

Networks

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INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH BRODERICK

ELIZABETH BRODERICK, SEX DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER, HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, AUSTRALIA – A WOMAN MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Elizabeth Broderick is one of Australia's most inspiring women. Able to walk into any boardroom – most of which are still dominated by men – and strike a deal, she is taking forward her agenda in the highest circles, but discreetly. Her warm, engaging manner and her genuine interest in people make her the ideal person to take on the role of Sex Discrimination Commissioner. Elizabeth Broderick was appointed for a five-year term in September 2007, has recently extended for a further two years. She was also the Commissioner responsible for Age Discrimination from September 2007 to July 2011.

A lawyer and businesswoman, Elizabeth Broderick was the 2001-2 Telstra New South Wales Business Woman of the Year and Australian Corporate Business Woman of the Year. It is no coincidence, therefore, that her most striking success has been at the highest levels of business: from 2009 to 2010, she helped bring about almost a six-fold increase in the number of women appointed to ASX 200 boards.

(continued on page 3)

Contents

Interview with Elizabeth Broderick	p. 1	Women's health	p. 21
Letter from the Focal Point for Women	p. 2	Work/life balance	p. 21
Congratulations to ...	p. 7	In your interest	p. 23
Around the UN ...	p. 8	Recommended reading	p. 25
Around the world ...	p. 14	Recommended websites	p. 26
Violence against women	p. 19		

Letter from the Focal Point for Women

Dear Friends,

A warm welcome and greetings from all of us at UN Women as we bring you the first issue of *Network* for 2012. As you may know, we commenced the year with the marking of UN Women's first anniversary at which Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women highlighted 2012 to be an active and challenging year, one that sees the voices of women to be heard even more.

In this context, we at **Network** seek to bring to you news each quarter on happenings around the UN and around the world that relate to gender equality and women's empowerment. In particular, we focus on improvement of the status of women in the United Nations and worldwide.

This issue, therefore, carries an interview with Elizabeth Broderick, the dynamic Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, who has successfully spearheaded and championed the struggle for women's rights to bring more women in leadership positions and more effectively balance work life issues in Australia. Also, it highlights the passage and approval of a landmark achievement- the development and adoption of the first System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) facilitated by UN Women. The UN-SWAP integrates into its framework aspects of both gender mainstreaming and the equal representation of women, serving also as a stronger platform for promoting better coordination and accountability within the UN system. It constitutes the first ever unified gender equality framework, designed to promote accountability, a common understanding, enhanced coherence and systematic self-assessment.

Amongst other inspiring news we also focus on a Panel Discussion on the vital role women play in military service, security operations and peacekeeping missions around the world; consultations led by the European Union Justice Commissioner on measures to get more women into boardrooms; the International Parliamentary Union report showcasing too little progress on women's political participation; how the humanitarian sector is failing to consider the specific needs of women and girls in response activities; and last but not the least on how a new law in Indonesia transfers husbands salaries to their wives in an effort to stop extra-marital affairs!

We strive to present a wide spectrum of stimulating and enlightening news and trust that you find these stories a source of inspiration for your advocacy and work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment wherever you may be around the world.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra
Focal Point for Women in the UN system &
Senior Advisor Coordination Division
UN Women

INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH BRODERICK *(continued from p. 1)*

Elizabeth Broderick has travelled the length and breadth of Australia listening to concerns about gender equality and age discrimination. As Sex Discrimination Commissioner, she has achieved some significant successes in areas such as preventing violence against women and sexual harassment; balancing paid work with unpaid caring responsibilities; improving lifetime economic security for women; strengthening gender equality laws, monitoring and agencies; and promoting women's representation in leadership positions. She has also facilitated the attendance at the UN of women from marginalized groups as key advocates to address issues such as alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

Q. How did you come to take on the role of Sex Discrimination Commissioner and, later, Age Discrimination Commissioner?

A. I have for many years had a strong commitment to equality for women. Even as a young girl I never thought for a moment that girls couldn't do what boys could do. I grew up in an all-girl household, save for my father, and both my parents actively encouraged us to get educated and to be able to provide for ourselves. They were excellent role models for young girls growing up back in the 1970s. They both raised their three daughters and both did the housework, so I grew up thinking that was the norm. They also encouraged us to give back to the community on top of working for a wage. They instilled the values of equality and community responsibility in us from a young age.

I suppose I became most aware of the way my gender could work against me when I was about to have my first child. I realized that women hit a substantial hurdle at this point that could harm their career trajectory, as well as interfere with their ability to care for their children and spend that vital formative

time with them. I resolved to use my influence as a partner in the law firm where I was working to ensure the women were not disadvantaged because they might require flexible working conditions. I began to speak out strongly on these matters. Later, I cared for my late mother when she was very ill and that again reinforced the importance of being able to balance work and caring.

My mother and father brought me up to understand that women and men should be able to access the same opportunities, but I also happen to think, that they work brilliantly in partnership. And that is part of the reason I firmly believe that men have a major role in rectifying the imbalance in gender equality. I also firmly believe men want to be able to care and that it is often culturally more difficult for them in workplaces to request flexibility because of the traditional breadwinner/provider gender stereotype. So when I am talking about sex discrimination and gender equality, I am genuinely talking about both sexes.

My determination has intensified throughout my life as I meet and talk to people enduring discrimination, including unemployed mature age workers and people living through other aspects of age discrimination. This sort of injustice has always stirred something in me and I like to think that it is one of the things that drives me to believe we can and must make great changes.

Q. In your experience, what are the key differences and similarities in combatting age and sex discrimination?

A. The thing about discrimination is that it isolates people and disempowers the person on the receiving end. So at that level, both these forms of discrimination share great similarities. However, on other levels they are strikingly different. One of the defining

aspects of sex discrimination is that it impacts on women throughout their lives, and they pay a significant financial penalty because of it. Generally, women have not traditionally accumulated anywhere near the same level of retirement savings as men. This is largely because of pay inequality and inflexible work conditions that force women out of the workforce when they become pregnant and need to care for their children and then, later, when they are caring for the elders in their family, or indeed, their partner. Extremely important feminized industries, such as nursing and caring, are not valued and remunerated in our society to anywhere near the same level as masculine industries. All these things mean women are continually up against an unequal system throughout their lives – despite the fact that more women achieve higher levels of education in Australia than men. It is astonishing.

In contrast, age discrimination tends to occur in two distinct parts of our lives. We all know how hard it can be to get into the workforce when we are young because we have no experience. However, once we manage to conquer this hurdle, which the majority of people seem to do, we are later faced with people assuming we are too old to do work we are good at. Statistically this has been shown to start happening as early as the age of 45. Having spoken to many people in these situations, particularly mature age workers who simply cannot get work because they are “overqualified” or “would not fit into a younger team”, I know how distressing and debilitating this can be.

Of course, this is compounded for older women who find they are on the receiving end of both sex and age discrimination.

In many ways the solutions that are important for addressing sex discrimination – such as debunking stereotypes and unconscious bias, and embracing flexible work arrangements – will also assist workers suffering age discrimination

Q. What has been the hallmark of your tenure as Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner?

A. I am very proud of my involvement, and that of my team, in the advocacy work on adopting paid parental leave in this country. I think, along with other stakeholders and partners, our work in increasing the number of women in leadership positions and raising awareness of the importance to our entire society of having women in decision-making positions, has been tremendously beneficial and important.

I have recently been appointed to the role of Sex Discrimination Commissioner for an additional two years and sincerely hope that the work we have been doing to combat violence against women will continue full steam ahead and result in significant change and improvement.

However, if one was looking for a “hallmark”, it would be my Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force. My team and I have undertaken the most extensive cultural review ever done into the treatment of women in the Australian Defence Force. My aim was to get out into the field and speak to people at all levels of the Navy, Army and Airforce. My team and I visited deployed environments including Afghanistan and undertook qualitative and quantitative research, examining Defence Force structures, practices and policies and interviewing both male and female personnel. We are in the final stages of the review and my hope is that major positive change will result from our two major reports and accompanying recommendations.

