



# Network

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## INTERVIEW WITH ANN-MARIE ORLER

POLICE ADVISER AND DIRECTOR OF THE UN POLICE DIVISION, OFFICE OF RULE OF LAW AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS, DEPARTMENT OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, UNITED NATIONS



Commissioner Ann-Marie Orler was appointed United Nations Police Adviser in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in March 2010. Before being promoted she served as the Deputy Police Adviser since May 2008. Prior to joining the United Nations she was a police officer and eventually a Police Commissioner with the Swedish National Police for almost 20 years.

Apart from her extensive senior level policing experience with the Swedish National Police at the local, regional and headquarter level, Commissioner Orler served from 2001 to 2003 at the Council of Europe as the Programme Manager for the "Police and Human Rights Beyond 2000" programme. She was the Secretary General of Amnesty International in Sweden for a brief period in 1998 and worked for a private Swedish security company Dutra Ledarskap as a Leadership Consultant specializing in leadership on a strategic level in 1999.

She has traveled extensively as part of her international policing career, visiting many Council of Europe countries and countries where the United Nations has peacekeeping operations including Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Sudan and Timor-Este. She has been a member of the Committee for Prevention of Torture and Degrading Treatment of the Council of Europe between 2004 and 2008.

Commissioner Orler studied journalism in her spare time, is a graduate of the Swedish Police Training Academy and holds a law degree from the University of Uppsala, Sweden. She is fluent in English and has some French and German language ability.

### Contents

*(continued on p. 3)*

Interview with Ann-Marie Orler	p. 1	Women's Health	p. 9
Letter from the Focal Point for Women	p. 2	In your Interest	p. 10
Congratulations to ...	p. 6	Work/Life	p. 10
Around the UN ...	p. 7	Around the World	p. 12
Violence against women	p. 8	Recommended Reading	p. 13
		Recommended Websitess	p. 14





## Letter from the Focal Point for Women

First, as you already know, we now may note with pleasure and pride that several years of advocacy and sustained effort, on the part of so many supporters, led on 21 July 2010, to the passage of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/289, which established a new UN entity, known commonly as UN Women (UNW) dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Its mandate is universal and unique, as it is also daunting, recognizing that there is no nation where equality of women is yet a reality, and that the struggle toward our goal must be maintained.

The establishment of UN Women represents a milestone in the movement for gender equality, which we urge all readers to celebrate, however and whenever they can. It is a victory made possible by a gradual but forceful garnering of momentum, of which many of the readers surely are part. It is also a moment, therefore, to thank you and to acknowledge your support and contribution in whatever form it took. It is also the time to inform you that the Office of the Focal for Women (the title valid up to the end of 2010), is now to be part of UN Women.

Further, as we all know well, leadership is the critical factor. The Secretary-General appointed Ms. Michelle Bachelet, the former President of Chile, as the first head of UN Women. Given her demonstrated leadership achievements, and her credentials and credibility, the appointment has widely been welcomed and embraced.. Network commends her appointment as the Executive Director of this new agency which carries on its shoulders the aspirations and expectations of literally half of humanity. We wish her every success.

With respect to this issue of NETWORK in particular, readers will note that once again it carries an interview with an individual whose work and career have a direct bearing on the issue of equal representation of women, both by example and by advocacy. We interviewed the UN's "top cop", Ms. Anne-Marie Orlor, the Senior Police Advisor of the United Nations. She enlightens us with her perspectives, especially with regard to the need for more women in UN peace operations, and inspires us with her confidence and commitment.

It is also widely acknowledged that for women to succeed, a multi-pronged approach is required. The section "In your interest" therefore, presents several pieces of relevance: a piece on work/life which depicts the continuous struggle of mothers to integrate career and job satisfaction with personal life and happiness; summaries of research in the field of women in management, much of which points to limited progress over the past decade; settlement of gender discrimination class action suits; a story of empowerment through the internet; another on women and high potential employees; an evidence that, but for legislation on women in corporate boards, the representation of women on them would be unlikely to increase.

In ending, I again must record my apologies for the continuing delays in the availability of Network. While the priorities of other departments involved in its publication are one contributing factor, another very significant impediment has been acute shortage of staff, made more acute in years when the office has been also responsible for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women. In this regard, it is also expected that as UNW consolidates and aligns the mandates of and functions of its four component parts, (OSAGI, UNIFEM, DAW, INSTRAW), adjustments to some of the contents of the publication may become necessary.

That being said, I hope you enjoy our issue, becoming informed and inspired. The destination called gender equality still requires your energies in full and effective force.

In solidarity,



Aparna Mehrotra

## INTERVIEW WITH ANN-MARIE ORLER *(continued from p. 1)*

### CAREER

**Q:** *Could you please tell us about your background and the special influences and experiences you feel have shaped your character and aspirations?*

**A:** In May of 2008, I started in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations as the Deputy Police Adviser. In March, 2010, I became the United Nations Police Adviser. [Earlier,] I graduated from the Swedish Police Academy, and I hold a law degree from the University of Uppsala in Sweden.

I am a person who wants to change and improve things, in particular unfair situations. To me, nothing is impossible. The solution may be difficult but what remains most important is to try. A problem is there to be solved by looking at it from a positive angle and finding the best way to resolve it. This is my driving force.

