

***Beijing  
Platform for  
Action:***

***Youth  
Translation***



**The  
Working  
Group on  
Girls**

## Introduction:

### Mission Statement:

- The goal of the Beijing Platform for Action is to empower women and remove obstacles to gender equality. The sharing of power between men and women is necessary for peace.
- The Platform's goal is to take action to ensure the human rights of women and girls.
- Women and men need to work together to achieve gender equality.
- In order for the Platform to be a success, all governments and international organizations need to be committed to it. The Platform will also need funding resources.

### Global Framework:

- Regardless of culture, history, politics or economics, governments have the duty to uphold the human rights of all people. The Platform respects all religions, but states that all philosophies should contribute to the fulfillment of women's human rights.
- Though the end of the cold war has reduced threat of global war, violence is still prevalent in many parts of the world. In times of armed conflict, many grave violations of women's human rights occur. Prevention of war is critical to ensuring women's human rights.
- Poverty has increased in countries in debt due to war. Excessive money spent on the military and arms trafficking are socially detrimental.
- Improving the wealth of a nation does not necessarily improve the people's quality of life. This means a more holistic approach must be taken to generate economic growth.
- Women still are not able to fully participate in politics, though democracy is spreading. Some countries have experienced violent backlash to democratization, which is a violation of human rights. Gender equality is lacking in all levels of government, including at the United Nations.
- Recession and political instability have caused poverty, and most of the world's poor are women. Programs in place do not effectively address women's needs or the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- A new era of cooperation between governments and between the genders must be entered into in order to address the problems facing the world.
- Recession disproportionately affects women. Many don't have long term employment and have the added responsibility of tending to children.
- Women are important to the economy and many have gained independence and employment. Families with single mothers are often poorest because of wage discrimination.
- Everyone should have the right to freedom of religion and thought. Though forms of extremism can be negative to women and can lead to violence.
- Many governments have implemented gender equality measures and international agencies have focused more on women.
- Non-governmental feminist organizations have played an important advocacy role in advancing legislation. Some governments have recognized the importance of NGO's, while others have restricted their right to organize.

- More people are aware of gender inequality and this is contributing to change. Women have advanced where they are educated and employed. Women and men have begun to assume tasks not traditionally assigned to their gender.
- The importance of a women's contribution to the family is not fully recognized. The significance of motherhood should be recognized and should not be the basis for discrimination.
- Care of children, the old and the ill falls disproportionately on women.
- Indigenous women face discrimination both for being women and for being indigenous.
- Images of women in the media are demeaning and stereotypical. Until women are equally represented in the decision-making of the media, women will continue to be misrepresented. The media has the power, when used correctly, to promote gender equality.
- Women's health and wellbeing is affected by environmental issues, especially rural women. The major cause of environmental problems is unstable patterns of production and consumption but industrialized countries.
- The massive movement of people to cities, or as refugees has lead to consequences such as the sexual abuse of women.
- Women are twice as likely to be infected with AIDS as men are. Young women are particularly at risk. The rate of transmission of STD's is rapidly increasing.
- Son preference is threatening the education, health and lives of many girls.
- Girls are critical for achieving gender equality. Girls need to be nurtured and protected. Girls face discrimination from the earliest stages of life. Measures should be taken to empower young women.

### **Critical Areas of Concern**

- Equal rights for women means equal rights for all.
- All governmental and non governmental organizations should take action on poverty, education, violence against women, armed conflict, economic inequality, stereotyping of women, rights of girls.

### **Strategic Objectives and Actions**

- Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged women. The Platform recognizes that women face multiple barriers such as race, age, ethnicity, language, religion, family status, financial situation, refugee status or disability.

**Section A. Women in Poverty:** More than 1 billion people alive today live in extreme poverty, most of whom are women.

**Strategic objective A.1.** Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty

- Worldwide, governments need to develop policies that ensure the full participation of women in their economic, social, and agricultural agendas
- Disadvantaged women (women in poverty) require special attention by governments; worldwide many more women than men live in poverty; financial services need to be made available to them
- Governments need to analyze their policies and programs with the female perspective in mind, making sure all policies in all sectors of the economy are equitable to both genders
- Need to promote economic opportunities for women, and address the basic social, educational, and health needs of women
- Provide structures for women that ensure safety nets and food security that enable women in households to live sufficiently-promote equal distribution of food in households among male and female
- Develop anti-poverty programs directed at women
- Recognize human rights of all women workers
- Policies to strengthen indigenous women, respect cultural diversity
- Strengthen gender perspectives and integrate them into lending programs such as structural adjustment and economic recovery programs
- Create an environment that allows women to thrive
- Development of programs of education/training for women with cooperation of the government and grassroots organizations

**Strategic objective A.2.** Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources

- Ensure access to free or subsidized legal services
- Goal to protect women's right to economic resources
- Make sure women have access to property and lands and that they are educated about those rights

**Strategic objective A.3.** Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions

- Improve access of disadvantaged women, especially entrepreneurs, to financial services by improving links between banks and informal intermediate lending organizations.
- Encourage links between banks and NGO's working at the grassroots level with women

**Strategic objective A.4.** Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty

- Develop methods for incorporating gender perspectives into all aspects of economic policy making
- Conduct research of all policies and programs to assess gender-impact

**Section B. Education and Training of Women:** Education is a human right and a necessary tool for the achievement of gender equality, sustainable development and peace.

