



**United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

The Role of National Mechanisms in Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

**Report of the Expert Group Meeting
Rome, Italy
29 November – 2 December 2004**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In order to contribute to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, especially in relation to the critical area of concern on the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2005, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) organized an expert group meeting on “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: achievements, gaps and challenges”. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Italy, in Rome, from 29 November to 2 December 2004. The United Nations regional commissions collaborated with the Division in the organization of the meeting.

2. The expert group meeting built on the outcomes of intergovernmental processes such as the United Nations World Conferences on Women and sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women since 1995. It discussed the changing contexts as well as the achievements of different types of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, in formulation, implementation and monitoring of national strategies for gender equality and empowerment of women, and in facilitating gender mainstreaming in all national policy areas. It further identified good practices and continuing challenges faced by national mechanisms. Based on the inputs of experts, the expert group meeting adopted recommendations for strengthening and enhancing the roles of mechanisms for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. The report which follows is the outcome of this meeting.

II. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Participation

3. The expert group meeting on “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: achievements, gaps and challenges” was organized by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Commissions.

4. The meeting was attended by 8 experts from different regions, 11 resource persons, 43 observers (3 from the United Nations, 23 from the Government of Italy and 17 from non-governmental organizations and civil society), one consultant and three representatives from the Division (See annex I).

B. Documentation

5. The documentation of the meeting was comprised of:

- a background paper prepared by a consultant to the Division for the Advancement of Women
- eight papers prepared by experts
- eleven papers prepared by resource persons
- one paper prepared by an observer

This report and all documentation relating to the meeting are available online at the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>

C. Programme of work

6. At its opening session on 29 of November 2004, the meeting adopted the following programme of work (see annex III):

- Opening of the meeting
- Election of officers and adoption of the programme of work
- Presentation and discussion of the Division for the Advancement of Women's background paper and papers prepared by experts and resource persons
- Working groups on issues and recommendations
- Introduction of draft report
- Adoption of final report
- Closing session

D. Election of officers

7. The experts elected the following officers:

Co-chairs: Nüket Kardam (Turkey) and Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo (Uganda) Rapporteur: Marian Sawyer (Australia).

E. Opening statements

8. The meeting was opened by Her Excellency Stefania Prestigiacomo, Minister for Equal Opportunities, Government of Italy. In her opening statement, Minister Stefania Prestigiacomo noted the importance of the expert group meeting on the role of national mechanisms within the context of the preparation of the ten year review of the Fourth World Conference on Women that took place in Beijing in 1995. She emphasized that the Italian Government takes the ten year review and appraisal process very seriously and would send a high-level official delegation to the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2005. Minister Prestigiacomo indicated the full support of the Government of Italy for the expert group meeting and wished the experts a successful outcome.

9. Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director, Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, thanked the Government of Italy, in particular Minister Prestigiacomo, for hosting the meeting and welcomed all participants. She also thanked Regional Commissions for collaboration in the preparation of the meeting. In her statement, Ms. Hannan identified major achievements and challenges in development of institutional mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. She indicated that the expert group meeting had a special significance for the ten year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting would assist the Commission in its deliberations on the critical area of concern on institutional mechanisms.

10. In her welcoming statement, Prof. Zotta, Director of the Scuola Superiore de Ministero dell' Interno (High Institute of Ministry of Interior) provided a brief background of the work of the Scuola Superiore. She pledged her full support and wished the experts fruitful discussions and a successful outcome of the meeting.

III. BACKGROUND

11. Discussion on the role of national machineries preceded the First UN World Conference on Women in Mexico City, in 1975. The Mexico Declaration and Plan of Action was the first international instrument to introduce the concept of the national machinery for the advancement of women. The First World Conference on Women called for the establishment of national machineries for the advancement of women to advocate for attention to women's advancement, provide policy direction, undertake research and build alliances. Following the First UN World Conference on Women many national machineries were established in the 1970s and 1980s. By the end of the World Decade for Women (1976-1985), 127 Member States of the United Nations had established some form of national machinery.¹ As of 2004, at least 165 countries have established national machineries.²

12. The term national machinery for the advancement of women referred to the mechanisms established by government to promote and support the achievement of gender equality, including through implementation of the commitments made in global processes, such as the four world conferences on women. The national machineries established in the 1970s and 1980s included women's ministries and women's departments, bureaus or desks in other ministries with broad mandates covering a number of issues. Because Government structures differed, so did the bodies established to promote women's advancement.

13. The subsequent UN World Conferences on Women in Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) called for an increase and strengthening of national machineries to support women's advancement and gender equality. A number of constraints in the national machineries established were identified in this process, particularly related to mandate, location, power and resources. Many national machineries were constrained by lack of political will and commitment at the highest level, insufficient understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming among government structures, unclear mandates, and structural and communication problems within and among government agencies. Other constraints included a lack of financial resources, lack of expertise and conflicting demands on the scarce time and resources of the national machineries. Particular problems were experienced when women/gender equality units were part of larger ministries with responsibility in a number of areas, as gender equality issues tended to be marginalized in competition for attention and resources.

14. The Commission on the Status of Women considered the role and structure of national machineries as a priority theme at its thirty-second and thirty-fifth sessions in 1988 and 1991, respectively. The Secretary-General's report to the thirty-second session of the Commission defined the national machinery as being a body "recognized by the Government as the institution dealing with the promotion of the status of women".³ Its functions were described as *inter alia*: supporting the effective participation of women in development; promoting women's education and participation in political decision-making and the economy; ensuring the highest level of Government's support; combating negative cultural attitudes and stereotyping of women in the media; and facilitating research on the status of women and collecting sex-disaggregated data.

¹ As listed in the Directory of National Focal Points for the Advancement of Women, quoted in *Women 2000*, No. 3. 1987:7.

² As listed in the Directory of National Machineries for the Advancement of Women, Division for the Advancement of Women, March 2004

³ E/CN.6/1988/3, para. 21. The definition is based on the outcomes of the Seminar on "National Machinery for Monitoring and Improving the Status of Women", 1987, Vienna, Austria, 28 September - 2 October.