**Q:** *Why did you want to be a police officer? Would you share with our readers the challenges and highlights of your 20 years in the Swedish National Police? Are they different from your experience at the United Nations? If so, how?*

**A:** I actually wanted to become an actress. But, I realized my limitations in acting early. Also, my becoming an actress was not exactly what my father had in mind. I decided to go to law school since the legal field offered various platforms and possibilities for my future career. I also went for special training at the Swedish Police Academy. By chance, my father saw a posting for a police chief, and he asked me to apply for the job. I did, and I was hired. I have never regretted my choice. I remember thinking that I could not understand the problems women in their forties faced with men. I did not have any problems as I was younger. Later, I realized it was because young women did not pose a threat to men, but as women became older and more experienced they could take positions from them. Then, I understood the difficulties better.

At the United Nations, I have found that the staff, officials and politicians I encounter are polite and respectful. They are correct. Mostly, I am treated with respect by both men and women.

**Q:** *The police provide a civilian security counterpart to the military in UN. peacekeeping and peace-*

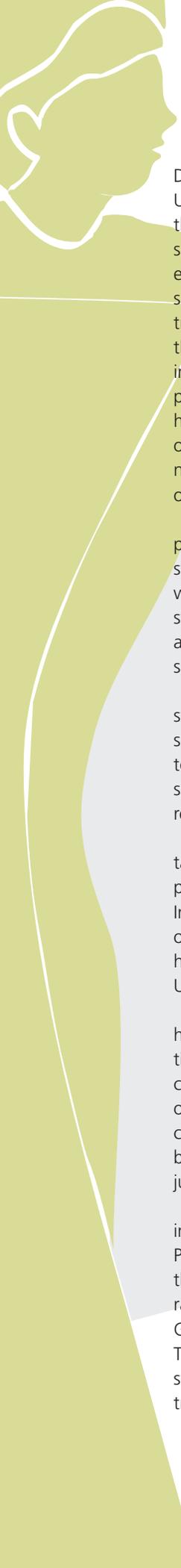
*building operations. What skills are required of a Police Adviser and the Director of the Police Division of the United Nations? Clearly, you possess them. But, do you believe that your gender makes or will make a difference? If so, how?*

**A:** My gender does not per se play any role in the performance of my duties. There may be some common traits among women that are positive, such as being more inclusive. However, in certain situations it is important to make hard and quick decisions. Yet, contrary to some stereotypes, both women and men possess these traits and reactions. In the end, what matters is the individual personality.

For me, it is important to share one's vision and lead by unifying everyone under a common goal. Motivating people is essential, as is treating everyone equally no matter what their rank or position. I make it a point to consult with my police contingents before I make a decision, provided that the situation is not extremely critical, such as the one in Haiti. In that case, I had to be strong and act immediately. Within seven days of the earthquake in Haiti, I had deployed police officers to the devastated country. The Haitian National Police (HNP) lost some of their officers. Their infrastructure was destroyed. The UN police assisted HNP while bringing the country to order, helping the victims and patrolling and assisting in humanitarian efforts.

**Q:** *Many readers are unfamiliar with the work of the Police Adviser and the police contingents globally. How does a police adviser support the police forces—both the men and the women—and help in advancing UN goals worldwide?*

**A:** Police have been part of peacekeeping since the 1960's, but they were traditionally limited to a passive monitoring and observing role. Military and police peacekeepers used to belong to a single unit until the review of peace operations by the Brahimi Report in 2000, which separated the military and police functions. As peace operations became more complex, the police role evolved in the early 1990's into advisory, mentoring and training functions to help rebuild, restructure and reform host-state police services, according to democratic-policing and human rights. In some instances, UN police also provide interim policing and other law enforcement.



As Police Adviser and Director of the Police Division of the Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations, I am responsible for ensuring that the standards for UN policing are implemented. I also specify the necessary capabilities the field requires, ensuring that recruitment procedures are professional, and developing and implementing relevant training for both male and female police officers in the field. Working closely with Member States is an imperative for me. Through their partnership, they provide us with the police officers we need. They have been very supportive in providing female police officers. As the police chief, I hope to build up the number of qualified women in the police service of our peacekeeping operations.

Both male and female United Nations police patrol, provide training to, advise and mentor host-state policing services. They help ensure compliance with international human rights and criminal justice standards, and they also assist in a wide range of activities to restore and promote security, public safety and the rule of law.

The UN police role ranges from assisting host-states to recruit women for their police services, setting up policies to ensure gender-mainstreaming to preventing sexual harassment and establishing specialized police units that respond exclusively to reports of sexual and gender-based violence.

With the increased complexity of UN policing tasks, there has also been a growth in the demand for police officers to serve in peacekeeping operations. In the 1960's, we numbered about two thousand officers, and today we exceed 14,000. More than one hundred Member States contribute police officers to UN peacekeeping operations.

The benefits of their work are clear: UN police help to create a safer environment where communities will gain better protection and see a decrease in criminal activities. The diverse national experiences of these United Nations police officers and also their commitment to peace and security function as their best tools in promoting sustainable peace through justice and security.

