



Questionnaire to Governments

on Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)

For preparation of regional review and appraisals in the context of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2010

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations regional commissions will carry out a review and appraisal of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) in preparation for the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2010. The regional commissions will collaborate with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in this process.

The review and appraisal of progress will cover the five-year period between the responses submitted by Member States to the questionnaire in 2004 and the end of 2009. It will identify achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of areas where actions and initiatives are most urgent to further implementation.

In preparing the review and appraisal of progress, the regional commissions will utilize the responses of Member States to this questionnaire. In addition, a variety of sources of information and statistics will be drawn upon, including reports submitted by States parties under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; information generated in the context of the Commission on the Status of Women; regional action plans and national reports to regional bodies; as well as the outcomes of expert group meetings and other activities at regional level. Other sources of information include Common Country Assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, (CCA/UNDAFs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, (PRSPs), national Human Development Reports and national Millennium Development Goal (MDG) reports.

II. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of four parts. Member States are requested to provide information on efforts made and progress achieved since the most recent review and appraisal in 2005.

In **Part One**, reporting States are invited to highlight **major overall achievements and obstacles** encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Responses in Part One of the questionnaire should be no longer than three pages.

In **Part Two** of the questionnaire, reporting States are encouraged to provide specific examples of achievements, including policy development, legislative change, advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity-development and programmes and projects which they have undertaken on implementation in the **critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action** (except for critical area H which is covered in Part Three), as well as areas requiring further initiative and action identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Obstacles and remaining gaps and challenges in relation to the critical areas of concern should also be identified and a summary of lessons learned provided. Response to Part Two of the questionnaire should be no longer than 10 pages.

Part Three focuses on **institutional development** or those structures and measures countries have put in place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. It covers the critical area of concern H in the Platform for Action: Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, and chapters V on Institutional Arrangements and VI on Financial Arrangements, as well as actions identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Information on national machineries, capacity-building programmes for line ministries, resource allocation, statistics and indicators, monitoring and accountability mechanisms and partnerships should be described in this section. Responses to Part Three of the questionnaire should be four pages in length.

In **Part Four**, respondents are invited to provide information on the **remaining key challenges and constraints** in the reporting States, as well as any **plans for future actions and initiatives** to address these and to ensure full implementation of the Platform for Action in each of the critical areas of concern. Reporting States are encouraged, in particular, to indicate any **new commitments** they will make to accelerate implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at national level over the next five years. Responses to Part Four of the questionnaire should be no longer than three pages.

The annex provides some examples of issues which could be covered under each part of the questionnaire. These examples are provided as guidance only. Reporting States are not required to cover all these issues but should focus on issues which are most relevant in their national contexts. Additional issues not included in the annex can also be raised in the responses.

III. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The information being sought through the questionnaire is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Emphasis is placed on implementation, and reporting States are urged, as far as possible, to provide concrete information on impacts of initiatives and activities described. Activities and outputs and actions should be differentiated from achievements and impacts on the situation of women and on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. Reporting States are encouraged to provide quantitative data, disaggregated by sex and age, or to indicate where such data has already been submitted in other contexts. Countries wishing to provide information on indicators used at the national level to monitor activities for gender equality and empowerment of women may do so. Reporting States are also urged to provide information on the specific time periods for initiatives and actions taken.

For guidance, a list of reports submitted by Member States to the United Nations Secretariat prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), and the ten-year review and appraisal in the Commission on the Status of Women (2005), as well as the most recent reports submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, can be found on the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>).

IV. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Responses to this questionnaire should be sent in both hard copy and electronic format in one of the six official United Nations languages no later than 1 March 2009 to the relevant regional commissions:

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Gender Equality and Empowerment Section
Social Development Division
United Nations Building, 6th floor
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
Contact: Beverly Jones
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ANNEX: GUIDANCE ON ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED IN RESPONSES

The examples below are provided as guidance only. Reporting States are not required to cover these issues but should focus on issues which are most relevant in their national contexts. Additional issues not included in the annex can also be raised in the responses.

Part One: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (3 pages)

Please note that the response to Part One of the questionnaire should contain highlights of achievements and challenges. The issues raised in this part can be discussed in more detail in responses to other parts of the questionnaire. For example, issues related to globalization would be discussed in more details under Part Two of the questionnaire and issues on gender-responsive budgeting would be discussed under Part Three.

Guiding questions: The response could, for example, address the following issues and questions:

- a) Has a national policy on **gender equality and the empowerment of women** been adopted and at what level? Was a strategy or plan of action developed to support the implementation of the policy? What mechanisms were established for monitoring and how are different actors held accountable for its implementation? Is there a national coordination mechanism at the highest level to ensure that the policy is implemented in all sector areas?
- b) What impact does the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, and the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have on the promotion of gender equality? How is implementation of the Convention progressing?
- c) What are the **main legislative and policy-making achievements** in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment over the past decade? Please provide details.
- d) To what extent have gender perspectives and the concerns of women been taken into account in preparation of **budgets** at national, regional and local levels? Has this resulted in increased resources for gender equality? Describe efforts to increase and track budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. Have gender-responsive budgeting procedures been introduced and to what effect?
- e) To what extent are the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** utilized as the national framework for development? What attention is given to Goal 3 on gender equality? Is national-level data available to effectively monitor the achievement of the targets under MDG3? Are gender perspectives and the concerns of women considered in all other MDG goals?
- f) Provide information on major **government policy discussions and/or parliamentary debates** where gender perspectives and the concerns of women have been taken

systematically into account and resulted in policy and/or programmatic changes. What **recent major reforms** have taken place in the country where these perspectives were taken into account? What **major problems** are being debated in the country where the perspective of women and gender equality are considered as an integral part of the overall debate?

