

United Nations
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Joint United Nations Programmes on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Expert Group Meeting on
“The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality”
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AGREED LANGUAGE FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES

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**Fourth World Conference on Women
4-15 September 1995
Beijing, China**

Beijing Declaration

15. Equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy;

25. Encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality;

Platform for Action

Mission Statement

1. The Platform for Action is an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims at accelerating the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. ***This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. ...***

3. The Platform for Action emphasizes that ***women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men*** towards the common goal of gender equality around the world. ...

Global Framework

27. ... The boundaries of the gender division of labour between productive and reproductive roles are gradually being crossed as women have started to enter formerly male-dominated areas of work and men have started to accept greater responsibility for domestic tasks, including child care. ***However, changes in women's roles have been greater and much more rapid than changes in men's roles. In many countries, the differences between women's and men's achievements and activities are still not recognised as the consequences of socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological differences.***

30. ... ***Care of children, the sick and the elderly is a responsibility that falls disproportionately on women, owing to lack of equality and the unbalanced distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men.***

40. Half the world's population is under the age of 25 and most of the world's youth - more than 85 per cent - live in developing countries. Policy makers must recognize the implications of these demographic factors. Special measures must be taken to ensure that young women have the life skills necessary for active and effective participation in all levels of social, cultural, political and economic leadership. It will be critical for the international community to demonstrate a new commitment to the future - a commitment to inspiring a new generation of women and men to work together for a more just society. This new generation of leaders must accept and promote a world in which every child is

free from injustice, oppression and inequality and free to develop her/his own potential.
The principle of equality of women and men must therefore be integral to the socialization process.

Critical Areas of Concern

Strategic Objectives and Actions

B. Education and training of women

83(i) Develop appropriate education and information programmes with due respect for multilingualism, particularly in conjunction with the mass media, that make the public, particularly parents, aware of the importance of non-discriminatory education for children and the ***equal sharing of family responsibilities by girls and boys***;

C. Women and health

93. ... Overall, for young women early marriage and early motherhood can severely curtail educational and employment opportunities and are likely to have a long-term, adverse impact on the quality of their lives and the lives of their children. ***Young men are often not educated to respect women's self-determination and to share responsibility with women in matters of sexuality and reproduction.***

98. ... Women, who represent half of all adults newly infected with HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, have emphasized that social vulnerability and the ***unequal power relationships between women and men are obstacles to safe sex***, in their efforts to control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. The consequences of HIV/AIDS reach beyond women's health to their role as mothers and caregivers and their contribution to the economic support of their families. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases need to be seen from a gender perspective.

107. Actions to be taken by Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations, the mass media, the private sector and relevant international organisations, including United Nations bodies, as appropriate:

(c) Encourage men to share equally in child care and household work and to provide their share of financial support for their families, even if they do not live with them;

108. Actions to be taken by Governments, international bodies including relevant United Nations organisations, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organisations:

(e) Develop gender-sensitive multisectoral programmes and strategies to end social subordination of women and girls and to ensure their social and economic empowerment and equality; facilitate promotion of programmes to educate and enable men to assume their responsibilities to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases;

(l) Design specific programmes for men of all ages and male adolescents, recognising the parental roles referred to in paragraph 107 (e) above, aimed at providing complete and accurate information on safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour,

including voluntary, appropriate and effective male methods for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases through, inter alia, abstinence and condom use;

D. Violence against women

118. Violence against women is a manifestation of the historically *unequal power relations between men and women*, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement....

120. The absence of adequate gender-disaggregated data and statistics on the incidence of violence makes the elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult. Lack of or inadequate documentation and research on domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence against women and girls in private and in public, including the workplace, impede efforts to design specific intervention strategies. *Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilized to overcome violence in all its forms and that effective public measures can be taken to address both the causes and the consequences of violence. Men's groups mobilizing against gender violence are necessary allies for change.*

F. Women in the Economy

165. Actions to be taken by Government:

(m) Adjust employment policies to facilitate the restructuring of work patterns in order to promote the *sharing of family responsibilities*;

178. Actions to be taken by Governments, employers, employees, trade unions and women's organisations:

(g) Eliminate occupational segregation, especially by promoting the equal participation of women in highly skilled jobs and senior management positions, and through other measures, such as counselling and placement, that stimulate their on-the-job career development and upward mobility in the labour market, and by stimulating the diversification of occupational choices by both women and men; *encourage women to take up non-traditional jobs, especially in science and technology, and encourage men to seek employment in the social sector*;