In August of 2009, the UN launched a major initiative that became the first of its kind within UN Policing. Entitled a 'Global Effort,' it seeks to increase the representation of women in UN police across the ranks, including within senior leadership. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon strongly supports this initiative. The Global Effort initiative is action-oriented, with a strategy to engage two groups: first, countries contributing police officers to UN peacekeeping, known

as police-contributing countries, and, second, female police officers worldwide.

The initiative aims to have Member States raise the number of female police officers in peacekeeping missions to 20 percent of the full force by 2014. Effort initiative calls on police-contributing countries, or PCC's, to complete a number of tasks. The initiative would like them to establish a policy that sets the percentage of female police officers they contribute to UN missions on a par with their national police gender ratio. In addition, the PCC's should review their recruitment requirements and procedures for international deployment to ensure that they do not preclude female candidates. Finally, Global Effort asks them to consider incentives for officers who serve in peacekeeping missions.

Our global message is empowerment. Women's participation in police peacekeeping empowers communities to restore peace and security and to reconstruct not only their police services but also their societies. Female police peacekeepers also act as important role models for women in the countries where they serve.

For example, the Government of Bangladesh deployed two police units to the peacekeeping operation in Haiti. A contingent of all-female police officers comprised one of them. The visibility of female police is of absolutely value in Haitian camps. It is easier for women, especially those who are victims of gender-based violence, to reach out to females in uniform rather than to their male counterparts. Just the presence of a woman makes female victims more inclined to open themselves up to discussion. They feel the sensitivity of the female police mediators because of the female mediators' "sympathetic ear," and they have less fear talking about their experiences of conflict and abuse. Female police officers empower other women. With them in the police force, a less macho environment emerges. Female officers exhibit strength without sacrificing tenderness.

It is important that women do the same policing jobs as their male colleagues and that they are not relegated to administrative functions or to specialized police units.

**Q:** *Commitment to work-life balance is necessary for any modern organization but difficult to practice in reality. What has been your experience and how have you succeeded?*

**A:** Work-life balance permits staff members to achieve personal and professional goals of staff members. We have begun flexible hours and use telecommuting,

staggered working hours and compressed hours. The achievements and enjoyment of work and other personal aspects of a staff member's life are valuable. We now have a person on board who has the background and experience to help with better implementation of work-life balance. Our division will further adopt telecommuting, flexible hours and staggered hours in the culture of our office. We want to create a rotational system wherein staff can balance their work and lives. At the same time, someone will always remain in the office to respond to daily issues. I am committed to making the work-life balance programme in our office beneficial to both the organization and its staff members.

## GENDER/GENDER ISSUES

**Q: One hears about gender-related problems in police and other law enforcement agencies themselves. What has been your experience? How do these issues manifest themselves and what can be done about them?**

**A:** Although women have gradually entered the field of policing, the profession has traditionally been seen as male, and it continues to do so in many countries. In general, societies maintain their perceptions of female stereotypes. However, the presence of a critical mass of female officers in police services will bring about a significant change and translate into fewer gender-related problems. As more and more women perform the same policing tasks as men, they will become accepted and respected for the same and equal contributions they make to the organization.

Police peacekeeping will greatly improve with the presence of both men and women. I am convinced that, slowly, the situation will improve. Women should be given the opportunity through investment in appropriate training to succeed in leadership roles in the police hierarchy and not find themselves marginalized in administrative duties.

Female harassment and abuse of female officers exist in every police service, but sexual misconduct is never acceptable in any police service. As managers we need to be clear about this. In the UN, we have a zero tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse that is strongly enforced.

**Q: Should men and women achieve equally representation in the UN police service? If so, why? What are the merits of such equal representation and what challenges must the UN overcome to arrive at gender balance in its police?**

**A:** The Global Effort initiative is but the start of this process. Our ultimate goal is to reach a 50-50 representation of female and male police peacekeepers. UN Security Resolution 1325, which passed in 2000, mandates a gendered perspective concerning the enormous impacts of conflict on women. It also stipulates that] women play an integral role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Also aligned with our mandate and implemented in peacekeeping missions are Security Resolutions 1820 and 1888 which ensure measures for the protection of women and children by peacekeeping missions.

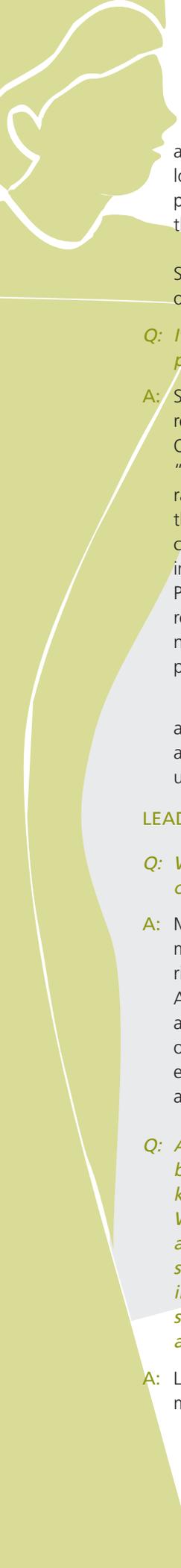
A gender-balanced police service benefits society. Police services become more effective when they represent the male and the female equally. Female police help build stronger societies because they empower other women. The participation of female police peacekeepers ensures that all aspects of policing reflect the security priorities of women and that police services are accessible to women. Female police officers play an important role as mediators, investigators and trainers in reconstructing police services in Liberia, Sudan, Haiti, DRC as well as other peacekeeping operations. They bring a diverse set of skills to public order management and problem-solving techniques within communities and investigations. For example, a Nigerian UN police unit in Liberia often sends out its female police officers at crowd control operations since, reputedly, they calm the crowds more easily than their male colleagues.

