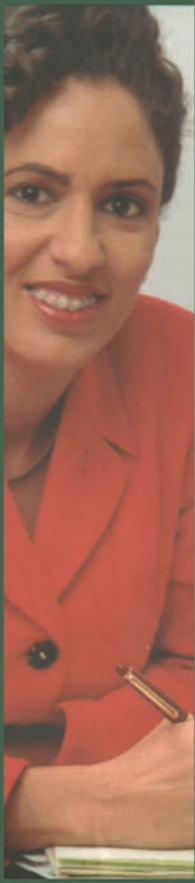


GENDER EQUALITY

A Decade of Commonwealth Action

A Reference Book for Gender Ministers



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EQUALITY**

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**COMMONWEALTH
SECRETARIAT**

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Foreword

Women have an equal role to play in addressing some of the most pressing issues we face today – eradicating poverty, combating HIV/AIDS, preventing and resolving conflicts. If we do not enable half the world to play their part in solving these problems, we will only get half the solutions.

The year 2005 marks a decade of successful initiatives since Commonwealth governments adopted the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development, which was presented to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

This Reference Book for Gender Ministers provides a snapshot account of the Commonwealth's achievements in promoting gender equality over that decade and records the advances made by women during the 1995–2005 period. The publication also highlights the work of member countries and partner organisations across the Commonwealth and will allow us to build on achievements and learn from the challenges we have encountered. Further, it outlines emerging challenges we shall be addressing in the decade ahead.

I am grateful to all Commonwealth governments, Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs, civil society organisations and partners for their contributions, which reflect the breadth and diversity of good practices and strategies throughout the Commonwealth. The lessons drawn from this experience will help shape the global

review of the Beijing Platform for Action on Gender Equality.

The mid-2004 Seventh Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs held in Fiji Islands adopted a new Plan of Action for Gender Equality (2005–2015). This 10-year plan constitutes a road map for Commonwealth action and provides a common agenda to tackle the persistent and emerging challenges we face in the area of gender equality.

Women are the strongest link in the virtuous circle of growth and development: educating women, for example, leads to better health for the entire family, and better health and education facilitate economic empowerment and growth. The education of women also results in significant social gains including lower fertility, better household nutrition, and reduced maternal, infant and child mortality. It also helps prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Giving women access to training, credit, land and property rights, as well as information on markets and technology, can improve livelihoods and increase productivity at all levels.

More and more women are being accorded their rightful place alongside men in political decision-making. Three Commonwealth countries have achieved 30 per cent of female representation in national parliaments, some 13 countries have attained over 20 per cent and 23 countries have more than 10 per cent. Women leaders at local government level in many countries have reached the



50 per cent target.

In 2004, the African Union took the unprecedented step to adopt parity representation of women and men within the organisation, and appointed the Honourable Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, as the first President of the pan-African Parliament.

The challenges facing the Commonwealth are many but not insurmountable. Peace, social and economic progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms are dependent on the active participation, equality and development of women.

Women must continue to be at the centre of the Commonwealth development and democracy agenda. This is critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is crucial if women are to have more choices and attain more power and control over their lives and the future of their communities and societies.

Don McKinnon
Commonwealth Secretary-General

Introduction

A Decade of Commonwealth Action

We pledge the Commonwealth and our countries to work with renewed vigour (for) ... equality for women so they may exercise their full and equal rights.

– *Commonwealth Heads of Government, Harare Declaration, 1991*

The 16-point Harare Declaration of principles, agreed by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their summit in 1991, has become the standard by which social, economic and governance progress is judged in the Commonwealth's 53 member countries (see *Annex I*). The fourth of these points was the affirmation of equality for women 'so they may exercise their full and equal rights.'

The Commonwealth Secretariat has drawn up three plans of action (PoAs) – the first, the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Women, in 1987; the second, the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development, in 1995 (see *Annex II*) which was presented to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing that year (and was given a 2000–2005 Update five years later, see Annex III); and the third, Plan of Action for Gender Equality, in 2005–2015.

The 1995 Plan of Action represented a shift in emphasis from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD), setting gender mainstreaming as the new direction of the Commonwealth's approach to achieving gender equality. The Commonwealth thus moved from a concentration on special projects for women to mainstreaming gender equality issues into the whole spectrum of Commonwealth policies and programmes, including democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and sustainable social and economic development.

The 1995 PoA articulated a Commonwealth vision of the world in which:

'women and men have equal rights and opportunities at all stages of their lives to express their creativity in all fields of human endeavour, and in which women are respected and valued as equal and able partners in establishing values of social justice, equity, democracy and respect for human rights. Within such a framework of values, women and men will work in collaboration and partnership to ensure people-centred

sustainable development for all nations.'

Each PoA was mandated, discussed and agreed on by Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs who meet every three years. Each was further based on extensive consultations with governments and civil society. The plans are usually endorsed by Heads of Government, and the 2005–2015 PoA will be presented to the Commonwealth summit in Malta in November 2005. The effect of this process has been full Commonwealth consensus.

The 2005–2015 PoA takes the Commonwealth into its third decade of working for the advancement of gender equality. Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs, who held their 7th meeting in the Fiji Islands from 30 May–2 June 2004, agreed on four critical areas for Commonwealth action in the decade ahead:

- Gender, democracy, peace and conflict;
- Gender, human rights and law;
- Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment; and
- Gender and HIV/AIDS.

Within these critical areas, the Commonwealth aims to build on and deepen the gender mainstreaming approach introduced in the 1995 PoA and its 2000 Update.

Beijing Platform for Action

The year 2005 also marks a decade since the 1995 Beijing conference identified 12 critical areas of concern for women's advancement globally:

- Women and poverty;
- Education and training of women;
- Women and health;
- Violence against women;
- Women and armed conflict;
- Women and the economy;
- Women in power and decision-making;
- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
- Human rights of women;
- Women and the media;



Equal rights for women and men to express their creativity in all fields

- Women and the environment; and
- The girl-child.

These form the core of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) (*see Annex IV*).

The lead-up to 2005 has thus been a time for reassessing the status of women, measuring progress and identifying gaps, and reiterating the global commitment to implementation.

Priority Concerns – The Commonwealth Survey

In 2003, as part of its contribution to the Beijing +10 process, the Commonwealth Secretariat commenced compiling the collective experiences and progress of member countries in advancing gender equality within the framework of the BPfA and Commonwealth PoAs. National Women's Machinerys (NWMs) were requested in a questionnaire to rank their priorities for national action from among the BPfA areas of critical concern and describe progress, constraints and plans in the top four or five areas. They were also asked to identify issues they believed would be of concern to them and to their regions in the next few years. All member countries responded, many with CEDAW reports attached¹.

Analysis of the survey shows broad progress in the advancement of women across the Commonwealth, although the extent and depth of change varies

considerably. Generally, countries have established NWMs, although these vary in size, influence, because of their location in the government structure, and funding. Most countries have gender equality policies. Gender mainstreaming is either part or planned to be part of national policy.

Education is seen as critical for advancing gender equality with all countries emphasising education of girls at least at primary school level – enrolment at secondary and higher levels is variable and appears to be dependent on a number of factors, including public expenditure on education, affirmative action policies, the family's economic situation and health status, and traditional attitudes. HIV/AIDS has also led to setbacks for socio-economic indicators in high-prevalence countries.

More women are using ICTs



Poverty among women, and domestic and other gender-based violence feature high on the priority concerns of most Commonwealth countries.

Commonwealth regional priorities for BPfA critical areas of concern are outlined in Table 1.1 (pages 8–9).

Emerging Issues

The country profiles and regional reports in this Reference Book provide the context for understanding the current and emerging challenges facing Commonwealth member countries and regions in achieving gender equality. The third Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality 2005–2015 was developed through regional and pan-Commonwealth consultative processes that have critically assessed progress in achieving gender equality since the 1995 BPfA and the Commonwealth PoA of the same year, the lessons learned, the obstacles and challenges that persist, and new and emerging issues in the post-Beijing +10 decade.

The 2005–2015 PoA views issues of socio-economic development, democracy and peace as inextricably linked to gender equality. Thus, gender equality is viewed not only as a goal in its own right but also as a key factor in contributing to democracy and peace, eradicating poverty and hunger, ensuring education for all, improving maternal health, reducing infant and child mortality and combating HIV/AIDS. Advancing gender

Table 1.1: Beijing Critical Areas of Concern: Commonwealth Regional Priorities

1. Women and Poverty

In the 2003/04 Commonwealth survey, poverty among women was identified as a top concern throughout the Commonwealth with 49% of member countries placing it in their top three priority areas of concern and 71.6% among the top five. Poverty among women was of particular concern in Africa and the Caribbean.

Table 1.1.1: Women and Poverty: Priority by Region

Region/No. of countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	72.2%	88.8%
Asia (8)	12.5%	75%
Caribbean and Americas(13)	61.5%	66.6%
Europe (3)	33.3%	33.3%
Pacific (11)	18%	27.3%

2. Education and Training of Women

Of equal importance to the issue of women and poverty was education and training of women, reported by 49% of countries as among their top three concerns and by 69.8% among the top five.

Table 1.1.2: Education and Training of Women: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	38.8%	83.3%
Asia (8)	62.5%	62.5%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	61.5%	84.6%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	54.5%	63.6%

3. Women and Health

Among member countries, 35.8% ranked women and health among their top three priority concerns and 69.8% among the top five.

Table 1.1.3: Women and Health: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	33.3%	77.7%
Asia (8)	50%	87.5%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	38.4%	62.2%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	36.6%	63.6%

4. Violence Against Women

About 50% of countries in all Commonwealth regions (except the Pacific) reported Violence against Women among their top three concerns, with 79.2% placing it among their top five. Every member country in the Caribbean and Americas region and Europe placed this issue among the top five concerns, as did 12 out of 18 African, 6 out of 8 Asian and 8 out of 11 Pacific member countries.

Table 1.1.4: Violence Against Women: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	50%	66.6%
Asia (8)	62.5%	90%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	76.9%	100%
Europe (3)	66.6%	100%
Pacific (11)	36.3%	72.7%

5. Women and Armed Conflict

Only four Commonwealth members reported women and armed conflict as being among their top three priority concern areas – Lesotho, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands.

Table 1.1.5: Women and Armed Conflict: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Reported as Among Top 3 Concerns	Reported as Among Top 3 Concerns
Africa (18)	16.6%	22.2%
Asia (8)	0%	0%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	0%	0%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	10%	10%

6. Women and the Economy

All three European member countries placed women and the economy among their top concerns, followed by the Pacific (81.8% of the top five concerns) and Africa (61.1%).

Table 1.1.6: Women and the Economy: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	50%	61.1%
Asia (8)	12.5%	25%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	7.7%	15.4%
Europe (3)	100%	100%
Pacific (11)	63.6%	81.8%

7. Women in Power and Decision-making

Europe, the Pacific and Africa placed getting more women in power and decision-making positions among their top concerns. Among all Commonwealth members, 35.8% placed this issue among their top three concerns and 52.8% among their top five.

Table 1.1.7: Women in Power and Decision-making: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	44.4%	61.1%
Asia (8)	12.5%	12.5%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	23.1%	54.5%
Europe (3)	66.6%	100%
Pacific (11)	45.4%	63.6%

8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Among Commonwealth member countries, 33.9% placed improvement of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women among their top three concerns, and 41.5% among their top five. All three European member countries placed it among their top five concerns, followed by Asia (50%) and the Pacific (45.4%).

Table 1.1.8: Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	22.2%	27.7%
Asia (8)	50%	50%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	30.7%	38.5%
Europe (3)	33.3%	100%
Pacific (11)	45.4%	45.4%

9. Human Rights of Women

Half of the member countries in Africa and Asia reported women's human rights issues among their top priority concerns. Among all member countries, 32% placed it among their top three concerns and 43.3% among their top five.

Table 1.1.9: Human Rights of Women: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	50%	50%
Asia (8)	50%	50%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	7.7%	30.7%
Europe (3)	33.3%	33.3%
Pacific (11)	18.1%	45.4%

10. Women and the Media

Only two Commonwealth countries placed women and the media among their priority concerns – Mozambique, which placed it second, and Singapore which said it placed equal priority on all the BPfA concerns (except for Women and Armed Conflict which was not applicable).

Table 1.1.10: Women and the Media: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	5.5%	5.5%
Asia (8)	12.5%	12.5%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	0%	0%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	0%	0%

11. Women and the Environment

Only two Commonwealth countries placed women and environment among their top five priority concerns – Nauru and Mozambique.

Table 1.1.11: Women and the Environment: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	0%	5.5%
Asia (8)	0%	0%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	0%	0%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	0%	9.1%

12. The Girl-child

Six Commonwealth countries – half of them in Asia – reported the girl-child as among their top three priority concerns. The three in Asia were Brunei Darussalam, India and Singapore (which had ranked all the areas of concern equally, except for Women in Armed Conflict which was not applicable). Dominica (Caribbean), Mauritius (Africa) and Vanuatu (Pacific) were the other three. Nine other countries reported it among their top five concerns, eight in Africa and one in Asia.

Table 1.1.12: The Girl-child: Priority by Region

Region/No. of Countries	Among Top 3 Concerns	Among Top 5 Concerns
Africa (18)	5.5%	50%
Asia (8)	37.5%	50%
Caribbean and Americas (13)	7.7%	7.7%
Europe (3)	0%	0%
Pacific (11)	9.1%	9.1%

equality across the Commonwealth will contribute to development, democracy and peace.

The Commonwealth recognises the need to work towards gender equality in partnership with men and boys, and also recognises the emerging male gender issues. These include boys' underachievement in education, male health issues, the pivotal role of men in preventing and combating HIV/AIDS, and the issue of child soldiers and young men in armed conflicts. Men are both perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence in armed and other forms of conflict.

As traditionally male-dominated industries collapse or are reorganised in the global economy, men frequently face unemployment. The Commonwealth appreciates that there is a diversity of regional and national experience in this respect, which needs to be addressed appropriately.

Also, recognising that over half of Commonwealth citizens are young persons under 30 years of age and that by 2015 the proportion is likely to increase to 60–70% in many member countries, the Commonwealth promotes the inclusion of young persons in all programmes designed to achieve gender equality.

The Commonwealth recognises that gender differences do not exist in a vacuum but intersect with a number of other factors of diversity, such as class/caste, race/ethnicity, age, religion, ability/disability and sexual orientation. Diversity is intrinsic to the Commonwealth, which derives strength from its member countries' mix of peoples, geographical environments and levels of economic development. It uses the principle of common values in diversity to share experiences and resources and develop consultative and collaborative processes.

The following is a discussion of emerging issues in the four critical areas for action in the new Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015.²

Gender, Democracy, Peace and Conflict

Many Commonwealth countries have embraced democratic systems of government, introduced accountability measures, and increased women's participation and representation through adoption and implementation of quotas and affirmative action measures. For example, Uganda has revised its constitution to provide for one woman Member of Parliament per district and one-third of local council positions for women. Similarly, India's 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments reserved one-third of all local government seats for women, which has resulted in over 500,000 women being elected to the Panchayat Raj throughout the country. Following the first post-conflict national elections in Sierra Leone in 2002, the percentage of women in parliament increased from 8% to 15%.

However, many governments remain fragile and lack the institutional frameworks to sustain democracy, such as Ombudspersons, electoral commissions, parliamentary oversight, an impartial judiciary to uphold the rule of law and human rights, and adequately trained civil servants, including women. Even where democratic institutions are firmly established, citizens, particularly women, continue to be marginalised and have little access or capacity to influence national policies, plans and programmes.

In the Commonwealth and globally, armed conflicts within and between states, sharpened by growing terrorism and assisted by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, are on the increase. Unequal power relations, lack of access to resources, intolerance and lack of respect for individual rights and freedoms fuel armed and other forms of conflict.

Statistics show that civilian populations are increasingly the targets of a myriad of human rights violations such as trafficking in persons, rape with impunity used as a weapon of war, abduction of girls, recruitment of child soldiers and other crimes against humanity. These actions and crimes, committed by both state and non-state actors, violate conventions and

treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the four Geneva Conventions, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with their various Optional Protocols. The differential impacts of conflicts on women, men and children, and the challenges they create, have profound democratic and developmental implications for all humanity.

