

**The Journey From Beijing:
The Long, Winding and Bumpy Road
Toward Equality, Development
and Peace**

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**The United Nations Fourth World
Conference on Women, Beijing China,
1995**

**“Action for Equality, Development and
Peace”**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action



Paper will cover

**Historical background of Fourth World
Conference on Women (FWCW)**

Significance of FWCW

**Gains, gaps and issues in implementation of
Beijing Platform for Action**

Some current critical areas of concern

Conflict


Migration

**Natural Disasters and Climate
Change**

Financing for Gender Equality

The road ahead: Gender Equality

Architecture Reform (GEAR)



Historical Background on the FWCW

3 prior U.N. World Conferences on Women

1975 Mexico

1980 Copenhagen

1985 Nairobi



Historical Background on FWCW

1990 Review of implementation of Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies at Commission on the Status of Women

De jure vs. De facto Equality

Decision to hold Fourth World Conference

Focus on priority areas and strategic objectives

Recommend specific actions



Significance of FWCW

**Built on past 3 world conferences on women
Built on and upheld commitments of major
UN conferences of the decade**

**Environment and Development, Rio
(1992)**

Human Rights, Vienna (1993)

**Population and Development, Cairo
(1994)**

**Social Development, Copenhagen
(1995)**



Significance of FWCW

Covered familiar ground and reinforced old concerns of U.N. Decade on Women (1975-1995)

Feminization of poverty

Economic participation

Health

Education

Political participation

Human rights



Significance of FWCW

Broke new ground

Violence against women

Women's unremunerated work

Women's sexual rights as human rights

Girl-child

Women migrant workers



Significance of FWCW

**Raised level of awareness and discussion
of gender issues globally**

Consultative and participatory spirit

**Complex consultation process at
national, regional and global
levels**

Partnership with NGOs

**De-mystified UN processes and
procedures**

Largest UN conference ever



UN in 1990s

Exhilarating times

**High level of participation of civil society
and advocates**

End of decade: Millennium Summit



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Beijing + 5, Beijing + 10

12 Critical Areas of Concern

Women and poverty

Education and training of women

Women and health

Violence against women

Women and armed conflict

Women and the economy

Women in power and decision-making

**Institutional mechanisms for the
advancement of women**

Human rights of women

Women and the media

Women and the environment

The girl-child



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Celebrating Gains

National machineries, gender plans, budgets

Violence against women: special bodies/units established; new or amended laws; judicial processes

Women's health: rights-based framework and improved data for reproductive health; recognition/attention to HIV/AIDS; expansion of health services

Conventions, resolutions and human rights mechanisms

Breakthrough work on gender-sensitive indicators, gender analysis, gender audits



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Celebrating Gains

**Transformation of women and their
organizations**

More confident and aggressive

**Working in groups and
networks**

**Engendered and strategic
agenda**

Heightened identity politics

Important partnerships



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Broken Promises: Gaps

Unemployment, inadequate employment

Impact of environmental degradation,
ecological disasters

Negative effects of globalization

Micro impact of micro credit

Inadequate application of human rights
accountability mechanisms

Violence against women: trafficking,
domestic violence

Low representation in politics and
governance



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Confronting Emerging Issues

Role of the U.N.

**Moral authority and effectiveness in
serious question**

Conservative backlash from governments

Extreme unilateralism of U.S.

**Civil society participation in UN
diminished**

Global trends

Religious and ethnic fundamentalisms

Armed conflict and terrorism



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Confronting Emerging Issues

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

- 1. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger**
- 2. Achievement of universal primary education**
- 3. Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women**
- 4. Reduction of child mortality**
- 5. Improvement in maternal health**
- 6. Combating HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases**
- 7. Ensuring environmental sustainability**
- 8. Developing a global partnership for development**



Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Confronting Emerging Issues

Gender Mainstreaming

Favorite post-Beijing strategy

Strategy aimed at bringing about gender equality and women's empowerment by infusing gender analysis, gender-sensitive research, women's perspectives and gender equality goals into mainstream policies, projects, institutions instead of or in addition to having segregated or targeted activities or interventions for women

Disturbing developments, possible misuse



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Conflict

One of 12 critical areas of concern in Platform 6 Strategic objectives

1. Increase participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts
2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control availability of armaments
3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations



Current Critical Areas of Concern

4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace
5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women
6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Conflict

Recent Developments

**UN Security Council Resolution 1325
(2000) on Women, Peace and Security**

**Recognizes the impact of armed
conflict on women**

**Recognizes vital role women play in
peacemaking and peace
building**



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Conflict

Recent Developments

**UN Security Council Resolution 1820
(2008) against sexual violence in conflict**

**Explicitly links sexual violence as a tactic
of war with the maintenance of
international peace and security**

Justifies a response from Council

**Demands concrete measures from parties
to armed conflict**

**Asserts importance of women's
participation in all processes related to
ending sexual violence**



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Migration

Women migrant workers introduced for first time in Platform

Women and the Economy:
recognized contribution of women migrant workers to economies of sending and receiving countries;
recognized discrimination suffered

Human Rights of Women: recognized barriers to enjoyment of human rights of migrant women workers



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Migration

Recent Developments

Feminization of migration for work

**Global Forum on Migration and
Development (GFMD), Brussels
(2007), Manila (October 2008)
with Civil society Days**

**International Conference on Gender,
Migration and Development:
Seizing Opportunities, Upholding
Rights, Manila, 25-26 September,
2008 with “Manila Call to Action”**



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Natural Disasters and Climate Change

“What’s women got to do with it?”