**Strategic objective B.1.** Ensure equal access to education

*Actions to be taken*

80. By Governments:

- Reduce discrimination of any type at all levels of schooling - this would increase the number of females who are able to access education
  - By 2000: have access to basic education for both genders, with at least 80% of children completing primary school
  - By 2005: have equal numbers of girls and boys in primary and secondary schools (close the gender gap)
  - By 2015: have primary education for everyone in all countries
- Make sure women have equal opportunities (career development, training, scholarships etc) in college
  - use affirmative action if needed - gender sensitive education system
- Have equal participation of women in educational administration/decision-making;
- Work with parents, NGOs, the community and private businesses to make sure women have the skills and work experience to be a full part of society - socially, politically and economically
  - including academic/technical training, career planning, leadership/social skills
- Increase the funds put towards the education of girls to increase enrollment and help the parents
  - through campaigns, incentives, scholarships, financial aid, etc
  - repeal any discriminatory laws - allow choice in terms of school (religious/non, etc)
- All schools should give equal access and opportunities for pregnant students/teen mothers
  - including child-care options and parenting classes
  - should have the option of returning to/continuing schooling
- Have gender-sensitive school counselors and non-discriminatory career education and leadership programs in high school to encourage girls to continue their education and therefore widen their career opportunities
- Sign the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, if not already signed

**Strategic objective B.2.** Eradicate illiteracy among women

*Actions to be taken*

81. By Governments, national, regional and international bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs:

- There should be less than half as many illiterate females as there were in 1990
  - focus especially on rural women, migrants, refugees, and women with disabilities
- By 2000: have primary education and its completion available to all girls

- Have equal rates of basic literacy among males and females - as per the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien);
- Lessen the differences between developed and developing countries - make sure girls have opportunities no matter where they live
- Involve families in the education process/promoting literacy for all
- Promote, together with literacy, life skills and scientific and technological knowledge to work towards an expansion of the definition of literacy, taking into account current targets and benchmarks.

**Strategic objective B.3.** Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education

*Actions to be taken*

82. By Governments, in cooperation with employers, workers and trade unions, international and NGOs, including women's and youth organizations, and educational institutions:

- Have training policies/programs that teach skills which will make it easier for women to get jobs in the changing socio-economic world
  - focus especially on young women and women re-entering jobs
  - focus on areas where women are underrepresented
- Recognize non-formal educational opportunities for girls and women
- Give females information on the availability and benefits of training
  - including vocational training, science/technology programs, and continuing education
- Have educational/training programs for unemployed women
  - to give them new knowledge and skills
  - to give them other options like self-employment and entrepreneurial skills
- Have vocational and training for women in more fields
  - such as science, math, engineering, technology and management
- Promote women's role in food and agricultural research/education programs
- Adapt teaching materials as needed - to support women in all fields
- Have supportive environments with training for all job choices (including non-traditional)
  - make sure teachers understand the importance of science/technology in women's lives
- Make policies and programs that encourage females to do apprenticeship programs
- Increase income opportunities with marketing and technical training
- Increase women's role in economic decision-making by the growth of women's grassroots organizations
- Have all levels of proper education/training available for uneducated adult women, the disabled, migrants, refugees, etc, to increase job opportunities

**Strategic objective B.4.** Develop non-discriminatory education and training

*Actions to be taken*

83. By Governments, educational authorities and other educational and academic institutions:

- Make sure textbooks and all other materials do not have gender-stereotypes at any levels