The challenge now is to push beyond numbers and demonstrate the impact of women's contribution to democracy, peace and conflict in member countries; promote accountability for international legal frameworks that governments have ratified; domesticate international standards in national constitutions and legislations as tools for promoting *de facto* equality; encourage political parties to adopt the 30% Commonwealth target for women candidates; and ensure women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes. In line with the Commonwealth's comparative advantage, there is need to develop peace education curricula and promote a culture of peace, geared particularly towards young people, to ensure sustainability.

The Focus

Consequently, Commonwealth activities in this critical area will focus on:

- Strengthening democratic political systems through achievement of the Commonwealth target of at least 30% of women in decision-making in the political, public and private sectors;
- Mainstreaming gender equality into early warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and resolution, peace agreements, peace-building, reconciliation, post-conflict reconstruction, and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes;
- Ensuring the collection of sex-disaggregated data and integrating gender analysis into policy-making,



Gender equality is essential to poverty eradication and sustainable development

- planning and programme implementation in conflict and post-conflict situations; and
- Documenting and disseminating good practice in gender-sensitive initiatives in the area of democracy, peace and conflict.

Gender, Human Rights and Law

Although 50 Commonwealth countries have ratified CEDAW and 16 have ratified its Optional Protocol, there are still significant gaps in implementation (see Annex VI). Many countries have ratified with reservations. The lack of a gender perspective in the administration of the law has stymied gains made in international and regional treaties and conventions.

Even where sound legislation exists, application and interpretation of these laws are inadequate for many reasons: lack of political will, lack of trained judiciaries, lack of enforcement capacity, traditional or customary systems of law that discriminate against women, women's inadequate awareness or legal literacy concerning their rights and recourse to justice, limited human and financial resources for gender-sensitive monitoring and enforcement at national, local and community levels, and inadequate evidence-based data collection. It is in this context that the human rights of women and girls continue to be widely violated.

Customary laws, practices and traditions often have greater significance and value for people in their daily lives than the established statutory and constitutional laws in a country. In addressing gender equality and human rights issues, it is critical to recognise the complex ways in which identities, values and behaviour are formed and regulated

at household and community levels, often being shaped by elders, traditional leaders or religious institutions.

Universal human rights and specific cultural values and traditions have largely been viewed as opposed rather than complementary, and would benefit from greater dialogue about how they might relate to each other. It is now important to focus attention on the opportunities for changing gender relations in communities by working in partnership with traditional, cultural and religious institutions and leaders.

In the area of customary and traditional laws and practice, it is urgent that harmful practices that violate the rights of women and girls such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, 'honour killings' and widow inheritance are eliminated. Where multiple legal systems exist, whether statutory or customary, protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls should be paramount.

The rapid growth of trafficking in persons is causing greater global concern. Many of those most exploited and subjected to slavery-like situations are women and girls. It is widely acknowledged that the root causes of this trafficking lie in issues of migration and labour market failings, in which gender inequality and women's poverty are significant elements. However, it is important to recognise clearly the distinctions between trafficking,

smuggling and regular and irregular migration, and to ensure that solutions and strategies appropriate to each context are found. Anti-trafficking legislation must embrace a human rights approach and protect the rights of those most vulnerable to abuse.

Indigenous peoples, particularly women, continue to be marginalised and disadvantaged in comparison to other groups in society, and face significantly greater poverty, social exclusion and discrimination. Despite acknowledgement of the history of colonialism and its role in the marginalisation of indigenous peoples in the Commonwealth's Lusaka Declaration of 1979, there has been a lack of recognition of their rights in many countries.

The Focus

Consequently, Commonwealth activities in this critical area will focus on:

- Legislative and constitutional reform, judicial capacity building and strengthening of mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and accountability;
- Culture, the law and human rights, including rights regarding access to and ownership of land and property;
- Gender-based violence, integrated with work on trafficking in persons (especially women and girls), conflict resolution and peace-building;
- Indigenous peoples' rights, with a focus

- on indigenous women and girls; and
- Gender and human rights throughout the life cycle, addressing discrimination and opportunities at all stages of life and ensuring the maintenance of rights from one stage to another, linked with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and poverty reduction strategies (PRSPs).

Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economic Empowerment

The Commonwealth contains one-third of the world's estimated 1.2 billion poor. It is now universally accepted that poverty is not only based on lack of income but is also intrinsically linked to lack of access to political, economic, social, natural and cultural resources. This results in the lack of entitlements and opportunities, and social exclusion that can be based on gender, class, caste or other forms of marginalisation. Gender inequality causes and exacerbates the impact of poverty on women, who globally account for some 70% of the poor.

While globalisation and trade liberalisation offer new opportunities for economic growth and poverty eradication, they also pose critical challenges related to loss of livelihoods and employment for both women and men, with women generally being more severely affected. Economic restructuring and high levels of debt, conflict, HIV/AIDS

Women have their say – more women are coming forward to elect political representatives and stand for election as well



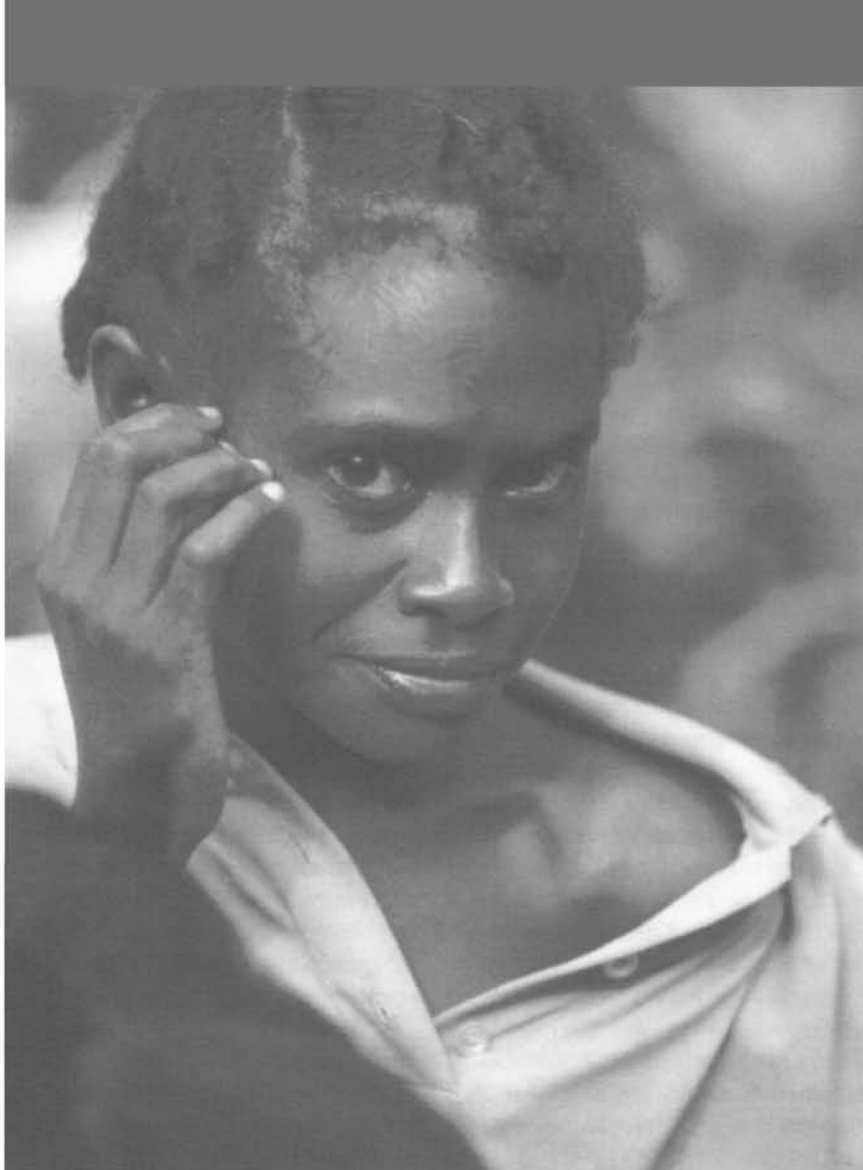
and environmental degradation also constrain the ability of many countries to meet the challenges of poverty reduction.

Macroeconomic policies do not take into account the unpaid work that women contribute to the care economy or the unequal recognition and valuation of the contribution of women and men to production and social reproduction. They also focus predominantly on the formal economy, whereas women constitute the majority of workers in the informal economy, estimated to represent 45%–80% of all non-agricultural employment. Legal and regulatory frameworks have insufficiently taken into account women's rights. Lack of access to power and decision-making, education and training, and economic resources, especially land and credit, and the absence of social protection increase women's vulnerability.

The prevalent market-access focus of trade policies and liberalisation, and assumptions regarding the 'gender neutral' character of the processes of globalisation and trade liberalisation agreements, have often obscured their impacts on gender relations, poverty reduction and human development. Since women shoulder the primary responsibility for household and community management, their paid and unpaid work, their overall time burden and even their health are directly affected by trade policies.

Policies regarding exports and imports affect women as producers and consumers in different ways than men. Increased cutbacks by governments lead to reduced investment and expenditure in the social sectors, resulting in reduced access to basic services and social protection and causing food insecurity.

It is therefore important not only to enhance the negotiating capacity of Commonwealth developing countries so that they can play a key role in setting the agenda and can benefit from trade negotiations, but also to ensure that gender analysis becomes part of the process of developing trade policies and negotiations. In view of gender-differentiated access to resources and the gendered division of labour, the differential impacts on women and men



of measures undertaken must be taken into account. In this context, it is important not only that gender perspectives are mainstreamed into trade agreements but also that women participate meaningfully in the negotiations towards just and fair trading agreements and systems.

In order to effectively address the processes of the feminisation of both labour and poverty, the Commonwealth will broaden its approach to gender and economic empowerment to encompass the macro-, meso- and micro-levels as a continuum.

At the macroeconomic level, this means building on and institutionalising initiatives to mainstream gender-sensitive approaches across critical areas related to the formulation of fiscal and trade policies and policies related to enterprise and agricultural development.

At the meso-level, the main thrust of Commonwealth activity will relate to the creation of an enabling environment for women workers, both self-employed and wage-employed, in the agricultural and non-agricultural areas, and influencing poverty eradication strategies and programmes.

At the micro-level there needs to be focused attention on increasing access to resources of all kinds for women: natural, material, financial and technological. These would result in enhanced well-being and economic empowerment and would be manifested in food security, sustainable livelihoods, social protection and more and better employment opportunities.

An enabling environment includes the establishment of appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure workers' rights and adherence to core labour standards, and the adoption of appropriate social protection measures to mitigate the risks and vulnerability faced by women workers, including migrants. Women whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, forestry or fisheries need to be equipped with appropriate technical skills and backward and forward linkages.

Other key factors to enable women to respond to the world economy as workers and entrepreneurs include increased access to social, economic and natural productive resources, including land and capital; appropriate skills development; and access to markets and to knowledge and information, including ICTs.

Facilitating the organisation and networking of women can play a key role in their ability to make their voices heard at local, national, regional and international levels. Statistical and data collection systems need to enhance the visibility and valuation of women's paid and unpaid work.

The Focus

Consequently, Commonwealth activities in this critical area will focus on:

- Influencing trade, financial and labour policies for the implementation of Gender-responsive Budgets (GRBs), the engendering of multilateral trade processes and the improvement of women workers' conditions and rights; and influencing sectoral policies in areas that would enhance women's livelihoods, such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry by improving women's access to productive resources, markets, skills and extension services;
- Facilitating the process of creating an enabling environment for women workers, including by establishing frameworks for core labour standards, social protection, the identification and development of appropriate skills, and promoting women's organisations and networking; and
- Mainstreaming gender equality in programmes and processes related to poverty eradication, the MDGs, PRSPs, Sector-wide Approaches to Poverty (SWAPs), etc., and working to enhance women's access to and control over productive and natural resources.

Gender and HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS has reached crisis proportions in Sub-Saharan Africa, is increasing dramatically in the Caribbean and Asia, and has enormous implications for small states. At their Abuja meeting in 2003, Commonwealth Heads of Government highlighted its devastating impact. They recognised the fundamental importance of confronting the pandemic. Two-thirds of the five million people who became infected with HIV in 2003 were Commonwealth citizens. HIV/AIDS affects primarily people of working age, and in the

most severely affected countries it is decimating the human resources necessary to sustain social and economic growth.

Poverty and gender inequalities are driving factors in the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS. Women's inferior political and legal status perpetuates poverty, discrimination and lack of opportunity in social, economic and cultural spheres of activity, including access to and ownership of land and property, inheritance rights and decent work opportunities. In this context, women and girls, faced with the need to support their families, often feel they have little choice but to engage in sex work or in transactional sex (sex for food, rent, bus fare, clothing), which makes them even more vulnerable to HIV infection.

Women also bear the brunt of the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS. Women of all ages, especially older women, very young women and adolescent girls, bear unsustainable burdens of care for the sick and dying in their homes, face additional health-care costs for HIV-affected family members, and in many cases cope with extra dependants such as orphans. Research has shown that up to 90% of HIV care is provided in the home. In some cases, over 43% of total household labour is lost to AIDS-affected households because of care responsibilities.

In a number of countries, there are growing numbers of child/orphan-headed households containing children with few prospects for education, socialisation or economic opportunities as they grow up. At the end of 2001, 11 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 15 had lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. It is expected that by 2010, there will be 20 million AIDS orphans in this age group.

Women and girls are more susceptible to contracting HIV not only for biological reasons but because they lack the power to negotiate safe sex or refuse unwanted sex. Gender-based violence, particularly rape, is both a cause and consequence of HIV transmission. The high incidence of violence and forced sex experience by women, as well as their abandonment or eviction from their homes and communities when they are HIV positive, create enormous difficulties for women

who lack economic means or alternatives.

Illiteracy, lack of information or educational opportunities and inappropriate prevention messages further exacerbate the vulnerability of women and girls to infection. It is critical to increase opportunities and create an enabling environment for women and girls to be empowered to make choices and informed decisions over their lives and relationships in the home, workplace and community.

Further, in over-crowded urban as well as rural areas, basic health and social services are grossly inadequate, especially in terms of treatment of opportunistic infections, voluntary testing and counselling facilities, anti-retroviral treatment and social and family service support. Even where support exists, many women and men are not aware of the services available to them at local and community levels.

Lack of availability and access to female-controlled prevention methods are a critical factor in the increasing infection rate among women and girls. Women are twice as likely as men to contract HIV from a single act of unprotected sex, but they remain dependent on male co-operation to protect themselves from infection. Greater attention needs to be paid to research and investment in microbicides, improving the female condom, and exploring other forms of female-controlled prevention.

Women constitute the majority of workers in the informal economy



While many policies and commitments made by governments and international organisations make the connection between gender and HIV/AIDS explicit, these commitments are not always implemented. Some examples of good practice are emerging, but there is often a big gap between policy and practice because of insufficient resources, training and capacity, especially where public sectors and basic service provision have been cut back. There is a need for greater attention to be paid to the implementation of policies and commitments, and for increased monitoring of and accountability for service delivery on the part of multilateral institutions, governments and civil society organisations.

The Focus

Consequently, Commonwealth activities in this critical area will focus on:

- Mainstreaming gender equality into multi-sectoral, national, regional and international programmes on HIV/AIDS prevention;
- Promoting partnerships between women and men to reduce the prevalence and impact of HIV/AIDS;
- Strengthening institutional partnerships to support the implementation of effective strategies to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS and address the social and economic impact of the pandemic, in particular on women and girls;
- Preventing new HIV infections among young people, particularly girls and young women, through support and promotion of the Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living Initiative.

Partnerships

The Commonwealth seeks to promote strong and dynamic partnerships in order to accelerate the achievement of gender equality through advocacy, brokering, consensus-building and sharing of knowledge, information and good practice. Partners include Commonwealth governments, the body of Commonwealth institutions, the United Nations and its agencies, international financial institutions, other multilateral and bilateral agencies, regional groupings, regional initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), civil society organisations and the private sector.

End Notes

1 In ranking BPfA priority concerns, some countries placed equal priority on some concerns. A few chose to forward national priority areas which did not necessarily coincide with the 12 BPfA areas of critical concern.

2 This section is based on the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015.

The Commonwealth Secretariat Working for Gender Equality

The Commonwealth has made many contributions to bringing about improvements in the current international political, economic and social climate, including its strong stand on gender issues and support of the United Nations gender equality goals.