15. The report of the Secretary-General to the Commission in 1991 focused on information systems and identified the acquisition, analysis and dissemination of information on the advancement of women as essential factors for the success of national machineries.⁴ It further suggested that location, improvement of staff access to modern communication technologies and networking, especially with non-governmental organizations and with the United Nations system, were also important for successful work of national machineries. During the thirty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, many representatives of Member States drew attention to the efforts undertaken in various countries to restructure the national machineries to increase their status and improve their technical potential. Others highlighted the obstacles to the success of national machineries, including lack of human and financial resources and clear mandates.

16. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (September 1995) gave specific attention to national machineries in chapter four under the critical area of concern "Institutional Mechanisms" and in chapter five on Institutional Arrangements. The Platform for Action brought a new and important element into the work of national machineries - the strategy of gender mainstreaming which aimed to ensure the incorporation of gender perspectives into all areas of development. It defined the main role of the national machinery as being the central policy coordinating unit inside the government whose main task is "to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas" (para 201) and proposed strategic objectives with concrete actions to strengthen national machineries.

17. Discussions on the role of national machineries have also been held at the regional and sub-regional levels. In 1996, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), organized a sub-regional conference on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in Central and Eastern Europe. Recommendations were elaborated on strengthening national machineries in the region. In the same year, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) also held a regional meeting on strengthening national machineries for the advancement of women.

18. In 1998, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), organized an expert group meeting on "National Machineries for Gender Equality" in Santiago, Chile.⁵ The expert group meeting aimed, inter alia, to create a better understanding of the institutional and other factors which would stimulate actions, policies and the allocation of resources to strengthen the role, efficiency and effectiveness of national machineries in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. One of the recommendations of the expert group meeting was the compilation of a United Nations publication on good practices in order to facilitate exchange of information on enhancing the role of national machineries in different countries.⁶

19. The agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming highlighted the important role of national machineries. They defined gender mainstreaming "as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy of making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design,

⁴ Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/1991/3).

⁵ Expert Group Meeting on "National Machineries for Gender Equality", 1998, Santiago, Chile, 31 August-4 September (EGM/NM/1998/Rep.1).

⁶ A publication was commissioned by the Division for the Advancement of Women: "Mainstreaming gender, democratizing the state? Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women", edited by Shirin M. Rai, Manchester University Press, 2003.

implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality”.

20. The agreed conclusions also emphasized that the responsibility for gender mainstreaming did not lie with specialist individuals or entities, but with management and staff in all bodies. They stressed the need to enhance interaction among United Nations entities and national machineries for the advancement of women. In July 2004, ECOSOC adopted resolution E/2004/4 which reinforced the role of national machineries as key actors in promoting gender mainstreaming.

21. The agreed conclusions 1999/2 adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women in 1999 on institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women stressed that “the effectiveness and sustainability of national machineries are highly dependent on their embeddedness in the national context, the political and socio-economic system and the needs of and accountability to women”.⁷ The Commission recommended that national machineries be placed at the highest possible level of government and be invested with the authority and resources needed to fulfil their mandates. It further recommended structuring the functions of national machineries to ensure their effective work on gender mainstreaming.

22. The outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” pointed out that in many countries, “national machineries have been instituted or strengthened and recognized as the institutional base acting as ‘catalysts’ for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming and monitoring of the implementation of the Platform for Action...” (para 24). While it was pointed out that “progress has been achieved in terms of the visibility, status, outreach and coordination of activities of these machineries” (para 24), obstacles to the effectiveness of the national machineries were also revealed in many countries. These included inadequate financial and human resources, lack of political will and commitment at the highest level, insufficient understanding of gender equality and mainstreaming among government structures, unclear mandates, and structural and communication problems within and among government agencies (para 25).

23. Over the past decade the role of national machineries has evolved in many countries. National machineries have attempted to play catalytic roles in facilitating gender mainstreaming as elaborated in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session. Some national machineries have had major successes while others have been constrained by lack of clear mandates, political support and resources. In some cases national machineries have experienced problems in balancing the demands for project implementation, including from their constituents at grassroots level, with the need to actively influence policy and programme development at national level from a gender perspective. Many national machineries are constrained by lack of financial resources, with decreased external support, lack of expertise and conflicting demands on their scarce time and resources. This is particularly so when women/gender equality units are part of larger ministries with responsibility for a number of issues. Women’s and gender equality issues may be marginalized in the competition for attention and resources.

24. The expert group meeting aimed to capture the developments and evolution in the role of national machineries and the potential for enhancing this role through partnerships, as well as the challenges presented by globalisation, economic reforms and the changing character of governance.

⁷ Commission on the Status of Women. Report on the Forty-third Session, 1999, 1-12 March and 1 April (E/CN.6/1999/10:18).

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS, PERSISTENT CHALLENGES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Achievements

25. A review of responses of 134 Member States sent to the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)⁸ indicates that the majority of countries have taken actions recommended by the Beijing Platform of Action to achieve the three strategic objectives in the area of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. Member States initiated and strengthened national machineries as well as other governmental bodies (strategic objective H. 1); integrated gender perspectives in legislation, public policies and programmes and projects (strategic objective H. 2); and generated and disseminated sex disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation (strategic objective H. 3).

26. A number of major areas of achievements were discussed by the experts. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, global progress has been achieved in the establishment and strengthening of national machineries. National machineries were created for the first time in many countries and in countries that already had such machineries, measures were taken to strengthen them. The strengthening efforts included upgrades in status, including movement to central areas of government, increases in budget and staff, enhanced authority, vertical extension into municipal, district, regional and provincial government structures, as well as horizontal extension in various line ministries and agencies and improved inter-governmental co-ordination. In addition to establishing focal points in line ministries, networks of such focal points have been set up in some countries, facilitated by the national machinery. Experts commented, however, on the lack of up-to-date and reliable information on national machineries and the clear need for the establishment of an independent global electronic database on national machineries, in order to assess progress more systematically.

27. Another positive development over the past decade has been the setting up of new mechanisms for promoting gender equality in addition to machinery within government. In many countries, standing committees on equal opportunities or gender equality have been established in parliaments. There may also be caucuses of women parliamentarians that focus on gender equality. Other countries have established separate Gender Equality, Women's Commissions or other statutory bodies. In a few countries ombudspersons for gender equality have been appointed. There has been little documented research on the roles of these bodies, the achievements as well as their relation to the existing national machineries.