Q. What do you think are the central challenges regarding gender-related issues, both in the workplace and in the home? How might they be overcome, ideally?

A. I believe that domestic or family violence presents one of the greatest gender-equality challenges for us today – both in the home and at work.

As I travel around Australia, I often ask people to name countries where they consider domestic violence to be a problem. More often than not, they reel off a list of countries and fail to recognize the high rates of domestic violence in their own country.

The scourge of violence against women is one of, if not *the*, greatest worldwide gender-equality issue today. We have come from a place where this form of violence was hidden behind closed doors and considered to be a matter between a husband and wife – which it still is in many places around the world – to seeing it emerge into the public spotlight. But there is still a long way to go in shifting the cultures that continue to condone violence against women.

It is not just about the victim or the perpetrator. Violence against women in our community is an injustice that is everybody's concern. One of the areas I am strongly committed to is encouraging workplaces to realize that they have a vital role to play in assisting staff members, such as in-house training programmes for staff, supportive leave provisions, and policies that allow women to keep clothes and valuables at work. I want to see the entire community rally behind this issue.

Q. What does advancing gender equality and women's human rights in a policy context really mean? Why is it so important?

A. It is only by making gender a central consideration in the development and implementation of public policy that we can hope to advance gender equality and women's human rights in Australia. The risk in failing to do so is that public policy responses will perpetuate existing forms of oppression against women and limit women's and men's autonomy, and also create new forms of gender oppression that undermine broader efforts to achieve equality.

A gender perspective is important for the very simple reason that most policies impact on

the lives of both men and women in one way or another. Because of economic and social differences between men and women, policy consequences (intended and unintended) often vary along gender lines. It is only through a gender analysis of policy that these differences become apparent and solutions can be devised.

We need to interrogate policy to uncover the gender implications that might otherwise appear to be neutral or objective. I ask myself two questions:

■ The woman question: Have women been taken into consideration or not? If not, in what way and how might that omission be corrected? What difference would it make to do so?

■ The man question: What is the position of boys and/or men in this situation? Does this apply to all boys and/or men, or does it affect different men differently?

Advancing gender equality and women's human rights in a policy context is, therefore, not just about including women's voices or, for example, removing barriers to women's participation. It is also about the adoption of positive measures to bring about a transformation in the institutions and structures that cause or perpetuate discrimination and inequality. Who is responsible for ensuring this is applied? Simply put, we all are.

Hilary Charlesworth, a leading Australian feminist legal scholar, has cautioned that a genuine commitment to advancing gender equality and women's human rights requires gender to "be taken seriously in central, mainstream, 'normal' institutional activities and not simply left in a marginalized, peripheral backwater of specialist women's institutions."

No matter where we work or what walk of life we come from, each of us is responsible for applying a gender perspective in the development and implementation of public policy.

Q. Is achieving gender equality all about women agitating for change? Or is it also getting men taking the message of gender equality out to other men as “male champions of change”?

A. As I said earlier, I have never believed women can solve the problems of gender inequality on their own. There are two sexes and two sides of this equality story. So I believe both sexes need to work together to create the solutions. I have been a proponent of this ever since I was appointed.

This viewpoint was reinforced when I went on my listening tour at the beginning of my term and met women and men all across the country from many walks of life. They believed women and men needed to work together.

Many men also want to become more involved in raising their children and caring for their elders, but the traditional view of the ideal worker – a man who is available whenever the company wants him – precludes this. So making changes for women also means making changes for men.

Additionally, as men have always been at the head of the power structures in most of our organizations, they are in a position to make the changes. They know that more women graduate from our universities than men. They know that they work with extremely competent, skilled and talented women. As Commissioner, I consult with a great many male business leaders and I can tell you there is a groundswell of commitment gathering among men out there to take action to rectify gender equality and sex discrimination issues.

You mentioned male champions of change, that is the name of a group of male CEOs and business leaders from some of the largest organizations in Australia. I facilitated bringing them together to form a group that will drive gender equality best practice in business in our country. I have found this to be a tremendously inspiring initiative.

Q. Representation of women in boards and senior positions is understood to be key to progress? Why? And why are they still not there in sufficient numbers?

A. On one level it is really very simple. There are more women than men in Australia. More women graduate from tertiary education as well. Women do most of the purchasing of goods and services. Yet representation of women on boards for these big organizations is very low, both in the public and private sector. So where is the representation for these female consumers in the decision-making processes about the goods and services they are buying? It is the age-old story of men making decisions for women.

It is also a story of sex discrimination. Women are just not able to break through the glass ceiling. There are two main reasons for this. One is that women have difficulty climbing the corporate ladder because large organizations still have patriarchal structures. The other is that we simply need a critical mass of women in these positions to encourage women to keep climbing.

Q. What is the prevalence of sexual harassment in Australia? What are the changes that you believe will best address the problem?

Sexual harassment continues to be an issue in Australia. Our 2008 prevalence survey showed that:

■ Around a third of women in Australia aged 18-64 have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime. Most sexual harassment (65 per cent) continues to be experienced in the workplace.

■ 22 per cent of women and 5 per cent of men aged 18-64 have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in their lifetime.

In 2011, the Sex Discrimination Act was strengthened to ensure that all forms of sexual harassment, including through electronic media, were unlawful. The law is

strong. What needs to change are cultures that still allow sexual harassment to persist. We are currently conducting our 2012 prevalence survey. This will compare, for the first time, the prevalence of sexual harassment in the military and in the general community. The results will be available in October 2012.

Q. What changes in attitudes and business practices do you think are needed to facilitate work-life integration?

A. We must recognize that men and women's life cycles are different and intelligently apply that knowledge in the business practices that exist in modern organizations. We need to make flexibility mainstream and to see men working in flexible arrangements because this sends a strong message that you can be a serious player at work and an engaged parent/son. Progressive organizations are reviewing their career development processes and culture and asking: "If you had to design your organization from a clean sheet so that you eliminated barriers to women's progression, what would it look like?"

Q. As someone who has successfully combined family life and career advancement, what are the key lessons you have learned?

A. Two lessons are:

1. Your work-life balance is not a result of one big decision you make to find greater balance but rather a result of the thousands of small decisions you make every day about where you spend your time. For example, the decision to take a phone call and stay late when you've agreed to attend your child's school concert. I reflect on my work-life balance over several months rather than just a few weeks and I ask myself whether I'm happy with where I've spent my time.
2. I'm a guilt free zone. I try not to feel guilty about the time I spend at work or the time I spend at home. I set out to make the right decision every day about combining work and family. Sometimes I make the wrong decision, but that's OK.

Q. You are an effective female leader. What drives you?

A. What drives me is a strong desire to correct injustice; to give dignity back; and to create a more equal world for all our children and generations to come. I will do this by listening deeply, making strong connections and using my influence to create positive change. At a macro level, my quest is to realize a more peaceful world, one where all children can thrive, irrespective of their gender.

Q. What message would you give to younger women and men?

A. Be authentic. See failure as an investment in learning, believe that change is possible and always remember the quote by Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

CONGRATULATIONS TO ...



Susana Malcorra of Argentina, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, on her appointment as Chief of Staff to the UN Secretary-General. She will start in her new role on 1 April 2012.

Ms. Malcorra will succeed Vijay Nambiar of India who will carry on at the UN as the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Myanmar.

As Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Malcorra directed logistical and administrative support for UN peace missions worldwide in support of some 30 field operations comprising 120,000 military, police and civilian personnel.



Jan Eliasson of Sweden on his appointment as UN Deputy Secretary-General. A veteran in the fields of diplomacy and foreign relations, he will take over from Asha-Rose Migiro of Tanzania on 1 July 2012.

Mr. Eliasson served as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, President of the 60th session of the General Assembly, and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

He is currently a member of the Secretary-General's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Advocate Group. At the national level, he has served in key ambassadorial positions representing Sweden in New York and Washington, as well as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Minister.