179. By Governments:

(a) Adopt policies to ensure the appropriate protection of labour laws and social security benefits for part-time, temporary, seasonal and home-based workers; promote career development based on work conditions that *harmonize work and family responsibilities*;

(b) *Ensure that full and part-time work can be freely chosen by women and men on an equal basis*, and consider appropriate protection for atypical workers in terms of access to employment, working conditions and social security;

(c) Ensure, through legislation, incentives and/or encouragement, *opportunities for women and men to take job-protected parental leave and to have parental benefits; promote the equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women*,

including through appropriate legislation, incentives and/or encouragement, and also promote the facilitation of breast-feeding for working mothers;

(d) Develop policies, inter alia, in education to change attitudes that reinforce the division of labour based on gender in order to ***promote the concept of shared family responsibility for work in the home, particularly in relation to children and elder care***;

J. Women in the Media

245. By the media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in collaboration, as appropriate, with national machinery for the advancement of women:

(a) ***Promote the equal sharing of family responsibilities through media campaigns that emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family*** and that disseminate information aimed at eliminating spousal and child abuse and all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence;

L. The girl-child

262. Girls and adolescents may receive a variety of conflicting and confusing messages on their gender roles from their parents, teachers, peers and the media. ***Women and men need to work together with children and youth to break down persistent gender stereotypes***, taking into account the rights of the child and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents as stated in paragraph 267 below.

267. The International Conference on Population and Development recognized, in paragraph 7.3 of the Programme of Action, that "full attention should be given to the promotion of mutually respectful and equitable gender relations and particularly to meeting the educational and service needs of adolescents to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality", taking into account the rights of the child to access to information, privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent, as well as the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in conformity with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. ***Support should be given to integral sexual education for young people with parental support and guidance that stresses the responsibility of males for their own sexuality and fertility and that help them exercise their responsibilities.***

Twenty-third United Nations General Assembly special session, “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, New York, 5-9 June 2000

Political Declaration

6. *Emphasize that men must involve themselves and take joint responsibility with women for the promotion of gender equality;*

Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

C. Women and Health

11. *Achievements.* Programmes have been implemented to create awareness among policy makers and planners of the need for health programmes to cover all aspects of women’s health throughout women’s life cycle, which have contributed to an increase in life expectancy in many countries. There is: ... ***increased knowledge and use of family planning and contraceptive methods as well as increased awareness among men of their responsibility in family planning and contraceptive methods and their use***; increased attention to sexually transmitted infections, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) among women and girls, and methods to protect against such infections; increased attention to breastfeeding, nutrition, infants’ and mothers’ health; the introduction of a gender perspective in health and health-related educational and physical activities, ...

12. *Obstacles.* ... ***Such obstacles as unequal power relationships between women and men, in which women often do not have the power to insist on safe and responsible sex practices, and a lack of communication and understanding between men and women on women’s health needs, inter alia, endanger women’s health, particularly by increasing their susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and affect women’s access to health care and education, especially in relation to prevention.*** ... There continues to be a lack of information on availability of and access to appropriate, primary health-care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care, insufficient attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care as well as a lack of prevention, screening and treatment for breast, cervical and ovarian cancers and osteoporosis. ***The testing and development of male contraceptives is still insufficient.*** ...

D. Violence against women

13. *Achievements.* ... ***Research into and specialised studies on gender roles are increasing, in particular on men’s and boys’ roles,*** and all forms of violence against women, as well as on the situation of and impact on children growing up in families where violence occurs. ...

F. Women and the economy

20. *Achievements.* There is increased participation of women in the labour market and subsequent gain in economic autonomy. Some Governments have introduced a variety of measures that address women’s economic and social rights, equal access to and control over economic resources and equality in employment. Other measures include the

ratification of international labour conventions as well as enacting or strengthening legislation to make it compatible with these conventions. ***There is increased awareness of the need to reconcile employment and family responsibilities and of the positive effect of such measures as maternity and paternity leave and also parental leave, and child and family care services and benefits.*** Some Governments have made provisions to address discriminatory and abusive behaviour in the workplace and to prevent unhealthy working conditions, ...

21. *Obstacles.* ... In some cases, persistent gender stereotyping has led to a lower status of male workers who are fathers and to insufficient encouragement for men to reconcile professional and family responsibilities. ... ***The combination of remunerated work and care giving within families, households and communities still leads to a disproportionate burden for women since there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities by men.*** It is still also women who perform the larger part of unremunerated work.