28. Today many countries have multiple mechanisms. One country may have a women's ministry, a gender equality commission, a parliamentary caucus, gender focal points in line ministries, and an ombudsperson. The gender equality commission, for example, may be a multi-stakeholder body with high level participation, focused on monitoring and reporting to top political leadership. Parliamentary standing committees on gender equality or equal opportunities include women and men, while there may also be cross-party or intra-party women's caucuses. Human rights commissions giving attention to women's human rights, specific women's rights bodies and statistical offices focused on gender equality within national statistical bodies, are examples of other mechanisms which exist in some countries. Temporary bodies may also be established, for example, inter-departmental committees set up to prepare the report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, sometimes chaired by the Ministry of Justice. With

⁸ Responses to the questionnaire on implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the special session, of the twenty-third special session submitted to Member States by the Division for the Advancement of Women as part of the preparations for the ten year review and appraisal in the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

different mechanisms operating in different contexts, the potential for promoting and monitoring gender equality should be increased. However, an essential precondition for success is that there is good collaboration and coordination among these different mechanisms.

29 Many countries have enacted gender equality laws and legal reforms encompassing equal opportunities in the work place and prohibition of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as introducing punishment for violence against women. A large number of countries have adopted national gender equality policies, action plans and national strategies. In many countries, national machineries have played an important catalytic role by sensitizing different sectoral ministries and agencies to address gender concerns in their policies and programmes. Gender focal points in these bodies have played a key role in this mainstreaming effort. In the majority of countries, the gender mainstreaming strategy has been used to develop policies, strategies, plans and programmes. Gender sensitive budgeting has been also introduced in many countries.

30. Many countries reported the existence of mechanisms and tools to monitor the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session. The mechanisms included special units or committees, monitoring missions and monitoring and management tools for gender impact assessment. In several countries the government established monitoring bodies with membership from civil society and NGOs. This has facilitated the incorporation of citizens' voices in government structures. In other countries, NGOs had initiated monitoring of progress.

31. Many national machineries took steps to build capacity by training their own staff as well as focal points and senior managers in line ministries. Specific technical methods, such as gender-based analysis, gender impact assessment, and gender sensitive budgeting, all essential to gender mainstreaming, were included in the training.

32. National machineries took initiatives to improve data collection, develop indicators and support gender-related research in collaboration with central statistical offices and research institutions. Research on women and gender issues has increased and in many countries there has been growing support for women's studies departments/institutions. An annual publication of statistical information on women and men is now available in many countries.

33. In many countries, national machineries launched national campaigns to raise public awareness about issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment. Increasingly, national machineries are using websites to provide information and engage in dialogues with civil society. Many machineries developed strategies to present positive images of women in the mass media.

34. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, collaboration with non-governmental organizations and civil society increased in many countries. National machineries established committees or commissions with joint government-civil society membership and partnered with a wide variety of organizations including trade unions and professional bodies.

35. Many national machineries drew upon international as well as regional instruments and agreements and bodies to strengthen their national efforts. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has been a powerful instrument which has facilitated reform of laws and policies in many countries. The Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals have also provided an important framework in many countries. The periodic reports that countries present to various United Nations bodies served as monitoring tools to assess progress towards achieving these global objectives. Regional bodies and regional

commissions of the United Nations also contributed to setting standards and guidelines for improving gender equality and women's empowerment. Several countries reported on actions undertaken to meet these regional standards and guidelines.

Persistent challenges

36. While all the 134 countries responding to the questionnaire elaborated on their achievements, only a limited number reported on obstacles they faced in implementing the strategic objectives of the Platform for Action and identified future actions to meet the challenges being faced. The experts shared their own experiences on constraints. While some challenges are new, many of the constraints identified in 1995 still remain. Resource constraints remain the most frequently cited obstacle. The major challenges that continue to hamper the effectiveness of national mechanisms are outlined below.

37. Many national machineries still have very unclear mandates and are uncertain about their functions. They are sometimes caught between awareness of the need to work more constructively with gender mainstreaming, and to influence policy and programme development at the national level, and the more concrete demands of local constituencies of women who would like to see the national machinery play a more traditional role and implement projects.

38. Lack of political will has been identified by many national machineries as a major obstacle. This is manifested in different ways: some lack the support from political leadership which would ensure that their roles and work was taken seriously and that there was real potential for developing collaboration with other parts of the government. In other cases the political leadership leaves everything relating to women and gender equality to the national machinery, which works against gender mainstreaming.

39. Changes in government and national commitments may also lead to frequent restructuring and locational shifts. In some countries machineries have been moved out of central locations into line departments. Leadership of these machineries may also change frequently.

40. Some countries have been successful in mobilizing political support of wide-ranging constituencies. However, the strength of women's movements with which national machineries interact and collaborate varies between countries. In some countries, the movement has been successful in mobilizing widespread popular support, in others the women's movement has become weaker. Mobilizing and sustaining political will thus remains a continuing challenge.

41. Although an increase in staff in national machineries has been reported in a few countries, many have noted cuts in this area. The weak capacity of staff in the national machinery, as well as in the various ministries and agencies, is another issue raised by some countries. Additionally, in many countries, the machineries have too many functions which are difficult or inappropriate for them to implement. Gender focal points in the ministries are also overburdened with many other routine tasks.

42. Shortage of funds has been identified as a major obstacle. Funding constraints impeded not only the work of the machineries at national level but also at provincial and local levels. In many countries budget cuts have also affected gender mainstreaming in sectoral ministries such as health and education.

43. Donor dependency is another significant constraint as donors may impose their own priorities and national agendas, with implications for the sustainability of efforts.

44. Absence of sex disaggregated statistics and data is another frequently cited constraint. Despite the progress achieved, gaps in sex disaggregated information persist in certain areas, such as violence against women, wage differentials, health indicators, decision making and returns of investment in human development. This lack of information inhibits the construction of appropriate tools for planning and programming. It also constrains development of effective monitoring systems.

