

# Beijing Platform for Action extract

## H. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

196. National machineries for the advancement of women have been established in almost every Member State to, inter alia, design, promote the implementation of, execute, monitor, evaluate, advocate and mobilize support for policies that promote the advancement of women. National machineries are diverse in form and uneven in their effectiveness, and in some cases have declined. Often marginalized in national government structures, these mechanisms are frequently hampered by unclear mandates, lack of adequate staff, training, data and sufficient resources, and insufficient support from national political leadership.
197. At the regional and international levels, mechanisms and institutions to promote the advancement of women as an integral part of mainstream political, economic, social and cultural development, and of initiatives on development and human rights, encounter similar problems emanating from a lack of commitment at the highest levels.
198. Successive international conferences have underscored the need to take gender factors into account in policy and programme planning. However, in many instances this has not been done.
199. Regional bodies concerned with the advancement of women have been strengthened, together with international machinery, such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. However, the limited resources available continue to impede full implementation of their mandates.
200. Methodologies for conducting gender-based analysis in policies and programmes and for dealing with the differential effects of policies on women and men have been developed in many organizations and are available for application but are often not being applied or are not being applied consistently.
201. A national machinery for the advancement of women is the central policy- coordinating unit inside government. Its main task is to support government- wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas. The necessary conditions for an effective functioning of such national machineries include:
- a. Location at the highest possible level in the Government, falling under the responsibility of a Cabinet minister;
  - b. Institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate, as appropriate, decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring with a view to involving non-governmental organizations and community organizations from the grass-roots upwards;

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- c. Sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity;
  - d. Opportunity to influence development of all government policies.
202. In addressing the issue of mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.

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#### Strategic objective H.1.

#### Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

#### Actions to be taken

203. By Governments:
- a. Ensure that responsibility for the advancement of women is vested in the highest possible level of government; in many cases, this could be at the level of a Cabinet minister;
  - b. Based on a strong political commitment, create a national machinery, where it does not exist, and strengthen, as appropriate, existing national machineries, for the advancement of women at the highest possible level of government; it should have clearly defined mandates and authority; critical elements would be adequate resources and the ability and competence to influence policy and formulate and review legislation; among other things, it should perform policy analysis, undertake advocacy, communication, coordination and monitoring of implementation;
  - c. Provide staff training in designing and analysing data from a gender perspective;
  - d. Establish procedures to allow the machinery to gather information on government-wide policy issues at an early stage and continuously use it in the policy development and review process within the Government;
  - e. Report, on a regular basis, to legislative bodies on the progress of efforts, as appropriate, to mainstream gender concerns, taking into account the implementation of the Platform for Action;
  - f. Encourage and promote the active involvement of the broad and diverse range of institutional actors in the

public, private and voluntary sectors to work for equality between women and men.

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Strategic objective H. 2.

Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects

Actions to be taken

204. By Governments:
- a. Seek to ensure that before policy decisions are taken, an analysis of their impact on women and men, respectively, is carried out;
  - b. Regularly review national policies, programmes and projects, as well as their implementation, evaluating the impact of employment and income policies in order to guarantee that women are direct beneficiaries of development and that their full contribution to development, both remunerated and unremunerated, is considered in economic policy and planning;
  - c. Promote national strategies and aims on equality between women and men in order to eliminate obstacles to the exercise of women's rights and eradicate all forms of discrimination against women;
  - d. Work with members of legislative bodies, as appropriate, to promote a gender perspective in all legislation and policies;
  - e. Give all ministries the mandate to review policies and programmes from a gender perspective and in the light of the Platform for Action; locate the responsibility for the implementation of that mandate at the highest possible level; establish and/or strengthen an inter-ministerial coordination structure to carry out this mandate, to monitor progress and to network with relevant machineries.
205. By national machinery:
- a. Facilitate the formulation and implementation of government policies on equality between women and men, develop appropriate strategies and methodologies, and promote coordination and cooperation within the central Government in order to ensure mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all policy-making processes;
  - b. Promote and establish cooperative relationships with relevant branches of government, centres for women's studies and research, academic and educational institutions, the private sector, the media, non-



- governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, and all other actors of civil society;
- c. Undertake activities focusing on legal reform with regard, inter alia, to the family, conditions of employment, social security, income tax, equal opportunity in education, positive measures to promote the advancement of women, and the perception of attitudes and a culture favourable to equality, as well as promote a gender perspective in legal policy and programming reforms;
  - d. Promote the increased participation of women as both active agents and beneficiaries of the development process, which would result in an improvement in the quality of life for all;
  - e. Establish direct links with national, regional and international bodies dealing with the advancement of women;
  - f. Provide training and advisory assistance to government agencies in order to integrate a gender perspective in their policies and programmes.