- work with publishers, teachers, public authorities and parents' associations to do so
- Have training programs for teachers to make sure they understand their importance in the education process and encourage equality, cooperation, and respect between girls and boys from pre-school onward
  - also to make sure they teach boys skills to care for themselves and share responsibility for their future households and children
- Make sure female teachers/professors have the same status/opportunities as males at all levels
- Increase the number of women who can take part in educational policy/decision-making,
  - especially in traditionally male-dominated fields, like science and technology
- Support gender studies/research at all levels of education, especially at the postgraduate level of academic institutions
  - apply them in teacher training and when developing textbooks, curricula, and materials
- Have leadership training/opportunities for women as both students and adults
- Work with the media to have informational campaigns that make the public aware of the importance of education for everyone (non-discriminatory), and sharing family responsibilities
  - make sure to respect multilingualism
- Make sure all levels human rights education programs include gender issues
  - especially encourage colleges to include the study of the human rights of women as from United Nations conventions;
- Make sure there is nothing (social, legal, etc) stopping women from accessing sexual/reproductive health information, especially in formal education programs about women's health issues
  - remember the importance of proper education in personal development/self-esteem
  - also to avoid unwanted pregnancy, STD spreading (especially HIV/AIDS), and sexual violence/abuse
- Have recreational & sports facilities available for all genders
  - support women in all areas of athletics, including coaching, training, administration, and participation at all levels
- Support the rights of indigenous females to access education within a multicultural approach and support the preservation of their cultures
- Respect the artistic, spiritual and cultural activities of indigenous women
- Have education/information available for rural women through affordable technologies/media like radio, cassettes and mobile units
- Provide non-formal education for rural women - about their health, micro-enterprise, agriculture and legal rights;

**Strategic objective B.5.** Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms

*Actions to be taken*

84. By Governments:

- Give more funding to education, especially basic education
- Create programs at every level to make sure educational reform is effective, and to address issues

85-86. By Governments and, as appropriate, private and public institutions, foundations, research institutes and NGOs & by multilateral development institutions, including the World Bank, regional development banks, bilateral donors and foundations:

- Work with governments and give extra money when needed to make sure boys and girls have equal education so that they complete schooling, especially in under-served populations and for fields like math/science

87. By international and intergovernmental organizations, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, at the global level:

- Create an international campaign to promote girls' and women's rights to education
- Give developing countries technological assistance to better record and monitor progress
- Give funds and resources to increasing basic education for girls
- Help keep track of progress in increasing female education
  - Urge Governments to make sure boys and girls have equal access to education and opportunities in all fields

**Strategic objective B.6.** Promote life-long education and training for girls and women

*Actions to be taken*

88. By Governments, educational institutions and communities:

- Make sure a broad range of educational/training programs are available for women of all ages
- Have child care services available so that mothers can continue school
- Make sure all programs and education are flexible for life-long education so that women can have resources through all life stages



## Section C: Women and Health

**Strategic objective C.1.** Increase Women's Access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care

- A woman's access to health care is limited by global sexism, racism, and classism.
- All women should have access to the best physical and mental health care possible.
- Integrate mental health services into primary health-care systems.
- New legislation needs to be implemented to provide accessible, affordable, and gender-sensitive health care. Detrimental and sexist health practices need to be eliminated in all communities.

**Strategic objective C.2** Strengthen preventive programs that promote women's health

- Due to the lack of health services relating to reproduction, pregnant women and girls cannot access the care that they need. Pregnancy complications are a leading cause of death for young women, and that will be decreased if affordable and accessible care for pregnant women is provided.
- In order for women to have full access to health, gender equality and peace must be achieved. Men must share the responsibility with women in this matter to support and empower their female counterparts.
- In underdeveloped countries, health services are even harder to come by, making it especially hard for women to get the healthcare they deserve. Therefore, the women in these countries need special attention in regard to their health needs.
- Girls need special attention in regards to sexual and reproductive healthcare and education because they are especially vulnerable to the practices of female genital mutilation, child marriage and early pregnancy. Son preference often leads to an unequal distribution of food in family systems and endangers girls' current and future health.
- The mental health of women is steadily declining due to an increase in domestic and sexual violence, trafficking, and sexual exploitation. This increase has been accompanied by an increase in substance and tobacco abuse. Addicted and mentally ill women should be encouraged to recover and be provided with counseling and support.
- Indigenous women living in these areas need a strong and accessible healthcare system. Traditional and modern medicine should be linked to create the most effective and culturally sensitive healthcare system possible
- Older women now need increased attention in healthcare because of the increased life expectancy that is now present. Elderly women are more harshly exposed to osteoporosis heart and lung diseases, and disability. To care for older women, programs should be developed that educate people and treat the special health risks that older women face.

**Strategic objective C.3.** Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address STD's, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health.

- Reproductive health is the physical, mental and social well-being of an individual in regards to their reproductive system. This is a basic human right that belongs to all peoples, and a

necessity for full participation in all parts of society. Reproductive rights mean that women can control their sex lives and sexual health.

- For example, women living with HIV/AIDs have a more difficult experience with the disease because of social vulnerability and the larger burden of family roles women are expected to assume. Overall, women often do not have the power in relationships with men to insist on safe and responsible sex practices.
- Unsafe abortions also contribute to the high rates of death among young women. Abortions should be considered the last option possible for pregnant women, and family planning should be provided to avoid abortions in the future.
- Underdeveloped countries are also harshly affected by climate change. Women living in rural and poor urban areas have a more extreme reaction to contaminants causing climate change than men, and there should be green efforts by governments to reverse these changes.