45. Monitoring progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is a major challenge. The national machineries have generally tended to monitor the progress in actions, recommended under the three main strategic objectives in the Beijing Platform for Action (H1, H2, and H3). Monitoring progress of these efforts may give positive results but does not provide information on impacts of the activities. There is less systematic monitoring and reporting of gender mainstreaming efforts across all bodies. The definition of outcome indicators, the tracking of data against these indicators and the establishment of causal links between policies/programmes and results, remains problematic.

46. Ensuring accountability where there are multiple actors responsible for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment remains a key challenge. Many national governments demonstrate accountability through reports to parliaments and publications through websites. Accountability systems for scrutinizing the gender equality activities of private sector actors, transnational actors, and civil society are much less in evidence.

47. The increase in the number of women/gender units/offices and focal points vertically at the provincial and local levels and horizontally in different ministries and agencies provides a key opportunity for achieving goals but involves challenges for the national machineries in terms of providing adequate support and ensuring coordination and collaboration. Resource constraints – staff and budget – limit the capacity of the national machineries to play the intended role. Collaboration with other mechanisms such as parliamentary caucuses/committees and statutory bodies, which have autonomous status, is sometimes difficult. The relationship between these various mechanisms is not well defined. In some countries, they are able to work in collaboration, supporting each other, while in others they work in isolation without being able to create effective synergies.

48. Experiences in building a collaborative work relationship between national machineries with civil society have varied. In some countries, national machineries have built alliances with civil society and women's movements, creating a successful strategy of inside-outside advocacy to promote the agenda of gender equality and women's empowerment. In many countries however, national machineries and civil society collaboration is difficult to achieve, particularly when there is competition over scarce resources. This competition and lack of collaboration has detrimental effects on the work of both the national machineries and civil society. Greater attention to developing effective partnerships with NGOs and civil society groups is critical, particularly because of the increased strength and importance of women's groups and networks over the past decade.

Good practices

49. Despite constraints, national machineries in many countries have been successful in promoting policy and programme development and in undertaking and supporting activities in key areas, such as violence against women, trafficking and women's participation in public life and politics. A number of countries have been able to put in place a system-wide gender mainstreaming

approach to address gender equality concerns in all sectors. Many good practices have been identified which supported successful outcomes.

The elements of good practice identified through the discussions of the experts were:

1. A clear vision and intellectual leadership which harnesses the knowledge of many relevant partners in the society;
2. The development of a strategic plan of action to support policy development and implementation;
3. The utilization of research and data collection, in formulation and review of policies, programmes and plans;
4. The establishment of alliances with strategic actors within government (head of governments, line ministries and local governments) parliaments, professional organizations, academic institutions, civil society, community-based organizations and the media to create synergies to enhance outcomes.

Good practice examples discussed by the experts included:

1. The implementation of a package of actions—such as legislation, gender mainstreaming action at policy and programme levels, and pilot projects. Such packages have been developed in areas such as violence against women, trafficking and increasing the participation of women in politics;
2. Capacity development through training of government officials and other relevant actors to support gender-sensitive policy formulation and implementation. For example, training of government officials, police, health personnel, judiciary and frontline workers on violence against women or in human trafficking;
3. Allocation of adequate personnel and budgetary resources to government bodies and other partners to implement the various activities;
4. Innovative special incentives (such as awards to gender sensitive judges or earmarked seed funds to sectoral ministries) to encourage further actions;
5. Establishment of targets, development of appropriate monitoring tools and regular tracking of progress;
6. Regular meeting with partners inside and outside government, to assess progress, identify gaps and devise collaborative strategies to address obstacles;
7. Mobilization of political will through public awareness programmes and broad dissemination of information.

V. CHANGING SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXTS

50. Transformations in geopolitics and in global and national systems of production and governance, as well as in society and culture, which were already underway prior to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, have intensified in the past decade. These have had important implications for gender relations and for the role, relevance and impact of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality. These changes stem from market liberalization and governance reforms as well as other processes including the HIV/AIDS pandemic, urbanization, new forms of conflict, increased migration, and new communication and other technologies.

51. The implications of these trends for national-level efforts to mainstream gender equality in public policy are complex and varied. The contemporary restructuring of states, markets, and the international arena has been accompanied by problems of:

- deepening inequalities both within and between countries, producing an exacerbation of poverty in some contexts;
- informalisation of markets and of systems of social service provision;
- increased insecurity and conflict, and an erosion of social cohesion; and
- rise of social conservatism, and in some cases a weakening of the women's movement, with a related backlash reaction against women's human rights including sexual and reproductive rights.

52. State restructuring in response to fiscal crises has in some contexts involved a shrinking of the size of the state and the scope of state action. Privatization both of public industry (for example, rail transportation) and services (for example, education, health, water and sanitation, even dispute adjudication), has been promoted. This can lead to inequalities because consumers have differential purchasing powers and because the state cannot regulate to assure equality of treatment. Often there are new and informal forms of influence as a range of non-state providers enter service delivery. User fees for services can mean that women do not spend on their own health or education needs, and some forms of community or non-governmental substitution for public services can revitalize traditional value systems not conducive to gender equality.

53. Other public sector and governance reforms that build efficiency in remaining state functions through the introduction of market principles may fail to address problems of gender bias in the design and delivery of services because gender equality rarely figures in new performance measurement and incentive systems. Public sector reforms that hold promise for women, such as effective decentralization of services, enforcement of accountability mechanisms, and greater transparency in public expenditure management have been unevenly and inadequately implemented. The consequence is that public sector reforms have not promoted social and gender equality. The ability of top decision-makers to compel compliance with policy is critical when policy goals encounter resistance, as is often the case with gender equality policy.

54. Market liberalization and the dominance of trade as the main engine of growth has brought new employment opportunities to women worldwide, but has also made some types of livelihood insecure and expanded informal economies into which women and men move when they lose access to formal employment. These effects vary by region but in many areas the benefits of new market opportunities are enjoyed by very few, while the income insecurity of the majority who engage in the informal economy has been exacerbated, leading to greater poverty. This has locked many women into unregulated sectors including domestic work, and has fuelled migration for work. In some contexts, such as South and East Asia, liberalization has brought new industry and employment opportunities, but also an erosion of formal sector employment protections. Some

second-generation economic reforms that are designed to ensure that states better support market development – including rule of law reforms to support contract enforcement and private property rights and reforms to banking regulations – do not pay adequate attention to the difficulties that women face in accessing credit or in securing assets, limiting the extent to which they can profit from new economic opportunities. Poverty, social exclusion, and distorted market access are not new problems for women in many parts of the world, but their persistence and exacerbation suggest that market liberalization does not take gender perspectives into account.