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, a filmmaker and journalist from Pakistan, on winning the country's first ever Academy Award for the Best Documentary (Short Subject) at the 84th Academy Awards in February 2012. The award is a first for Ms. Obaid-Chinoy and for Pakistan



More than 100 women are disfigured in acid attacks every year in Pakistan. Ms. Obaid-Chinoy's film, *Saving Face*, will help to

increase global awareness of a violent crime that is seldom discussed. The film follows Pakistani plastic surgeon Mohammad Jawad who performs re-constructive surgery on acid attack survivors. Ms. Obaid-Chinoy hopes the film will bring about a positive change in the country and in policy-making and help bring an end to crimes against women in Pakistan.

Ms. Obaid-Chinoy's previous films also won international acclaim. Her 2010 documentary, *Pakistan's Taliban Generation*, won an International Emmy Award.

AROUND THE UN...

Ban Ki-moon calls for greater efforts to promote women's economic empowerment



Equality Means Business, an initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact, was launched on 6 March 2010. To mark its second anniversary, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon joined nearly 200 business leaders and representatives from civil society, governments and the UN in New York to highlight this year's theme "Gender Equality for Sustainable Business". This calls for greater efforts to remove barriers to women's full participation in the economy. Among the obstacles highlighted are lack of access to jobs, markets, credit and property.

Elaborating on how business can empower women in the workplace, market and community, the UN Secretary-General said that: "the meaningful participation of women

in business – from the inclusion of women-owned businesses in supply chains, to having significant representation of women on corporate boards – also translates into stronger performance”.

Michelle Bachelet, UN Women's Executive Director, stressed that countries and companies with higher levels of gender equality enjoy faster growth and better performance. In addition, the growth is more inclusive, which benefits everyone.



Georg Kell, Executive Director of Global Compact, said that more and more companies recognize that business can maximize its contribution to sustainable development by prioritizing and integrating gender equality and the empowerment of

women as key components of corporate sustainability.

Michelle Bachelet outlines action agenda as UN Women marks its first anniversary

Reporting on the first year of operations of UN Women, Executive Director Michelle Bachelet called for greater commitment and action in support of women and gender equality. In her first press conference of the year in February, Ms. Bachelet outlined the action agenda, challenges and priorities of the organization against a backdrop of austerity measures, budget cuts and political changes affecting women's lives, worldwide.

“My top priority for 2012 will be to make a renewed push for women's economic empowerment and political participation. This is in response to women's demands and also to recent events, to the transformations taking place in the political, social and economic spheres,” said Ms. Bachelet. “With

rising demand for justice, upcoming elections in many countries and political transition, we can open doors wider for women in pursuit of the dignity and rights to which all human beings are entitled,” she added.

Ms. Bachelet focused on the challenges and opportunities for women's rights that have emerged as a result of the two major developments that dominated global debate in 2011: the democracy movements in the Arab states and the continued financial and economic crisis. She highlighted UN Women's response to changing geopolitical scenarios, such as its support for the creation of the Egyptian Women's Union and its work facilitating the formulation of the Egyptian Women's Charter.

Ms. Bachelet noted that UN Women is also working increasingly with the private sector: 257 CEOs have so far signed up to the Women's Empowerment Principles that guide companies in creating better and more equitable conditions for women.

Ms. Bachelet focused on key achievements in UN Women's first year. These included the bringing together of women leaders during the UN General Assembly to call for more women leaders in politics, and the adoption of a new General Assembly resolution in December calling on countries to take concrete steps to increase women's political participation.

During the year, a global policy agenda to end violence against women was launched, as was an initiative to provide essential services to survivors of violence. Ms. Bachelet also drew attention to work on expanding the role of women in peace talks, peacebuilding and recovery by training women in Africa and Asia as mediators in conflict prevention and facilitating women's participation in international engagement conferences for Afghanistan and South Sudan. She also highlighted capacity-building efforts in more than 50 countries in gender analysis and budgeting.

In 2011, contributions to UN Women totalled US\$235 million, representing a 33 per cent increase over 2010 and a widening of the donor base. However, intensified fundraising efforts are required to meet the target of US\$700 million for 2012-2013.

Landmark action plan to measure gender equality across the UN system

On 13 April a landmark System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women was adopted at a meeting of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to be applied throughout the UN system. UN Women developed the UN-SWAP in consultation with the UN system and in line with its mandate (RES/64/289) to lead coordinate and promote accountability of the UN system for its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Subsequently, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) called on the UN system to actively engage in its roll-out. The Secretary-General was asked to report on progress in the implementation of the UN-SWAP at ECOSOC's substantive session in 2013.

UN-SWAP includes 15 performance indicators derived from intergovernmental mandates and consultation with 50 departments and entities. It provides a unified gender equality framework that promotes accountability, a common understanding, enhanced coherence and systematic self-assessment. This steady, targeted and progressive approach will enable all entities in the UN system to promote and enhance gender equality and the empowerment of women at the corporate level. For the first time, the UN will use a set of common measures to assess progress in its gender-related work, including the mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all its operations.

All UN entities are expected to report on the UN-SWAP in 2013 to set the baseline for the UN system's performance on gender equality

and the empowerment of women against the UN-SWAP performance indicators.

Embedded in the UN-SWAP are a series of criteria focused on gender balance in staffing across the UN system, including human resources, gender architecture and organizational culture. The accountability framework thus strengthens the UN's commitment to the equal representation of women, by facilitating the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses across the UN system and identifying the resources and capacity needed.

Planned roll-out activities from July 2012 to April 2013 are now in place. The roll-out is being undertaken in the same participatory fashion as the UN-SWAP development, a process that has been recognized as a model for the UN system.

Ms. Bachelet celebrated the ground-breaking launch of UN-SWAP, but reiterated the need for its full and fast implementation. This will require a coordinated effort across the UN system, and both joint activities and intensified efforts by individual entities. UN Women will play a coordinating role and track progress to help ensure that results are achieved as planned.

For further details on UN-SWAP, please visit <http://www.unwomen.org/2012/04/un-women-welcomes-a-landmark-action-plan-to-measure-gender-equality-across-the-un-system/>

Commission on the Status of Women 56th session

The 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place from 27 February to 9 March 2012 at UN headquarters in New York.

The Commission focused on the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication and sustainable development. However, the Commission did not adopt agreed conclusions



on these themes. Six resolutions and one decision on the following issues were adopted:

1. Ending female genital mutilation;
2. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women;
3. Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;
4. Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters;
5. Eliminating maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women;
6. Indigenous women as key actors in poverty and hunger eradication;
7. Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS.

For more information, please see www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm

Making introductory remarks at the Commission's NGO Forum Consultation Day, Ms. Bachelet announced the setting up of advisory groups at the global, regional and national levels to provide regular feedback on UN Women programming.

Ms. Bachelet highlighted the opportunities for change afforded by UN General Assembly resolution adopted in December 2011. This calls on UN Member States to take concrete steps to increase women's political participation and leadership, including rural women. She also stressed the importance of economic empowerment, and the urgent need to open up economic opportunities for women. She said that it was vital that policymakers establish mechanisms to ensure fair wages, labour rights and decent working conditions for rural women and men. This should include policies that promote fair trade, and fair and stable prices for food and agricultural goods.

International Women's Day 2012

"Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty" was the theme of the official UN

event in New York to mark International Women's Day 2012. Addressing the session, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the plight of the world's rural women and girls mirrors that of women and girls throughout society. The glass ceiling persists in the workplace. Violence against women is pervasive at home and in conflict. He stressed that he was determined to change the UN's record on gender equality and women's empowerment.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, broadcaster Femi Oke, and Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

Ms. Kamara, Chairperson of the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, spoke about the vital role of rural women in achieving MDG 1 by 2015 and of the need to finance and prioritize rural women.

Ms. Anne Itto, a representative from South Sudan, spoke about how teaching people about voting and elections had ensured that when the time came, the population of South Sudan could elect and choose their own leaders and decide their destiny, despite high illiteracy levels. She said that the challenge was to reach out to all women, including those who may be difficult to reach, to ensure that they are involved in decision-making.