– *Angela King, (then) United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, March 2003, New York.*

The Commonwealth Secretariat recognises that gender equality cannot be divorced from mainstream political and socio-economic issues and other priority development agendas. At the national level, National Women's Machineryes (NWMs) take a leading role in ensuring that their governments recognise the importance of integrating gender equality concerns into relevant sectors. Similarly, the Secretariat takes the lead in ensuring that gender issues are integrated into the agenda of meetings of Commonwealth education, finance, health, law and youth ministers.

Guided by the 1987 Commonwealth Plan of Action (PoA), the Secretariat's first Women and Development Programme provided advisory services to governments and programmes that looked at women's status in a number of areas. On the whole, however, the Women in Development approach promoted failed to address systemic causes of gender inequality. It viewed women as passive recipients of development assistance, rather than as active agents in transforming their own economic, political, social and cultural realities.

After 1995, the Secretariat's work was guided by the second Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development. This was the Commonwealth's contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, and was thus consistent with the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) goals and strategies while also building on the comparative advantages¹ of the Commonwealth. The 1995 PoA marked a shift from a concentration on special projects for women to mainstreaming gender issues into the whole spectrum of Commonwealth development policies and programmes, and also from 'equality of opportunities' to 'equality and equity of outcomes'.

In 2000, the PoA priorities were reviewed and updated by Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers. The PoA Update (2000–2005) responded to

persistent challenges and emerging gender equality issues, such as poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and concentrated efforts and resources for greater effectiveness and impact. Progress reports in 1997, 1999, 2001 and 2003² relating to the implementation of the PoA have confirmed significant progress in some areas while recognising the urgent need to 'deepen action and refocus strategies to meet urgent development priorities and emerging challenges.'

Consultations in 2003 and 2004 in the wings of the annual meetings of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York allowed Commonwealth ministers and heads of NWMs to agree on priorities and needs, emerging challenges and strategies required.

The refocusing of direction, partnerships and strategies is reflected in the new PoA for Gender Equality 2005–2015 that was approved by Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs at their seventh meeting held in Fiji Islands from 30 May–2 June 2004. This new PoA will guide Commonwealth action for the next 10 years. Internally, the Secretariat, guided by the 2003 Aso Rock Commonwealth Declaration³, seeks to deepen the gender equality outcomes within the 16 development and democracy programme areas of its four-year Strategic Plans.

A Strategy for Gender Equality

The Commonwealth Secretariat gender equality strategy operates at three levels:

- **National** – providing policy advice, support for capacity-building, information and other support to member governments, civil society organisations and other partners through a special gender equality programme, as well as through the technical assistance activities of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC);
- **Regional/International** – focusing on

advocacy, consensus-building, networking, partnerships with key regional and international bodies and development agencies;

- **Institutional** – supporting the development of capacity for gender mainstreaming systems and strategies within institutions.

National Interventions: Maximising Gender Impacts

The Secretariat's work is based on its areas of comparative advantage and its programmes are based on its advocacy, brokering and catalytic roles. Its gender mainstreaming activities are executed under the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) and Commonwealth Secretariat budgets. Partnerships add benefits, providing technical expertise, additional funds and in-kind contributions. The Gender Section has moved from being part of a division responsible for gender and youth affairs, to join the education and health sections in 2002 to form the Social Transformation Programmes Division (STPD). Together, they provide a human-centred approach to development. The division reports to the Gender Steering Committee which is chaired by the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

The division has a three-pronged role which is central to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It has lead responsibility for the programme to mainstream gender equality in the policies and activities of member countries; lead responsibility for monitoring gender mainstreaming in the Secretariat; and responsibility for the Secretariat's education and health programmes.

Gender equality, the development challenges posed by HIV/AIDS, poverty eradication and the economic empowerment of women, and the impact of conflict are common themes in the work of the three sections in STPD. The three sections assist member countries with policy advice, strategy development,

tools and methodologies, training, strengthening institutional capacity and implementation.

The following illustrate some of the gender mainstreaming activities undertaken by the Secretariat to support national and regional initiatives:

Consensus-building, Advocacy and Information Dissemination

Consultations, sharing of experiences and consensus-building lie at the heart of the Commonwealth's work and form an integral part of the Commonwealth's approach to advancing gender equality. The Commonwealth spearheads important initiatives placing gender on global, regional and national agendas. It promotes the principle that gender equality is an issue of democracy, good governance and people-centred development through the following:

- Consensus-building and advocacy programmes to promote a Commonwealth voice on gender and development issues at regional/global-agenda setting fora (e.g. at meetings of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs; key regional bodies; the UN CSW; and global conferences such as the Monterrey Summit on Financing for Development and the Johannesburg Summit of Sustainable Development);
- Policy advice to governments and partners through a help-desk and the dissemination of country experiences and good practice;
- The dissemination of information through a Knowledge-based Network and a Commonwealth gender website (www.thecommonwealth.org/gender) which contains an extensive gender knowledge database and records over 8 million hits a year.

Supporting National Women's Machineries

The Gender Section has facilitated the work of NWMs through:

- The development of the Gender Management System (GMS) (*see Box 2.1, page 17*);
- Contributing to the shaping of gender-



aware development policies, plans and programmes at national and regional levels;

- Developing innovative publications, resource materials, tools and methodologies for use at the institutional, national, regional and international levels on gender mainstreaming; gender, democracy, peace and conflict; gender and human rights; gender-based violence; gender-responsive budgets; gender, enterprise and trade; and gender and HIV/AIDS;
- Organising pan-Commonwealth, regional and national workshops, symposia and colloquia on the above areas, bringing together NWMs with other constituencies such as parliamentarians, magistrates and judges, local councillors, finance and trade ministries, HIV/AIDS national commissions, women's NGOs, tertiary institutions, the media, etc.;
- Facilitating partnerships between women, men and young people from a wide range of organisations, to contribute to conflict resolution, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction in countries in conflict;
- Promoting the Commonwealth's 30% target of women in parliament and local government;
- Building partnerships with Commonwealth, international and regional agencies to better deliver programmes and facilitating the sharing of good practice on gender equality;
- Monitoring, assessing and reporting on the impacts of activities undertaken within the framework of the PoA across the Commonwealth.

Gender, Democracy, Peace and Conflict

Strengthening participatory democracy is one of the key Commonwealth goals. The

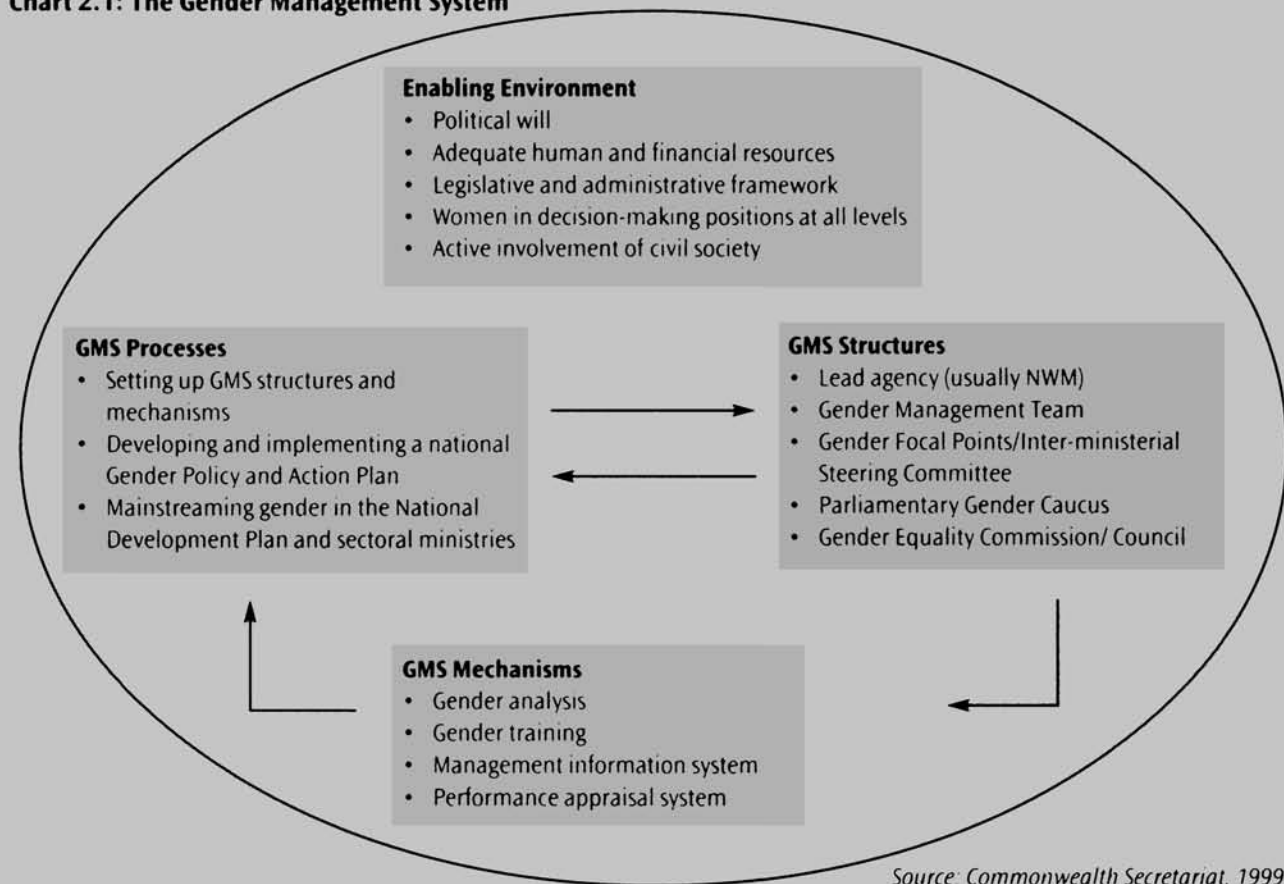
Box 2.1: The Gender Management System

The Gender Management System (GMS) is a Commonwealth framework for gender mainstreaming. It is a network of structures, processes and mechanisms set up within an institution, sector, cross-cutting development issue or country to facilitate the advancement of gender-aware policies, plans and programmes at all levels.

The GMS was developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat in consultation with member governments and other key stakeholders to strengthen the capacities of NWMs, the public sector and the Secretariat itself.

The GMS is a useful tool for NWMs as national bodies with responsibility to implement national gender policies and action plans. NWMs need to understand the links between gender issues and key development objectives; advocate for the shared responsibility for gender equality outcomes and allocation of resources with mainstream sectors and institutions; build capacity for gender planning to bring about broad policy and programme changes; and undertake gender audits to monitor and assess impacts.

Chart 2.1: The Gender Management System



The flexibility and usefulness of the GMS as a framework for advancing gender equality allows it to be adapted to the needs and priorities of countries, sectors and institutions. It facilitates partnerships with other stakeholders and lays the foundation for co-ordination, collaboration and co-operation.

The Secretariat has provided technical assistance to member countries on gender mainstreaming and establishing a GMS. St Kitts and Nevis was the first member country to pilot the GMS in 1999.

A set of resource manuals has been published to assist governments and other stakeholders in undertaking gender-aware analysis, policy making, planning and programme implementation. These include sector-wide publications such as *Gender Management Systems Handbook*, *Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators*, *Gender Mainstreaming in Development Planning* and *Gender Mainstreaming in the Public Service*.

There are, in addition, sector-specific manuals on finance, agriculture and rural development, legal and constitutional affairs, trade industry, and information and communications.

The Secretariat has also published a new GMS series on such strategic development issues as poverty eradication and the Millennium Development Goals, multilateral trade, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence and human rights (see Annex X).

The GMS Toolkit (2004) uses distance education principles to bring together the series of manuals and includes a Trainer's Guide, an Action Guide (for individual learners), a Change Management Briefing (to facilitate institutional change), and a CD-ROM which includes the Toolkit and the entire GMS series of publications.

Secretary-General's Good Offices role supports capacity-building initiatives to prevent and resolve conflicts and ensure increased women's participation and representation in peace processes. In their Aso Rock Declaration in 2003, Commonwealth Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen democracy and development through partnerships for peace and prosperity. Thus, women's full participation in democracy, peace and conflict resolution processes is highlighted as crucial for the achievement of gender equality and sustainable development.

In 2000, the Sixth Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs (6WAMM)⁴ recommended that the Commonwealth take action, in collaboration with other international organisations and civil society, to include women at all levels of peace-building, peacekeeping, conflict prevention, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction policies, programmes and decision-making. The Ministers adopted a 30% target for women's participation in these processes. More recently in Fiji Islands in 2004, the Ministers urged countries which have already reached the 30% target to strive for parity in representation.

As part of its efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, the Secretariat continues to provide technical assistance and training to member countries in areas such as election monitoring and observation.

More women are entering politics and standing for election



The Gender Section works with the Secretariat's Democracy Section to engender the electoral processes through reviews of national Constitutions, election manuals, and training workshops for parliamentarians. In December 2003, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), a workshop entitled 'Engendering Development and Democracy' was organised for parliamentarians in the wings of the CHOGM in Abuja, Nigeria.

The Secretary-General has also appointed Special Envoys, several of them women, to member countries to assist in the democratic, conflict prevention and resolution processes.

Four regional symposia on gender, politics, peace and conflict were organised for the Africa, Asia/Europe, Caribbean and Pacific regions.

The Secretariat conducted a fact-finding mission to northern Uganda to assess the impact of armed conflict on men, women and young persons and explore ways to improve livelihoods. In 2001, the Secretariat and a number of national and international partners convened a national consultation on 'Women and Men in Partnership for Post-conflict Reconstruction in Sierra Leone'. This was followed in 2002 by a workshop on 'Women in Parliament in Sierra Leone' which brought women parliamentarians from other countries to build leadership capacity among and support for prospective women candidates in the May 2002 elections. Among other outcomes,

these initiatives resulted in an increase from 8% to 15% of women in the parliament of Sierra Leone.

In promoting gender equality and democracy through peace and conflict activities, member countries continue to face many challenges, such as inadequacy of resources, lack of political will, lack of sex-disaggregated data, weak NWMs and low levels of civil society participation. Significant progress has been made, but much work remains to be done. The challenge is to review lessons learned, share ideas and exchange information, and lobby governments to exercise the necessary political will to mainstream a gender perspective into policies, plans and programmes at all levels.

Gender, Human Rights and Law

The Secretariat promotes the protection of the human rights of women and the girl-child, the elimination of gender-based violence, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. It advocates ratification and implementation of Conventions that protect the rights of women such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Regional strategies, in partnership with multilateral and regional bodies, have been adopted by the Secretariat to support countries' efforts to institutionalise the Commonwealth's integrated approach to eradicate gender-based violence. Resource and training materials on an integrated approach to gender-based violence have been developed.

A Commonwealth Expert Group has looked at ways of combating the unlawful trafficking of women and children. Trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, for commercial sexual exploitation is one of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity and of increasing concern to the international community. Trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation, forced labour, marriage, adoption, and

the trade in organs are additional areas of concern, but are less well documented. Six country studies on the commercial sexual exploitation of children have been undertaken in India, Jamaica, Kenya, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economic Empowerment

The Commonwealth has adopted a multi-pronged approach to poverty eradication and economic empowerment for women. At the macro-economic level, it has contributed to the international advocacy on mainstreaming gender perspectives in fiscal and trade policy.

Gender-responsive Budgets (GRBs), (see Box 2.2, this page) have been a priority focus area and the Secretariat has been recognised for its instrumental role in the development and production of tools, methodologies and capacity-building materials.

The Secretariat has also played a key role in disseminating knowledge on GRBs through a series of publications and has similarly contributed to the international debates on poverty eradication.

Future areas identified for development on GRBs include revenue analysis and expanding the methodology for monitoring of the MDGs.

Trade is another strategic area of intervention. In collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the Secretariat organised a symposium for Trade Officials in Suva, Fiji Islands in February 2003. Participants discussed how to maximise trading opportunities for women and minimise the negative impacts of multilateral trade on women, and build capacity of member governments in the areas of gender and multilateral trade – an integral part of the process of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

In addition, the Commonwealth Secretariat's Debt-Recording and Management System (CS-DRMS) programme has reviewed the need for sex-disaggregated data and gender practices with a view to examining the differential impact of debt programmes on women and men (see Box 2.3, page 20).