55. A marked phenomenon of the past decade has been the political assertion of conservative identity-based or religious movements around the world. While social conservatism in some contexts is associated with a weakening of women's movements, in other contexts women's movements have gained strength through new opportunities for international networking and communication. Of particular note is women's participation in global free trade movements, informal sector workers' rights, and global reproductive rights alliances. The opportunities provided by new information and communication technologies (ICT) for effective networking and cooperation for gender equality should also be recognized.

56. At the international level, there has been increased recognition of the valuable role of evolving multilateral instruments in tackling human rights abuses. On the other hand, these instruments have come under threats in some contexts, including in the context of fight against terrorism. This problem may be exacerbated in weak and fragile states or in situations of conflict, where displacement, suffering, and the imperative of post-war reconstruction may sideline gender equality concerns. Armed conflicts have been accompanied by the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war – imposing new concerns in addressing human rights abuses.

57. The United Nations Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) have established a common programme of shared development goals that create incentives for new development partnerships. Gender equality is central to the achievement of all MDGS. The Member States of the United Nations are committed to achieving the MDGS, including through new approaches to development assistance that involve harmonisation and alignment of aid with developing countries' national poverty reduction plans and through budget support. This should allow for more meaningful national interpretation of gender-sensitive implementation of development goals, for context-specific approaches to gender mainstreaming, and for the integration of gender equality concerns to the pursuit of all the MDGs. There are concerns, however, that new aid modalities may remove direct donor funding to national mechanisms.

Implications for gender equality

58. The new challenges to gender equality posed by contemporary economic and governance reforms require national mechanisms for gender equality to address the accountability of the state and the private sector for gender equality and women's empowerment. Specifically, the challenges raised by market and state restructuring include:

- To ensure that gender equality and women's rights are central to achieving the Millennium Declaration and MDGS, and to ensure that the commitments agreed under the Beijing Platform for Action are fully incorporated across all MDGs;
- To make women's human rights a central element of economic, social and political reforms;
- To ensure that the new harmonisation of aid enables context-specific and innovative support to gender-mainstreaming in anti-poverty programmes;

- To bring gender-equality concerns into governance reforms that are re-shaping formal accountability mechanisms (judicial reform, audit reform, parliamentary reforms, local government transparency in budgets, etc);
- To bring gender-equality concerns into market governance, through monitoring the formulation and application of labour standards, both at national and international levels, through ensuring that new systems for securing private property rights, enforcing contracts, or regulating credit, do not discriminate against women directly or indirectly;
- To bring gender-equality concerns into social and other public services by scrutinising the remit or mandate of institutions contracted to provide these services, and the systems through which they are held to account;
- To ensure that women's migration for labour is voluntary and that their citizenship and labour rights are adequately protected;
- To make the women's movement a more effective accountability institution through creating more space for women's voices and direct access to formal institutions, by expanding arenas for consultation with women's groups, by fostering and encouraging women's NGOs and by encouraging dialogue between women's groups that hold diverse positions on gender equality;
- To make political parties more responsive to women's concerns – through internal democratisation - to enable more women to participate as members and leaders, and to enable women to influence party platforms. This can help improve the 'political will' to support gender equality in government.

59. Fundamental to facing these challenges is that they be considered and evaluated in the broader context of promotion and protection of universal human rights. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women means far more than a fair treatment of women in an economic and social context of change. It goes beyond the realm of fairness to the fulfillment of fundamental rights for women as well as men. Vital in this regard is full recognition of the role of CEDAW as the main legal instrument at global level addressing women's human rights. Attention must be drawn to States' responsibility for full implementation of the Convention's provisions, which require that women's human rights and gender equality become central elements of state reforms and of social organisation. Promoting and monitoring this dimension of gender equality and women's empowerment is a fundamental task of national mechanisms for gender equality.

60. These challenges present an important opportunity to national mechanisms for gender equality to influence contemporary economic, social and governance reforms to ensure that they promote women's human rights, market access and political participation. For example, the shared commitment to meeting MDGs presents an opportunity to mainstream gender-equality perspectives into key development goals, and the Monterrey Consensus offers a chance to incorporate gender equality centrally in economic governance reforms. Governance reforms introducing new accountability jurisdictions at sub-national levels (local government) and supra-national levels (regional governance institutions) provide national mechanisms for gender equality with opportunity to influence policy-making at multiple levels, and to transform themselves into a co-ordinated set of mechanisms for addressing gender equality.

61. While there are now a broader range of issues with which national mechanisms for gender equality must concern themselves, there are also new forums and new entry points for addressing gender equality concerns – for instance, new partnerships between women's groups and municipalities, or new means by which citizens can influence policy, for instance through poverty reduction strategy processes. These represent opportunities to cultivate new constituencies of support for gender equality amongst public and private power-holders and civil society groups.

62. The contemporary increase of national mechanisms for gender equality both horizontally and vertically within states is a sign of a response to these opportunities in order to set up multiple gender-sensitive accountability checks across government. In implementing common goals, it is important to clearly establish the roles and inputs of different mechanisms. For example, to achieve effective gender mainstreaming in budgets it is important to establish clearly the roles of the different agencies involved and to ensure collaboration, exchange of information and coordination. Questions that might be asked include: how can the women's ministry support gender mainstreaming in budgets; what is the role of parliamentary standing committees or caucuses; how can the gender equality commission contribute strategically; what inputs can gender focal points in relevant ministries make; is there a role for the ombudsperson; how can research institutions be engaged; in what way would NGOs and civil society groups be involved?

63. The evolution of mechanisms for addressing gender equality across the public sector and civil society imposes the need to think creatively about coordinating the efforts of a wide range of accountability mechanisms, from civil society, political bodies, and state institutions at different levels. This is the subject of the next section of the report.