G. Women in power and decision-making

22. *Achievements.* ... An increasing number of countries applied affirmative and positive action policies, including quota systems or voluntary agreements in some countries and measurable goals and targets, developed training programmes for women's leadership, and introduced ***measures to reconcile family and work responsibilities of both women and men.*** ...

III. Current challenges affecting the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

44. ... Responsible behaviour and gender equality are among the important prerequisites for its prevention. ***There is also the need for more effective strategies*** to empower women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, to protect themselves from high risk and irresponsible behaviour leading to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and ***to promote responsible, safe and respectful behaviour by men and to also promote gender equality.*** ...

47. The changing context of gender relations, as well as the discussion on gender equality has led to an increased reassessment of gender roles. ***This has further encouraged a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of women and men*** working together towards gender equality and the need for changing those stereotypical and traditional roles that limit women's full potential. There is a need for balanced participation between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work. Failure to recognise and measure in quantitative terms unremunerated work of women, which is often not valued in national accounts, has meant that women's full contribution to social and economic development remains underestimated and undervalued. ***As long as there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities with men, the combination of remunerated work and care giving will lead to the continued disproportionate burden for women in comparison to men.***

IV. Actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

58. Political will and commitment at all levels are crucial to ensure mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the adoption and implementation of comprehensive and action-oriented policies in all areas. Policy commitments are essential for further developing the

necessary framework which ensures women's equal access to and control over economic and financial resources, training, services and institutions as well as their participation in decision-making and management. Policy-making processes require the partnership of women and men at all levels. ***Men and boys should also be actively involved and encouraged in all efforts to achieve the goals of the Platform for Action and its implementation.***

60. Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and is a strong force for social cohesion and integration and, as such, should be strengthened. The inadequate support to women and insufficient protection and support to their respective families affect society as a whole and undermine efforts to achieve gender equality. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist and the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected. Women's social and economic contributions to the welfare of the family and ***the social significance of maternity and paternity continue to be inadequately addressed. Motherhood and fatherhood and the role of parents and legal guardians in the family and in the upbringing of children and the importance of all family members to the family's well-being are also acknowledged and must not be a basis for discrimination.*** Women also continue to bear a disproportionate share of the household responsibilities and the care of children, the sick and the elderly. Such imbalance needs to be consistently addressed through appropriate policies and programmes, in particular those geared towards education, and through legislation where appropriate. In order to achieve full partnership, both in public and in private spheres, ***both women and men must be enabled to reconcile and share equally work responsibilities and family responsibilities.***

A. Actions to be taken at the national level

By Governments:

72. (l) Design and implement programmes to encourage and enable men to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour, and to use effectively methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

B. Further actions to be taken at the national level

By Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and other actors of civil society:

82. (b) Promote programmes to enable women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and child-care responsibilities;

82. (d) Design, implement and promote family friendly policies and services, including affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependants, parental and other leave schemes and campaigns to sensitize public opinion and other relevant actors on equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities between women and men;

(j) Develop policies and implement programmes, particularly for men and boys, on changing stereotypical attitudes and behaviours concerning gender roles and responsibilities to promote gender equality and positive attitudes and behaviour;

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Commission on the Status of Women, 40th session
11-22 March 1996

Agreed conclusions 1996/3. Child and dependant care, including sharing of work and family responsibilities

B. Increasing the role of men in family responsibilities

5. Family responsibilities rest equally with men and with women. *Greater participation of men in family responsibilities, including domestic work and child and dependant care, would contribute to the welfare of children, women and men themselves.* Even though this change is bound to be slow and difficult, it remains essential.

6. These changes, which imply a change in outlook, can be encouraged by Governments, notably through education and by promoting *greater access on the part of men to activities hitherto regarded as women's activities.*

D. Adapting the legal system

10. There is a need, through legislation and/or other appropriate measures, to rebalance the *sharing of family responsibilities between men and women*, and to inform them of the existing legislative provisions.

12. Action is needed to:

(c) Promote legislative measures, incentives and/or measures of encouragement that would *enable men and women to take parental leave and receive social security benefits.* Such measures should protect working men and women against dismissal and guarantee their right to re-enter employment in an equivalent post;

E. Adopting and promoting a family support policy and encouraging reconciliation of family and professional life for women and men

13. It is essential to define, at the national, regional and local levels, a family support policy that is based on the principle of *equal sharing of family responsibilities* and is consistent with the policies for promoting equality in the labour market and protecting the rights of the child. Particular attention should be paid to single-parent families. There is a need, where necessary, to revise legislation so that women are no longer defined as "minors" and/or dependants and to ensure that they enjoy the same access to resources as men.