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### Strategic objective H.3.

Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

#### Actions to be taken

206. By national, regional and international statistical services and relevant governmental and United Nations agencies, in cooperation with research and documentation organizations, in their respective areas of responsibility:
  - a. Ensure that statistics related to individuals are collected, compiled, analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society;
  - b. Collect, compile, analyse and present on a regular basis data disaggregated by age, sex, socio-economic and other relevant indicators, including number of dependants, for utilization in policy and programme planning and implementation;
  - c. Involve centres for women's studies and research organizations in developing and testing appropriate indicators and research methodologies to strengthen gender analysis, as well as in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the goals of the Platform for Action;

- d. Designate or appoint staff to strengthen gender-statistics programmes and ensure coordination, monitoring and linkage to all fields of statistical work, and prepare output that integrates statistics from the various subject areas;
- e. Improve data collection on the full contribution of women and men to the economy, including their participation in the informal sector(s);
- f. Develop a more comprehensive knowledge of all forms of work and employment by:
  - i. Improving data collection on the unremunerated work which is already included in the United Nations System of National Accounts, such as in agriculture, particularly subsistence agriculture, and other types of non-market production activities;
  - ii. Improving measurements that at present underestimate women's unemployment and underemployment in the labour market;
  - iii. Developing methods, in the appropriate forums, for assessing the value, in quantitative terms, of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, such as caring for dependants and preparing food, for possible reflection in satellite or other official accounts that may be produced separately from but are consistent with core national accounts, with a view to recognizing the economic contribution of women and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men;
- g. Develop an international classification of activities for time-use statistics that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work, and collect data disaggregated by sex. At the national level, subject to national constraints:
  - i. Conduct regular time-use studies to measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work, including recording those activities that are performed simultaneously with remunerated or other unremunerated activities;
  - ii. Measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, work to improve methods to assess its value, and accurately reflect its value in satellite or other official accounts which are separate from, but consistent with core national accounts;

- h. Improve concepts and methods of data collection on the measurement of poverty among women and men, including their access to resources;
- i. Strengthen vital statistical systems and incorporate gender analysis into publications and research; give priority to gender differences in research design and in data collection and analysis in order to improve data on morbidity; and improve data collection on access to health services, including access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, maternal care and family planning, with special priority for adolescent mothers and for elder care;
- j. Develop improved gender-disaggregated and age-specific data on the victims and perpetrators of all forms of violence against women, such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, incest and sexual abuse, and trafficking in women and girls, as well as on violence by agents of the State;
- k. Improve concepts and methods of data collection on the participation of women and men with disabilities, including their access to resources.

207. By Governments:

- a. Ensure the regular production of a statistical publication on gender that presents and interprets topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users;
- b. Ensure that producers and users of statistics in each country regularly review the adequacy of the official statistical system and its coverage of gender issues, and prepare a plan for needed improvements, where necessary;
- c. Develop and encourage the development of quantitative and qualitative studies by research organizations, trade unions, employers, the private sector and non-governmental organizations on the sharing of power and influence in society, including the number of women and men in senior decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors;
- d. Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects.

208. By the United Nations:

- a. Promote the development of methods to find better ways to collect, collate and analyse data that may relate to the human rights of women, including violence against women, for use by all relevant United Nations bodies;



- b. Promote the further development of statistical methods to improve data that relate to women in economic, social, cultural and political development;
- c. Prepare a new issue of The World's Women at regular five-year intervals and distribute it widely;
- d. Assist countries, upon request, in the development of gender policies and programmes;
- e. Ensure that the relevant reports, data and publications of the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on progress at the national and international levels are transmitted to the Commission on the Status of Women in a regular and coordinated fashion.

209. By multilateral development institutions and bilateral donors:

Encourage and support the development of national capacity in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition by providing resources and technical assistance so that countries can fully measure the work done by women and men, including both remunerated and unremunerated work, and, where appropriate, use satellite or other official accounts for unremunerated work.