Michelle Bachelet celebrates International Women's Day in Morocco

On 8 March, Ms. Bachelet celebrated International Women's Day from Morocco, to underline the need for women in the region

to be fully involved in the democratic transition processes. “Women’s full and equal participation in the political and economic arena is fundamental to democracy and justice, which people are demanding,” she said. “Equal rights and opportunity underpin healthy economies and societies.”



Michelle Bachelet visiting a rural women’s land rights project in Morocco

On her first official visit to the country, Ms. Bachelet commended Morocco and the Arab region on the gains that have been made. She highlighted the closing of the gender gap in schools and universities and drew attention to the Moroccan Constitution, which establishes the principle of equality between men and women in all spheres. In Tunisia, the electoral law enabled women to win 27 per cent of seats in the Constituent Assembly in recent elections. However, she called for more concrete measures to improve women’s lives.

During her visit, Ms. Bachelet addressed the National Conference “Morocco on the Path towards Equality: Legal and Institutional Advances for Gender Equitable Public Policies”, in Rabat, and visited students at the Al-Ghafari High School. She also met rural women of the Soulalyates ethnic group, who have been striving for inheritance and property rights. Ms. Bachelet heard how their community-based mobilization and activism had transformed their lives, and empowered them in their society. The campaigns and press conferences held by Soulalyates women

successfully mobilized public opinion and led the Ministry of the Interior to urge the provincial authorities to ensure that gender equality principles were observed in communal transfers, including women’s rights to inherit communal land.

Panel discussion: “Change Makers and Peacekeepers”



One of the events to mark International Women’s Day was a panel discussion on “Change Makers and Peacekeepers: Journey towards equal representation of women”. The Panel discussion was held on 7 March 2012 at the UN Headquarters in New York and hosted by the Office of the Focal Point for Women, UN Women. Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, delivered the opening remarks.

Panelists included Admiral Mark E. Ferguson III, US Navy Admiral, Vice Chief of Naval Operations; Commissioner Anne-Marie Orlor, Chief Police Adviser at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support (DPKO/DFS); Lieutenant General Babacar Gaye, DPKO/DFS Chief Military Adviser; and Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, UN Department of Political Affairs, Director of Europe Division. The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Aparna Mehrotra, Senior Advisor on Coordination UN Women and Focal Point for Women.

The focus of the panel discussion was providing a forum for change makers, in the UN and outside, to share their vision, experience and insights. Since 2000, the US Navy has been at the forefront in increasing the representation of women. Similarly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s agenda for

change has been accompanied by historic progress in the representation of women in the UN, especially at the highest levels and within military and police peacekeeping contingents.

The discussion centred on the vital role women play in military service, security operations and peacekeeping missions around the world. Ms. Lakshmi Puri stressed that women are one of the keys to establishing sustainable peacekeeping operations. She also highlighted the importance of gender components in UN missions and gender-sensitive training for all personnel in post-conflict situations.

A key message conveyed by the panellists was the importance of an institutional environment of empowerment and equality. Admiral Ferguson, US Chief of Naval Personnel, reiterated the significant position women currently play in the US military. He noted that 55,000 of the 300,000 enlisted personnel in the US Navy, are women. The critical mass of 20 per cent has, therefore, been exceeded.

He cited the opening of almost all areas of the military service to women (the exception being the Navy Seals) and mentoring programmes by senior female officers as examples of the ways that the US Navy has tried to send a clear message that women have a significant role in the service. "The behavior of men improves when the women officers are present. Women have gender qualities of sensitivity and a deep commitment to success," he said. Continuing to encourage and place women in strategic leadership positions will serve as a catalyst in the "journey" towards equal representation

When asked what makes them great leaders, the panellists cited qualities such as integrity, character, vision, conviction, courage, humility, empowering others as fundamental to successful leadership. Gender was not a deciding factor.

Multi-country initiative on women and peacebuilding

UN Women, the UNDP, and the European Union (EU), will take part in the first joint programme piloting a model for EU/UN collaboration on Women, Peace and Security. This programme, announced on 1 February 2012, will strengthen the capacity and coordination of women's civil society organizations and relevant EU and UN actors, and support women's participation in peacebuilding, especially with regard to post-conflict planning and financing, the rule of law, and post-conflict economic recovery.

It will be implemented in three strategic locations: Kosovo (UN Security Council Resolution 1244), Timor-Leste and Liberia. In all three locations women face significant challenges in actively participating in political life and decision-making processes, as well as in benefiting equally from security, justice and economic recovery. The two-year programme will work through targeted practical interventions that can be replicated in other locations. It is hoped that these could provide a blueprint in future post-conflict contexts for greater coordination among international actors, including the European External Action Service, EU Delegations, and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions.

The initiative, which is in line with the EU Policy on Women, Peace and Security, is funded by a €1.5 million grant from the EU under the Instrument for Stability. An EU/UN Women/UNDP advisory group for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 will be established in each pilot location, tailored events at global and local level will facilitate knowledge-building, and regular spaces will be created for dialogue with civil society. In addition, micro-grants will be made available to women's organizations to support peacebuilding, social cohesion and reconciliation.

For more details, please see http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/index_en.htm

AROUND THE WORLD ...

Women as the way forward, Ms. Bachelet at the World Economic Forum, January 2012

The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters devoted a major plenary session on its opening day to the role of women as leaders.

Thai Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, opened the discussion by announcing that Thailand plans to create a national women's development fund to counter human rights abuses directed at women.

Michelle Bachelet participated in the panel entitled, "Women as the way forward". This first public meeting in Davos focusing on women's leadership was moderated by Nick Kristof, columnist at *The New York Times*. Panellists included Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Facebook; Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand; and Desmond M. Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner, South African peace activist and president of The Elders, a non-governmental organization dedicated to peace and human rights.



Sheryl Sandberg said that women suffer from an ambition gap. "We say we want to educate girls," she said, "but we don't really believe it. We don't raise our daughters to be as ambitious as boys."

Ms. Bachelet said: "We need to work harder with the business community and countries to

increase opportunities for women. We need men and women working together to advance women's empowerment and equality. Women and men have to lead together."

Desmond Tutu said, "What we need is a revolution led by women. I think women ought to be saying to us men: 'You have made a mess, just get out and let us in.'"

While radical revolution was not on the agenda at the World Economic Forum's Women Leaders Dinner, the question of leadership was. Moderator Laura Liswood, Secretary-General of the Council of Women World Leaders asked whether these turbulent demand the bold "John Wayne" style of leadership or whether women see – and bring – something different? The conversation had clearly moved on from questions of whether women are better or different leaders to a debate about "what kind of leadership is demanded in these challenging times?"

The women leaders assembled agreed that the current environment calls for "an era of hybrid leadership." As Ms. Bachelet, said, "We can't generalize. For good leadership in changing times, one day they need to be the general, the next the consensus-builder." Her comments were echoed by Josette Sheeran, UN World Food Programme Executive Director and new board member of the World Economic Forum: "Today's leadership still needs to be hierarchical but also needs to be flexible." She added: "And I agree with those who feel our perpetually shifting environment calls for leadership that is more decisive and crisis-oriented than slow and consensual." As Diezani Alison-Madueke, Nigeria's Minister of Petroleum Resources, said, "We need [leaders] to have thick skin."

There was a general view that the discussion of male versus female leadership traits is stopping progress. Ms. Bachelet said, "We don't believe we need to make a trade-off between being feminine and tough. Women are of course capable of strong and tough decisions."

The ability to lead from within or outside a hierarchical structure is more possible and more critical given current technologies and global culture shifts toward the importance of civil engagement.

Through this leadership lens, workplace gender equality metrics and measurements are incomplete if they focus on how many women are (or are not) on the executive board. It was suggested that if the concept that leaders are people mobilizing resources, not just those with powerful titles, is truly embraced, then perhaps we have more women leading than current measurements suggest.