**Commission on the Status of Women, 41st session
10-21 March 1997**

Agreed conclusions 1997/2. Women in power and decision-making

12. Political parties should be encouraged to fund training programmes in conducting campaigns, fund-raising and parliamentary procedures to enable women successfully to run for, be elected to, and serve in public office and parliament. ***In order to promote reconciliation of work and personal life for women and men, structural changes are needed in the work environment, including flexible working times and meeting arrangements.***

Agreed conclusions 1997/3. Women and the economy

13. Governments, labour unions and the private sector should develop and use analytical tools to compare wages in female and male-dominated occupations, including measures and tools to better reflect the real value of the skills, knowledge and experience of women developed through waged and unwaged work, as well as the full range of the requirements and conditions of waged work, with the aim of achieving equal pay for work of equal value, with a particular focus on minimum wages and low-wage industries. Gender-sensitive monitoring is crucial in enforcing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Comprehensive policy-making in this field should include:

(d) Changing the gender-based division of labour and the stereotyped choices of men and women;

15. Full integration of women into the formal economy and, in particular into economic decision-making, means changing the current gender-based division of labour into new economic structures where women and men enjoy equal treatment, pay and power. To this end, better ***sharing of paid and unpaid work between women and men is required.*** Governments should take or encourage measures, including, where appropriate, the formulation, promotion and implementation of legal and administrative measures to ***facilitate the reconciliation of work and personal and/or family life, such as child and dependant care, parental leave and flexible working schemes for men and women and, where appropriate, shorter working hours.***

**Commission on the Status Women, 42nd session
2-13 March 1998**

Agreed conclusions 1998/I: Violence against women

F. Change attitudes

Actions to be taken by Governments and civil society, including non-governmental organizations:

-Encourage and support men's own initiatives to complement efforts of women's organizations to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls;

Agreed conclusions 1998/IV: The girl child

A. Promotion and protection of the human rights of the girl child

Actions to be taken by Governments, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and civil society and the United Nations system, as appropriate:

-Conduct awareness-raising campaigns designed to mobilize communities, including community leaders, religious organizations, parents and other family members, *especially male family members*, with regard to the rights of the child, giving special emphasis to the girl child, and monitor changes in attitudes;

**Commission on the Status Women, 43rd session
1-12 March and 1 April 1999**

Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action

I. Women and health

Actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations system and civil society, as appropriate

2. Sexual and reproductive health

(d) Support the development and widespread use of male contraceptive methods;

(e) *Educate women and men, particularly young people, with a view to encouraging men to accept their responsibilities in matters related to sexuality, reproduction and child-rearing* and to promoting equal relationships between women and men;

4. Mental health and substance abuse

(e) Promote equitable *sharing of household and family responsibilities* between women and men, and provide social support systems, where appropriate, to help women who, as a result of their multiple roles in the family, often may suffer from fatigue and stress;

Resolution 43/2: Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

The Commission on the Status of Women,

...

Noting with concern that approximately 80 per cent of the infected women have been infected through unprotected sex with an infected male partner, and ***acknowledging therefore that men have a shared responsibility towards protecting their own and women's sexual health,***

...

13. Welcomes the efforts of the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in promoting sexual and reproductive health education for young people, in particular girls, while encouraging them to delay sexual initiation, and, in this context, urges that greater attention must be given to the ***education of men and boys about their roles and their responsibilities in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases,*** including HIV/AIDS, to their partners;

Commission on the Status of Women, 44th session
28 February -17 March 2000

Resolution 44/2: Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

The Commission on the Status of Women,

*Noting with concern that approximately 80 per cent of the infected women have been infected through unprotected sex with an infected male partner, and **acknowledging therefore that men have a shared responsibility towards protecting their own and women's sexual health,***

16. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in promoting sexual and reproductive health education for young people, in particular girls, while encouraging them to delay sexual initiation, and, in this context, ***urges that greater attention be given to the education of men and boys about their roles and their responsibilities in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, to their partners;***