**Strategic objective C.4.** Promote research and disseminate information on women's health

- To create a new health care system, women's health research needs to be adequately funded. Women are differently affected by various diseases and medications, so these different effects should be explored in research and then made accessible to the public. Women should also be empowered by being in charge of this research.
- Support and fund social, economic political and cultural research on how gender-based inequalities affect women's health.

**Strategic objective C.5.** Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health

- Develop innovative approaches to funding health services through promoting community participation and local financing also increase budgetary outlay for community based, grassroots programmes and services specifically addressing the needs of women.
- Develop gender-sensitive self-care education programs designed to improve preventive health care.

**Section D. Violence Against Women:** is a violation of human rights, and a major obstacle in achieving equality.

**Strategic objective D.1.** Integrate measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

- Actively and publicly condemn violence against women and do not use any custom, tradition or religious duty as an excuse to avoid working towards its elimination
- Prevent, investigate, and punish violence against women with national laws
  - no matter who commits the crime (public/State workers must also be punished!)
  - no matter where the crime is committed - at home, educational institutions, or in the workplace, community or society
  - including acts such as female genital mutilation, female infanticide, prenatal sex selection and dowry-related violence
- Make sure gender-insensitive national laws do not allow for revictimization or prevent survivors of violence from access to:
  - justice, by being able to report violence in a safe and confidential environment, free from the fear of punishment or retaliation
  - care for any harm suffered, including medical, psychological and other counselling services; shelters; free or low-cost legal aid; and necessary assistance in finding jobs
  - information on their rights
- Sign and implement international human rights agreements that relate to violence against women
- Increase knowledge and understanding of the causes, consequences and mechanisms of violence against women among those responsible for enforcing these policies
- Train judicial, legal, medical, social, educational, police and immigration workers to
  - prevent abuse of power leading to violence against women
  - build an understanding about the threats of gender-based violence to assure fair treatment of female victims
- Cooperate with and assist any relevant Special Rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights
  - Recommend that the Commission on Human Rights renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women when her term ends in 1997 and update and strengthen it as needed
- Support and promote the role of institutions like primary health-care centers, family-planning centers, school health services, mother and baby protection services, and centers for migrant families in providing information and aid for abuse/violence
- Develop/support awareness campaigns that increase understanding in girls, boys, women and men about
  - the harmful effects of violence in the family, community and society
  - how to communicate and solve conflicts without violence
  - how to protect themselves and others against such violence

- Encourage counselling/rehabilitation programs for those guilty of violence to prevent further offenses
- Make special efforts to recognize and eliminate violence against women in vulnerable situations
  - such as young women, refugees/displaced persons, women with disabilities, migrant workers, etc
    - enforce/develop laws protecting migrant women workers in both sending and receiving countries
  - Aid should be linguistically and culturally available to all

**Strategic objective D.2.** Study causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

- Promote research/data-collection on all forms of violence against women and girls, with:
  - specific research on the causes and effects of such violence
  - regular analysis/necessary editing of laws to ensure effectiveness in preventing/eliminating violence against women, punishing offenders, and protecting victims while providing relief/aid
  - publicize findings and information on violence against women and any efforts to eliminate it in any human rights reports submitted as per UN provisions
- Emphasize the media's responsibility in:
  - examining the impacts of gender stereotypes they portray, and eliminate them
  - stimulating informed, appropriate public debate on the topic and spreading data on violence issues

**Strategic objective D.3.** Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking:

- Respect international standards on human trafficking and slavery
- Work to eliminate trafficking, prostitution, forced marriage and forced labor of women and girls by
  - addressing external and internal root factors
  - strengthening/making laws that punish offenders both criminally and civilly
  - working cooperatively to dismantle national, regional and international trafficking networks
- Give resources to programs that heal/rehabilitate victims of trafficking, and cooperate with NGO's working in these fields.
- Develop educational programs and laws that prevent sex tourism and trafficking, emphasizing the protection of young women and children

## Section E. Women and Armed Conflict

- In order for women to advance, world peace should be maintained, human rights should be protected, and the boundaries and governments of nations should be respected.
- There is a body of international law that says that civilians should not be attacked during conflict, but this is often ignored. This is a violation of human rights.
- Women should be protected against demeaning attacks like rape and forced prostitution.
- Human rights violations that occur in conflict zones are against the human rights laws.
- The majority of people who have to leave their homes because of conflict are women, teenage girls and children and these groups need to be protected. Women and children make up some 80 percent of refugees.
- In order for there to be peace, women should have access to power in government and women should be involved in preventing and resolving conflict.
- In a conflict, one group may rape the women on the other side of the conflict as a way to weaken the opponent. Those who commit this kind of rape are rarely punished.
- Women in poverty and women living in rural areas can be victim to weapons like land mines. 100 million landmines have gone off in 64 countries.
- When conflicts are dealt with, the opinions of both genders should be taken into account.