VI. STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE PARTNERSHIPS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

64. The challenges presented by globalisation, continuing conflicts in different parts of the world, rising fundamentalisms and governance and institutional reforms are undeniable. However, together with the challenges have come the new opportunities for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment mentioned in the previous section. These include effectively utilizing the Millennium Declaration and the Mugs as instruments to ensure a stronger focus on national level implementation of the Platform for Action through targets and indicators. National mechanisms could also be more effective in utilizing CEDAW as a framework for work on promoting gender equality. Use of ICTs for achieving the goals of national machineries needs also to be enhanced. The possibilities offered by changing macro-political and institutional environments should also be considered, including the increasing interest in effective, transparent and accountable government, through decentralization, democratization and civil service reform.

65. When discussing national mechanisms it is very difficult to generalize and to compare progress across countries. The mandate, location, and role of national mechanisms have to be looked at in terms of the overall governmental structure and context, the existence and relationships with other national mechanisms, and the civil society context. It is not possible to develop a blueprint for national machineries or other types of national mechanisms. Despite these differences, however, exchange of experiences and good practice examples is critical to ensuring greater progress in effective functioning of national mechanisms and achievement of the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Close attention needs to be paid to the lessons learned over the past ten years.

66. On the basis of the experience of the past 10 years, experts reaffirmed the importance of a central policy co-ordinating unit within government to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective across all policy areas (Platform for Action, para. 201). The full potential of gender mainstreaming has yet to be achieved. One approach which could move gender mainstreaming forward, if utilized strategically and effectively, is to incorporate gender perspectives into budget processes at different levels of government. Strong central policy co-

ordination is needed to ensure that adequate guidelines and expertise are available for this purpose and to support agencies undertaking gender-sensitive budgeting for the first time.

67. While the primary responsibility for gender mainstreaming rests with government, partnership with a wide range of political and social bodies at national, regional and international levels is also required for effective outcomes. These include governmental bodies, parliaments, independent human rights commissions, the private sector, NGOs and civil society at national level. They also include sub-regional, regional and international bodies in public and private sectors. The gender units of multilateral bodies have played an important role in capacity building and providing expertise relating to MDGs, sector-wide approaches and gender-sensitive budgeting. Experts noted the increased diversity of mechanisms that are promoting gender equality perspectives at national, regional and global levels and the contribution they make to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment within the new environment.

68. In view of the increased diversity of mechanisms for promoting gender equality it is important that there be adequate monitoring of developments worldwide. Such monitoring is most effective if conducted by an independent body. With rapid changes taking place it is also important that the information be kept more up-to-date than is possible with existing arrangements. One model is the Global Database of Quotas for Women established by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) in conjunction with Stockholm University.

Recommendations

69. Taking into account good practices and lessons learned governments should

1. Provide mandatory training on gender mainstreaming to all governmental bodies, including at the local level, to ensure understanding of their roles and responsibilities;
2. Provide national machineries with adequate human and financial resources to enable them to respond more effectively to the challenges of changed global and national environments and to enhance their important monitoring and reporting roles;
3. Strengthen the capacity of national machineries to undertake gender analysis, and to develop the methodologies and tools needed to play a catalytic role in gender mainstreaming across all sectors of government in collaboration with line ministries;
4. Develop effective accountability mechanisms, particularly through the introduction of gender perspectives and gender equality indicators in budgetary processes at all levels of government;
5. Support the maintenance of strong women-in-development or gender equality units within multilateral and bilateral institutions, to provide capacity-building and support to national machineries in critical areas such as poverty reduction strategies, MDGs, sector-wide approaches and national planning and budgeting processes.
6. Support the creation of a global database of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality, hosted by an independent body, to facilitate the monitoring of new developments.

Parliaments and political parties

70. Parliaments have an important role to play in promoting gender equality perspectives, reviewing legislative proposals for gender impact and scrutinising government performance in meeting gender equality goals. Many parliaments now have standing committees on gender equality or equal opportunity. In a few countries all parliamentary enquiries are obliged to consider the gender impact of proposals. Standing committees have been able to take evidence from NGOs and gender experts as well as from national mechanisms in the course of their enquiries.

71. In many countries there are also caucuses of women parliamentarians, which play a significant part in promoting and monitoring progress in achieving gender equality. There is wide variation in such caucuses: in some regions, such as Southern Africa, they are primarily cross-party bodies, while in other contexts they are often confined to one party. Such caucuses have worked effectively with NGOs to promote legislation advancing gender equality. In addition, political parties often have women's wings that play an important role in promoting gender equality as a goal of party policy and in providing mentoring and training for women candidates.

72. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an example of an international organisation that is supporting and promoting gender equality perspectives in the parliamentary sphere. The IPU has recommended the role of parliaments be strengthened in the ratification and implementation of CEDAW and in the preparation and submission of reports to the CEDAW Committee (2004)⁹. It also monitors the representation of women in all national parliaments and provides data on regional patterns as well as rankings of national parliaments on its website (www.ipu.org). Both the IPU and the Association of Commonwealth Parliamentarians have organisations for women parliamentarians which cross party lines.

73. IDEA is another multilateral body that works to increase women's parliamentary representation and make women parliamentarians more effective. It has published handbooks on women in parliament and also maintains the global database on quotas for women referred to above (para 69). This includes the constitutional and legislative quotas for parliamentary representation adopted in South American countries over the last decade, as well as the longer-standing party quotas for women candidates found in Scandinavia and elsewhere. IDEA supports many regional organisations working to increase the parliamentary representation of women.

Recommendations

1. National machineries should seek to create more effective partnerships with parliamentary bodies concerned with promotion of gender equality, such as standing committees and women's caucuses;
2. Standing committees and women's parliamentary caucuses should draw more effectively on NGOs and gender experts in their work;
3. Parliaments should require sex-disaggregated statistics and information on gender equality indicators in all government reporting, including budgetary reporting;

⁹ See resolution "Beijing+10: An evaluation from a parliamentary perspective" adopted by the 111th Assembly of the IPU on 1 October 2004, Geneva

4. Periodic reports to CEDAW should be tabled in national parliaments before submission to the CEDAW Committee and the concluding comments of the Committee should also be tabled in parliament;
5. Donors should continue to support the work of cross-party women's parliamentary caucuses, including through capacity building.