**Commission on the Status of Women, 45th session
6-16 March 2001 and 9-11 May 2001**

Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on thematic issues

A

Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

Actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate

1. Empowerment of women

(a) The rapid progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly in the developing world, has had a **devastating** impact on women. The ***unequal power relationships between women and men***, in which women often do not have the power to insist on safe and responsible sex practices, and lack of communication and understanding between women and men on women's health needs, inter alia, endanger women's health, particularly by increasing their susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

2. Prevention

(f) Request the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its cosponsors to continue in their efforts aimed at providing complete and accurate sexual and reproductive health education for young people, within a cultural and gender-sensitive framework, while, inter alia, encouraging them to delay sexual initiation, or/and to use condoms and, in this context, ***urge that greater attention be given to the education of men and boys about their roles and their responsibilities in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, to their partners;***

(i) Encourage active involvement of men and boys through, inter alia, youth-led and youth-specific HIV education projects and peer-based programmes, in challenging gender stereotypes and attitudes as well as gender inequalities in relation to HIV and AIDS, as well as their full participation in prevention, impact alleviation and care, and ***design and implement programmes to encourage and enable men to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and to use effectively methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;***

B

Gender and all forms of discrimination, in particular racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate

3. Change attitudes and eliminate stereotypes and prejudice

(e) ***Develop strategies to increase awareness among men and boys with respect to their shared responsibility in promoting gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination,*** in particular racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance as well as multiple discrimination;

**Commission on the Status of Women, 46th session
4 - 15 March 2002**

A

Agreed conclusions on eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle, in a globalizing world

5. The Commission urges Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, to take the following actions to accelerate implementation of these strategic objectives to address the needs of all women:

(o) Design, implement and promote family friendly policies and services, including affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependants, parental and other leave schemes and campaigns to sensitize public opinion and other relevant actors on *equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities* between women and men;

Action taken by the Commission

Women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS)

39. At the 9th meeting, ...

The Commission on the Status of Women,

18. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in promoting sexual and reproductive health education for young people, in particular girls, while encouraging them to delay sexual initiation, and, in this context, ***urges that greater attention be given to the education of men and boys about their roles and their responsibilities in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, to their partners;***

40. At the same meeting, the representative of Malawi orally revised the draft resolution. The revisions were subsequently issued in document E/CN.6/2002/L.3/Rev.1, which read as follows:

“1. Calls upon Governments, to intensify efforts to challenge gender stereotypes and attitudes and gender inequalities in relation to HIV/AIDS, encouraging the active participation and involvement of men and boys;

International Conference on Population and Development
5-13 September 1994
Cairo, Egypt

Programme of Action

Chapter IV: GENDER EQUALITY, EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

A. Empowerment and status of women

Basis for action

4.11. The design of family health and other development interventions should take better account of the demands on women's time from the responsibilities of child-rearing, household work and income-generating activities. *Male responsibilities should be emphasized with respect to child-rearing and housework.* Greater investments should be made in appropriate measures to lessen the daily burden of domestic responsibilities, the greatest share of which falls on women....

B. Male responsibilities and participation

Basis for action

4.24. Changes in both men's and women's knowledge, attitudes and behaviour are necessary conditions for achieving the harmonious partnership of men and women. *Men play a key role in bringing about gender equality since, in most societies, men exercise preponderant power in nearly every sphere of life, ranging from personal decisions regarding the size of families to the policy and programme decisions taken at all levels of Government.* It is essential to improve communication between men and women on issues of sexuality and reproductive health, and the understanding of their joint responsibilities, so that men and women are equal partners in public and private life.

Objective

4.25. The objective is to promote gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community life, and to *encourage and enable men to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and their social and family roles.*

Actions

4.26. The *equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including family planning, child-rearing and housework*, should be promoted and encouraged by Governments. This should be pursued by means of information, education, communication, employment legislation and by fostering an economically enabling environment, such as family leave for men and women so that they may have more choice regarding the balance of their domestic and public responsibilities.

4.27. Special efforts should be made to *emphasize men's shared responsibility and promote their active involvement in responsible parenthood, sexual and reproductive behaviour*, including family planning; prenatal, maternal and child health; prevention of

sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV; prevention of unwanted and high-risk pregnancies; shared control and contribution to family income, children's education, health and nutrition; and recognition and promotion of the equal value of children of both sexes. *Male responsibilities in family life* must be included in the education of children from the earliest ages. Special emphasis should be placed on the prevention of violence against women and children.