Box 2.2: Gender-responsive Budgeting

Gender-responsive Budget (GRB) initiatives provide a mechanism by which governments and civil society agencies can integrate gender analysis into public expenditure, and increasingly revenue, policies and budgets. The idea of GRBs developed out of a growing understanding that macroeconomic policy can contribute to narrowing or widening gender gaps in areas such as education, health, incomes and nutrition, and make the living standards of different groups of women better or worse.

The Commonwealth Secretariat was the first intergovernmental organisation to promote Gender-responsive Budgeting (GRB). It launched the Gender Budget Initiative in 1995 and has since played a pioneering role in the production of tools, methodologies and capacity-building materials for the implementation of gender budgets.

The Secretariat has promoted and disseminated these concepts and tools internationally through a wide variety of publications – including case studies and a practitioner's guide. Some of the more recent publications are:

- *Gender Budgets Make Cents* (2001)
- *Gender Budgets Make More Cents* (2002)
- *Engendering Budgets: A Practitioner's Guide* (2003)

Until recently, the focus of most of the work was on the expenditure side of budgets. The Secretariat, however, has pioneered new work on the revenue side. In 2003, it brought out a publication on *Gender Impacts of Government Revenue Collection: The Case of Taxation* which put forward a conceptual framework; it is proposed to develop this further through the development of tools and some in-country pilots.

In addition, the Secretariat has been responsible for policy work and capacity-building in support of GRBs through providing technical assistance in several countries, such as Barbados, Belize, South Africa and Sri Lanka for pilot work. To a large extent, it is the Commonwealth experience – primarily in Australia and South Africa – which has been adapted as the framework for developing GRB in over 50 countries globally.

In 2004, the Gender Section of the Secretariat commissioned regional reports on the progress of GRBs within the Commonwealth. The reports were compiled and presented with a synthesis report as *Gender-responsive Budgeting in the Commonwealth: Progress and Challenges* at the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in September 2004. This was a preliminary report which will form the basis for assessing progress at the 2005 Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting, where a final report will be presented based on comments and updates received from member countries.

A manual, *Gender and Debt Management*, was published in 2005.

The Secretariat's Gender Equality Programme seeks to assist the empowerment of women by eliminating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities for women, and recognising that gender equality is essential to poverty eradication and sustainable development. The 2003 publication, *Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals: A Handbook for Policy-Makers and Other Stakeholders* illustrates that most MDGs can only be achieved by addressing, among other things, women's disproportionate burden of poverty, lack of access to education and health services, natural resources including land, lack of productive opportunities and control over their livelihoods.

The Secretariat supports the Commonwealth Business Women's Network (CBWN), a strategic arm of the Commonwealth Business Council, in its efforts to promote women's access to markets and other opportunities (see Box 2.4, page 21). The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex and the network, Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO), has supported the development of case studies on Global Value Chain (GVC) Analysis on the status of women in the informal economy.

The Secretariat has two publications on the above subject, *Mainstreaming Informal Employment and Gender in Poverty Reduction and Chains of Fortune: Linking Women Producers and Workers with Local Markets*.

Gender and HIV/AIDS

The Secretariat has adopted a multi-sectoral approach to assist member countries to combat HIV/AIDS. An important element is the mainstreaming of gender analysis in addressing the pandemic, including areas of prevention, treatment and care. The merging of the education, gender and health sections into STPD has also brought potential synergy between the activities in areas of policy, advocacy and awareness-raising, and capacity-building.

The urgency of this programme is underlined by the fact that the number of people living with AIDS globally stands at 40 million (UNAIDS/WHO, 2004, Estimates) and that 60% of all infected people are in the Commonwealth, with nine of the most heavily affected countries being member states. Nearly 50% of all people living with AIDS are women and the infection rate among young women is outstripping that for men of similar age.

The Secretariat seeks to contribute to raising awareness about gender and HIV/AIDS, working with member countries and international agencies (e.g. UNAIDS and UNIFEM) on strategies for assisting national AIDS plans and National AIDS Commissions to be more gender-sensitive so that the issues of gender and HIV/AIDS can be better understood and addressed in future programmes.

Work has been undertaken with individual governments in Africa (e.g. Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia) and through the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other regional organisations. The Secretariat published a training manual on gender mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS in 2002.

In June 2004, the Secretariat collaborated with the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and launched the virtual International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS in Johannesburg, South Africa (see Box 2.5, page 22). In June 2004, it established with the University of the West Indies and UNESCO an academic chair on HIV education at the university.

Box 2.3: Debt Management and Gender Equality

The link between national debt, repayment schedules and gender equality is not widely understood. Officials handling national debt are often not aware of the impact of debt on gender equality; those working on gender issues are generally not conversant with the intricacies of debt management. Thus borrowings are often made for projects where gender impacts have not been taken into account; and repayments are made from financial allocations – most often taken from health, education and other sectors, which have an adverse impact on women.

For nearly two decades, the Commonwealth Secretariat's package of advisory services in debt and development resource management¹ has been useful to over 50 countries. Successful as this programme has been, the gender dimension within debt management has, until recently, been largely ignored. Now, the Secretariat's lead division in this area, the Special Advisory Services Division (SASD), is taking measures to engender the debt management programme. In doing so, it seeks to sensitise governments on the need to take on board gender issues in their own debt management operations.

The new publication, *Gender Integration in Debt and Development Resource Management*, seeks to sensitise both debt and gender practitioners on the link between debt management and gender equality. In addition to reviewing the policies and actions taken by the main international development agencies and bilateral donors to promote and integrate gender issues in the provision of development assistance, the report suggests effective and practical ways through which developing country governments can integrate gender equality considerations into their debt and development resource management.

The core findings of the publication are already being disseminated to officers working in debt management units in member countries. More than 300 officers from Commonwealth ministries of finance and central banks, who attended regional debt management workshops in 2002/03, were sensitised to the need to take into account gender needs at all stages of the borrowing process. The framework for gender integration that the publication proposes will be pilot-tested in a number of countries.

¹ Known as the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System (CS-DRMS 2000+). In use since 1985, the CS-DRMS software allows countries to manage different types of national debt flows in an integrated manner and is a valuable tool for both policy-making and improving transparency in economic management.

Gender and Education

Following the 15th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Edinburgh, UK, in October 2003, the Secretariat has been working with Education Ministries and civil society organisations in six key areas which are important for the social and economic empowerment of girls and women: universal primary education; gender disparities in education; improving quality in education; using distance learning to overcome geographical barriers; supporting education in difficult circumstances; and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on education systems.

The ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa) Working Group on Non-Formal Education was set up in response to the Education for All challenge. ADEA is co-ordinated by the Commonwealth Secretariat which is an active partner in educational

development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In June and September 2004, the Secretariat, in partnership with UNICEF, the Forum for African Women Educationalists and the Commonwealth Youth Programme, convened meetings in Nairobi, Kenya, and Chandigarh, India, to share and review good practice in girls' education in the two regions.

Drawing on this information, the Secretariat's Education Section is preparing a publication on gender mainstreaming in education.

Gender and Health

The Secretariat also seeks to include gender perspectives in its main programme areas in health: combating HIV/AIDS, maternal health, infant health and managing the migration of human resources in the health sector.

It advocates the participation of men and young people in HIV/AIDS prevention

programmes, and works with countries to develop multi-sectoral strategies for the reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates. The Secretariat also assists countries to develop strategies and systems to manage the migration of professionals from the health sector, and implement the Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health Workers.

Regional/ International Partnerships

The Secretariat has built a number of coalitions with Commonwealth associations and civil society partners, regional development bodies and multilateral agencies, including UN agencies, and individual governments and their development agencies. Commonwealth partnerships include the Commonwealth Foundation's work with CSOs, professional and other organisations, the Commonwealth of Learning with its innovative approaches to distance education, CPA, Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association and the CBWN.

The Secretariat has encouraged collaboration with NGOs, wider civil society partners and the private sector to add value to the work of NWMs in areas such as advocacy, legislative reform, training and capacity building, economic empowerment and credit initiatives, and programmes with marginalised communities. This has sprung from the recognition that civil society acts as a critical voice in ensuring that resources, wealth and power are equitably distributed between women and men, within communities, and across social groups and regions.

As part of preparations for the 7th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers' Meeting (7WAMM) held in Fiji Islands in 2004, a Commonwealth Gender Reference Group – a representative body of key policy-makers, practitioners and experts from all regions – was established in March 2003. At the 7WAMM itself, civil society representatives for the first time were able to participate actively in the

Box 2.4: The Commonwealth Business Women's Network

The Commonwealth Business Women's Network (CBWN) is a division of the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC). Originally conceived in the Gender Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat, responsibility for it was transferred to the CBC in 2002; it was formally launched in 2003.

The CBWN works with businesses and governments to support gender mainstreaming activities. Its mandate includes empowering businesswomen through raising awareness of how global and local trade and trade agreements impact on them; creating knowledge networks for Small, Medium and Micro-Enterprises (SMMEs); disseminating gender equality best practices amongst stakeholders; and providing global outreach and networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

In carrying out this mandate, the CBWN creates linkages between the private sector and governments, and works with partners to set up 'knowledge networks' which provide support and advice on funding, sustainability and growth for women entrepreneurs.

Since its launch, the CBWN has taken the lead in creating fora for stakeholders to promote gender equality within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) – a key developmental initiative in Africa. It has also been a leader in advocating a specific agenda for women within all developmental initiatives, especially the role of 'Women in SMMEs' in Africa, where women are the key drivers of growth in the formal and the informal economy.

The CBWN has attracted private sector support and contributes to important policy platforms such as the Commonwealth Business Forum, which feeds into CHOGM discussions and Commonwealth ministerial meetings such as that of Ministers Responsible for Women.

At the 2003 Forum, held parallel to CHOGM in Abuja, Nigeria, the CBWN conference fed into a session on 'The Role of Women Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Development'. In May/June 2004, a CBWN Roundtable on 'The Role of Women Entrepreneurs in Poverty Alleviation: Multi-stakeholder Partnerships' was held during the Partners Forum of the 7th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting and a summary of the Roundtable discussions and recommendations fed into the ministerial discussions.

The CBWN has initiated groundbreaking work on creating awareness about how multilateral trade agreements affect women entrepreneurs. In partnership with Geneva Women in International Trade, CBWN organised a session on 'Gender and Trade' at the World Trade Organisation Public Symposium in May 2004 in Geneva. This was the first time such a session had been held. In November 2004, it organised a seminar on 'Promoting Women Entrepreneurs: Sharing Best Practice' in London.

The CBWN will continue to provide a platform for advocacy, discussion and capacity building about the WTO and Multilateral Trading Agreements with the support of its partners across the Commonwealth and the support and backing of trade expertise at the CBC.

Further information on the CBWN is available from: Ms Sudha Singh, Co-ordinator, Commonwealth Business Women's Network, 18 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5LU, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 70244 8238 Fax: +44-(0)20-7930 3944 Email: sudha.singh@cbcglobelink.org Website: www.cbcglobelink.org

Young businesswomen at a CBWN meeting



development of the new PoA. This new consultative mechanism consists of representatives from civil society, governments and regional organisations. This Group's input will enable a more coherent focus on the specificities in countries/regions and enhanced implementation of the PoA.

Engaging as key partners the major regional economic communities, such as SADC and CARICOM, is seen as critical to the Secretariat's ability to maximise use of its efforts and scarce resources, and ensure sustainability and development impacts on the ground.

Institutionalising the Gender Equality Programme

The Commonwealth Secretary-General provides overall direction for the Secretariat's work on gender equality and reports regularly to Heads of Government, Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs and the Secretariat's governing bodies on progress in implementing the PoA. The Secretary-General also encourages governments to strive for gender balance in the composition of their countries' delegations to Commonwealth meetings and workshops; and requests them to encourage qualified women to apply for senior positions in the Commonwealth Secretariat.

At the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the Secretary-General committed the Secretariat to 'adopt nine Special Measures that cut across Secretariat activities to strengthen its capacity to provide gender-inclusive and women-specific functional and technical assistance to governments'.

Critical Institutional Changes

Shortly after the Beijing conference, the organisational structure and culture of the Secretariat were reviewed with the objective of transforming the Secretariat itself into an example of good practice. A Gender Steering Committee, made up of divisional Directors and chaired by the Secretary-General, was set up. It reports to the Management Committee which is also

Box 2.5: International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS

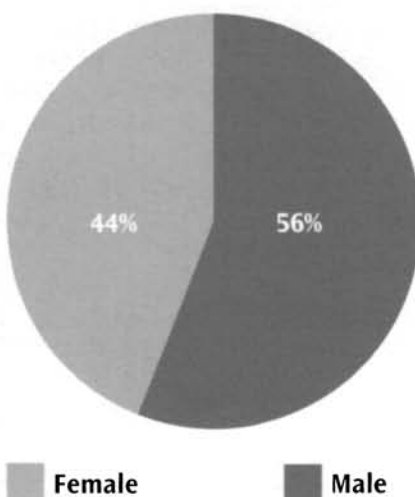
In response to the severity of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, many Commonwealth countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have drawn up HIV/AIDS policies and are implementing programmes to mitigate its impact. The challenge, however, has been to ensure that these policies make the link between gender inequality and the spread of HIV/AIDS, address gender issues related to prevention, treatment and care, and that they are translated into effective gender-sensitive practices. It is also important that appropriate research informs the development of gender-sensitive policies and programmes so that successful interventions come from a strong evidence base.

With this in mind, an International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS was launched in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June 2004. It is a virtual Institute which brings together governments (policy makers, programme implementers), researchers (academics and research organisations), and civil society organisations (including youth organisations and people living with HIV/AIDS), to identify the critical gender issues, develop action plans for integrating gender issues into HIV/AIDS policies and programmes, and build collaborative partnerships.

The Institute was established by the Commonwealth Secretariat in collaboration with the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Dalhousie University of Canada, the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance and the AIDS and Rights Alliance of Southern Africa. It was launched in Southern Africa, one of the worst affected regions in terms of the pandemic. The main aim of the Institute is to strengthen and enhance gender-sensitive HIV/AIDS policies and programmes in the region.

The virtual Institute has been described as being 'without walls and without borders'. The Secretariat and its partners plan to introduce this virtual model to other regions of Africa, as well as the Caribbean, Asia and Pacific. It therefore contributes to a global network of expertise on gender and HIV/AIDS policy, practice and research.

Chart 2.2:
Commonwealth Secretariat – Staff Numbers by Sex, July 2004



chaired by the Secretary-General. Two divisional Gender Focal Points (GFPs) were also identified in each Division to co-ordinate the mainstreaming of gender in programmes. 'Gender Resource Packs' were prepared for Directors and GFPs and regular consultations and reviews on the Secretariat's gender mainstreaming activities were carried out.

An Equal Employment Opportunities

Policy (EEOP) became effective from 11 June 1997. An EEOP Steering Group, constituted in April 1998, monitors its implementation and reports to the Management Committee. Counsellors provide a 'listening ear' to staff on how to address such concerns as sexual harassment and sex discrimination in the workplace.

The adoption of a 33% target for the recruitment of female experts and for posts within the organisation has resulted in an increase of women at professional levels. As of July 2003, 33% per cent of senior positions were filled by women. Women make up 40% of all middle professional staff (see Table 2.1 page 24). By July 2004, women constituted 44% of all staff, while support staff was overwhelmingly female at 82.7%. Female staff have increased since 1999.

In 1997/1998, workshops to raise awareness about gender issues were organised for all staff. By 2000, the Secretariat had completed extensive training for 288 staff members in gender analysis, planning, and evaluation skills. The project management manual and related training for staff included clear gender guidelines and indicators for projects. The Secretariat's gender training

Box 2.6: Public Sector Management and Leadership Development

Civil services in many developing countries are undergoing extensive reform in order that they may spearhead development efforts and play a leading role as modernisers. To be effective, public sector leaders must build effective coalitions and partnerships with non-state stakeholders, integrate different cultures, styles, sectors and disciplines, and build support teams. To assist them in this, the Commonwealth Secretariat provides support to member governments through a series of Public Sector Management in Leadership Development activities in which gender equality plays a prominent part.