Another example is the all-female United Nations police unit in Liberia, which successfully participated in the country's security in recent years as it recovered from civil war. The all-female police unit from India has played a vital role in empowering Liberian women to join its national police.

As I mentioned earlier, female police peacekeepers bring a ray of hope to women victims because female police have proven that they improve the police response to and reporting of sexual violence, thereby building confidence in police services overall.

Furthermore, it is necessary to train the police of the host countries of our peacekeeping missions. In some societies where the genders remains segregated, our female police peacekeepers have found themselves crucial in delivering training to their female police counterparts in the host-states. This was the case, for example, for our UN police officers in Sudan who trained the Sudanese female police officers in traffic policing.

Various challenges remain. Adapting to the culture of the country in conflict is one of them. It



also takes time to build confidence among the locals to respect and understand the role of police peacekeepers as well as the role of women within the police.

We will continue to request that Member States contribute police personnel, especially female officers, to our peacekeeping operations.

**Q:** *If you could realize a dream with regard to the police forces, what would it be and why?*

**A:** Small things make a great impact. I would prefer to refer to the term police “force” as police “service”. Only five percent of policing tasks require the use of “force” The message I wish to convey is “service” rather than the “use of force”. I want to influence the mind-set of people. I have managed to make this change in the language of the Council of Europe, in particular the language of the Committee for Prevention of Torture and Degrading Treatment. The role of the police remains work for the people and not for the state. Female police officers tend to view police work more often as a service.

For female police, we would like to work as much as we can towards the Global Effort to achieve a representation of 20 per cent in the police units by 2014.

#### LEADERSHIP and GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

**Q:** *What has been your guiding philosophy in your career and your life?*

**A:** My philosophy is to never give up, to always listen to my own thinking, to focus on what I believe is the right way to do things and not become intimidated. At the same time, I believe strongly in consultation, and I always attempt to hear other ideas and remain open to other points of view. I also consider it essential to remain humble and to continue learning at all stages of my personal and professional life.

**Q:** *Are there any differences in the leadership behaviour of men and women in the peace-keeping police units? If so, what are they? What advice would you give young women who aspire to become leaders so that they can better support women and men in the police force and in the United Nations itself? What would you say to them to offer them hope, philosophically and concretely?*

**A:** Leadership styles most often depend on personalities more than gender.

My own advice to women is to never give up. Listen to yourself. Stay who you are. Focus on what you want to achieve rather than what others expect of you. Be humble and considerate, and be yourself.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO

**Ms. Michelle Bachelet** on her appointment by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 14 September 2010 as head of United Nations Women (UN Women), an entity established by the General Assembly in July 2010 to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women globally. Ms. Bachelet, who became the first woman President of Chile in 2006, fulfilled her campaign promise by bringing gender parity to her cabinet. Before her election as president, she had served as the country's Minister of Health under socialist President Ricardo Lagos, who appointed her to that position in 2000. In early 2002, she became Chile's Minister of Defense—the first woman in Chile or indeed in all of Latin America to hold that position.

Ms. Bachelet was born in Santiago, Chile, on September 29, 1951. Her father, Alberto Arturo Miguel Bachelet Martínez was an air force brigadier general who died after months of torture for his opposition to the regime of Augusto Pinochet. Her mother, archaeologist Ángela Jeria Gómez, was imprisoned in a torture center with Michelle in 1975. From 1975–1979, Ms. Bachelet remained in exile with her mother in Australia and Germany, where, having earlier studied medicine at the University of Chile, she continued her medical education. She received her M.D. degree and studied pediatric medicine after she returned to Chile in 1979. Later, she studied military strategy at Chile's National Academy of Strategy and Policy and at the Inter-American Defense College in the United States.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters in announcing the appointment that “Ms. Bachelet brings to this critical position a history of dynamic global leadership, highly honed political skills and uncommon ability to create consensus and focus among UN agencies and many partners in both the public and private sector.”

**Ms. Carmen Lapointe-Young** (Canada) whose appointment as the new Under-Secretary-General for The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) was approved by the General Assembly on 28 July 2010. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed her for a five-year non-renewable term. The new head of OIOS, a Certified Internal Auditor and a certified Fraud Examiner, holds a Business Ethics Certificate from Colorado State University. She is a graduate of the financial management programme in internal auditing from Algonquin College in Ottawa. She gained her expertise for this challenging position from years of experience in national and international positions. She began her service as the Director of the Office of Audit and Oversight at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in February 2009. She held the position of Auditor General of the World Bank Group from 2004 to 2009. Ms. Lapointe-Young has also served with Canadian corporations in the field of corporate auditing, holding the position of Vice-President for Internal Audit and Evaluation with Export Development Canada and Auditor at Bank Canada, among others.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that Ms. Lapointe-Young has the “breadth and depth of experience and expertise required for this demanding position.” ■

each of which executed a gender related mandate: UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). It was expected to become fully operational on 1 January 2011. In welcoming the Resolution of the General Assembly, the culmination of four years of negotiations, the Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon asserted “It will now be much more difficult for the world to ignore the challenges facing women and girls—or to fail to take the necessary action”.

