foundations and other entities of civil society. In this regard, we take note of the contributions and opportunities offered by recent ongoing initiatives, such as the Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" and, inter alia, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women; the Secretary-General's Network of Men Leaders; the Global Jobs Pact, adopted on 19 June 2009 by the International Labour Conference at its ninety-eighth session; and the Women's Empowerment Principles: Equality Means Business, which offer guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, the marketplace and the community. We encourage the Secretary-General to take a more comprehensive approach in addressing all twelve critical areas identified in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

"16. We encourage United Nations country teams to support, through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, national efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals and commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

"17. We call upon the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, to take into account in its deliberations the recommendations contained in the present declaration and to ensure that gender perspectives are fully integrated into the outcome of the Meeting."

This publication presents the key debates that took place during the 2010 High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council, at which ECOSOC organized its second biennial Development Cooperation Forum. The discussions also focused on the theme of the 2010 Annual Ministerial Review, “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women”.

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