A training programme on 'Men and Women in Public Sector Management: Developing Executive Leadership in the SADC Region', was held in Botswana in 2003 by the Secretariat's Governance and Institutional Development Division together with the University of Botswana's Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management. It drew 30 participants from the region, including heads of civil services and public service commissions; permanent secretaries; and top officials from civil service reform and change management units, treasuries, ministries of finance, and planning and development; NWMs; and central personnel management officers of civil services.

Recommendations included the need for:

- Building capacity through skills enhancement to promote leadership roles for men and women to achieve better management performance in the public service;
- Promoting partnerships between men and women for effective leadership in executive positions;
- Creating awareness of support strategies for incorporating gender analysis in public policy-making and implementation;
- Contributing to the enhancement of women's participation in socio-political and economic decision-making processes;
- Developing executive management skills for gender-related advocacy and policy development;
- Promoting gender-responsive public expenditure and management through gender-sensitive budgets; and
- Contributing towards capacity enhancement for poverty eradication strategies and the achievement of relevant MDGs in the SADC region.

Similar workshops are being held in other regions of the Commonwealth.

programme has provided a foundation for gender mainstreaming. Impacts of the training at programme level are continuously assessed and adjusted as an integral part of the human resources strategy programme.

Employment terms in the Secretariat have also been upgraded to reflect gender considerations. Maternity leave for Secretariat staff has been increased to a period of 18 weeks' paid leave, and 10 working days' leave is now granted to a staff member whose spouse gives birth or who adopts a child.

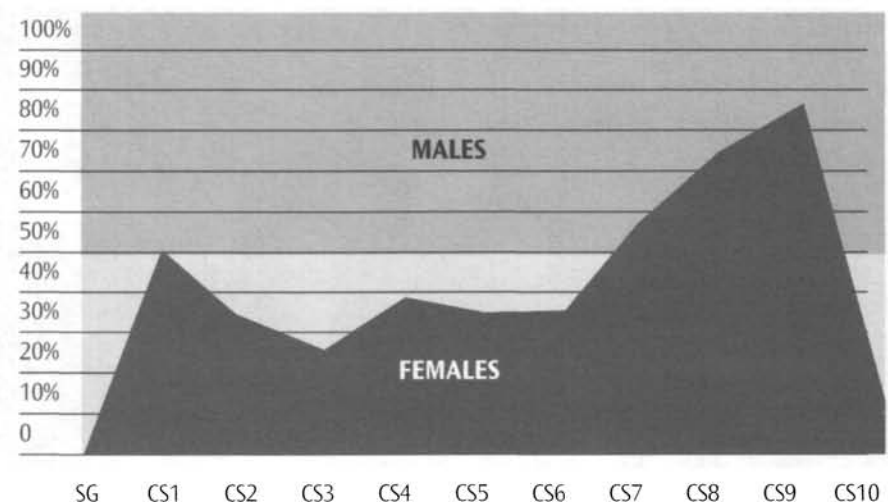
Technical assistance forms an important part of the development work of the Secretariat. However, proactive work needs to be done to ensure that suitably qualified female experts are recruited. The analysis by sex of the number of short-term experts recruited indicates that from 1997 to 2004, the total number of female experts was consistently around 50% less than male experts, except in 2001 when the number of female experts showed a slight increase. Out of a total of 312 contracts issued, 77 were awarded to females against 150 to males, and 85 to companies (July 2004).

Strategic Planning through a Gender Lens

In 1997, a separate Gender Equality Programme was established within the Secretariat's third Three-Year Strategic Plan. Leading work by a dedicated Gender Section has been vital to ensure that the Secretariat continues to build and strengthen its commitment to gender equality, and that gender mainstreaming is advanced in core political, legal and socio-economic development programme areas.

The promotion of 'development with a gender lens' reinforces the overarching and cross-cutting importance of gender equality within all programme activities. It has had a positive impact on the activities and achievements of the Secretariat where gender equality has been accorded higher priority in its governing and planning bodies, strategic planning and ministerial meetings. The Gender Equality Programme has become

Chart 2.3: Gender Distribution by Grade in the Secretariat (October 2003)



Note: SG = Secretary-General; CS1 = Deputy Secretaries-General; CS2 = Directors; CS3-4 = Special Advisers and Deputy Directors; CS4-6 = Professional Staff; CS7-10 = Support Staff.

a central component of the organisation's work. Its budget allocations since 1996/97 have been 2.1% (1996/97), 1.86% (1998/99), 2.1% (2001/02) and 2.3% (2002/03) of the combined

Commonwealth Secretariat and CFTC budgets.

In 1998, the Gender Steering Committee adopted the Framework for Strategic Actions which was approved by

Table 2.1: Secretariat Staff – Comparative Figures 1999–2003

Year	Female Directors (%)	Female Special Advisers and Deputy-Directors CS2–CS3 (%)	Female Professional Staff CS4–CS6 (%)	Female Support Staff (%)
1999	14.3	25.0	34.1	75.9
2001	27.3	37.9	38.0	76.1
2003	27.0	28.8	40.0	82.7

the Management Committee later that year. These 1998 Strategies, as they became known, institutionalised a gender-sensitive strategic plan across the Secretariat and further stipulated that each programme should develop at least one gender-specific project, in addition to mainstreaming gender in all activities, as appropriate.

The Secretariat has taken a lead in gender mainstreaming by providing gender planning and awareness training across the organisation. Divisions are required to address gender issues in their programme work, including field activities. Guidelines for this were developed and five Gender Mainstreaming Codes introduced to facilitate gender audits and analyses (see

Box 2.7, page 25). Action indicators, and a series of planning briefs and checklists were also developed to help integrate gender into projects.

New Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015

The PoA for the next decade reflects the Commonwealth’s principles and values and incorporates its responses to the differential impacts of global changes and challenges on women and men, girls and boys (see *A Decade of Commonwealth Action, page 6*).

The Secretariat will continue to provide critical support to governments in the

implementation of the PoA, policy advice and technical assistance on the application of gender mainstreaming especially gender analysis and planning, and assist in related issues identified by governments. Sector specific strategies and programmes will be developed.

Its future work will seek to promote good governance through public sector reforms and strengthen the capacity of NWMs to mainstream gender equality. The Secretariat and Commonwealth associations will work with other key constituencies, including ministries, local governments, parliamentarians, justice systems, universities, public service training institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs), acting as advocate, broker and catalyst in the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming.

Partnerships are seen as the most effective way of working towards gender equality. The Secretariat will build on existing partnerships and develop new ones 2005–2015, especially with organisations that have expertise in the four critical areas of the PoA. Regional organisations will be strategic partners in grounding Secretariat work in member

Commonwealth partner organisations met in Fiji Islands in June 2004



countries and within regions.

The Secretariat will endeavour to implement the PoA through strategic interventions and making greater use of ICTs to generate and share knowledge and information, strengthen capacity and institutional development, and improve monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Building on Achievements

The Secretariat continues to strengthen institutional arrangements and processes that are crucial to the ability of both governments and the Secretariat to advance gender equality. It provides training, advice and technical assistance to member governments in a set of interrelated priority issues of special concern to the Commonwealth and in which it has a comparative advantage. However, the need to improve the low rate of implementation of gender-sensitive programmes is critical for progress and sustainability of results. The uneven progress recorded by member states indicates that urgent action is needed: good practice and success stories should be shared, scarce resources re-allocated and more effective ways of using partnerships sought.

Within the Secretariat, the inclusion of gender perspectives in consensus-building and advocacy work, and in core CFTC activities will enhance gender equality.

End Notes

1 The Commonwealth's areas of comparative advantage respond to its principles and values: democracy and good governance, respect for human rights and rule of law, gender equality, sustainable development, poverty eradication, and HIV/AIDS. It also reflects issues related to least developed countries (LDCs), small states, and common values and similarities in political, administrative, legal, educational and other systems in member countries which facilitates consensus-building and the sharing of experiences, expertise and resources.

2 See The Secretary-General's Reports on the Implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development: *Learning by Sharing (2000)*; *Meeting the New Challenges (2001)*; and *Building on Achievements (2003)*.

3 At their December 2003 Meeting in Abuja, Commonwealth Heads of Government stated

Box 2.7: Gender Accounting

Gender accounting is central to transparency. It allows the Secretariat to identify and monitor the flow of financial resources to gender mainstreaming and other activities.

In 1997, only 127 project completion reports contained specific reference to gender equality issues, as well as 8 completed evaluations and 2 continuing evaluation studies which were assessed, among other things, for gender equality impacts. Since 1997, there has been a gradual increase in the number and scale of projects classified under the gender codes ranging from 'gender-sensitive' and 'gender-mainstreamed' to 'gender-neutral' or 'unknown' (see tables below).

By February 2004, of a total 515 projects being implemented or completed, at least 72% (370 projects) were gender-coded in some way, 19% (95) as being gender-neutral, and 9% (50) as gender-unknown.

Comparative Gender Review of 199 Secretariat Projects (1999–2001)

Project by Gender Code ¹	Number/Percentage	Value in £ (and percentage)
Gender mainstreamed activities	22 projects (11%)	£2.0 million (21.4%)
Gender-specific	14 projects (7%)	£160,353 (1.7%)
Gender-sensitive	80 projects (40%)	£4.14 million (44.2%)
Gender-neutral	36 projects (18%)	£755,481 (8.0%)
Gender impact unknown	12 projects (6%)	£190,846 (2.0%)
No Gender Code	35 projects (18%)	£2.12 million (22.6%)

Note: An additional 232 projects were not 'gender-coded' as they were implemented before the Gender Mainstreaming Codes were introduced. Closer review showed that a large number of those uncoded activities could have been improved upon from a 'gender dimension' and 'gender outcomes'. (*Commonwealth Secretariat, PIMS Gender Reports, IT Unit, June 2001.*)

Comparative Gender Review of 515 Secretariat Projects (2003/2004)

Project by Gender Code	Number/Percentage	Value in £
Gender mainstreamed activities	111 projects (22%)	£ 2.3 million (26.2%)
Gender-specific	37 projects (7%)	£ 1.4 million (15.6%)
Gender-sensitive	222 projects (43%)	£ 3.8 million (43.3%)
Gender-neutral	95 projects (19%)	£ 0.5 million (5.3%)
Gender impact unknown	50 projects (9%)	£ 0.8 million (9.5%)
No Gender Code	-	-

(*Commonwealth Secretariat, PIMS Gender Reports, IT Unit, February 2004*)

Gender accounting will become more critical in assessing the qualitative and quantitative impacts of mainstream development and democracy programmes undertaken by the Secretariat in the future.

¹ Gender Codes are used to assess the types and number of project activities implemented under the CFTC programme. Their characteristics:

- Gender-specific – The project's primary objective is specific to advance gender equality;
- Gender-mainstreamed – The project takes gender issues into consideration at the design, implementation and evaluation stages;
- Gender-sensitive – Although the primary objective of the project is not specifically gender equality, the project contains a tangible gender component(s)/intervention(s) within it.

their vision: commitment to democracy and a more equitable sharing of the benefits of globalisation; recognition that development and democracy must be mutually reinforcing; making democracy work for pro-poor development and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

4 Reaffirmed by the 7th Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs (7WAMM) in May/June 2004 in Fiji Islands.

The Commonwealth Foundation

Partnerships for Progress

True social justice requires a change in what is considered acceptable behaviour toward women and between women and men. Dealing with the pervasive violations of women's rights requires that we break the mould in our thinking and our actions.

– Graça Machel, (then) Chair, Commonwealth Foundation, 2002

The remit of the Commonwealth Foundation, which is funded by Commonwealth governments, is to strengthen civil society in the achievement of Commonwealth priorities, especially those of good governance, people-centred sustainable development, and poverty eradication. The Foundation facilitates pan-Commonwealth and inter-country connections between people, their associations and communities.

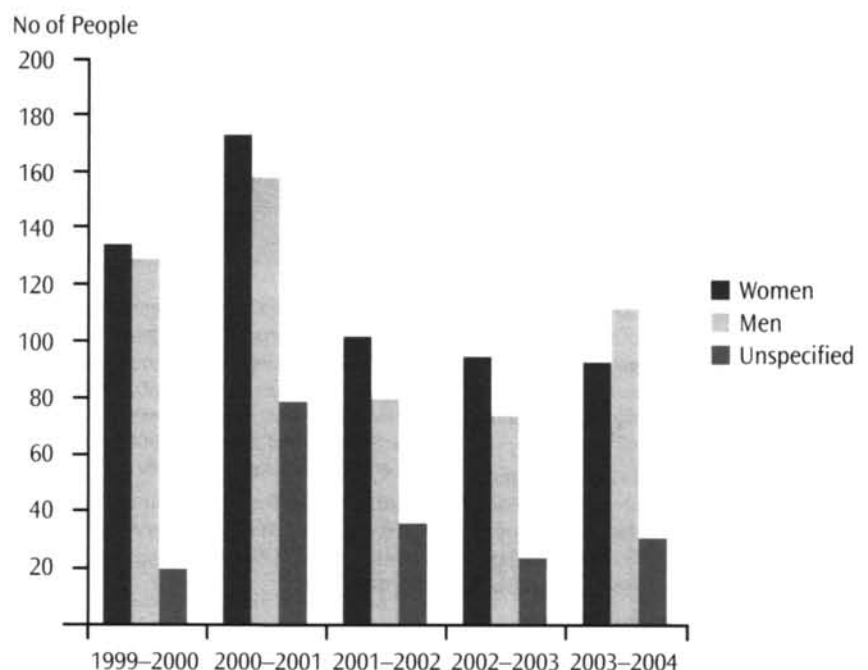
One of the Foundation's core principles is to 'support and encourage programmes and activities that promote gender equality, and encourage gender equitable approaches within its own and partner organisations'.

It is increasingly accepted by the Commonwealth and the development community at large that to mainstream gender issues requires not just involvement of, but also partnership with, civil society. The focus of the Foundation's work is to build and nurture such partnerships. Through its work with civil society, the Foundation supports areas outlined in the Commonwealth Plans of Action (PoAs) on gender equality since 1995.

Established in 1965, the Foundation originally existed to support the many pan-Commonwealth professional associations which operate throughout the Commonwealth. Through its links with a spectrum of Commonwealth associations, the Foundation became increasingly involved with the non-governmental sector in Commonwealth countries. While some of the Foundation's work continues to support the professional associations, the focus of its work widened to support the work of non-governmental and voluntary organisations, faith-based organisations, trade unions and media, or what is now widely referred to as 'civil society'.

The Foundation works to increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and their constituencies, to facilitate their communication with development partners, and to increase their accountability. The Foundation's publication *Non-Governmental Organisations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice* was published in 1996 and has since been translated into 13 languages.

Chart 3.1: Commonwealth Foundation Grants 1999 to 2004



Civil society leadership, participation and actions are recognised as critical components of a fully democratic society

How the Foundation Works

The Foundation is committed to creating opportunities for civil society-government dialogue and collaboration in working towards development and democracy.

The Foundation supports CSOs which require assistance to engage with governments and development partners. Such assistance includes developing training materials for CSOs, funding workshops for CSOs and governments at regional and global levels, building the capacity of CSOs and their representatives, developing the capacity of governments to work with CSOs, funding the participation of CSOs in ministerial and other governmental meetings, and providing support for CSO advocacy work at such meetings.

The mechanisms through which the Foundation is able to support this work are its grant-giving facility (both responsive grants to applications from CSOs – over £300,000 each year – and annual core grants provided to Commonwealth associations – which total over £400,000 each year); and through its programme work, which focuses on creating space for civil society at government meetings, and targets long-term support to key regional CSOs.

A substantial number of grants have been awarded to projects whose specific focus is gender equality. From 2001–2004, over £60,000 in such grants had been awarded. All grants are awarded on the basis that, where possible, at least half the participants are women.

Mainstreaming Civil Society Participation

The Commonwealth's 1995 PoA on Gender and Development recognised the need for civil society to be involved in democratic processes in order to set gender-aware policies and courses of action that lead to equality between women and men. The Foundation's work has focused on the inclusion of civil society, with a particular emphasis on women, in systems of governance and political processes. This has been most



visibly demonstrated in consultations with and, in some cases, the participation of civil society representatives in Commonwealth ministerial and other meetings.

Through the Foundation's support and funding of Commonwealth associations and CSO representatives, Commonwealth civil society is playing an increasing role in consultative processes at global and regional levels, promoting participatory approaches to development.