An Executive Director will serve as head of UN Women at the level of Under-Secretary-General, and will report to the Secretary-General and be a member of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). As already noted, Ms. Michelle Bachelet has been appointed to this position.

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report to the General Assembly in its sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh sessions on the implementation of the resolution which is entitled “Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women”.

## **United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals**

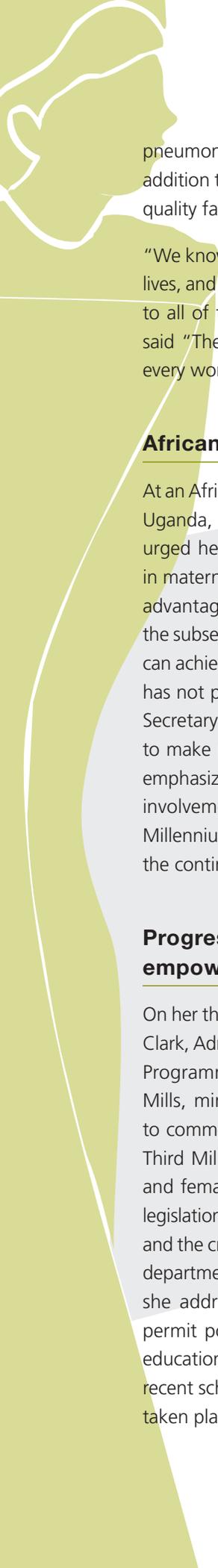
The United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) took place from 20 to 22 September 2010. It launched a global action plan that contains new commitments for women’s and children’s health in addition to others to combat poverty, hunger and disease. With pledges of more than \$40 billion over the next five years, the Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health has the potential to save the lives of more than 16 million women and children and stop 33 million unwanted pregnancies.<sup>1</sup> The effort also seeks to protect more than 100 million children from

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010>

## AROUND THE UN ...

### **UN Women**

As noted above, in an action lauded as “historic” by numerous delegations, the General Assembly, by resolution 64/289 on 21 July 2010, established a new UN entity, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, known as “UN Women” (UNW), to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. Established as a composite entity, UNW will report to both a newly created Executive Board overseeing its programme operations and to the General Assembly for its other mandates. It consolidates and absorbs four entities and offices,



pneumonia and 88 million children from stunting, in addition to ensuring access for women and children to quality facilities and skilled health workers.

"We know what works to save women's and children's lives, and we know that women and children are critical to all of the MDGs." Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said "The 21st century must and will be different for every woman and every child."

### **African Union Summit**

At an African Union summit on 26 July 2010 in Kampala, Uganda, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro urged heads of state, ministers and leaders to invest in maternal and child health because of the enormous advantages good health brings to communities and the subsequent economic growth healthy communities can achieve. Noting that maternal and child health care has not progressed in sub-Saharan Africa, the Deputy Secretary-General called on the participating leaders to make maternal and child health a top priority. She emphasized that such a vital issue demands the serious involvement of leaders in order to meet the 2015 Millennium deadline of maternal and child care across the continent.

### **Progress on women's empowerment in Ghana**

On her three-day visit to Ghana in July 2010, Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, met with President John Evans Atta Mills, ministers, senior officials, and women leaders to commend the country's progress in addressing the Third Millennium Goal of promoting gender equality and female empowerment. She praised the country's legislation, passed in 2007, to prevent domestic violence and the creation of a support unit within the local police departments for domestic violence victims. In addition, she addressed the construction of dormitories that permit poor girls to attend school. The provision of educational supplies, uniforms and meals for girls and recent scholarship offers to women and girls have also taken place in Ghanaian communities.

UNDP continues to collaborate with Ghanaian communities to assist in a campaign to involve women in politics and to build up their decision-making skills. ■

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### **Sexual violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to displace people. Armed troops have made sexual violence a weapon of war, particularly for girls who are forced to engage in sexual relations in exchange for food for themselves and their families or even to gain passing marks in school. Violence in the form of sexual abuse has also become rampant in non-hostile areas such as schools and work places. The victims find it difficult to access justice because of a scarcity of courts, their long commute to the courts and the difficulties of needing to leave their work or family to visit them, usually located only in major towns.

To assist the situation, the International Movement for Children and Women's Rights in the DRC provides psychological counseling to the victims and brings them to court so that they might seek justice. Still, sexual violence in the Congo remains an enormous and ugly challenge. The victims as well as the children born as a result of rape live in shame, rejection and stigmatisation. According to the President of the Children and Women's Rights in DRC. Isidore Kalimara, a solid commitment to the pursuit of justice remains a necessary part of the healing process.

### **Kenyan women fight back against sexual violence**

Nairobi Women's hospital reported that one person is raped every thirty minutes in Kenya.<sup>2</sup> Women fear

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.peacewomen.org/news\\_article.php?id=1436&type=news](http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=1436&type=news)

for their lives. In the slums of the country, women are forced to use communal bathrooms because they rarely have access to adequate bathrooms—a situation that exposes women to the dangers of sexual violence. Dr. Jake Sinclair, one of the founding members of a non-governmental organization proposed giving women the tools to stop sexual attacks before they occur. He created a programme designed to empower women by using simple and effective self-defense techniques. Although women hope that the government can set up better bathroom and toilet facilities, females can protect themselves now through the self-protection strategies proposed by Dr. Sinclair.