New climate agreement increases gender equality commitments

Gender equality issues rose a step higher on the international climate change agenda at the UN climate talks in Durban, South Africa, in January 2012. The Durban Platform that emerged from the meeting highlights an unprecedented 11 commitments to gender equality, including in a widely heralded new agreement to create an international Green Climate Fund. Gender advocates focused on pushing forward commitments made a year earlier at negotiations in Cancún. These included, creating institutions in the critical areas of climate finance, technology and adaptation. Commitments to gender were subsequently secured in all three, with efforts by delegations of Ghana, Haiti, Finland, Iceland, Malawi and Nepal, among others.

The creation of the Green Climate Fund marks the first time that a climate finance mechanism will be established with gender aspects integrated from the outset. The Fund is expected to channel much of the annual US\$100 billion that developed countries have committed to mobilize for climate change by 2020. It will support efforts both to mitigate the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, and to adapt to the consequences of global warming.

The Durban Platform also set up the Climate Technology Centre and Network. Its mandate includes making gender considerations part of broadening access to technology to manage climate change, such as through greater energy efficiency to cut emissions. The capacity for gender sensitivity will be factored into a process to select a host organization for the Centre.

These steps recognize that the spread of technology will be most effective if it reflects the differing needs of men and women and the varying impacts of climate change. For example, land use for large-scale energy projects affects women and men differently where they have different access to and ownership of the land affected. Another example where poorer women are disproportionately affected is access to modern cooking stoves that not only cut emissions but also reduce the amount of time required to collect fuel.

Working with key partners such as the Global Gender Climate Alliance, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Women and Gender Constituency, and the Heinrich Böll Foundation, UN Women played a critical role in Durban, in providing technical support to delegations including those advocating broader recognition of the gender dimensions of global warming. UN Women is an Official Observer to the UNFCCC under which international climate talks take place.

For more information, see *Climate Change: putting Gender Equality at the Centre* at <http://www.unwomen.org/focus-areas/climate-change-and-the-environment/facts-and-figures/>

SEED Gender Equality Award 2011

The SEED Initiative is a global partnership for action, founded at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. This year, as part of SEED's partnership with UN Women, a special Gender Equality Award was given to the "Solid Waste Management and Community Mobilization Program" in Nepal. The



programme is a waste collection and recycling initiative of over 1,000 households and businesses. It is run by a women's environment committee and supported by the local municipality. A savings and credit cooperative has also been established to mobilize loans to 150 female members.

"UN Women is proud to join other UN partners and sponsor the first-ever SEED Gender Equality Award to lend a helping hand to women who drive sustainable development and the Green Economy," said Ms. Bachelet. She added: "As we face rising disparities, mounting protests, faltering economies, and a changing climate, we must unleash the potential of women to contribute to the solutions our common humanity has to find."

Non-Aligned Movement's ministerial meeting on the advancement of women

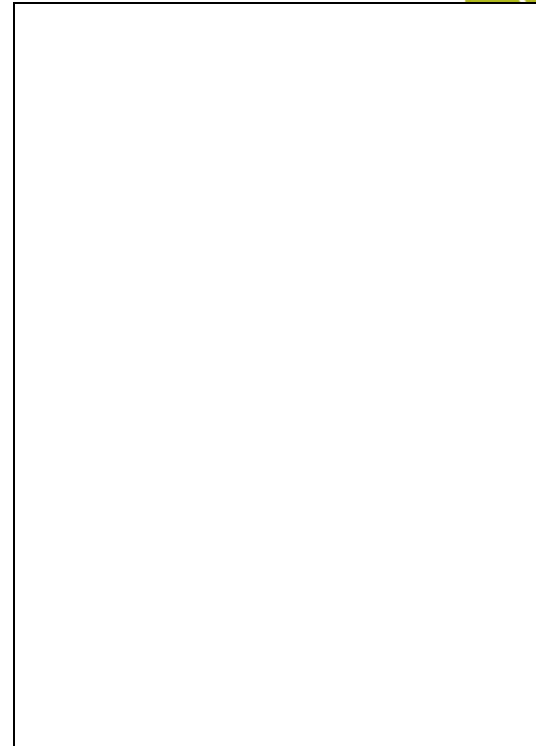
Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro urged UN Member States to boost economic empowerment for women to help them realize the global community's common goals. Speaking at the Non-Aligned Movement's ministerial meeting on the advancement of women in Doha, Qatar, on 14 February 2012 she stressed that gender discrimination around the world was still widespread.

Focusing on the struggles faced by women in rural communities around the world, Ms. Migiro also urged governments to empower rural women economically. She also pointed to the progress made by the UN's youngest agency, UN Women, noting that as it entered its second year, it was determined to do even more to deliver on the organization's promises to advance women's issues.

The humanitarian sector fails to consider different needs of women and girls

Humanitarian agencies are failing to take into account the different needs of women and

girls (and equally of men and boys), according to a report published in March 2012 by Development Assistance Research Associates (DARA), a leading humanitarian organization based in Madrid. The report, *The Humanitarian Response Index 2011*, also found that addressing issues of gender, the focus of this year's report, remains more of a political commitment than a practical reality.



DARA blamed three factors for this failure:

1. The humanitarian sector is too male dominated. DARA notes that 68 per cent of the senior managers it interviewed were men. "Men wouldn't understand why it was important to put locks on latrine doors. They thought it was just so the wind wouldn't open them," one aid worker told DARA. Other respondents gave credit to senior male staff for pushing the gender agenda but complained that female staff attempting to do the same were often seen as doing it for personal or emotional reasons.
2. Gender is often considered a low priority in emergency responses. Many saw gender as an

"added luxury", optional, depending on timing and resources. "In truth this is not a priority; it's more of a 'tick the box' approach," said one donor representative in Somalia.

3) Gender is still mainly equated with women's issues and not as a comprehensive strategic approach to programming. In other words, men and boys should not be forgotten. In a foreword to the report, Michelle Bachelet recognized that the humanitarian sector had made some improvements, but these measures, she argued, needed to be financed and implemented in a much more systematic way. "Far too many people still wrongly assume that the specific threats faced by women should be addressed once broader security issues are solved; that their voices should be heard once peace is consolidated. The opposite is true."

Indonesian women get husbands' pay to stop affairs

Thousands of male Indonesian civil servants had their monthly pay transferred to their wives' bank accounts in March 2012 in a bid by a local government to stop men having affairs. The Gorontalo administration on northern Sulawesi Island issued the recommendation early this year to its 3,200 civil servants. "Men are usually unable to control their behaviour if they have too much money in their pocket," government spokesman Rifly Katili told AFP. "I'm pretty sure this will eliminate the possibility of love affairs that undermine families," he said, adding that about 90 per cent of workers are taking part in the initiative voluntarily. "This kind of initiative will also empower employees' wives to learn about household budget management," he said.

Gender equality at the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness 2011

About 2,000 delegates from both donor and receiving countries of official development assistance (ODA) gathered in Busan, Republic

of South Korea, between 29 November and 1 December 2011. Gender equality was central to discussions and the focus of numerous events.

■ A **Global Women's Forum**, sponsored by UN Women, was held as part of a Civil Society Forum on 27-28 November 2011. It focused on helping to coordinate and advance the advocacy of women's groups during the High-Level forum in Busan.

■ UN Women and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Gendernet organized a side event on 29 November on **Progress on gender equality and women's empowerment since the Paris Declaration**. Recommendations from the event fed into the Special Session on Gender on 30 November and the Busan Joint Action Plan on Gender Equality and Development. The side event addressed questions related to national ownership and financing for gender equality in economic sectors, and accountability for gender equality outcomes.

■ A **Special Session on Gender, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for Development Results** was held on 30 November 2011. It was co-hosted by the USA and the Republic of Korea, in collaboration with UN Women, the World Bank and OECD Gendernet and moderated by Michelle Bachelet.



The session included opening remarks by US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, interventions by the President of Timor Leste, José Manuel Ramos-Horta; and contributions from representatives of women's

organizations and the private sector. Korean Minister of Gender Equality and Family Kim Kum-lae provided the closing remarks.