Civil society's contribution to the 2002, 2003 and 2004 Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meetings, for example, has shown the ability of CSOs to dialogue on an equal plane with Ministers on matters of international finance.

At these meetings, civil society representatives raised several concerns including the need for a broader definition of poverty, debt cancellation, aid and mobilisation of domestic resources, fair trade, global economic governance and HIV/AIDS. They also raised concern over the lack of civil society representation in national and global economic governance.

The CSOs have also welcomed government efforts to develop gender-responsive national budgets.

In 2003, the Foundation commissioned 10 case studies on the

provision of essential services throughout the Commonwealth, recognising that when the provision of these services is privatised, especially in the education and health sectors, reduced access to those services disproportionately affects women.

Also in 2003, Commonwealth Education Ministers were presented with briefing papers prepared by civil society (supported by the Foundation) advocating for education to be 'at the heart of the Commonwealth' and highlighting educational concerns in the Commonwealth, in particular the out-migration, or 'brain drain', of teachers from developing countries.

Civil society has also been present at the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting to campaign for a rights-based approach to development and contributed to discussions on maternal health at the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting in 2004, emphasising the importance of maternal health in order to improve public health.

Civil society representatives at the 7th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (7WAMM) in Fiji Islands in 2004 articulated their concern that the framework for the Commonwealth's work on gender equality over the next 10 years should be consistently measured against

international human rights standards (in particular, CEDAW), and emphasised the importance of including men and boys in development strategies to achieve equality and justice for women.

The Fiji Islands meeting marked a big step forward for civil society participation at a Commonwealth ministerial meeting. Civil society representatives were given speaking rights in plenary sessions with Ministers and opportunities to present outcomes of their own meetings. They also participated fully in working groups with Ministers and senior officials.

The meeting was held to discuss the Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality 2005–2015 and its theme underlined the need for partnerships to achieve the PoA's objectives. The concept of partnership, the participants noted, especially between government and non-governmental organisations, was integral to the achievement of the goals Commonwealth partners have set themselves (see Box 3.1 on Page 29).

This meeting set a precedent for government–civil society engagement in future Commonwealth ministerial meetings and helped build the momentum from all stakeholders to carry forward the PoA. As with all ministerial meetings, the opportunities provided for civil society at 7WAMM enabled CSO representatives to network with each

other and with government officials.

While the presence of civil society representatives at Commonwealth ministerial meetings is becoming increasingly accepted, and their contributions valued, the Foundation works to create even more and better opportunities for dialogue between governments and civil society representatives and to increase their capacity to contribute meaningfully to discussions.

Civil Society and Heads of Government

The reality is that women still have little opportunity to participate in decision-making processes at all levels of society.

– Tongan female senior government official

As part of the biennial Commonwealth People's Forum, the Foundation convened a civil society meeting in the wings of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2003. Over 45 countries, represented by more than 100 civil society representatives, discussed how civil society's contribution to development

and democracy could be maximised.

In their communiqué to CHOGM, the civil society representatives observed, among other things, that 'contributions by women to the enhancement of their society are not appreciated equally by existing systems and practices which often exclude women from governance and social development.' They went on to urge governments to 'ensure that gender equality is at the centre of programmes and policies of government, that women's human rights are protected and participation in decision-making is achieved at all levels.'

Citizens and Governance

Women saw themselves as existing outside the mainstream of society through oppression or discrimination ... they wanted to be inside ... to influence its values and its norms.¹

Drawing on 20 action-learning projects implemented across the Commonwealth, the Foundation's Citizens and Governance Programme has explored the concept and practice of 'good governance'. Participants in the programme have concluded that inclusive governance requires all sections of society to have access to and be involved in its policy and decision-making processes: excluding women from these processes undermines the requirements for good governance. The Foundation's *Citizens and Governance Toolkit* provides guidance for practitioners, CSOs and other sectors, for good governance and examples of best practice.

Between October 2002 and August 2003, the Foundation also organised 10 dialogues involving over 250 participants from 20 countries to discuss partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society for development and democracy. Through the Kampala Vision², participants articulated their concern over unilateral decision-making and advocated multi-sectoral partnerships as the key to effective policy-making, good governance and

The Foundation places particular emphasis on capacity-building and small enterprise development skills



The CSO View

Box 3.1: Working Together for the Future

CSOs would like to work even closer with governments for continued progress on gender equality issues. Participants at the Civil Society Preparatory Meeting for 7WAMM made the following recommendations for a future working partnership:

- Women's CSOs should continue to advocate women's empowerment even where national gender policies or affirmative action are in place – this will supplement government action;
- CSOs should be aware of government priority development areas when they package proposals for support;
- Work on CEDAW should not be done in isolation from other women's development programmes;
- Women's CSOs should seek opportunities to advance women's and children's interests when legislation is introduced in parliament;
- It is essential to strengthen the information base for decision-making and improve the capacity of the government and its development partners to identify gender-specific constraints and develop appropriate responses;
- Within the Commonwealth there are many possibilities for building partnerships between civil society and parliamentarians, local government associations, business and labour organisations, and professional associations;
- Gender indicators for projecting potential differential impacts of trading activities on the quality of life of women and men, or measuring real benefits to specific social groups should be developed;
- CSOs working on gender should identify new political spaces, and foster new strategic partnerships and coalitions in order to broaden the debate on gender, poverty eradication and women's economic empowerment.

participation. Such partnerships, they said, should be committed to gender equality and should recognise the value of devolution of power at all levels.

In one project funded by the Foundation, three women lawyers from East Africa went on a study visit to work with UK-based NGOs to gain an insight into the workings of international NGOs and the nature of NGO networks. The women were able to meet and network with professionals in the international development community. It provided them with the opportunity to deepen their expertise in working with and for NGOs.

Human Rights

The Foundation emphasises the role of civil society in monitoring and upholding human rights, including women's rights. With its support, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) held a capacity-building workshop for West African human rights commissions and NGOs to explore and strengthen this role.

Two of the most recent of the annual Foundation-run Commonwealth Lectures have focused on the issue of human rights. Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in her 2002 lecture on Human Rights in the Shadow of September 11, highlighted the crucial role that NGOs play in reminding governments of their duty to protect human rights in the face of terrorism. In 2001, the Foundation's then chairperson, Graça Machel, urged the Commonwealth to regard 'women's rights as human rights,' and questioned whether these rights could be brought about by legislative change alone. 'True social justice requires a change in what is considered acceptable behaviour toward women and between women and men,' she said. 'Dealing with the pervasive violations of women's rights requires that we break the mould in our thinking and our actions.'

In 2002 an international seminar for women broadcasters was held where participants, funded by the Foundation, learned about the role of the media in women's human rights and development. A participant from Fiji TV noted: 'Discussions included how we as women

broadcasters could help advance the status of women worldwide. I found that, although Fiji Islands is insulated by geography, our problems are the same as those in hugely populous countries.' Other participants identified the value of the international support network that is established as part of these meetings.

Peace-Building

Grants given to CSOs demonstrate the Foundation's belief in the important role women play in building peace. Recent grants include the support of women participants from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the South Asia Regional Consultation on UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security in South Asia organised by International Alert. Recommendations were made to governments and policy-making bodies on the implementation of the Resolution.

The Foundation also supported the involvement of the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum (Nigeria) in a seminar to consider multi-faith approaches to peace-building in areas of social discontent, where violence is expressed through religious fundamentalism. As part of its Special Fund for countries undergoing or recovering from conflict, the Foundation has supported the strengthening of the

civil society networks in Sierra Leone.

Training and Capacity Building

The 1995 Commonwealth PoA on Gender and Development reiterated the importance of encouraging vocational skills to ensure women's equal access to employment. The Foundation's grant-giving role has placed particular emphasis on capacity-building and small enterprise development skills. Projects sponsored have included the participation of women from Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Namibia and Sri Lanka in International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development courses, and exploring the important role of business development services and micro-enterprises for women in poverty eradication. Members of the Self-Employed Women's Association in India visited the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh to learn about the importance of micro-credit and community development.

The Foundation has also supported the participation of young female professionals in conferences throughout the Commonwealth, enabling the exchange of information and best practice. For example, the Foundation provides special travel grants to enable

women broadcasting executives to attend meetings; this has also supported the exposure of young editors from around the Commonwealth. Participants in such programmes make and sustain valuable networks across the Commonwealth.

In another example, the Foundation funded two young women parasitologists from Papua New Guinea to participate in an international congress on parasitology in Vancouver to share their work on malaria in their country.

The Foundation has funded Commonwealth Trade Union Council³ efforts to support the role of women in the workplace, especially where they are susceptible to exploitation. A project with women in Bangladesh resulted in more women elected to executive positions; women's concerns reflected in the bargaining agenda; increased awareness by men of the contribution women can make to building strong trade unions; and increased women's confidence through participation in project activities.

Emerging Issues

The HIV/AIDS pandemic, and especially the growing rate of infections among women, was identified as one of the major emerging issues for the Commonwealth in 2000. The Foundation believes that only through co-operation, mutual learning and sharing can HIV/AIDS be tackled and has responded in many ways, including supporting exchange programmes, capacity building of organisations working in reproductive health, training of health professionals, and supporting youth education.

In 2001, the Foundation sponsored a study visit for a group of young NGO leaders from around the Commonwealth to Lusaka, Zambia. Visitors learned how Zambia has taken a lead in attempting to 'break the silence' surrounding HIV/AIDS and problems it generates in a multi-

sectoral approach. Participants learned how community drama groups were tackling the issue, how 'youth-friendly' clinics worked, and were shown the counselling services offered to clients. Other projects supported by the Foundation have included an education programme on sex workers in India, a prevention of parent-to-child transmission training programme in Uganda, a youth seminar in Malaysia, and an international congress on HIV/AIDS in Australia.

The Foundation is a member of the Commonwealth Joint Action Committee on HIV/AIDS (together with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Business Council). It is the main donor for Commonwealth Action on HIV/AIDS – Para 55, a pan-Commonwealth coalition of associations advocating more action in the Commonwealth to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Foundation organised and funded the first Commonwealth Awards for Action on HIV/AIDS – Para 55.

Looking Ahead

The Commonwealth Foundation is committed to its role in the implementation of the 2005–2015 Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality. The PoA dovetails with the Foundation's own Framework of Action (put together in consultation with civil society representatives at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Abuja 2003) which aims to maximise the contribution of civil society to development and democracy. The Framework consists of six main themes:

- Recognising the importance and contribution of civil society to development and democracy;
- Creating an enabling environment for CSOs to operate;
- Strengthening the civil society sector at

technical and institutional capacity level; and strengthening the role and capacity of networks at national and regional levels and across the Commonwealth;

- Building CSO partnerships with governments, academia, research organisations and other professional groups, donors, the private sector, the media and others;
- Mainstreaming citizen participation in governance at all levels; and
- Facilitating civil society contribution to the achievement of Commonwealth values and programme priorities.

The Foundation is thus placed to implement Commonwealth priorities of advocacy and networking at national, regional and global levels. The Framework provides a base for Foundation action to strengthen civil society organisations as they engage with the Commonwealth and with governments to implement the 2005–2015 Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality.

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End Notes

¹ This quotation is taken from B. Knight, H. Chigudu, and R. Tandon, *Reviving Democracy: Citizens at the Heart of Governance*, Commonwealth Foundation (2002).

² *Multi-sectoral Partnerships for Development and Democracy: The Kampala Vision*, Commonwealth Foundation (2003).

³ The Commonwealth Trade Union Council ceased to function in 2004.

Challenges continue to face girls ... whether in the lack of educational and economic opportunities or in the contravention of their human rights. Open and distance learning methodologies offer opportunities to address such challenges. By making learning available at times and places suitable to the particular needs of the student, distance education overcomes many of the obstacles faced by girls and women trying to access conventional education systems.

– From Executive Summary of the COL Board of Governors to the 6th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting, 2000

The Commonwealth of Learning

Delivering by Distance

Established by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has the notable distinction of being the only intergovernmental organisation that contributes to development by providing governments with the requisite technical assistance to expand their education and training systems using open and distance learning approaches.

Open and distance learning methodologies offer a range of non-traditional measures and methods that can be implemented to address the challenges faced by developing countries grappling with issues such as extreme poverty, lack of educational and economic opportunities for females, and male underachievement.

The difficulties that females still encounter when trying to access conventional education systems and the resulting negative social and economic impact, continue to justify the prominent position that gender issues occupy on the development agenda of COL. The more recently acknowledged phenomenon of boys' underachievement in education in some Commonwealth countries and territories, has served to further highlight the need for COL to incorporate gender sensitivity into its programmes and to undertake projects that have a direct impact on the education and livelihood of marginalised males and females.

The following is a summary of the gender-related projects and programmes implemented by COL since 1995, as well as a brief account of forthcoming projects and programmes.

Management of Small Enterprise Skills Training for Rural Women (Bangladesh) 1997/98

In partnership with the Bangladesh Open University, CSOs and government organisations in Bangladesh, COL developed and delivered a non-formal education programme aimed at equipping trainers with the skills to develop management and

entrepreneurial skills among rural businesswomen. The programme comprised the following five courses: Entrepreneurial Skills for Development; Management of Small Businesses; Planning and Strategic Management; Money Management and Dimensions of a Rural Small Enterprise.

During the course, trainee trainers were expected to deliver the training module to rural women engaged in the management of small enterprises, indirectly assisting with poverty eradication, human development and employment generation.

Media Development for Women in Agro-Food Processing (Ghana) 1999

COL provided training to extension officers of the Women in Agro-food Development (WIAD) Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture in Ghana, to equip them with the requisite skills in video production. The videos were used by the extension officers to expose women in both rural and urban areas to new techniques in agro-food processing and marketing. Additional outputs associated with this project were the establishment of a video production unit at WIAD and archiving of agro-food data using video.

Workshops to Identify Barriers Encountered by Women in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for Open and Distance Learning

In November 1998, COL convened an Asian regional meeting of experts involved in gender issues, open and distance education and information and communications technologies. The meeting, which was held in India, was the first in a series of regional meetings focusing on new information and communications technologies, and the opportunities and challenges they create for women in education.

Subsequent meetings were held in

Barbados in November 1999 and in Tanzania in March 2000 for experts from the Commonwealth Caribbean and Commonwealth African countries respectively. The final meeting was held in New Zealand in May 2001 for the countries of the Commonwealth Pacific.

The country reports produced for presentation at these workshops identified the extent of open and distance learning provision, the barriers to women's participation, possible strategies that could be employed to overcome the identified barriers and the possible influence and effect of communications policies on women's participation in the use of information and communication technologies.

Development of a Gender Mainstreaming Training Resources Database

In November, 1999, COL, in partnership with the UN Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE), initiated the establishment of a global electronic database and Internet network for gender-related training materials, to support capacity-building for gender mainstreaming and women's equality issues within the UN system and the Commonwealth.

The IACWGE, a steering committee comprising representatives from UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM, provided funding for the development of the database and COL provided the technical expertise. COL also invited the Commonwealth Secretariat to include its extensive gender mainstreaming publications in the database. The prototype was launched at the Special Session of the General Assembly for the Beijing +5 Review held at the UN in New York in June 2000.

Implementing Core Labour Standards through Management Training in the Bangladesh Ready-made Garment Sector

In November 2000, COL, in collaboration with OXFAM and The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, designed and produced learning materials for a pilot project, with a view to improving the working conditions of garment workers, by building the capacity of management to understand the need for and to be able to implement change.

The pilot project was a direct response to research conducted by OXFAM (Bangladesh) in 1999 which indicated that low management capacity amongst female garment workers was a major obstacle to implementing change within an industry that employs approximately 1.5 million people (mainly women).

Forum on ICTs and Gender (Malaysia) 2003

In August 2003, COL participated in the International Forum on ICTs and Gender in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The event, which was organised by the Government of Malaysia, ITU, Global Knowledge Partnership, UNESCO and supported by CIDA, attracted some 300 delegates from around the world.

The purpose of the meeting was to foster a greater appreciation of the gender-related barriers that exist in developing and developed countries, develop an understanding of why women need access to ICTs and to discuss strategies for overcoming these barriers.

Publication of a Gender Management System (GMS) Tool Kit 2002–2004

COL partnered the Commonwealth Secretariat, to develop the GMS Toolkit to assist policy-makers and other stakeholders with gender analysis, policy-making, planning and programme implementation. The Toolkit is being distributed at no cost to relevant government and non-governmental organisations in developing Commonwealth countries.