### **Appeals Court allows possible asylum to the United States for Guatemalan women**

The Associated Press reported that more than 3,800 Guatemalan women have been murdered since the year 2000. Fewer than two per cent of the cases are solved. Consequently, and in view of the rising incidence of sexual assaults in this country, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in the US ruled, on 12 July 2010, that Guatemalan women who are in danger may meet eligibility requirements for political asylum in the United States.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH ...

### **Vitamin D's power**

Sascha de Gersdorff, in her article, *The Ultimate D-fense*, in the *Women's Health Magazine* writes how Vitamin D could give "sunshine to our lives" because of the many benefits it brings to our health and well-being. The author ventured into capturing various studies and advice from doctors about the sunshine pill.

In the past two decades, researchers have made ample studies on the benefits of the super vitamin—Vitamin D. The Institute of Medicine recommended

a daily intake from 200 international units (IU) to 600 IU. Medical Expert Sarfraz Zaidi MD, author of the book *The Power of Vitamin D* says, "The nutrient affects some 2,000 genes and could amp up your immunity to fight off everything from depression to cancer. Plus, many women are D-deficient. Based on new research, you should get 1,000 to 2,000 IU a day." Dr. Zaidi mentions in his book that the nutrient serves to build stronger bones, joints and muscles because it promotes the absorption of calcium. Vitamin D affects every organ system in the body. Michael F. Holick, Ph.D., M.D. director of the Vitamin D, Skin, and Bone Research Laboratory at the Boston University School of Medicine attests that "the sunshine pill" regulates cellular growth. If a cell in our body becomes abnormal, D tries to normalize it or, if that does not work, kill it by blocking off its blood supply." For women, a high D level could cut the risk of breast cancer.

Diseases such as lupus and multiple sclerosis affect far more females than males. Since D strengthens the immune system, it then reduces the woman's risk of getting MS. Other diseases that may be prevented, and treated with Vitamin D include flu, common cold, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, Type 1 diabetes, and an underactive thyroid.

The *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism's* study on vitamin D indicates that women with low D levels are more likely to suffer from mood disorders and depression. More importantly, the American Heart Association recognizes that D is crucial for a healthy heart because it helps to lower blood pressure.

Dr. Holick recommends getting "some D from sensible sun exposure and some from D-rich foods like certain mushrooms and salmon. Also, everyone should take a daily supplement."

### **Live in the moment: a key to happiness**

A study made by journal *Science* finds that happiness largely depends on a person's ability to focus and to live in the present moment. From more than 2,000 participants,



ages 18 to 88, who reported on their thoughts, activities and associated levels of happiness, approximately 50 per cent of their time was spent thinking about something other than what they are doing. This causes an unhappy feeling. What made these participants the least happy? They cited resting, working and using a home computer. On the contrary, they conveyed that making love, exercising and communicating with others are activities they enjoy most. ■

## IN YOUR INTEREST

### WORK/LIFE

#### **Despite moves towards equality, a labour market punishing to mothers**

A New York Times article dated 4 August 2010 “Despite Moves Towards Equality, A Labour Market Punishing to Mothers” by David Leonhardt focuses on the problem of motherhood in the workplace. The article points out the penalty that the labor market imposes on mothers, obstructing or decelerating their climb up the organizational ladder. It notes that although American feminists have waged the fight for anti-discrimination laws to improve equal treatment of men and women, women still pay a price for being away from work. Research reveals many reasons for the differential in pay and promotion between males and females. These range from women taking more days off relative to men, using of flexible working arrangements, working part-time and maternity leave absences, to merely leaving work earlier than men—mainly to fulfill family responsibilities. It would appear, therefore, that women can prosper and become successful only as long as they do not have children, in which case they may earn almost as much as men, although, most likely, a disparity in pay would still exist. To succeed, women may still have to abide by the usual career path, explaining why many women, especially

those with children, leave the work force and choose full-time parenting.

#### **Women in management: Delusions of Progress**

Harvard Business Review “Women in management: Delusions of Progress”, by Nancy M. Carter and Cristine Silva of Catalyst, alerts organizations that gender parity remains far from being attained, contrary to common perceptions. Gender disparity exists in overall career fulfillment, in wages, and in promotions. Men feel more content with their careers, according to this research. Men move up in the career ladder earlier and faster than women. Even when beginning their careers, men start at a higher level than women, irrespective of whether or not they have to shoulder motherhood responsibilities. The authors argue that women cannot continue to lag behind in these ways in the labour market. Considering that females comprise forty percent of the global workforce, the authors observe, companies must accelerate the development of programmes to empower women and must do so immediately. Businesses that are unable to harness their talents run the risk of being out-competed by those who do. From a business perspective, it is really no longer a question of whether, rather of when.

#### **Still Few Women in Management**

In a New York Times article “Still Few Women in Management” by Catherine Rampell on 27 September 2010, a report slated for release by the US General Accountability Office. states that women have made little progress in rising into management positions in the United States.