### **Strategic objective E.1. Women should be able to have more of a say in the decisions made about conflict and they should be protected when there is conflict where they live**

- Take action to encourage women to participate in every aspect of peace-making. When appointing people to serve in powerful governmental positions, there should be an equal number of men and women.
- Train the officials that deal with rape, forced pregnancy and assault cases so that the government can adequately handle these difficult issues and women are supported.

### **Strategic objective E.2. Too much money should not be spent on conflict and the availability of weapons should be controlled.**

- Military resources should be conserved and used instead for peaceful purposes.
- New ways of creating national wealth should be explored by reducing the amount of money spent on the military and weapons.
- Police officers and members of the military who violate the human rights of women should be investigated and punished.
- The United Nations should have a unified plan to get landmines out of the world. There should be support for a nuclear-test-ban treaty, which addresses the removal of nuclear weapons.

### **Strategic objective E.3. Conflicts between nations should be solved without violence and people should be able to keep their human rights during conflict.**

- Women should have a greater role in decision making nationally and internationally.
- The planned and organized rape of women as a means to fight a war must be stopped. It must be recognized that rape in an armed conflict situation is a war crime and in some circumstances is a crime against humanity or an act of genocide.

- The international community should condemn and act against terrorism.
- Laws that hinder the human rights of women and children should not be passed.
- The lack of food and medicine cannot be used to politically manipulate the people.

**Strategic objective E.4. Women should be encouraged to be involved in creating a culture where peace is expected.**

- There should be research done on how armed conflicts affect women. This research should have a particular focus on girls and young women.
- Educational programs for boys and girls that foster peace, nonviolent conflict resolution and tolerance should be created.

**Strategic objective E.5. Refugee women should be protected and given opportunities by the international community (or the UN).**

- Women officials should help in managing refugee camps to ensure that women and girls have equal access to services provided at the camps.
- Those who commit violence against refugee women should have a fair investigation and be brought to justice.
- Refugee women should have the right to return to their original homes. They should be protected after they return home.
- The international community should provide money for emergency relief of refugee women.
- When determining which people will be granted asylum, there should be equality between men and women.
- The ability of refugee women to rely on themselves should be promoted.
- Refugee women should have access to professional and language training programs, counseling on violence, rehabilitation programs for torture and trauma victims.
- People should be more aware of the positive contributions refugee women make to the countries where they are resettled.
- Military and police officers working in conflict and refugee areas should receive human rights training.

**Strategic Objective E.6. Women who live in places that are governed by another nation, such as colonies or territories, should be assisted as well.**

- Public awareness should be raised through mass media and education about the situation of women living in colonies and territories governed by another nation.

## Section F. Women and the Economy

### Strategic Objective F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence

- Enforce legislation to guarantee men and women have equal pay and work of equal value.
- Women on maternity leave cannot be discriminated against.
- Adjust employment policies to change work patterns in order to promote the sharing of family responsibilities
- Establish strategies to ensure the participation of women entrepreneurs and women workers in policy and program development by economic and financial corporations.
- Promote gender-sensitive policies and measures to empower women as equal partners with men in technical, managerial and entrepreneurial fields.

### Strategic objective F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.

- Promote women's self-employment and the development of small enterprises
- Strengthen women's access to credit and capital equally with men by scaling-up institutions made for promoting women's entrepreneurship.
- Increase (nationally and locally) rural women's income - by increasing access and control over resources, land, credit, property rights
- Provide women working in rural fields with equal access to technology, transportation, marketing, and training in their use.
- Encourage institutions that can provide necessary services to women.
- Increase the amount of women in government who can conduct economic programs.
- Make/edit policies to ensure no discrimination of women's businesses.
- Promote respect for basic workers' rights.
- Mobilize banking sector to increase lending and refinancing through incentives that serve the needs of women entrepreneurs; include women in leadership and thereby decision making.
- Ensure that women's priorities are included in public investment programs for economic infrastructure.
- Make/review policies to ensure a larger amount of resources reach women in rural/remote areas that are sparsely populated.
- Have flexible funding for organizations that target women's economic activities; promote independence in women's economic businesses.



**Strategic objective F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.**

- Provide public infrastructure for equal market access for men and women
- Develop outreach programs for low-income women (especially in rural areas) with possible opportunities for market/technology access; help them take advantage of these opportunities.
- Share info on successful women business owners in both traditional and non-traditional spheres and teach the importance of networking and exchanging info.
- Provide affordable support services (like child care services) that keep working men and women in mind.