Beyond 2004

COL will continue to focus attention on facilitating the efforts of developing country governments to expand access to learning and education for females, by providing technical assistance to facilitate the implementation and use of non-traditional technologies and resources. Attention will also be given to the underachievement of boys in education.

In an effort to support practitioners working for gender equality, the Commonwealth of Learning has entered into a joint initiative with the Forum for African Women Educationalists to create a virtual library of gender resources. This internet-based resource will provide all the full-text documents in the field that are available electronically.

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Today nearly one in two people on the African continent survives on less than US\$1 a day. Between 1987 and 1998, the number of poor people increased from 217 million to 290 million. Of these poor, 80% are estimated to be women. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women comprise 60% of the informal sector (including informal trade), provide about 7% of the total agricultural labour, and produce about 90% of the food (World Bank, 2000). Yet these women lack equal access to health, education, finance and other essential resources.

– ADB/ECA Symposium on Gender, Growth and Sustainable Development, May 2004, Kampala, Uganda

Regional Profile

Africa: Struggling to Meet Targets

The UNDP Human Development Report 2004 shows that most Sub-Saharan African countries are among the medium to low development groups. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it has been projected that only eight countries may be able to halve extreme poverty by 2015, a Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Progress on non-income poverty goals has been considerably slower.

In the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region alone, about 76 million people are estimated to be living in extreme poverty and there are acute food shortages affecting 6 million people in six countries in the region. Outside this region, conflicts have significantly contributed to undermining development efforts, and a disproportionate number of women and children have been caught up in these, as in Sierra Leone in the 1990s.

Six Commonwealth African countries have attained more than 20% of women in parliaments, with South Africa leading with 32.4%, Mozambique 30%, Seychelles 29.4%, closely followed by Namibia and Uganda at 26.4% and 24.7%. Only five Commonwealth African countries have less than 10%. There are more women decision-makers in Commonwealth African countries (50% at local government, executive and managerial levels) than in other regions.

Priorities for Action

Country analyses clearly show women's poverty, and economic empowerment and participation as being the top concerns for the region. Other priority areas are: education and training of women, women in power and decision-making, violence against women, women's human rights, women's health, HIV/AIDS, the girl-child and strengthening institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. Mozambique and Sierra Leone, emerging out of past conflicts rated peace, women and armed conflict as their priorities.

If current economic trends persist, the number of people living in absolute poverty is expected to increase by 2015

rather than decline by half as called for in the Millennium Declaration. *The World Bank Global Monitoring Report of 2004* indicates that the least progress has been made in child and maternal mortality, and in improving access to safe water and sanitation. In hardly any region are those goals likely to be met by 2015 though there seems to be more progress in the area of gender parity in education especially at the primary level – partly as a result of prioritisation by most African countries of the girl-child and access to education, and the introduction of free or subsidised primary and secondary schooling policies.

Between 1997 and 2002, 24 of 46 Sub-Saharan African countries – representing 53% of the region's population – experienced positive per capita growth. GDP growth in Africa has averaged 3% a year over the past decade and was expected to be over 4% in 2004. Some countries, following either successful political and economic reforms or increased production, or emerging from recent conflicts, have registered high rates of growth. Mauritius, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia averaged 5% growth and Mozambique, with years of conflict ended, approximately 14%.

Many Sub-Saharan African countries, however, continue to have lower growth rates than required to meet poverty eradication and other social development targets. Many countries are facing negative fiscal balances and high levels of indebtedness. There is negligible foreign direct investment (FDI) at approximately 1% of GDP which accounts for only 2.1% of foreign direct investment going to all developing countries.

HIV/AIDS Threat

Sub-Saharan Africa has only 10% of the world's population yet it accounts for nearly 70% of the world's HIV and AIDS cases estimated at 42 million infected people – of which more than 28.2 million are found in Southern Africa.

The pandemic is generalised in nearly

Box 5.1: On the Frontline of Risk

Young people today constitute one of the groups with the highest risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS and with the highest infection rates. According to UNAIDS, almost 7,000 young people are newly infected with HIV daily.

Southern African and Eastern African Sentinel Surveillance, Health Demographic Surveys and UNAIDS 2003 Reports state that 'youth' – defined internationally as being between the ages of 15 and 24 – possess some of the following attributes and/or characteristics in terms of the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS:

- They are the leading group for prevalence of HIV/AIDS – as high as 40% in some countries;
- As many as 50% of female teenagers become pregnant within this age group;
- A ratio of between 2:1 and 5:1 of female to male infection rates;
- Inter-generational sexual relationships, especially with young females, contribute to the higher incidence in female youth relative to their male peers;
- Relatively higher awareness of HIV/AIDS;
- Lower education status and attainment levels;
- High poverty levels in economies with an average per capita income of about US\$300;
- High rates of sexually transmitted infections;
- Low or poor availability of sexual and reproductive health services;
- Lack of access to and poor youth-friendly services.

These and various related factors – including the policy environment, service delivery infrastructure, human resource situations, cultural and traditional factors, stigma and discrimination, and uncertain legal environment – all contribute towards what is considered to be currently a worsening HIV/AIDS pandemic.

every country in the region. Six Southern African countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia) have adult prevalence rates above 20%. Around one in three adults in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are infected; the rate in South Africa, Namibia and Swaziland, is about one in five. Nigeria and Mozambique have over 3.5 million and 1.1 million adults and children living with AIDS respectively.

HIV/AIDS, together with malaria and tuberculosis, are reversing development gains in all areas, intersecting with the challenges of poverty, food insecurity and limited institutional capacity to deliver essential public services. It is estimated that by 2020, the hardest hit African countries could lose a quarter of their work forces to HIV/AIDS. Highest infection rates are among people who should be in their prime – in the 15–45 age group. In many countries, life expectancy has fallen dramatically – for example from 59 years in 1990 to 39 years in 2000 among women in Botswana; in Lesotho the decline is from 59 to 44.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has worsened economic performance. The disease has been described as not just a 'continuing threat to the region's human development performance –' HIV/AIDS represents the 'greatest shock to development.'

Growth and Sustainable Development: Closing the Gender Gap

Accelerating economic growth is central to meeting the MDGs. The link between economic growth and income poverty is particularly strong, but growth is also an important determinant of human development outcomes. In order to attain and sustain such growth, Commonwealth Africa will have to implement substantial policy and institutional reforms in areas such as the regulatory and institutional framework for private sector activity, better infrastructure and better governance and accountability.

Political commitment is directly linked to better implementation and resources. These issues are emphasised in the vision of the New Partnership for Africa's

Development (NEPAD) and many countries are now putting into place the relevant policies. A large majority of countries are also moving towards gender mainstreaming.

The 2003/2004 Commonwealth Survey shows that women in Commonwealth African countries have by and large been pushed deeper into poverty in the last decade. They have borne the brunt of the social, economic and poverty impacts of HIV/AIDS – 58% of those infected are women; and girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are five times more likely to get infected than young men. SADC comments that the disproportionate impact is exacerbated by inequalities perpetuated by women's 'subordinate legal status, obsolete cultural beliefs, traditional attitudes and practices', as well as inability to negotiate safe sex and lack of sexual rights.

African societies are strongly patriarchal. This is a factor which profoundly affects gender relations in virtually every sphere of activity, notably decision-making, educational access, health status and access to and control of resources. Women's rights are limited; for the most part, they require permission from spouses and community leaders to enter politics, and there are barriers to their owning and disposing of property.

Many countries have reported high levels of gender-based domestic violence. Early marriage, female genital mutilation

in some communities, as well as customary and religious laws which negate formal law and constitutional rights, contribute to the under-education of girls and to their disinheritance. In turn, this leads to the maintenance of the traditionally perceived women's role as home-makers and to the promotion of the cycle of low-income, low-status work among women. The invisibility and marginalisation of women follows.

Given their gender roles in African society, other factors also impact on women disproportionately. Most countries have a clause on equal human rights enshrined in their Constitutions and have ratified international and regional conventions that mandate gender equality/equity. However, discriminatory legal frameworks and customary practices have worked against this objective. In some cases, even where the laws exist to protect and promote gender equality, they are rendered ineffective by religious practices and customary law or by administrative practices that lack a gender perspective. Sometimes, the co-existence of two or three justice systems works against women. Weak political will in relation to implementation is also common.

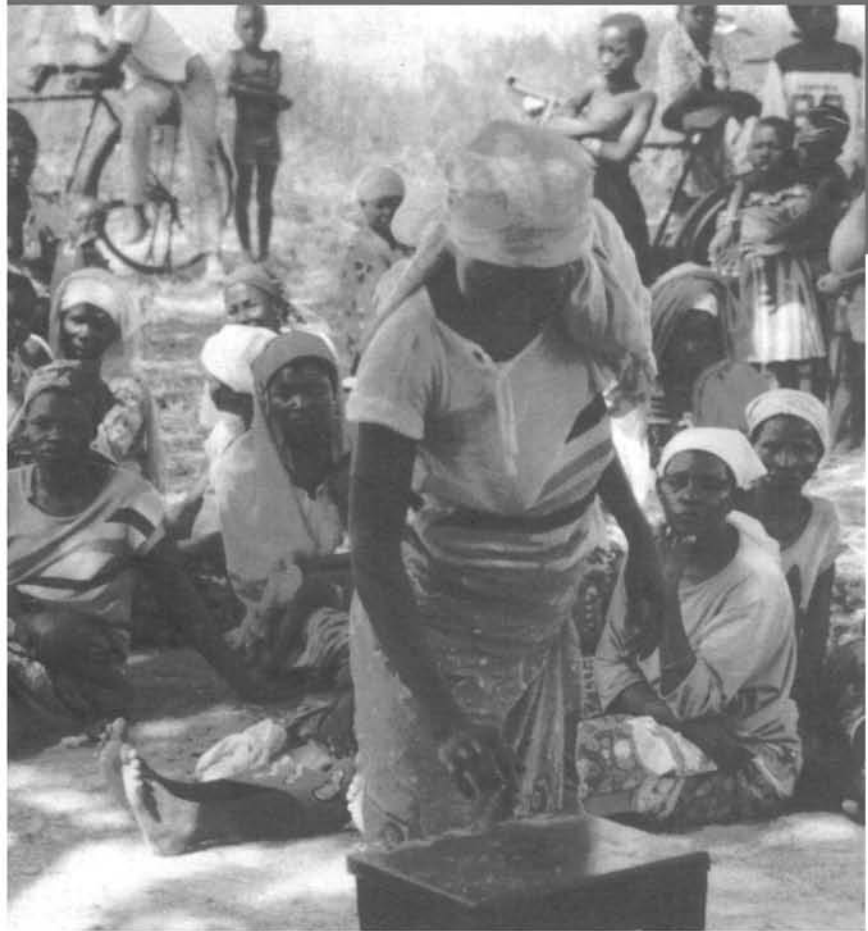
Land is a key productive resource and arable agriculture is an important activity that employs over 70–80% of the sub-region's population – the majority of whom are women. In spite of this, Africa

In Africa, women have their say – and efforts are being made to encourage more women to stand for election

is a net importer of food. Among the reasons for low output, especially in subsistence and rural agricultural sectors, are generally weak land tenure policies and land administration systems. Women food producers are rarely able to make decisions about the land and have little access to credit facilities. Loss of genetic biodiversity, insufficient levels of agricultural inputs and technology, natural disasters, inadequate control and containment of plant diseases and pests, as well as the impact of HIV and AIDS also contribute to low output.

According to the recent *ECOWAS Gender Policy Report (2003)*, a gender gap in economic activity exists in member countries, with Ghana showing the smallest disparity. In most cases, agriculture is the principal activity for men and women; while services are the secondary field. However the percentage of women engaged in agriculture tends to be higher than that of men; while the proportion of men engaged in industries is usually higher than is the case for women. Moreover a sectoral shift, notably from agriculture to services, has occurred between 1980 and 1990. Women are often found in the informal economy and subsistence agriculture. The average wage for women is 33% of the average male wage in the informal sector. In addition, the average wage in the informal sector is estimated at only one-sixth of that of the formal sector.

There have, however, been positive efforts in conflict resolution and a growing role for women in it. The region is steadily shifting towards greater effort at economic emancipation and maintenance of peace. There is also growing interest in and closer scrutiny of governance processes, and a keen interest in electoral democracy, with efforts aimed at enfranchising citizens with the fostering of transparent and accountable elections. All promise to have some impact on the empowerment of women.



Platforms for Gender Equality

One of the major gaps highlighted during Africa's mid-decade review of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing +5) in 1999 was the persistence of gender biases in national development policies and programmes. Although gender mainstreaming is one of the major strategies recommended by the Beijing Platform for Action, governments and other stakeholders had not made it a priority. Ministries responsible for women's/gender affairs continue to be seen as solely responsible for the achievement of gender equality.

Efforts to achieve gender equality and sustainable pro-poor development in Africa have been influenced by the 1994 African Platform for Action, whose cardinal principle is integration of gender perspectives in all policies, plans and actions directed towards the achievement of equality, development and peace. A number of significant policy shifts and practices are being taken to address these challenges, including regional integration initiatives have been taken.

African Union

The African Union, charged with spearheading the continent's rapid

integration and sustainable development, has established an Office of the Department of Women, Gender and Development which promotes gender equality and women's empowerment issues in the region.

The Union took a landmark decision in 2004 when it adopted a new target for women at all levels of decision-making – an increase from 30% to 50%. It also nominated a woman as the first Chair of the African Parliament. On 11 July 2003, the Union adopted the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, a supplementary protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was adopted in 1981. For the first time in international law, the reproductive right of women to medical abortion when pregnancy results from rape or incest or when the continuation of pregnancy endangers the health or life of the mother is explicitly set out. In another first, the Protocol explicitly calls for the legal prohibition of female genital mutilation.

The Protocol also calls for an end to all forms of violence against women, including unwanted or forced sex, endorses affirmative action to promote the equal participation of women, including equal representation in elected office, and calls for the equal representation of women in the judiciary

and law enforcement agencies as an integral part of equal protection and benefit under the law. Articulating the right to peace, the Protocol recognises the right of women to participate in the promotion and maintenance of peace.

The broad range of economic and social welfare rights for women set out in the Protocol includes the right to equal pay for equal work, and the right to adequate and paid maternity leave in both private and public sectors. It specifically recognises the rights of particularly vulnerable groups of women – including widows, elderly women, disabled women and women in distress, which includes poor women, women from marginalised population groups, and pregnant or nursing women in detention.

New Partnership for Africa's Development

NEPAD, as a development blueprint for Africa, recognises the role of civil society, including women's organisations, and lays emphasis on the reduction of poverty among women.

It highlights the need to promote the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in education and training; the development of revenue-generating activities through facilitating access to credit; providing better infrastructure and safe water; and assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries. There is an urgent need to mobilise, organise and link up small-scale women producers in the informal economy with national, regional and global markets. Pro-growth and pro-poor programmes are required in order to break the cycle of poverty and slow growth in Africa. There is a need to ground the gender perspective, and in particular women's concerns, in all areas of the NEPAD Programme.

Southern Africa

In 1997, the Heads of State and of Government of SADC reaffirmed their commitment to the 1985 Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, the African

Box 5.2: Gender Mainstreaming in the Sierra Leone PRSP

The 2003 Human Development Report ranks Sierra Leone as the poorest country in the world with about 80% of the population living in abject poverty that has been exacerbated by a decade of armed conflict. Women represent 51.3% of the population.

The literacy rate for women is 20% and 40% for men. Primary school enrolment for girls is 38% as against 52% for boys. Sierra Leone had the highest maternal mortality rate (1,800 per 100,000 live births), infant mortality rate (170 per 1,000 live births) and under-five mortality rate (286 per 1,000 live births) in 1998¹. Fifty-four per cent of women of child-bearing age are unaware of HIV/AIDS.