Human rights, equal opportunity and gender equality commissions

74. The experts emphasised the important role of independent statutory bodies outside government, such as human rights commissions, equal opportunity ombudspersons and gender equality commissions. Such independent bodies do not replace mechanisms within government but play important complementary roles in promoting gender equality through complaints handling, community education, advising governments on legislation and monitoring progress. One "good practice" example is a human rights commission that undertook a major national campaign to advocate the introduction of paid maternity leave.

75. Where human rights institutions are established as umbrella bodies, other areas of human rights concern may take precedence over gender equality and women's human rights. There may also be a lack of gender-specific expertise among generic human rights commissioners. Therefore, it is extremely important for there to be a statutory officer with specific expertise in gender equality and women's human rights, supported by a unit with dedicated human and financial resources.

76. Experts recommended greater recognition of the role of human rights institutions in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, both in national and international arenas. They observed that currently national human rights institutions rarely attend Commission on the Status of Women meetings and, when they do attend, lack independent status. To encourage participation and strengthen partnerships, while respecting the independence of human rights institutions, it would be desirable for independent status at the Commission on the Status of Women to be established.

Recommendations

1. Independent statutory bodies should be established, where they do not already exist, with adequate resources and expertise and clearly defined mandates to safeguard women's human rights and promote gender equality. Such bodies, which might take the form of a Gender Equality Commission or Ombudsperson, should be framed in accordance with the Paris Principles and have the power to make recommendations to government on new legislation or amending existing legislation.
2. Where independent bodies are established, as umbrella human rights commissions rather than as special purpose gender equality commissions, they should have a statutory officer with specific expertise in gender equality and women's human rights, supported by a unit with dedicated human and financial resources;
3. National human rights institutions should be encouraged to establish partnerships with other national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women, including those inside government;
4. National human rights institutions should have independent status at meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Research and academic institutions

77. The experts noted the important role of applied research as well as sex-disaggregated data in supporting the work of national mechanisms for gender equality. They observed that continuity and accumulation of expertise was important in ensuring high quality data gathering and policy research.

78. The experts also noted increased efforts and initiatives by academic and higher education institutions in developing and conducting training and capacity building programmes on gender equality issues. Some academic and higher education institutions have also established gender equality structures, to facilitate promotion of gender equality and coordinate gender mainstreaming programmes in these institutions. Such programmes contribute to an increased number of graduates who join the labour market with high levels of gender awareness, skills in gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, and gender sensitive research methods.

Recommendations

1. National research institutions and national statistical bodies should establish regular mechanisms for dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and information on gender equality issues in all sector areas to national stakeholders in an accessible and user-friendly form;
2. Governments should encourage the establishment of gender equality programmes by providing financial and human resources to academic and higher learning institutions;
3. Regular mechanisms for collaboration between academic institutions and national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment should be established.

Private sector

79. In the context of globalisation, market liberalization and the changing roles of public and private sectors, experts noted the importance of equal opportunity legislation covering the private sector and gender-sensitive labour protection standards. Employers and employer bodies need to be encouraged to promote gender equality and equal opportunity for workers with family responsibilities. Labour protection standards, including protection relating to maternity/paternity leave and family responsibilities can only be effectively upheld where there is adequate financing and gender training of labour inspectorates. In some countries which have female-dominated industries, such as the textile industry, the majority of labour inspectors have been male. In order to ensure gender balance there should be affirmative recruitment and training of women inspectors.

80. In some countries industry assistance and government contracts are only available to companies that are in compliance with equal opportunity legislation. However the monitoring of compliance is not always effectively resourced.

Recommendations

1. Employer bodies, chambers of commerce and trade unions should set up structures to support implementation of equal opportunities and equal treatment;

2. Public and private sector bodies should provide awards for good practices in the promoting of gender equality among private sector employers;
3. Private sector/ corporate organisations should include the promotion of gender equality in their charters of social responsibility;
4. Governments should ensure that labour protection laws are made effective through adequate funding and gender training of labour inspectorates and ensure recruitment and training of women as labour inspectors;
5. The charter of the Global Compact should be amended to include the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

NGOs, civil society and media organisations

81. The experts recognised the vital role played by NGOs, civil society, and media organisations in the promotion of gender equality in capacity building, implementation of gender policy and programmes, awareness raising and campaigns. Collaboration between NGOs and governmental mechanisms has improved significantly in many countries but challenges still exist because of competition over scarce resources and lack of clarity over respective roles and responsibilities.

82. Greater attention to developing effective partnerships with NGOs and civil society groups is critical in the context of change and reductions in the scope of state action in many countries. National mechanisms need to facilitate government consultation with women's NGOs and networks to assist with capacity building to enable NGOs and civil society groups to participate effectively in policy processes including trans-national issues relating to trade liberalisation and globalisation. Government - NGO relationships must be a "critical partnership" where NGOs will sometimes have to be critical of the impact of governmental policies on women.

83. The mass media are a major influence in shaping views of reality in today's societies. They can play a crucial part in breaking down gender stereotyping and ensuring a more positive, realistic and diverse portrayal of women—for example, in advertising. National mechanisms need to establish working partnerships with media industry bodies to enhance their understanding of gender stereotyping and its negative impact on the achievement of gender equality.

Recommendations

1. National mechanisms should provide support, including financial and technical support, for the work of NGOs and civil society groups on gender equality;
2. National mechanisms should facilitate processes of consultation and dialogue with NGOs and civil society groups so that they can be adequately involved in policy design and implementation across government;
3. The results of consultations with NGOs and civil society groups should be adequately disseminated, for example through the websites maintained by national machineries;

4. National mechanisms should establish linkages with media organisations to encourage their participation in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Regional and subregional bodies

84. Regional and sub-regional meetings of national machineries and other national mechanisms have provided important opportunities to develop capacity and skills. The experts noted the important role of regional bodies and inter-governmental ministerial councils in hosting such meetings and promoting gender equality through the sharing of experience and good practices. Examples at the regional level include the meetings of national machineries organized by the United Nations Regional Commissions and meetings of the Nordic ministers for gender equality. Cross-regional examples include the meetings of Commonwealth ministers responsible for women's affairs. Regional Communities such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC), Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have also established their own structures to promote gender equality, while the European Community, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have established structures to promote gender equality which also provide a forum for exchange of experience and good practice.