The report disclosed that in 2007, the latest year for which widespread data is available, approximately 40 percent of the managers in the United States workforce were women. This figure is only slightly higher than it was in 2000, when women held 39 percent of the managerial positions.

Similarly, the pay gap between male and female managers narrowed only slightly. In 2007, full-time, female managers earned 81 cents for every dollar that their male counterparts earned, as compared to 79 cents in 2000.

According to Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, Democrat of New York and chairwoman of the Joint Economic Committee, working women know that having children will change their lives, but they are taken aback by how much, especially in financial and career terms. It comes as a rude and unacceptable shock, given that families increasingly depend on the working mother's wage in the current economy.

The report also found that compared to male managers, female managers were younger, were more likely to work part-time, and were less likely to be married or have children.

### **Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation settles a gender bias suit**

Thousands of female field representatives, sales agents from 2002 to 2007 in Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation claimed, bringing a class action suit that they were discriminated against in pay, promotion and pregnancy policies. The company settled, committing to pay the plaintiffs, as a class, \$152.5 million.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the company committed to adapting a diverse and inclusive environment that ensured gender equality in its workplace.

### **Woman empowering other women—through the internet**

Leila Chirayath is the founder and CEO of Samasource, a San Francisco-based company which assists developing country women, refugees and young people to earn a living wage on the Internet. Samasource partners with companies that require certain types of relatively simple computer-based tasks, such as database clean-up or translations and transcriptions. Then, it pays

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.novartis.com/newsroom/media-releases/en/2010/1431791.shtml>

hundreds of women across Africa, South Asia and Haiti to do the Internet-based projects. The company provides women with the necessary computer training, Internet access and a laptop. Through the leadership of Ms. Chirayath, several communities—particularly those from the poorest parts of the world—tap the economic potential of women, regarding them as crucial resources.

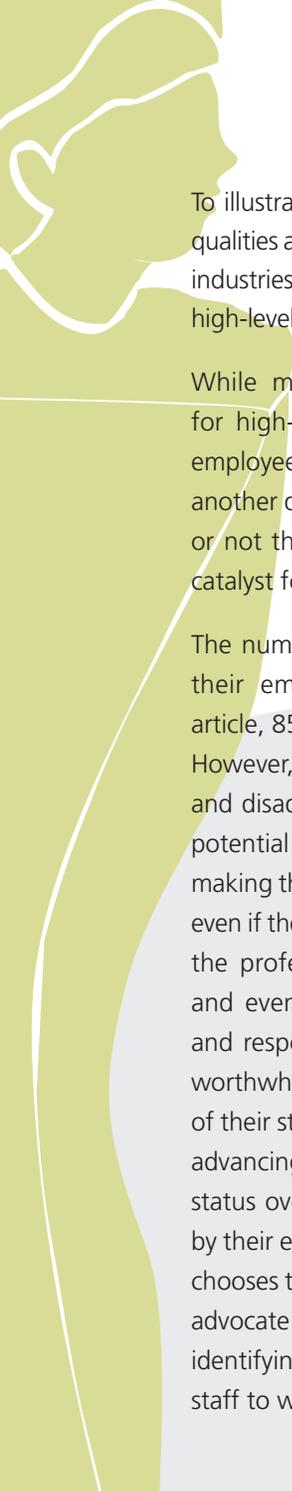
### **“Are You a High Potential?” by Douglas A. Ready, Ay A. Conger, and Linda A. Hill.**

Summarized by: Cynthia C. Gale

Most, if not all, companies now know to keep an active eye out for high potential employees. This effort becomes particularly important to companies during a bad economy, when business leaders at all levels are inclined to identify and develop those individuals most suited to maintain, expand and ensure the future of their company's reputation. Likewise, employees find themselves committed to securing and improving their positions by embodying those qualities that their employers seek.

So what qualities make somebody “high potential? Apparently, states the article, these are not dependent on the industry or sector where an employee works. Nor is it just a matter of meeting expectations or even demonstrating significant talent, skill or intelligence. Rather, the hallmarks of high-potential, according to this article, result from how an employee does a job, not what job an employee does. The authors point out that high-potential employees consistently achieve better results than their colleagues, embody their companies' values in professional conduct and demonstrate adaptability and efficacy in their careers.

The authors also identify a set of four qualities they call “X-factors” that all high potentials share: an avid determination to succeed; an ability to learn from situations and apply that learning to future problems; a desire for new experiences and willingness to take risks, and the judgment—or instinct—to identify when an opportunity is worthwhile.



To illustrate the manifestation of the “high potential” qualities across industry, the article provides from various industries and across ranks, ranging from accountant to high-level executives.

While most companies evaluate their employees for high-potential, whether the companies inform employees of the manner in which they do, is entirely another question. Informing employees as to whether or not they qualify as high-potentials can become a catalyst for growth in the workplace.