4.28. Governments should take steps to ensure that children receive appropriate financial support from their parents by, among other measures, enforcing child- support laws. Governments should consider changes in law and policy to *ensure men's responsibility to and financial support for their children and families*. Such laws and policies should also encourage maintenance or reconstitution of the family unit. The safety of women in abusive relationships should be protected.

4.29. National and community leaders should *promote the full involvement of men in family life* and the full integration of women in community life. Parents and schools should ensure that attitudes that are respectful of women and girls as equals are instilled in boys from the earliest possible age, along with an understanding of their shared responsibilities in all aspects of a safe, secure and harmonious family life. Relevant programmes to reach boys before they become sexually active are urgently needed.

Chapter V: THE FAMILY, ITS ROLES, RIGHTS, COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Diversity of family structure and composition

Actions

5.4. When formulating socio-economic development policies, special consideration should be given to increasing the earning power of all adult members of economically deprived families, including the elderly and women who work in the home, and to enabling children to be educated rather than compelled to work. Particular attention should be paid to needy single parents, especially those who are responsible wholly or in part for the support of children and other dependants, through ensuring payment of at least minimum wages and allowances, credit, education, funding for women's self-help groups and *stronger legal enforcement of male parental financial responsibilities*.

Chapter VII: REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

A. Reproductive rights and reproductive health

Actions

7.8. Innovative programmes must be developed to make information, counselling and services for reproductive health accessible to adolescents and adult men. *Such programmes must both educate and enable men to share more equally in family planning and in domestic and child-rearing responsibilities and to accept the major responsibility for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases*. Programmes must reach *men in their workplaces*, at home and where they gather for recreation. *Boys and adolescents*, with the support and guidance of their parents, and in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, should also be reached through schools, youth

organizations and wherever they congregate. Voluntary and appropriate *male methods for contraception*, as well as for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS, should be promoted and made accessible with adequate information and counselling.

B. Family planning

Objectives

(e) To increase the participation and *sharing of responsibility of men in the actual practice of family planning*;

D. Human sexuality and gender relations

Actions

7.37. Support should be given to integral sexual education and services for young people, with the support and guidance of their parents and in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, that *stress responsibility of males for their own sexual health and fertility and that help them exercise those responsibilities*. Educational efforts should begin within the family unit, in the community and in the schools at an appropriate age, but must also reach adults, *in particular men*, through non-formal education and a variety of community-based efforts.

Adolescents

7.41. The reproductive health needs of adolescents as a group have been largely ignored to date by existing reproductive health services. The response of societies to the reproductive health needs of adolescents should be based on information that helps them attain a level of maturity required to make responsible decisions. In particular, information and services should be made available to adolescents to help them understand their sexuality and protect them from unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and subsequent risk of infertility. This should be combined with the *education of young men to respect women's self-determination and to share responsibility with women in matters of sexuality and reproduction*. This effort is uniquely important for the health of young women and their children, for women's self-determination and, in many countries, for efforts to slow the momentum of population growth....

Chapter VIII: HEALTH, MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY

C. Women's health and safe motherhood

Actions

8.22. All countries, with the support of all sections of the international community, must expand the provision of maternal health services in the context of primary health care. ... *Programmes and education to engage men's support for maternal health and safe motherhood should be developed.*

8.27. All countries, as a matter of some urgency, need to seek changes in high- risk sexual behaviour and devise strategies to *ensure that men share responsibility for sexual and reproductive health, including family planning, and for preventing and controlling sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and AIDS.*

Chapter XI: POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

B. Population information, education and communication

Actions

11.16. Information, education and communication efforts should raise awareness through public education campaigns on such priority issues as: safe motherhood, reproductive health and rights, maternal and child health and family planning, discrimination against and valorization of the girl child and persons with disabilities; child abuse; violence against women; *male responsibility*; gender equality; sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; responsible sexual behaviour; teenage pregnancy; racism and xenophobia; ageing populations; and unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

...

Chapter XII: TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

B. Reproductive health research

Basis for Action

12.10. Research, in particular biomedical research, has been instrumental in giving more and more people access to a greater range of safe and effective modern methods for regulation of fertility. However, not all persons can find a family-planning method that suits them and *the range of choices available to men is more limited than that available to women.* ...

Actions

12.13. Research on sexuality and gender roles and relationships in different cultural settings is urgently needed, with emphasis on such areas as abuse, discrimination and violence against women; genital mutilation, where practised; sexual behaviour and mores; *male attitudes towards sexuality and procreation, fertility, family and gender roles*; risk-taking behaviour regarding sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancies; women's and men's perceived needs for methods for regulation of fertility and sexual health services; and reasons for non-use or ineffective use of existing services and technologies.