Recommendations

1. Regional and subregional bodies should continue to convene regular meetings of national machineries in order to promote networking and sharing of experiences and good practices; where such meetings are not convened, they should be established;
2. Electronic databases (on materials, methodologies, good practices) should be established at regional and sub-regional level to support more effective work of national machineries, including on particular emerging issues such as migration, trafficking and HIV/AIDS;
3. Regional bodies that have structures to promote gender equality should continue to strengthen them for the purpose of exchanging information, sharing good practices, and capacity building methodologies, and those which do not have such structures should establish them;
4. Inter-governmental ministerial councils on gender equality should have more effective input into other ministerial councils on the gender implications of policies and decisions in all areas, including migration and trafficking.

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

A. BACKGROUND PAPER

- EGM/National Machinery/2004/BP.1 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: achievements and challenges for the future”, prepared by Rounaq Jahan

B. PAPERS BY EXPERTS

- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.1 Advocacy Administration in the context of economic and political liberalization”, prepared by Anne Marie Goetz
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.2 The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: Turkey experience”, prepared by Nuket Kardam
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP. 3 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: lessons from Nepal”, prepared by Bal Gopal Baidya
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.4 “Gender equality in the age of governing for the mainstream”, prepared by Marian Sawer
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.5 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: Uganda experience”, prepared by Grace Bantebya-Kyomuhendo
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP. 6 “The Lebanese national women machinery. Where does it stand”, prepared by Mona Khalaf.
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.7 “National machineries for gender equality: Peru experience”, prepared by Cecilia Blondet
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/EP.8 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: SADC experience”, prepared by Christine Warioba.

C. PAPERS BY RESOURCE PERSONS

- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/ 1 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: achievements and challenges to the future: Thailand experience”, prepared by Pusadee Tamthai
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/2 “Rethinking the need for and structure of the national machineries for women’s advancement”, prepared by Devaki Jain
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/3 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: achievements and challenges to the future”, prepared by Regina Taveres da Silva
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/4 “National machinery : achievements and challenges – experience of Lithuania”, prepared by Vanda Jurseniene
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/5 “The equal oportunities ombudsman”, prepared by Claes Borgstrom
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/6 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: Italian experience”, prepared by Mario Serio
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/7 “The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women: achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment”, prepared by Emmeline Verzosa
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/8 (presentation) “Korean Women’s Development Institute, prepared by Soon-Young Jung
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/9 “Institutional mechanism for gender equality in Slovenia”, prepared by Violeta Neubauer
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/10 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women: the Antigua and Barbuda experience”, prepared by Sheila B. Roseau
- EGM/National Machinery/2004/RP/11 “The role of national mechanisms in promoting

gender equality and the empowerment of women:
experience of Tanzania”, prepared by Anne. S.
Makinda

D. OBSERVERS PAPERS

EGM/National Machinery/2004/OP.1

Issues and action note on IFAD’s experience
working with national mechanisms in support of
gender equality, prepared by IFAD.

ANNEX III

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Monday, 29 November 2004

- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Registration of the participants
- 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. Opening Ceremony
- Opening Statement by H.E. Stefania Prestigiacomo
Minister for Equal Opportunities
- Opening Statement by Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director, Division for the
Advancement of Women, DESA, United Nations
- Welcoming statement by Prof. Zotta, Director of the Scuola Superiore del
Ministero dell'Interno
- Election of Officers
- Adoption of programme of work
Introduction of the meeting
- 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:30 – 12:00 p.m. Presentation of background paper by a consultant Ms. R. Jahan
- “The role of national mechanisms in promoting gender equality and the
empowerment of women”.
- Presentation of experts papers:
- Mr. Bal Gopal Baidya
Ms. Cecilia Blondet
- Discussion
- 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lunch
- 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. Presentation of expert papers and discussion:
- Ms. Anne Marie Goetz

Ms. Nuket Kardam,
Dr. Mona Chemali Khalaf

4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Coffee break

4:30– 6:00 p.m.

Presentation of expert papers and discussion:

Ms. Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo
Ms. Marian Sawyer
Ms. Christine Warioba

6:00- 6:30

Concluding discussion

Tuesday, 30 November 2004

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Summary of the discussion for the first day presented by Rapporteur

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Presentation of Resource Persons:

Mr. Mario Serio
Ms. Vanda Jurseniene
Ms. Violeta Neubauer
Ms. Sheila B. Roseau
Ms. Emmeline Verzosa

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Coffee break

11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Continuation of presentation of Resource Persons

Mr. Claes Borgström
Ms. Pusadee Tamthai
Ms. Anne S. Makinda
Ms. Soon-Young Jung
Ms. Devaki Jain
Ms. Regina Tavares da Silva

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Lunch

2:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Establishment of Working Groups on specific topics

3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Working groups

4:00- 4:30 p.m.

Coffee break

4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Working Groups

7:30 - 10:30 p.m. Dinner hosted by the Italian Government and the National Commission for Equal Opportunities

Wednesday, 1 December 2004

9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Working groups

11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Coffee break

11:30 – 1:00 a.m. Report from Working Groups, discussion and summary of key issues

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lunch

2:30 – 4:00 p.m. Report from Working Groups, discussion and summary of key issues

4:00 – 4:30 p.m. Coffee break

4:30 – 6:00 p.m. Drafting group of experts to prepare final report and recommendations

6:15-6:45 p.m. Transfer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

7:00-8:00 p.m. Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Visit to the “Collezione Farnesina”

8:15- 11.00 p.m. Dinner-buffet hosted by the Italian Government

Thursday, 2 December 2004

8:30 – 10:00 a.m. Drafting group of experts to prepare final report and recommendations

10:00 – 10:30 p.m. Coffee break

10:30 – 1:00 p.m. Presentation and discussion of the report

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lunch

2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Adoption of final report and recommendations by experts

4:30 – 5:00 p.m. Coffee break

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Closing by Ms. Lucia Borgia, Vice-President of the National Commission for Equal Opportunities
Closing remarks by Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women