Participants discussed ways to translate evidence into action at the country level, and their support for gender-related commitments in the outcome document, The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. This emphasizes that gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to achieving development results.

The Busan Outcome Document marks a turning point for international development cooperation. It states that countries must accelerate their efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programmes grounded in country priorities. Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. Countries committed to:

- Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonize and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring that public expenditure is targeted appropriately.
- Integrate targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.
- Address gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of development efforts, including peacebuilding and state-building.

Closing the data and evidence gaps

A dynamic new partnership, the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Initiative, has been set up to respond to data and evidence gaps on gender equality. Jointly managed by UN Women and the UN Statistics Division, in collaboration with Member States, the World Bank, the OECD and others, it will work to meet the rising demand from countries across

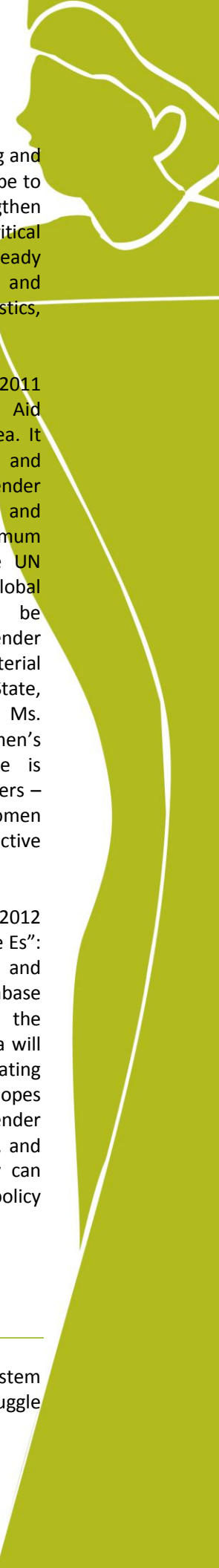
the world for greater support in gathering and using gender statistics. Its main role will be to help build national capacity and strengthen national systems on data collection in critical areas. It will also promote the work already being done to develop standards and definitions for those who gather statistics, and those who use them.

The initiative was launched in November 2011 at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Republic of Korea. It grew out of work by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Development of Gender Statistics, convened by the UN in 2006, and the sub-group formed to create a minimum set of gender indicators. In 2011 the UN Statistical Commission requested that a global programme on gender statistics be implemented. The call to harmonize gender data was reiterated in an OECD ministerial session in Paris by US Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton. According to Ms. Saraswathi Menon, Director of UN Women's Policy Division, high quality evidence is needed to understand the complex barriers – political, economic and social – that women face and to design and deliver effective policies.

The first three-year phase, from March 2012 to February 2015, will focus on the “three Es”: women's education, employment and entrepreneurship. This will see a database developed to compile guidelines for the collection of gender indicators. Pilot data will then be collected in 10 participating countries. Over the longer term, EDGE hopes to refine an approach that integrates gender issues into regular statistical production, and build countries' capacities so that they can produce gender data in all critical policy areas.

Only a quarter of Turkish women work outside the home

The gender gap in Turkey's education system has virtually disappeared. But women struggle



in the workplace. Although Turkey boasts the world's 16th largest economy, only a quarter (24 per cent) of Turkish women work outside the home and many of those who do work in the lowest-paying jobs. "We need more women in leadership roles in jobs in companies. If Turkey got 29 per cent of its women in the workforce, that could reduce poverty by up to 15 per cent," said Gulden Turkkan, head of the Women's Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGIDER).

With support from the World Bank, equal opportunity advocates like KAGIDER are targeting private companies, especially Turkish-owned ones, encouraging them to hire and promote women.

Twelve per cent of Turkish CEOs are women. One of them is Vuslat Dogan, who runs a leading newspaper, *Hurriyet* (Freedom), which she took over from her father. *Hurriyet* employs about 1,000 people.

"We started years ago with tracking our own numbers in terms of women versus men in the workforce. Initially it was 20 per cent, then we targeted 25, then 30 and above, so it was really continuously checking our own numbers of women." Vuslat Dogan is also involved in a campaign against domestic violence, which she says is such a problem in Turkey that it seeps into the workplace. She argues that if more women get jobs, that will offer them more freedom and autonomy as well as more opportunities to escape from home if they need to.

College disciplines that put women on an equal footing with men

According to a study published in the *New York Times* recently, the typical full-time female worker still earns about 81 cents for every dollar that her male counterpart earns. Much of that wage gap can be explained by the types of careers women go into, as well as other demographic considerations, such as education, age and experience. However,

according to PayScale, a company that collects salary data, even after allowing for those factors, an unexplained gap still exists across nearly every job category. The gap is particularly large in the highest paying professions.

PayScale has analyzed its database of millions of employee profiles to see how that gender pay gap varies by degree subject. After allowing for demographic factors (but not hours worked as PayScale does not collect this information), the data shows that men earn a bigger premium compared with women who studied the same subject.

The only discipline in which graduate women earned more than their male counterparts was information technology. Mechanical engineering and management information systems have about equivalent earnings. The subjects where male graduates earn the biggest premium over female graduates are architecture, education and criminal justice.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Say NO – UNiTE Nominated for Avon Foundation's Global Award for Excellence in Communications

UN Women's campaign "Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women" has been nominated for the first-ever Avon Communications Awards: Speaking Out About Violence Against Women.

As part of its support of the 2nd World Conference of Women's Shelters, the Avon Foundation for Women presented four awards to organizations that have produced exemplary communications materials or campaigns on preventing violence against women and girls. The categories are Storytelling, Innovation, Breaking the Silence and Global Excellence in Communications.

The nominees for the Global Excellence category include UN Women's global advocacy initiative, "Say NO-UNiTE to End Violence against Women"; the Center for Women's Global Leadership's global campaign "16 days of Activism Against Gender Violence"; Breakthrough's "Bell Bajao" campaign (Ring the bell against Domestic Violence) that originated in India; the "White Ribbon Campaign" from Canada, which mobilizes men and boys to take a stand against gender-based violence; and Chocolate Moose Media from Canada and Switzerland for its animation series *No Excuses*.

The 2nd World Conference on Women's Shelters, was held in Washington D.C., in February 2012. Hosted by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, it brought together more than 1,500 advocates from around the world who work to address violence against women and girls in their countries and communities and provide critical services to survivors.

Taking the fight against gender-based violence to new heights: the Mount Kilimanjaro climb

On 9 March, 70 intrepid, exhausted activists in Tanzania reached the base of Mount Kilimanjaro. The challenging five-day climb was organized as part of the Africa UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign, supported by UN Women, UN country teams in Africa, the UN Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) and the Kilimanjaro Initiative. The group was as dynamic as it was diverse: youth activists and sports personalities joining human right lawyers, journalists, and pop stars, as well as staff from UN offices, NGOs, and governments across Africa.

Speaking at the occasion UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra drew attention to the reality that violence against women and girls is pervasive across Africa. He said that in the sub-Saharan region, between 13 per cent and 45 per cent of women are

assaulted by intimate partners during their lifetimes. Recent studies from the region show that up to 47 per cent of girls in primary or secondary schools report sexual abuse or harassment from male teachers or classmates, and over 3 million girls in Africa are at risk of female genital mutilation. Evidence abounds on the effects of conflict and how rape has been used as a weapon of war. "It is these statistics that have to move us to action. These statistics that must make an imprint on our social conscience to stand together and take action," he said.

All the participating climbers drew attention to this pandemic of violence, returning from the journey with personal commitments as well as national pledges from the governments and agencies they represented.

For example, the Government of Tanzania pledged to review and reform laws (such as the Marriage Act and Inheritance Act), and take practical measures to improve access to justice, such as setting up gender desks in district police stations and referral hospitals, and dedicating resources for gender-sensitive judicial and security sector reform.

The Government of Kenya reaffirmed its commitment to pass the Family Protection Bill and other legislation to end impunity, and to make justice accessible for women by providing free legal and specialized services.