12.14. *High priority should also be given to the development of new methods for regulation of fertility for men. Special research should be undertaken on factors inhibiting male participation in order to enhance male involvement and responsibility in family planning.* In conducting sexual and reproductive health research, special attention should be given to the needs of adolescents in order to develop suitable policies and programmes and appropriate technologies to meet their health needs. Special priority

should be given to research on sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and research on infertility.

**Twenty-first Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Population and
Development
New York
30 June – 2 July 1999**

**Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International
Conference on Population and Development**

III. Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women

C. Gender perspective in programmes and policies

47. The differential impact on women and men of globalization of the economy and the privatization of basic social services, particularly reproductive health services, should be monitored closely. Special programmes and institutional mechanisms should be put in place to promote and protect the health and well-being of young girls, older women and other vulnerable groups. The provision of services to *meet men's reproductive and sexual health needs* should not prejudice reproductive and sexual health services for women.

D. Advocacy for gender equality and equity

50. All leaders at all levels, as well as parents and educators, should *promote positive male role models that facilitate boys to become gender-sensitive adults and enable men to support*, promote and respect women's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, recognizing the inherent dignity of all human beings. *Men should take responsibility for their own reproductive and sexual behaviour and health. Research should be undertaken on men's sexuality, their masculinity and their reproductive behaviour.*

IV. Reproductive rights and reproductive health

A. Reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health

52. Governments, in collaboration with civil society, including non-governmental organizations, donors and the United Nations system, should:

(g) *Promote men's understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to* respecting the human rights of women; protecting women's health, including supporting their partners' access to sexual and reproductive health services; preventing unwanted pregnancy; reducing maternal mortality and morbidity; reducing transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; sharing household and child-rearing responsibilities; and promoting the elimination of harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, and sexual and other gender-based violence, ensuring that girls and women are free from coercion and violence;

C. Reducing maternal mortality and morbidity

62. Governments, with the increased participation of the United Nations system, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, donors and the international community, should:

(c) Support public health education to create awareness of the risks of pregnancy, labour and delivery and to increase the understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of family members, including men, as well as of civil society and Governments, in promoting and protecting maternal health;

**World Summit for Social Development
Copenhagen, Denmark
6-12 March 1995**

Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development

Chapter 1: An Enabling Environment for Social Development

7. The ultimate goal of social development is to improve and enhance the quality of life of all people. ... Empowerment and participation are essential for democracy, harmony and social development. All members of society should have the opportunity and be able to exercise the right and responsibility to take an active part in the affairs of the community in which they live. Gender equality and equity and the full participation of women in all economic, social and political activities are essential. The obstacles that have limited the access of women to decision-making, education, health-care services and productive employment must be eliminated and an *equitable partnership between men and women established, involving men's full responsibility in family life*. It is necessary to change the prevailing social paradigm of gender to usher in a new generation of women and men working together to create a more humane world order.

Chapter 3: Expansion of Productive Employment and Reduction of Unemployment

47. There is therefore an urgent need, in the overall context of promoting sustained economic growth and sustainable development, for:

-
- Empowerment of women, gender balance in decision-making processes at all levels and gender analysis in policy development to ensure equal employment opportunities and wage rates for women and to enhance harmonious and mutually beneficial *partnerships between women and men in sharing family and employment responsibilities*;
-
- A broader recognition and understanding of work and employment and greater *flexibility in working time arrangements for both men and women*.

Actions

56. The full participation of women in the labour market and their equal access to employment opportunities require:

(e) *Encouraging men to take an active part in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including the sharing of child-rearing and housework.*

**Twenty-fourth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Further
initiatives for social development
Geneva
26 June – 1 July 2000**

II. Review and assessment of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

Full Employment

15. While in most countries the employment of women has increased steadily, gender inequalities, reflected in particular in the wage gap and a *disproportionate share of family responsibilities*, have remained obstacles to women's access to and participation in the labour market...

III. Further actions and initiatives to implement the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development

Commitment 3: To promote the goal of full employment as a basic priority of economic and social policies, and to enable all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work:

49. Promote gender equality and eliminate gender discrimination in the labour market by:

(c) *Assisting women and men in reconciling employment and family responsibilities*, inter alia, by flexible working arrangements, including parental voluntary part-time employment and work-sharing, as well as accessible and affordable quality child-care facilities, paying particular attention to the needs of single-parent households.