The number of companies discussing the issue with their employees is increasing—according to the article, 85 percent of companies opt for transparency. However, transparency carries with it both advantages and disadvantages: an individual aware of his “high-potential” may increase his/her loyalty to the company, making the greatest use of any opportunities available, even if these do not imply rapid advancement. To them, the professional and leadership experience gained and eventual accession to a position of leadership and responsibility within the firm make such loyalty worthwhile. On the other hand, employees informed of their status as high-potentials who feel they are not advancing rapidly enough or find that they lose their status over time may feel wronged or even deceived by their employers. Irrespective of whether a company chooses to make such status public or not, the authors advocate a policy of clarity, consistency and creativity in identifying high-potential employees and encouraging staff to work toward such a goal ■

## AROUND THE WORLD

### **Corporate Women Directors International (CWDI)**

CWDI aims to promote the participation of women in corporate boards worldwide. In 1997 it began to establish baseline data on women board directors in various countries, regions and industries, on the basis of which it then prepares a global analytical report

on women’s participation in corporate boards of two hundred of the largest companies in the world.

In its July 2010 e-newsletter, CWDI reports on the emergence of women on corporate boards, noting its direct link to the increase in the enactment of quota laws, particularly in Europe.

Legislation on quotas in European parliaments boosts the representation of women on boards. The evidence of the effectiveness of such initiative is clear and convincing, according to CWDI. Norway led the way in 2004 with the passage of legislation requiring 40 percent of corporate board seats to be occupied by within a two-year period. Currently, the country has surpassed target. Spain followed Norway, requiring women hold 50 percent of board seats legislating an eight-year deadline. The Netherlands passed quota laws in 2009, while France followed suit with a similar law in 2010. Countries such as Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Switzerland, and Denmark have also implemented quotas but for female directors in government companies. The Netherlands, Switzerland and France accompanied their legislation with a remarkably high level of outstanding advocacy, research and debate regarding the issue of women holding positions as board members.

With respect to the pace of progress, the CWDI 2010 report on Women Directors in the Fortune Global 200 notes that the Netherlands leads Europe with the proportion of female corporate directors rising from 8.6 percent to 15.9 percent between the passage of their law and the year 2010. Also, in the last five years, Switzerland progressed from raised from 7.7 percent to 11.2 percent and France from 3.6 percent to 11.2 percent female members on corporate boards.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, the majority of large companies in Asia except for China do not have female representation on their boards. China has one bank that ranks in the Top Ten list of corporations with the highest percentage of women. In Japan’s giant corporations, on the other

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.globewomen.org/cwdi/2010%20Global//Key.Findings.html>

hand, only 15<sup>5</sup> women directors in total serve on the boards.

In conclusion, the CWDI 2010 Report states that while men still hold 87.8 per cent of the posts on corporate boards worldwide, 77.5 per cent<sup>6</sup> of the 200 largest companies have at least one female member on their board. Nonetheless, it remains true that women barely moved up to serve as directors in the biggest companies and overall, 45 of the largest 200 companies still do not have even a single woman on their board of directors.<sup>7</sup> Analyzed by industry, the current listing by Fortune magazine of the 200 largest companies in the world identifies the food consumer products industry as possessing the highest representation of female directors. ■

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

### **Advancing women's leadership and participation: Transforming the national aids response**

The second in a series of resource guides produced by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) highlights the different approaches to consolidating women's leadership and active participation in national HIV and AIDS responses. Despite international agreement on including women in decision-making in HIV and AIDS responses, a lack of representation of HIV-positive women in decision making bodies and processes persists. The study aims to determine where and in what ways women can participate in response to the pandemic. Through in-depth interviews and consultations of institutional leaders, country case studies, surveys of global and regional networks, and in-depth interview of female leaders worldwide by the International Center

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

for Research on Women (ICRW), the publication delineates opportunities, challenges, and ways to achieve progress in gaining the participation of women at the national and international levels. The guide also provides recommendations for governments, donors and institutional leaders seeking to increase their commitment to respond to HIV and AIDS.

### **DPKO/DFS Guidelines**

#### **Integrating a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations military in peacekeeping operations**

In response to the landmark Security Council Resolution 1325 of year 2000 on women, peace and security, as well as recently adopted Resolution 1820 of year 2008, which reinforce the need to combat sexual violence against women and girls in conflict, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) issued guidelines on integrating a gender perspective into the work of the military in UN peacekeeping operations. This guide serves as a tool for military peacekeeping personnel and troop-contributing countries to ensure the security of women, men, girls and boys in peacekeeping missions.

#### **Transforming the National AIDS Response: Advancing Women's Leadership and Participation**

A resource guide published by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in collaboration with the ATHENA network, surveys the opportunities, challenges and strategies that promote HIV-positive women's participation and leadership in HIV and AIDS responses at the national and global level. The study concludes with recommendations addressed to donors, governments, and institutional leaders seeking to foster longer term commitments to increasing resources that reduce women's vulnerability to HIV AIDS. ■

## RECOMMENDED WEBSITE

<http://www.unwomen.org/>

The website of the newly established UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women called “UN Women” (UNW) is meant to become a gateway and information hub for the new entity. The website will integrate the websites of its four component parts (the former UNIFEM, INSTRAW, OSAGI and DAW), providing a wider range of information and perspective, including on UNW’s own activities. It also will aim to become a “go to” place for gender issues, continuously adapting and updating its structure and content as it discovers unique niches or new and improved ways to meet current and emerging user needs.

You can find a monthly list of senior vacancy announcements (P-5 and above) at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpcareer2.htm>

You can read  
online at

*Network*  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

To receive hard copies of *Network* please send an e-mail request to [network-newsletter@un.org](mailto:network-newsletter@un.org)

INFO

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