



**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**

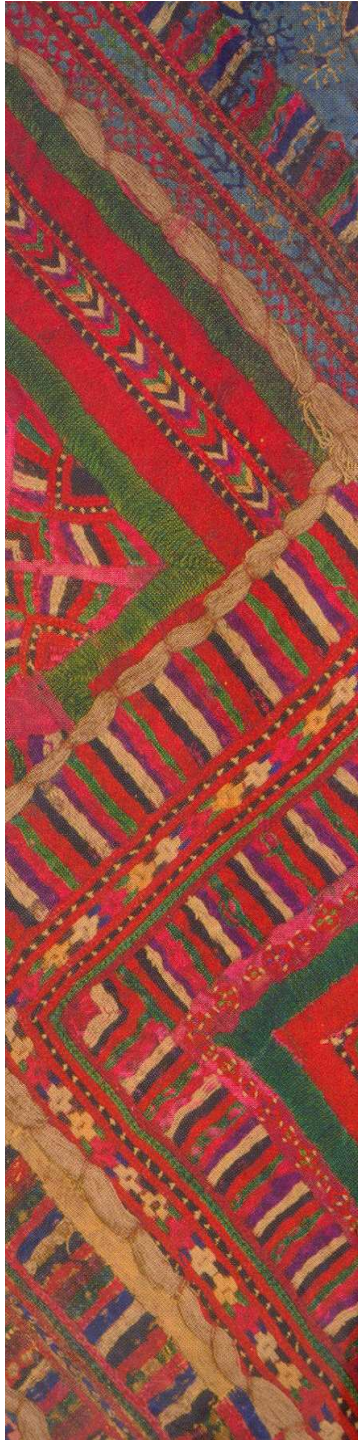
**Discussions at General Assembly**

**Decision expected at current 63<sup>rd</sup> session of GA**

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

**Let us GEAR up!**





**Thank You!**