g) In countries emerging from **armed conflict**, to what extent were women involved, and gender perspectives and women's concerns included, in peace negotiations and in planning of reconstruction efforts?

h) How has **globalization** (for example, the use of ICT, market liberalization, changes in trading patterns, etc.) affected the empowerment of women and girls and the promotion of gender equality? What efforts are being made to reduce potential risks and to build on opportunities for women?

i) In which **sector areas** have specific policies, strategies and/or action plans for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment been developed and implemented? To what extent are gender perspectives and the concerns of women routinely taken into account in legislation, policy-making and programme development in other sectors, so that inequalities and gaps are identified and addressed?

j) What types of significant **partnerships** have been established with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, as well as the private sector and other stakeholders, in support of different aspects of national efforts on gender equality and empowerment of women – through, for example, advocacy, participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes and service delivery?

k) What efforts have been made to actively engage **men and boys** in the promotion of gender equality, including, for example, in eliminating violence against women and combating HIV/AIDS? What successes have been achieved and what constraints have been identified?

l) What is the impact of **climate change** and **food and energy crises** on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women? What steps are being taken to reduce the potential risks for and impact on women and to engage women effectively in prevention and mitigation processes? Have social protection measures been put in place to reduce the impact on women and have measures been adopted to support women farmers?

m) What is the impact of the financial crisis on the promotion of gender equality? What measures have been taken to reduce the negative impact on women's access to resources, income and social protection? To what extent have measures to revive growth mobilized women's economic potential?

Part Two: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (10 pages)

Please organize the response to this part of the questionnaire according to the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (except for critical area H which is covered in Part Three of the questionnaire).

Guiding questions: The response within each critical area of concern could address, but does not need to be limited to, the issues outlined below:

A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects

a) In relation to the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action and other key issues, what **successful actions** (such as legal measures, policy reforms, media campaigns, and pilot programmes or projects) have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples.

b) To what extent have **specific commitments** on the critical areas of concern – for example in terms of resource allocation, legislative change and policy and programme development - made by the Government at the Fourth World Conference on Women or in other contexts, been met?

B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges

c) Describe the **obstacles, gaps and challenges** encountered in implementation of the critical areas of concern and other key issues identified.

C. Lessons learned

d) Provide information on the **main lessons learned** in implementation in relation to each of the critical areas of concern and other key issues identified.

e) Provide concrete examples of **successful interventions** and explain why these were judged to be successful? Describe any effort to replicate these efforts.

Part Three: Institutional development (4 Pages)

Guiding questions: The response could address, but does not need to be limited to, the issues outlined below:

- a) What **national mechanisms** exist for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women – for example, ministry, national commission, parliamentary committee or commission? What mandates and resources does each body have and have these increased in the review period? How do these bodies work together? Describe the location of the national mechanisms and the access to decision-making processes. What networks have been established and how effective are these networks? What resources do the national mechanisms have in terms of staff and financial support? What percentage of financial resources comes from international or bilateral donors or other external sources?
- b) Have **focal points** for gender equality and empowerment of women been established within line ministries, and in which ministries? What support is provided from within the ministries? What support (training, advice, etc.) is provided by the national machinery? How effective are these focal points?
- c) What **monitoring** mechanisms have been established to measure progress in implementation – in relation to national policies, strategies and action plans as well as international commitments? How is accountability for promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women established across all ministries? How is coordination achieved? What role does the highest level of Government play?
- d) What levels of **capacity** for promoting gender mainstreaming have been achieved? Through which mechanisms? What are the remaining challenges in the area of capacity-building?
- e) Has a core set of **indicators** been established and where is responsibility for monitoring located? What gaps and challenges remain in relation to data and statistics? In which areas is lack of sex-disaggregation still a problem? In which areas do new types of data need to be collected? To what extent are the national statistical office and the statistical units in line ministries aware, committed and capable of providing the required data? In which sectors, and to what extent, is sex-disaggregated data being used effectively to inform policy-making and planning?
- f) Provide information on the **roles of different stakeholders**. For example, what role does Parliament play in the promotion and monitoring of gender equality and women's empowerment? How could this role be strengthened? Describe the role of NGOs in planning and implementing the follow-up activities. Do NGOs participate formally in the mechanisms established to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women and support reporting on and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)?

Part Four: Remaining challenges and actions to address them (3 pages)

Provide information on areas requiring future action.

- a) *List any **further actions and initiatives** which the Government intends to take to fully implement the Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly beyond 2010.*
- b) *Describe the **priority areas** that have been identified for improving implementation in the next five years.*
- c) *Give **examples of measures** (with targets and timeframes) which will be taken in each of these areas.*
- d) *Outline explicit **new commitments** that will be made to accelerate implementation.*