Representatives of the Government of Ghana committed to research the prevalence and patterns of violence against women since the passing of its domestic violence law in 2007 and to provide shelters for survivors of violence in all regions.

The Namibian Government pledged to improve legislation and policies, and to improve the collection and use of forensic evidence to prosecute perpetrators of gender-based violence.

Myriad social mobilization and awareness-raising initiatives took the message

throughout the region during the week of the climb, from youth leadership forums to free legal clinics. The spirit of the endeavour was kept alive elsewhere in Africa through solidarity climbs, walks and runs in Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Kenya involving thousands of people from all walks of life.

India: The Must BoL campaign against gender-based violence

To rally more than 1.3 million web users you need four simple ingredients. A website, a blog, a video blog, and a team of 22 spirited young people. And just one message: that everyone should stand up and speak out about violence against women. This is how the Must BoL social media campaign is encouraging young men in India to examine violence in their lives, and question social norms.

With the support of UN Women and the youth collective Commutiny, the young team from Delhi has led campaign activities both online and off to engage young people to prevent violence.

“Women need to admit the violence meted out towards them, and fight back,” said Kuber Sharma, a Must BoL coordinator. “We believe that a man should be able to proudly say that he is a homemaker. Societal pressures on men often force them to be an earning and independent entity”.

A dedicated website launched in March 2011, offers three key interactive platforms: a video blog to exhibit films created by volunteer campaigners, which has had 30,000 unique visitors; a “shoutbox” for young people to ask questions on gender-based violence anonymously; and a team blog for posting campaign experiences and starting discussions

<http://saynotoviolence.org/user/1152>

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Innovative campaign highlights HIV-positive mothers

Women affected by HIV face persistent challenges as a result of their gender. Each year as many as 42,000 HIV-affected women die from complications relating to HIV and pregnancy; many more struggle to access prevention, treatment, care and support services.

UN Women's key focus in dealing with this epidemic is to empower women and guarantee their rights so that they can protect themselves from infection, overcome stigma, and gain greater access to treatment and care. Its programmes amplify the voices of HIV-positive women, using strategies that promote their leadership and participation, while also addressing the intersections between HIV/AIDS and violence against women. Strengthening national institutions so that they can deliver on commitments to gender equality, including for HIV-positive women and women care givers, is also fostered.

Related to the work undertaken by UN Women, UNAIDS has launched a new campaign, “Believe it. Do it”, that highlights the global goal of ending new HIV infections among children by 2015, and ensuring that HIV-positive women are healthy through pregnancy, delivery and breastfeeding.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Still too few women in politics

Despite significant political change and democratic transformation in parts of the world, 2011 was again marked by too little progress on women's political participation

and a continued global lack of political will to change the status quo, according to a report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) released in March 2012.

In its annual study on women members of parliament, the IPU found the global average of female parliamentary representation stood at 19.5 per cent in 2011, up from 19 per cent in 2010. This 0.5 percentage point increase has followed similar patterns over the past decade and underscores the minimal progress made in achieving gender parity in parliamentary representation.

“Less than one in five parliamentarians in the world today are women. It is a worrying statistic at this point of human development and impossible to justify. The political will to change this is simply lacking in most cases,” said Anders B. Johnson, IPU Secretary General.

The study does note several successes, such as the dramatic improvement in women’s political representation in many countries through elections last year, including in Andorra, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia, the Seychelles, Slovenia, and Uganda. The number of lower houses where women held more than 30 per cent of seats rose from 25 to 30, with a similar trend being witnessed among upper houses. The number of chambers without any women at all also dropped to seven.

In addition, new research carried out by the IPU and UN Women and presented in the *Women in Politics 2012* map, revealed progress at the executive level: the number of countries with a woman head of government, head of state or both has more than doubled since 2005 to 17. The percentage of women ministers has also seen a modest increase from 14.2 per cent in 2005 to 16.7 per cent in 2012.

But there were also significant setbacks in countries such as Cyprus, Egypt, Estonia, Peru, the United Arab Emirates and Zambia. Recent

elections in Egypt saw the percentage of women parliamentarians drop from 12.7 per cent to just below 2 per cent: only 10 of the 508 parliamentarians are women.

In the Arab world, the regional average for women parliamentary representatives remained well below the global figure at 10.7 per cent, despite some encouraging developments in the region, such as Tunisia adopting a law securing parity on candidate lists and the introduction of quotas for women parliamentarians in Morocco which resulted in a 6 percentage point increase in women MPs last year.

“The Arab Spring has yet to deliver for women in politics. The opportunities to ensure more women are voted into parliament are there. They just have to be taken. More than a third of countries with 30% or more women MPs are those that have emerged from conflict and are in transition. The precedents are there,” said Abdelwahad Radi, President of the IPU. “Women were at the forefront of the uprisings in the Middle East. They need to be at the forefront of parliamentary democracy too,” he added.

“For UN Women, expanding women’s political participation is a top priority,” said Michelle Bachelet. “Today I call for greater political will to address the under-representation of women in politics, which remains one of the largest gender gaps in the world. In 2012, UN Women will support UN Member States to increase women’s representation in public office as called for by the UN General Assembly in a resolution adopted in December,” she added.

Data tends to confirm that women would have the same success rate at elections but face many more obstacles along the way than men. Political parties have a key role to play by getting more women to stand. Gender parity on candidate lists and allocating more winnable seats to women would create a more level playing field. Clear and transparent rules on candidate selection also need to be



established in addition to ensuring the proper funding of women's campaigns. Effective sanctions against political parties that fail to facilitate gender parity or meet quotas would, the IPU argued, show political commitment to effect real change.

Until this commitment is in place, quotas remain the most effective route for increasing women's participation. Out of the 59 countries that held elections in 2011, 17 had legislated quotas. Women took 27.4 per cent of parliamentary seats in these countries as opposed to 15.7 per cent in countries without any form of quotas.

IN YOUR INTEREST

Women in business – waving a big stick

An article in *The Economist* reports that quotas for women on company boards in the EU are moving closer. "I DON'T like quotas, but I like what quotas do," said Viviane Reding, EU Justice Commissioner. A year ago she invited publicly listed firms to sign a pledge to increase the proportion of women on their boards to 30 per cent by 2015 and 40 per cent by 2020. She warned that if there was no significant progress within a year "you can count on my regulatory creativity." So far only 24 firms have signed up.



As a result, on 5 March 2012, Ms. Reding announced the launch of a three-month public consultation to ask what kind of

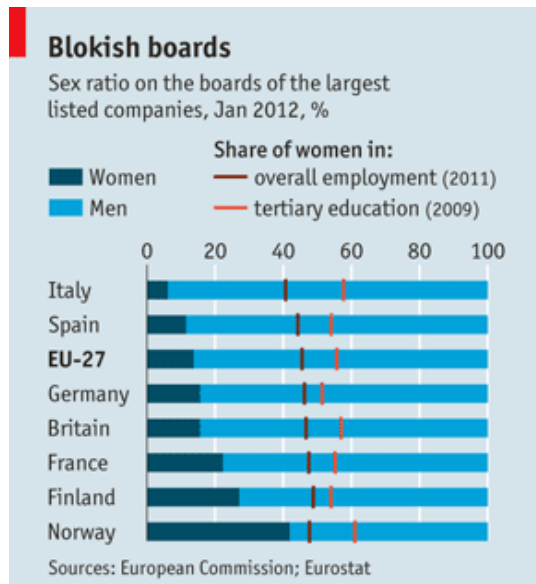
measures the EU should take to get more women into boardrooms. The European Commission will then decide on further action later this year, including the percentage targets that should be set. Opinion seems to be converging on a near-term target of 25-30 per cent and a longer-term one of 40 per cent.

Some European countries regulate the sex balance on the boards of state-owned companies. However, only 13.7 per cent of board members of large firms in the EU are women. Female presidents and chairwomen are even rarer: just 3.2 per cent of the total. Women account for 60 per cent of new graduates in the EU and enter many occupations in roughly equal numbers with men. But with every step up the ladder more of them drop out, and near the top they almost disappear.

