

**IANWGE Workshop**  
**on**  
**“Ten-year review of gender mainstreaming: Focusing on results”**

**Engaging Policy makers in Gender Mainstreaming: Successes and Challenges**  
**Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians**  
*Successes and Challenges*  
*(Synopsis)*

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The Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians is the result of one of the many outcomes of the International Conference on Population and development (ICPD)(1994). The ICPD POA emphasized the importance of women’s empowerment and their participation in the economic and political life of their countries, as one of the cornerstones of population and development.

The Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, the highest forum of African women leaders aims, at accelerating the process of empowering women to play a more active, coordinated and informed role in addressing issues of population and sustainable development. It also aims at strengthening the capacity of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians to assess the progress made by their governments in achieving international, regional and national commitments to address women’s concerns as well as to advocate for legislative and policy change to achieve gender equality.

Since 1995 the Africa Women Ministers and Parliamentarians representing 45 Sub-Saharan African countries has held six major conferences covering various themes. At these conferences African women leaders shared experiences on wide ranging concerns and declared their determination to press for action on many fronts in their own governments, as well as at sub-regional and regional levels.

As a lead UN agency in population programmes and in an effort to give emphasis to the strong linkages between reproductive health, gender equality and the broader issues of development, UNFPA has assisted the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians since its inception in 1995.

In the context of the Millennium Development Goals the leadership role of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians and the Funds support to their efforts has become much more pronounced. Against this background, UNFPA will share the process of the establishment of the network, the strategies applied, the successes of the Network so far and the challenges faced by the Network. Finally, entry points and recommendations for an inter-agency collaboration will be tabled.