**Strategic objective F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.**

- Economic restructuring policies must use a balanced gender perspective.
- Adopt policies that create a friendly environment for women's self-help groups and cooperatives.
- Support programs that promote self-reliance of special groups of women (like young, disabled, elderly, minority)
- Promote gender equality through the promotion of women's studies.
- Support the economic activities of native women, keep in mind their traditional knowledge to improve their situation and growth.
- Acknowledge and support women's contribution to research (scientists, technologists).
- Provide training in a variety of business-related, financial management and technical skills to enable women, especially young women, to participate in economic policy-making.
- Increase participation of women, including women who are marginalized within a society or group, in production and marketing organizations.
- Set up mentoring programs among women.
- Adopt policies/establish strategies to grant non discriminatory contracts.
- Recruit women for leadership, decision-making and management and provide training programs, all on an equal basis with men

**Strategic objective F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.**

- Prohibit direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex.
- Develop workplace policies against gender discrimination in the labour market, especially considering older women workers.
- Eliminate occupational segregation, especially by promoting the equal participation of women in highly skilled jobs and senior management positions.
- Women should be able to negotiate their working conditions.
- Set specific dates for eliminating all forms of child labour that do not follow international standards.
- Ensure that strategies to eliminate child labour also address the excessive needs made on some girls for unpaid work in their homes and as household servants in others' homes.



- Reformulate the payment structures in female-dominated fields, to help raise their low status and earnings.
- Ease the employment of documented migrant women and provide language training for immigrant women

**Strategic objective F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.**

- Men and women can freely choose full or part-time work equally
- Equally encourage women and men to take temporary leave (including parental leave) protected by their employment, to encourage the equal sharing of family responsibilities.
- Develop policies and create educational programs that change long-held attitudes of gender bias in terms of labour and family responsibilities.
- Provide equal support services at work (ex. child care + flexible working circumstances).
- Enforce and enact laws to prevent sexual and other forms of harassment against individuals in their place of work.

## **Section G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING**

**Strategic objective G.1.** Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

- Women are under-represented in political decision-making positions at all levels of government. It is a pervasive problem world wide. By having anything less than equal representation of women severely weakens the prospects of justice and of a properly functioning democracy. Such a weakening of justice and democracy has a detrimental effect, not only on the equality of women, but also on economic development and peace. The loss of the woman's unique perspective and voice in a world that is already deficient in collaborative and effective solutions is enormous.
- The problem of under-representation by women in government starts at home with an unfair division of labor and responsibilities, and spreads to attitudinal and systemic discrimination in almost all aspects of society. The problem of under-representation in government also stems from a shortage of women in decision-making positions in all areas of the private and public sectors, including banks, commercial and public institutions, art, culture, sports, media, education, and religion .

**Strategic objective G.2.** Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

- Without solving the problem throughout all layers of society, the problem of under-representation of women in political decision-making positions in government will not be solved. Thus, a pervasive world-wide problem requires an extensive world-wide set of

solutions targeting family, local, national and international structures in both the private and public sectors, as well as throughout the United Nations system.

- There is only so much that running a family and involvement in community organizations can do. Without the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. Companies, individuals, political parties, governments and the United Nations must constantly be conscious of these issues and diligent in making systemic improvements.
- Create a system of mentoring for inexperienced women, including setting up programs to train and support women in development of leadership, public speaking and self-assertion skills, as well as in political campaigning. Serious statistical analysis must be used to monitor improvements and failures to improve. Deadlines and goals should be set.

## Section H. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

- Members of the United Nations have established methods that promote the advancement of women, but they range in effectiveness and have not always fulfilled their purpose. Unclear goals, improperly trained staff, insufficient resources and staff, have affected the implementation and thus, the full effectiveness of previously established methods.
- Many regional and international efforts to promote the advancement of women have failed because not enough officials at highest levels of government have committed to fully supporting such efforts.
- Conference after conference has occurred to discuss these policies and programs in the making, but they have not fully addressed all contributing factors.
- The strengthening of regional bodies has occurred but limited resources and support have constrained the implementation and effectiveness of their proposed ideas.
- Surveys, methods, analysis of policies by different organizations focusing on gender differences have not been thoroughly applied or applied at all.
- It is necessary that gender equality perspectives are present when policies are being developed at the highest levels. Involvement of different organizations, especially grassroots organizations, is necessary when reviewing data existing policies. In addition, adequate budgets for resources and professional capacity are needed to support efforts towards the achievement of gender equality.

**Strategic Objective H.1.** Create strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

- Governments creating strategies should promote active and visible policies, so outside institutions can review and provide feedback on the impact of such policies on both genders.

**Strategic Objective H.2.** Integrate Gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs and projects

- Governments need to analyze the possible implementation and impacts of policies, by cooperating with different levels of society, including inviting gender based perspectives. It is necessary to review and evaluate policies after becoming law, to understand the social, economic, and cultural impacts of those laws on women.
- Effective National Machinery will facilitate cooperation and links between different branches of government and members of society, including the media, to understand the factors affecting women and the policies that aim to promote gender equality. This will result in the involvement of different sectors of society including those affected.