Norway, which is not a member of the EU, introduced a quota a decade ago. This increased women's representation on boards from 9 per cent in 2003 to the required 40 per cent now. Several EU countries have recently followed suit. France brought in legislation just over a year ago under which listed and large unlisted companies must reserve at least 20 per cent of board seats for members of each sex by 2014 and 40 per cent by 2017. This has boosted the number of women on French boards from 12 per cent to 22 per cent. Italy and Belgium have mandated a minimum one-third representation. Spain and the Netherlands have introduced new laws, but without stiff penalties. Germany is debating quotas.

Critics of the Norwegian scheme suggest that it has put less experienced women on boards and more able women tend to hold numerous directorships, defeating the aim of widening the circle of top women. In the UK an official report about women on boards, published a year ago, came out in favour of voluntary commitments by companies rather than quotas; a growing number of companies in the EU are setting their own targets.

On a positive note, Europe's population at large seems to be in favour of greater equality. A special Eurobarometer poll commissioned by Ms. Reding's Directorate-General and published this week, found that three quarters of respondents were in favour of laws to ensure balanced representation of women on boards. More than four in 10 thought that a 50 per cent share for women would be realistic.



For further details see <http://www.economist.com/node/21549953>

“Women of the World” app launched by the World Bank and Fotopedia

The World Bank and Fotopedia, publisher of popular *iOS Apps* and winner of the Best Tablet App of the Year Crunchies Award, announced their collaboration on a new free app entitled “Women of the World” for the iPad, iPhone and iPod touch on 8 February 2012. This collaboration also highlights the World Bank’s “Think Equal” campaign which aims to increase awareness of progress and obstacles in gender equality around the globe.

The app, which is updated weekly, takes users on an eye-opening tour of the lives of women across the world. It showcases the work of

professional photographer Olivier Martel, who traveled to more than 75 countries to gather these images. It features scenes as varied as a bride at her wedding in Singapore, women minesweeping fields in Cambodia, nuns in a convent in France, and girl soldiers in Mozambique. “We hope these images inspire people to act,” said Jeni Klugman, World Bank Director of Gender and Development. “Much has improved, but in many parts of the world, women’s rights and opportunities remain very constrained. This inequality is very unfair and it is bad economics. It hampers poverty reduction and limits development. The World Bank has major programs to support girls and women to become more educated, gain better access to health care, water, start businesses and access credit. These are becoming an increasingly important aspect of our work around the world.”

Additional features of the app include: a collection of hundreds of photos, visual stories, interactive maps, instant slideshows and free wallpapers for your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch .

You can get involved at <http://thinkequal.worldbank.org/>

World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education



The first *World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education*, a comprehensive overview of the progress and remaining gaps in gender equality at all educational levels, was launched in New York on 27 March 2012. It was also launched at UNESCO’s headquarters in Paris on International Women’s Day. It analyses trends in a broad ranges of key

areas including school enrolment at all levels, the increased world demand for quality education and how policies affect gender equality in education.

Moez Doraïd, Director of the Coordination Division of UN Women, addressed the launch. He congratulated UNESCO on the *World Atlas*, which provides a clear picture of what is happening. He stressed how important good data is for gender-responsive policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in the education sector. “This Global Atlas allows us to examine gender equality from different perspectives and illustrates the extent to which gender disparities in education have changed since 1970,” said Eric Falt, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information.

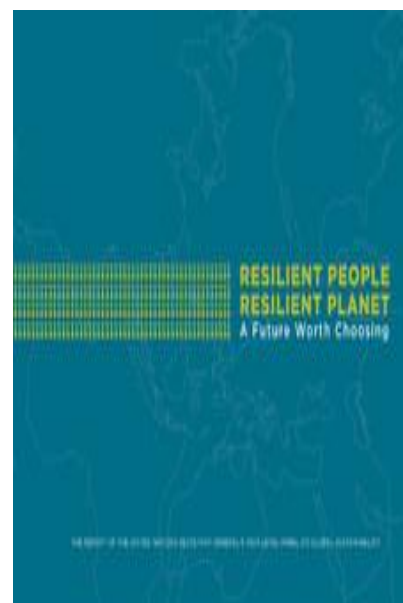
The *World Atlas* includes more than 120 maps, charts and tables featuring a wide range of sex-disaggregated indicators produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. It is designed to enable readers to visualize the educational pathways of girls and boys in terms of access, participation and progression from pre-primary to tertiary education. It also illustrates the extent to which gender disparities in education have changed since 1970 and how they are shaped by factors such as national wealth, geographic location, investment in education and fields of study.

RECOMMENDED READING

UN report on women’s empowerment and global sustainability

The UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability released its report *Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing* on 30 January 2011 in Addis Ababa.

The 22-member Panel established by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2010 brought together renowned global leaders to “formulate a new blueprint for a sustainable future on a planet under increasing stress resulting from human activities.” It was co-chaired by Finnish President Tarja Halonen and South African President Jacob Zuma. The report contains 56 recommendations to put sustainable development into practice and to mainstream it into economic policy, and will feed into the intergovernmental processes under way, including the Rio+ 20 Conference.



While panel members directed the ultimate content and recommendations, UN Women provided substantive support to the panel to help ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment issues were accurately reflected in the report. The Panel stated: “Persistent gender inequality in particular has to be addressed as part of any serious shift towards sustainable development.” At the launch, President Halonen stressed the importance of empowering women and of placing people at the centre of achieving sustainable development: “The Panel has concluded that empowering women and ensuring a greater role for them in the economy is critical for sustainable development.”

Three recommendations in the report explicitly address gender inequality. Other recommendations in thematic areas aim to address the practical needs of women, such as access to sustainable energy, modern communication and secondary education. Recommendations explicitly targeting gender equality and women's empowerment aim to:

- Accelerate commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment and remove barriers to productive resources such as land, property, credit and financial services;
- Support the rise of women leaders across sectors;
- Advance equality and gender-sensitive policies in the workplace – the [Women's Empowerment Principles](#) developed by UN Women's Global Compact initiative were cited as good guidance;
- Ensure universal access to quality and affordable family-planning and other sexual and reproductive rights and health services;
- Increase women's access to educational opportunities, especially those most relevant to a sustainable economy; and
- Promote equal rights and opportunities in decision-making processes.

The full report is available at:
<http://www.un.org/gsp/report>.

Women's Major Group survey on sustainable development

UN Women and the Rockefeller Foundation are supporting the Women's Major Group (WGM) to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. The WGM is conducting a global survey on sustainable development and Rio+20. The survey is gathering the views, perspectives and goals of advocates and practitioners around the world on the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment. Information from the survey will allow for a fuller view of this issue from all parts of the world.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

■ **Accountability for women's and children's health**

http://www.who.int/pmnch/media/members/2012/20120206_accountability_website/en/index.html

The World Health Organization and partners launched a new web site in February on women's and children's health. The site will track progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the Accountability Commission and inform the international community about the work of its independent Expert Review Group (iERG). The iERG, established in September 2011 with global oversight, will report to the UN Secretary-General annually. Dr Richard Horton, iERG Co-Chair and editor of *The Lancet*, issued a "Call for Evidence" on good practice and obstacles to accountability related to progress on the implementation of the UN Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. Documentation should be sent to the iERG Secretariat at ierg_secretariat@who.int.

■ **UN Food and Agriculture Organization: Closing the gap between men and women in agriculture**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDM828TpVpY>

The world cannot eliminate hunger without closing the gap between men and women in agriculture. With equal access to productive resources and services, such as land, water and credit, women farmers can produce 20 to 30 per cent more food, enough to lift 150 million people out of hunger.
www.fao.org/sofa/gender

■ **Women in Politics 2012 Map**

An IPU and UN Women Publication
www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnmmap12_en.pdf

The map showcases women's participation in various political spheres as of 1 January 2012.



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Employment opportunities

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements at <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

You can read *Network* online at <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

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