Women and the Environment in Platform: strategic objectives

- 1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels**
- 2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development**
- 3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of developmental and environmental policies on women**



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Natural Disasters and Climate Change

December 26, 2004: Indian Ocean Tsunami

“What’s gender got to do with it?”

49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women: Resolution “Integrating a gender perspective in post-disaster relief, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, including in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster.”

Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance: “Gender in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction”, Manila, Oct. 19-22, 2008



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Financing for Gender Equality

Financial Arrangements in Platform

National governments have primary responsibility for ensuring strategic objectives are met by

- allocating adequate resources to gender-related commitments
- ensuring equal access by women and men to public sector expenditures
- utilizing gender impact assessment of resource allocation



Current Critical Areas of Concern

**providing sufficient and continuing resources
for all national machineries for women
providing a supportive environment to non-
governmental organizations especially
women's groups and feminist networks
so that they can mobilize domestic
resources toward the realization of the
Platform commitments**



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Financing for Gender Equality

Financial Arrangements in Platform

Regional development banks, organizations and associations to take account of the Platform in their policies and funding modalities and UN regional commissions to assist in the mobilization of funds

At **international** level a number of actions were called for

agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance



Current Critical Areas of Concern

increase in the share of funding for activities designed to implement the Platform in developing countries, particularly in Africa and the least developed countries

implementation of debt management and reduction strategies and programs provision by the United Nations System of technical cooperation and other forms of assistance to the developing countries, in particular in Africa and the least developed countries, and in countries with economies in transition



Current Critical Areas of Concern

assistance by the IMF and the WB to developing countries in designing and implementing policies and programs for the advancement of women

conduct of a critical analysis of the assistance programs so as to improve the quality and effectiveness of aid through the integration of a gender approach, by countries involved in development cooperation and by UN development funds and programs

allocation of additional resources from within the United Nations regular budget in order to implement the Platform for Action



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Financing for Gender Equality

Recent Developments

Women's involvement in global dialogues on financing for development

UN International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002

Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus

Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD), an initiative of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in a meeting in Paris in March 2005



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Financing for Gender Equality

Recent Developments

A group of women's networks namely DAWN, AWID, WIDE, FEMNET, IGTN, with support from UNIFEM, have come together to coordinate their engagement with the global processes on aid effectiveness, financing for development, UNCTAD and WTO meetings.

Flagging persistent gender blindness in economic planning and programming, finance and budget tools



Current Critical Areas of Concern

Calling for commitment to gender budgeting initiatives, sex disaggregated data, women's decent work, convening a global and inclusive review by the UN of the global finance architecture

Present financial crisis forces countries to review their fiscal and monetary policies and presents opportunity for women's advocates especially feminist economists to push for women-friendly finance architecture



The Road Ahead: Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR)

**Gender Equality Architecture Reform
(GEAR) Campaign:**

**Building a United Nations that Really
Works for All Women**



GEAR Context

4 UN World Conferences on Women

10 years after Beijing

UN an important venue for promotion of human rights and social justice

However, countries, bilateral and multilateral agencies fail to prioritize women's rights



State of Gender Equality in the UN

Lack of effective mechanism. Small under-resourced agencies--- OSAGI, DAW, UNIFEM, INSTRAW

Other larger agencies do work on gender equality, but often small part of mandate and low priority--- UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF

Combined gender agencies annual budget (2006) USD 65M

UNICEF USD 2 billion



Push for UN Reform

**Secretary General's High-Level Panel on
System-Wide Coherence 2006**

Civil Society



Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign

Global initiative of women's, human rights and social justice groups that proposes the creation of a stronger UN entity for women in order to greatly advance gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's human rights throughout the world.



GEAR Principles/Recommendations

Strong normative and operational functions

Expanded and stronger operational activities at the national level

Led by an Under Secretary General

Ambitiously funded

Accountability at national and international levels with meaningful involvement of civil society



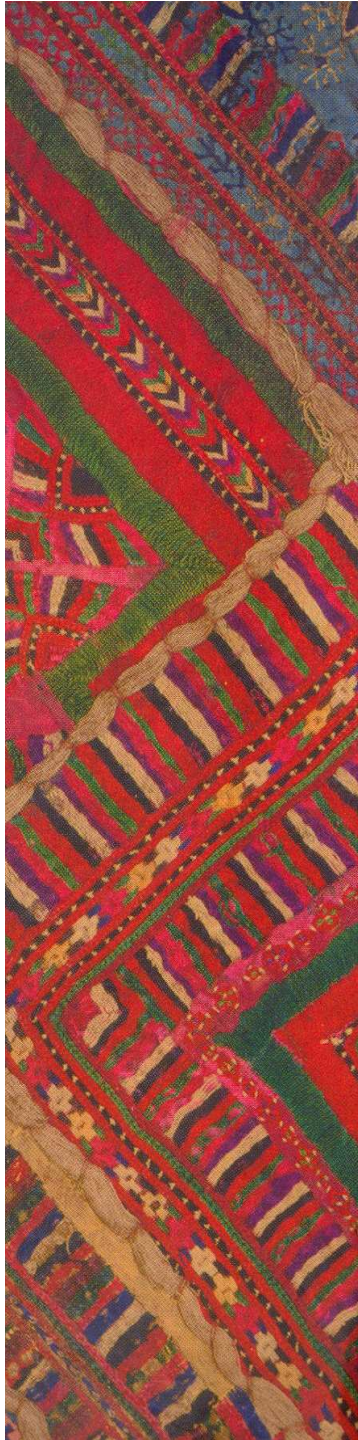
Moving GEAR Forward

Discussions at General Assembly

Decision expected at current 63rd session of GA

**GEAR will lead UN to more effectively work for
all women**

Let us GEAR up!



Thank You!