**Strategic objective H.3.** Generate and disseminate gender disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

- Improve the collection and analysis of data that focuses on the participation of women in often ignored sectors. Encourage studies of gender and publish reports based on research and regularly review and improve where needed. This information should be available for all to understand, including those directly affected and senior decision makers both in public and private sectors.
- The United Nations efforts should focus on collecting and analyzing data related to human rights. To promote, develop, and collect data on issues affecting women, culturally, socially, and economically. It should assist countries, upon request, in the development of gender policies. In addition, the sharing of relevant data regarding progress and challenges should be transmitted to the Commission on the Status of Women on a regular basis.

**Section I. Human Rights of Women** Human right: a right that is believed to belong justifiably to every person.

**Strategic Objective I.1** Promote and protect the human rights of all women through the full implementation of all human rights treaties.

- -CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), which helps women with their rights, as well as other important documents needs to be implemented.
- 20 years ago, Hillary Clinton gave a moving speech at Beijing in which she uttered the infamous quote, “Let’s keep telling the world over and over again that yes, women’s rights are human rights, and human rights are women’s rights, once and for all.” Although this speech was given two decades ago, women and girls all over the world are still being denied their fundamental human rights. It is crucial that the Beijing Platform for Action be implemented, as well as the other documents that would ensure that women and girls receive their fundamental human rights. The promotion and protection of these rights should be a priority objective of the UN.

- Women are human, so they should be given their fundamental human rights

**Strategic objective I.2.** Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.

- We have to make sure that there are laws that elevate women, and that these laws are actually practiced.

**Strategic objective I.3.** Achieve legal literacy

- Women will most likely be denied their rights, but they need to be taught they deserve them. Promote education to ensure all women are made aware of their human rights.
- Translate, whenever possible, laws, policies, conventions into local and indigenous languages and publicize information relating to the equal status of women and all human rights and in easily understandable formats.
- Fully publicize mechanisms for redress against violators of women's human rights.
- *The UN Declaration of human rights states everything you are entitled to. **Do you know your rights?***

## Section J. Women and the Media

**Strategic Objective J.1.** Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication

- The media is crucial to the advancement of women around the world.
- The lack of female leadership/representation in top media companies is a factor in perpetuating negative and harmful gender-based stereotypes.
- In most countries, the media fails to show the balanced lives of women and chooses to mostly show negative and degrading content. Violent, degrading, pornographic and even traditional portrayals of women adversely affect women's possible roles in society. Women of all ages are being targeted inappropriately.
- Women should have access to programs which will enhance their knowledge and skills of technology and media, so that they will be in a better position to combat these negative and demeaning media portrayals.
- Self-regulatory mechanisms need to be adopted by the media to encourage balanced non-stereotyped images of women and girls. Encourage the spread of and use of technology by women in the developing world to promote the human rights of women
- Government and actors should promote gender equality across all sectors of the media.
- Governments should encourage state or private media to increase programs for and by women to see that women's needs and concerns are properly addressed.
- Governments should encourage female participation in the development of media guidelines to ensure the non-stereotyped portrayals of women by the media.
- Non governmental organizations and media professionals should train women to make greater use of information technology for communication and the media, including at the international level.

**Strategic Objective J.2.** Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

- Governmental and international organizations should promote research and implementation of a strategy of information, education and communication aimed at promoting a balanced portrayal of women in their different roles.
- Governmental and international organizations should encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities.
- The mass media and advertising organizations should develop professional guidelines and codes of conduct and other forms of regulation to promote the presentation of non-stereotyped images of women.
- The media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should aim to produce media materials on women leaders who are able to balance their families with their careers.
- The media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should develop approaches to support the training of experts who can apply gender analysis with regards to media programming.

## Section K. Women and the Environment

**Strategic objective K.1.** Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels

- Women are key to achieving a sustainable environment.
- Worsening conditions are destroying delicate ecosystems and are taking away the ability for individuals in communities, especially women, to take part in productive activities. These deteriorating conditions are causing an increasing threat to a safe and healthy environment.
- Deterioration of the global environment is due to the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, ESPECIALLY in industrialized countries.
- Rising sea levels are causing threats to people living in island countries and coastal areas.
- Ozone depleting substances are allowing excessive levels of ultraviolet rays to reach the surface of the Earth. This leads to higher rates of eye damage, skin cancer, and weakened immune systems. It is also detrimental to sea life and crops.
- For the world to reach environmental sustainability, poverty needs to be eradicated.

**Strategic objective K.2.** Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development

- The deterioration of natural resources displaces communities, especially women, from income-generating activities. Women must also have equal access to the use of these natural resources.