Commitment 4: To promote social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons:

56. ...Greater attention should be paid to helping the family in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles, to the causes and consequences of family disintegration, and to the *adoption of measures to reconcile work and family life for women and men*.

Commitment 5: To promote full respect for human dignity and to achieve equality and equity between women and men, and to recognize and enhance the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and in development:

80. Strengthen national efforts, including with assistance from the international community, to promote the empowerment of women, inter alia, by:

(g) Promoting programmes to *enable women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and child care responsibilities*.

Commission for Social Development

Commission for Social Development, 35th session
25 February-6 March 1997

Agreed conclusions: Productive employment and sustainable livelihoods

IV. Poverty eradication, equality and social justice

21. The Commission therefore recommends that:

(b) Governments should actively combat gender discrimination in the labour market. Flexible working time arrangements and social support mechanisms, such as child care, should be provided *to allow men and women to harmonize work and family responsibilities*. Occupational segregation should be eliminated, inter alia, by ensuring that girls complete their education and by encouraging both boys and girls to make non-traditional career choices. Steps should also be taken to ensure that the high representation of women in part-time employment, or another factor, does not exclude them from training. Women's active participation in political decision-making, as well as in the structures of economic decision-making, and in workers' and employers' organizations should be strengthened;

VI. Education, training, labour market policies and patterns of work

24. There is a need to intensify efforts to achieve a broader recognition and understanding of work, employment and different patterns of work. The Commission therefore recommends:

(d) Adopting policies to enable workers to *combine work and family responsibilities and better share paid employment and unpaid caring tasks between women and men* through the enhanced availability of facilities such as child care and flexible working conditions.

Commission for Social Development, 36th session
10-20 February 1998

Agreed conclusions: Promoting social integration and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons

24. The family should be helped in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles and in contributing to social integration, and this help should involve:

(d) promoting *equal partnership between women and men in the family*.

29. The empowerment of women and their active participation are essential to social integration. Policies and programmes should ensure gender equality through changes in attitudes and practices, encourage the full participation and empowerment of women in

social, economic and political life, and enhance the gender balance in decision-making processes at all levels as well as improve access to ownership of resources and to positions of responsibility. Discriminatory attitudes and stereotyping must be actively combated. In this context, policies and programmes to *enable women and men to combine working life and family life are essential*.

53. Attention should be given to *reconciling professional activity and family responsibilities, for both men and women*, inter alia, through affordable childcare, family support and appropriate flexible working arrangements.

**Commission on Social Development, 38th session
8-17 February, 14 and 17 March 2000**

Agreed conclusions: Overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

Full employment

15. While in most countries the employment of women has increased steadily, gender inequalities, reflected for instance in the wage gap, and a **disproportionate share of family responsibilities**, in particular, have remained obstacles to women's equal access to and participation in the labour market. ...

**Twenty-seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Children
New York
8-10 May 2002**

A World Fit For Children

III. Plan of Action

A. Creating a world fit for children

24. We also recognize the need *to address the changing role of men in society, as boys, adolescents and fathers, and the challenges faced by boys growing up in today's world*. We will further promote the *shared responsibility of both parents in education and in the raising of children*, and will make every effort to ensure that *fathers have opportunities to participate in their children's lives*.

B. Goals, strategies and actions

4. Combating HIV/AIDS

46. To combat the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on children, we resolve to take urgent and aggressive action as agreed at the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, and to place particular emphasis on the following agreed goals and commitments:

(a) By 2003, establish time-bound national targets to achieve the internationally agreed global prevention goal to reduce by 2005 HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 in the most affected countries by 25 per cent and by 25 per cent globally by 2010, and intensify efforts to achieve these targets as well as to challenge gender stereotypes and attitudes, and gender inequalities in relation to HIV/AIDS, *encouraging the active involvement of men and boys*;

**Twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly
25-27 June 2001**

Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS: "Global Crisis — Global Action"

Prevention

Prevention must be the mainstay of our response

47. By 2003, establish time-bound national targets to achieve the internationally agreed global prevention goal to reduce by 2005 HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 in the most affected countries by 25 per cent and by 25 per cent globally by 2010, and to intensify efforts to achieve these targets as well as to *challenge gender stereotypes and attitudes, and gender inequalities in relation to HIV/AIDS, encouraging the active involvement of men and boys;*