- Women who live in rural areas or work in the agricultural sector need to be payed particular attention.
- Women who live in urban areas are at high risk to effects of various toxic chemicals.
- Women play an important role in promoting sustainable development.
- Governments have expressed interest in implementing a new development paradigm that would integrate environmental sustainability with gender equality.
- Indigenous women will be included in all levels and of environmental decision making.
- Education will be made increasingly more available to women so that they can make educated decisions in regards to the environment and all aspects of life.
- Women will partake in the development of legislation in regards to the environment.
- Women will help reduce environmental hazards.
- Women will help to integrate the gender perspective on problems regarding the environment.
- Women will be empowered so that they, as producers and consumers, can make the more environmentally sustainable decision.
- Women will be encouraged to take part in the environmentally friendly movement.
- Ensure that clean water is made accessible and available to all people.

**Strategic objective K.3.** Strengthen mechanisms at national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

- Involve women as advocates towards the creation of environmental sustainability and development.
- Women are seldom found in all levels of policy formulation, decision making, protection, conservation, management, and rehabilitation in regards to the environment. This needs to change.
- BOTH women and men need to be involved for lasting accomplishments to be made.
- Promote analysis of the links between gender relations, environment and development with special regard to sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, industry, environmental health, water resources and sanitation.

## Section L. The Girl-child

There is a separate section for the Girl Child because in many countries around the world evidence shows that she is discriminated against from the earliest stages of her life and into adulthood. The Beijing Platform for Action is the first major international agreement to have a separate focus on the issues of life as a girl.

- **Strategic objective L.1.** Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child. Actions to be taken.
  - Foster an environment which promotes equality and respect for children
  - Steps must be taken to ensure that a child (male or female) is financially supported by parents since birth, as well as enforcing child-support laws
  - Laws must be strictly enforced that one entering the marriage has chosen freely, and agrees fully and in accordance to the minimum and legal age.
  - Create and Implement policies and plans of action/survival, protection, development, and advancement of the girl child, which would protect as well as promote her human rights
  
- **Strategic objective L.2.** Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls. Actions to be taken.
  - Develop educational programs and materials to help improve the self-image, lives and work opportunities of girls, particularly in fields that girls have been deferred from, such as mathematics, science, and technology.
  - Promote an educational setting which hinders from girls being married off and becoming pregnant at a young age.
  - Encourage educational institutions and social media to show non-stereotyped images of girls and boys. Eliminate child pornography.
  - Develop policies and programs which will give priority to formal and informal educational programmes that support girls, allowing them to acquire knowledge, develop self-esteem, and take responsibility for their own lives.
  - Place the most focus on programs which will educate women and men on the importance of girls' physical and mental health and wellbeing.
  
- **Strategic objective L.3.** Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential. Actions to be taken.
  - Raise awareness of the disadvantaged situation of girls among many political figures.
  - Make the girl child aware of her potential and educate her on her human rights, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
  
- **Strategic objective L.4.** Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training. Actions to be taken
  - Ensure universal and equal access to primary education and secondary education
  - Promote human rights within the educational field including human rights education
  - Provide education and skills training which would increase girls' opportunities and knowledge in employment, decision making, economic, financial, and political systems.



- **Strategic objective L.5.** Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.

Actions to be taken.

- Strengthen health education and services, particularly primary health care programs, including sexual and reproductive health as well as designing quality health programmes that meet the physical and mental needs of girls as well as young, expectant and nursing mothers.
- Establish peer education and outreach programmes to strengthen the individual, and decrease the vulnerability of girls to HIV/AIDS and other STDs.
- Take all appropriate measures to abolish traditional practices in regards to the discrimination that exists in food allocation and nutrition in the home (boys and men get more than girls) and to improve girls' ability to access healthcare.

- **Strategic objective L.6.** Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work. Actions to be taken.

- Protect children from being forced into labor as well as economic exploitation at an age which would interfere with the child's education or would be harmful to the child.
- Create laws which would define a minimum age for a child's admission into employment.
- Protect young girls at work through:
  - Minimum age for admission into employment
  - Strict monitoring of work conditions
    - Respect for Work Time, Monitoring of hygiene and health conditions at work
  - Application of social security coverage
  - Establishment of continuous training and education

- **Strategic objective L.7.** Eradicate violence against the girl-child. Actions to be taken.

- Take actions to enforce the safety and security of the girl child from all forms of violence
  - Take the appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the girl child within the household and society against all forms of mental and physical violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment or sexual exploitation.
- Create legislative rules which would protect girls from all forms of violence

- **Strategic objective L.8.** Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life. Actions to be taken.

- Provide access for girls to information in the media and social, cultural, economic, and political issues around the world in order to expand their horizons
- Support the creation of grassroots clubs/organizations to promote the equality and inclusion of girls in society

- **Strategic objective L.9.** Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child. Actions to be taken.

- Create policies and community programs that will help educate a family on how to raise and support a child, emphasizing the elimination of intra family discrimination and shared responsibilities
  - Provide an environment which is conducive for living and will support a family.
  - Educate and encourage parents to treat girls and boys equally.