Working closely with the Gender Section, the Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat provided the Sierra Leone Government with a gender expert to assist in mainstreaming gender in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The following initiatives were undertaken:

- Poverty reduction sector working committees were established to provide technical gender expertise in the various sectors, and to draft the sectoral/thematic sections of the PRSP. The committees comprised representatives of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs as well as women's groups and women NGOs. A Social Sector Working Group (Health, Education and Youth) meeting was held from 27–29 October 2003;
- A series of three-day workshops was organised for members of sector working groups, stakeholders at the three provincial districts of Bo, Makeni and Kenema, and line Ministries' gender focal points, with the overall objective of enhancing the capacity of key stakeholders in the gender planning skills necessary for mainstreaming gender in the Sierra Leone PRSP;
- A three-day training workshop was conducted to enhance the capacity of the National Strategic Planning and Action Process Technical Committee in gender-sensitive Focus Group discussions, Participatory Poverty Assessments and Risk and Vulnerability Assessments;
- A series of gender-sensitisation programmes was held to raise awareness of policy-makers, political leaders, local and community groups, NGOs, civil society and private sector.

Way forward

Because disparities persist in men's and women's access to and control of human, economic and social assets, engendering the PRSP will increase economic growth and increases the effectiveness of poverty eradication efforts in Sierra Leone.

¹ *The 2000 Sierra Leone Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey-2 (MICS2)*

Platform for Action, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. To that end, they adopted the SADC Gender and Development Declaration (1997), which established a policy framework for mainstreaming gender in all SADC activities, thus strengthening the efforts by member countries to achieve gender equality.

The SADC Secretariat itself has undergone restructuring. Its Gender Unit is now located within the Department of Strategic Planning, Gender and Policy Harmonisation which is headed by a Chief Director. In April 2000, SADC adopted the SADC HIV/AIDS Framework, a blueprint for decentralising the response to the pandemic for each SADC development sector to apply its areas of highest

comparative advantage. In April 2003, this was revised to incorporate a gender perspective and to align it to the SADC restructuring process.

In the SADC region, more than 25 legally binding Protocols have either been signed or have come into force. A number of these Protocols aim at strengthening key areas of collaboration to accelerate human development as a whole. Instruments adopted include: the Charter on Fundamental Social Rights in SADC (adopted in August 2003), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (July 2003), and NEPAD.

West Africa and Cameroon

In West Africa and Cameroon, as elsewhere on the continent, poverty is a threat to political and economic stability. It imposes a heavy economic and social burden on governments and societies, and limits the productivity of human resources. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as a strategic institution for the region, therefore has a critical role in advancing gender equality. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as regional and international agreements, including the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action have been endorsed.

A Gender Division has been established in the ECOWAS Secretariat. The West African Women's Association was transformed into the ECOWAS Gender Development Centre and the ECOWAS Gender Commission established. These form the institutions within a Gender Management System (GMS). ECOWAS has adopted in principle the Commonwealth GMS framework which recognises gender mainstreaming as a central strategy for addressing developmental issues.

In September 2003, the draft Gender Policy, the Gender Strategic Plan Framework and the Guidelines for the Establishment of a GMS, prepared with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNIFEM, were adopted by the stakeholders. The first meeting of the ECOWAS Gender Commission and the 9th Conference of ECOWAS Ministers of Women's Affairs was held in February, 2004. The policies and guidelines were adopted by ECOWAS Heads of Government by the end of 2004 though implementation had begun before then.

In 1996, 53% of the population of Cameroon was rated as poor, and by 2001, the figures had dropped to 40.2%. Some 52% of the poor are women.

Eastern and Southern Africa

The Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) was established in 1994. Ten of its 19 members are in the Commonwealth. The region includes 15



of the 23 states classified as Least Developing Countries by the UN and many are too small to achieve economies of scale.

Both the agricultural and industrial sectors have been in decline.

For many COMESA countries, agriculture constitutes between 50% and 76% of GDP but the growth of agricultural output, at an average of 2% per year over the last three decades, has barely matched that of population growth, and so has not contributed effectively to sustainable growth and development. Agricultural exports have declined, budgetary allocations to agriculture have remained small and women have thus been adversely affected.

Way Forward

Africa's end-of-decade review of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2004 has put emphasis on the accountability of all sectoral departments to mainstream gender equality in their policies, programmes and resource allocation. Income, health, education and gender equality reinforce one another. More income leads to better human development, while better health and education lead to increased productivity and, in turn, higher incomes. Interdependence and cross-linkages thus mean that improvements in one goal depend also on progress on other goals.

In the area of HIV/AIDS, the overriding challenge facing the region in 2004 and beyond will be to translate promises and planned commitments into expanded services that rapidly reach the people who urgently need them. The resources and funding available will need to be made to work in the most effective ways possible

to prevent new infections, provide treatment and support for people living with HIV/AIDS, and offer care and support to the vulnerable, such as orphans and the elderly.

The Commonwealth endorses the UNAIDS 'Three Ones' principles for the co-ordination of national AIDS responses:

1. Agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for co-ordinating the work of all partners;
2. National AIDS Co-ordinating Authority, with a broad-based multi-sectoral mandate that includes a gender perspective; and
3. Agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System.

This will require dynamic leadership and management to unlock the existing constraints on resource flows. It will also involve redoubled efforts to mobilise even more resources and close the existing funding gap.

It is expected that governments and other development partners will need to invest equally in the empowerment of women and girls at all levels if the region's development is to be feasible and sustainable. Governments and their partners will need to facilitate an enabling environment for women's socio-economic and political empowerment, and the protection of women's human rights.

Country Reports

On the following pages are summaries of reports on the progress of women and gender equality programmes in Commonwealth African countries.

Botswana

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	1,254	1,450	1,602
Female population (% of total)	51.7	51.4	50.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	47	46	45
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	21.5	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	29.7	25.0	20.2
Male	34.3	30.0	25.5
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	97	83	86
Male	90	79	82
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	36	40	65
Male	31	..	61
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	3	5	4
Male	3	6	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	51	39
Male	55	49	39
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	45	50	74
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	34.3
Male	..	..	15.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Botswana Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women in Poverty/Women and the Economy
2. Women in Power and Decision-making
3. Education and Training of Women
4. Women and Health
5. The Girl-child

Followed by: 6. Violence Against Women/Human Rights of Women. (Some of the Beijing critical areas for concern have been paired for ease of implementation.)

A Decade of Action

Since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action was agreed, Botswana has put in place a National Policy on Women in Development (1996), launched a National Gender Programme Framework (1998) and developed concrete strategies with a National Plan of Action. In 1999, with the Advocacy and Social Mobilisation Strategy, the Botswana National Council on Women (BNCW) was created as the highest advisory body which guides and supports the government, NGOs and the private sector. The National Women's Machinery, the Women's Affairs Department (WAD), which is located in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, is the secretariat for the BNCW.

Botswana acceded to CEDAW in 1996. It is ranked at 102 on the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*¹.

Women in Poverty/Woman and the Economy

Studies have shown that 50% of rural households are female-headed. The figure is 44% in urban areas. A 1996 government study showed that the poorest urban female-headed household had an average disposable income which is 46% that of the poorest male-headed household.

A 1997–2003 Government-UNDP programme provided assistance to economic empowerment projects, among

Boys and girls, families affected by or infected with AIDS, are supported by local organisations like the Centre for Youth of Hope (CEYOHO) promoting 'Positive Living', Gaborone, Botswana, 2004



them enterprises and micro-credit schemes for women through NGOs, community-based organisations and women's groups. Government funds have also been distributed through ministries for similar programmes. In some, women do not have to put up as much collateral for project funding as men, loans are made through small, medium and micro-enterprise programmes, and funds are now available through a Citizenship Entrepreneurial Development Agency.

WAD reports that many policy-makers still need to acquire skills to analyse policies from a gender perspective. An additional challenge in the fight against poverty is the high rate of HIV/AIDS infection.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The Government believes that the equal participation of men and women in decision-making will strengthen democracy and advance the progress of women. In addition to WAD efforts to encourage women to take up leadership roles, an Inter-party Caucus of women politicians was established in 1998.

Working with an NGO, the caucus targets political parties and their women's wings. In 2003, for example, workshops were held for women candidates for the 2004 parliamentary and council elections. Affirmative action also ensures that women are specially nominated as councillors or Members of Parliament. In the 1999 local government elections, 22.8% of the elected or nominated councillors were women, but of the 63 (of 469) councillors who were nominated, 53.9% were women.

Table 6.1: Gender Representation in the Botswana Parliament and Cabinet (% Females)

	1994	1999
Parliament	9%	18.2%
Cabinet	21%	23.5%

WAD reports, however, that gender stereotypes still prevail, and there is still a need for a comprehensive affirmative action plan on promoting gender equality

in all organisations. Efforts to achieve the 30% Commonwealth and SADC target for women in leadership roles by 2005 are thus hindered.

Education and Training of Women

Efforts have been made to increase female enrolment at all levels of the education system. Women and girls are specially encouraged to take up technical education and science subjects, projects have been set up (YWCA Teen Mothers, UNICEF's Diphilana Projects) to enrol young mothers who had to leave school on becoming pregnant, and curricula and teaching material are revised to make them gender-neutral. Day care facilities are unfortunately limited and sex-segregated occupational stereotyping in schools and communities continues.

Women and Health

Major gender issues are the increasing infection rate of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among women compared to men (34.3% of females in the 15–24 year age group have HIV/AIDS compared to 15.8% of males); the lack of participation by men in health programmes; and the lack of access to reproductive health services by teenagers. Whereas in 1990, female life expectancy at 59 years was four years longer than males, in 2000 this had dropped to 39 years and was the same as male life expectancy.

In 2001, the first National Conference on Gender and HIV/AIDS identified a number of areas of concern. Later that year, Commonwealth Secretariat discussions with government, NGOs, patients and inter-governmental agencies brought out the fact that while HIV/AIDS programmes had been mainstreamed across many sectors, gender issues had not been considered in HIV/AIDS

interventions within and outside government. WAD was subsequently consulted by the National AIDS Council when the strategy against the disease was revised.

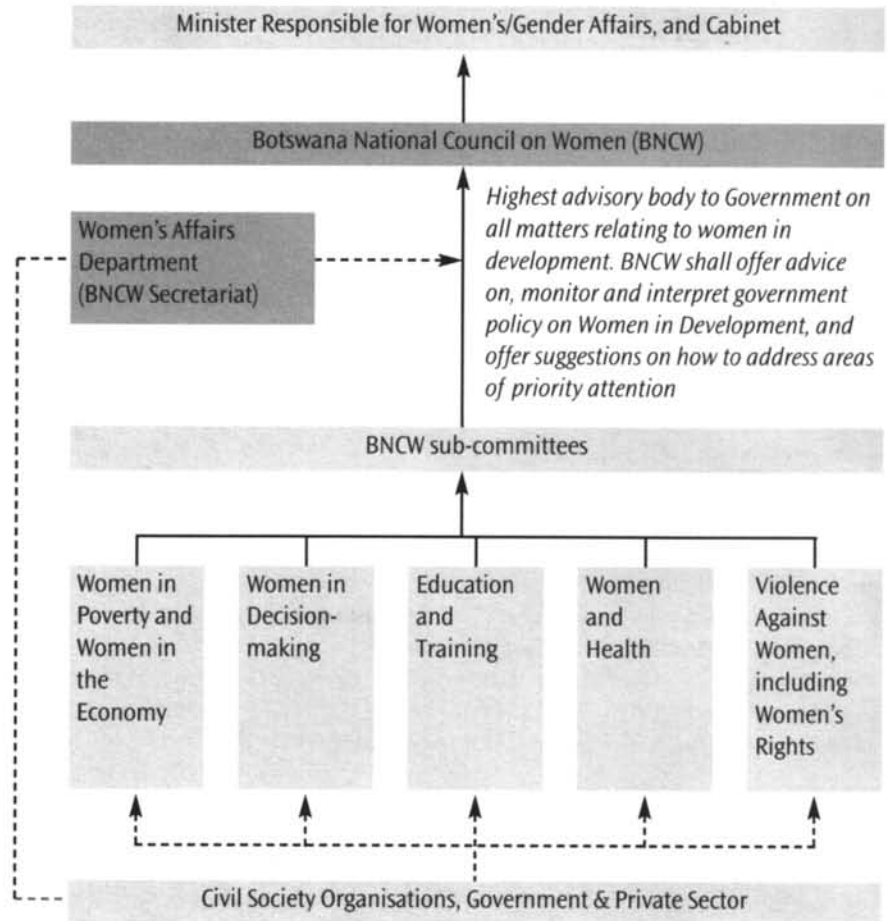
WAD reports some progress in safe motherhood programmes, nutrition for mothers and children, prevention of cancer of the cervix, counselling and home-based care for HIV/AIDS, and programmes to prevent parent-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. There are maternal, child health and family planning initiatives in every clinic.

Violence Against Women/Human Rights of Women

WAD reports an increase in violence against women. It adds, however, that there is a lack of comprehensive policies and laws dealing with gender-based violence, inadequate data on various forms of violence, and no legal assistance available for low-income groups. A pamphlet in English and Setswana explaining the existing legal rights of women has been produced.

In 2001 the Commonwealth Model Integrated Approach to Gender-based Violence was introduced. A number of studies have been conducted on gender-based violence and its impact, especially its economic impact, and on the attitudes of officials in the justice system. A women's shelter has been established to assist battered women and children, rape cases are now heard in camera and there are stiffer penalties for rapists. Laws have also been amended to enable married women to register immovable assets in their names and to require their consent when joint property is disposed of. WAD has linked up with other initiatives such as the Police Task Force on Violence Against Women. Each year, a period of activism, Sixteen Days, marks efforts to combat gender-based violence.

Chart 6.1: Botswana National Council on Women: Organisational Chart (August 2002)



Note: Issues pertaining to the Girl-child are cross-cutting and should feature across the other 5 priority areas.

Botswana has signed and ratified a number of international instruments on women and gender equality.

Mainstreaming Gender

A pilot project to mainstream gender equality in four ministries – Labour and Home Affairs, Finance and Development, Local Government, and Commerce and Industry – was developed. WAD is working with these ministries to monitor implementation of their gender policies.

Gender-Responsive Budgeting

With the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat, gender-responsive budgeting has been introduced to senior government officials and Members of Parliament.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery was established as a unit in 1981 with two officers. In 1991, it was upgraded to a division headed by a Co-ordinator, and to a department in 1996 headed by a Director. WAD is one of 12 departments in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. Currently, it has 11 professional and 34 staff members with five sections in three divisions.

WAD's mandate is to facilitate the integration of women in national socio-economic development, especially through the promotion of gender-sensitive policies. WAD also acts as the secretariat for the Botswana National Council on Women which reports to the Minister.

Budget allocations to WAD have increased in line with increases in the national budget, and in 2003/2004 stood at P6 million.

WAD has close relations with a number of government departments, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Social Services, Ministry of Local Government, the Attorney-General's Chambers, the Police Service, the Department for Non-Formal Education, district administrations, local authorities and the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

They hold mandates to implement various sectoral issues which impact on areas of gender concern. WAD shares information with them through their Gender Focal Points and also provides training.

Partnerships

WAD works closely with NGOs through the Women's NGO Coalition, an umbrella body. They have worked together to implement the National Gender Programme Framework and initiated communication between WAD and NGOs. WAD also meets quarterly with NGOs, community-based organisations and women's groups in Gaborone. The plan is to meet elsewhere in future so as to widen consultations.

Botswana also works closely with international organisations and agencies. The Commonwealth Secretariat has assisted with gender mainstreaming, an integrated approach to gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS and provided gender resource materials. WAD is looking to the Commonwealth for long-term training of staff, and expertise through secondments.

Concerns for the Future

WAD believes that a major area of concern is the lack of ownership of the Women in Development policy by some government ministries. It believes that if, in the next five years, progress can be made in increasing the number of women in power and decision-making, and combating violence against women, other areas of gender concern will improve.

End Note

¹ The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) is a composite index measuring average achievement in the three basic dimensions captured in the UNDP human development index – a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living – adjusted to account for inequalities between men and women.

Cameroon

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile 1990 1995 2000

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	11,700	13,400	15,100
Female population (% of total)	50.4	50.3	50
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	37	38	38
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	52.5	44.1	36.3
Male	31.3	25.8	20.9
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	93	82	99
Male	109	91	114
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	23	21	29
Male	33	30	36
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	1	4
Male	5	6	6
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	56	55	51
Male	53	52	49
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	85	92	95
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	7.8
Male	..	..	3.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Cameroon Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Human Rights of Women
 3. Women and Poverty
 4. Women and Health
 5. Education and Training of Women
- Followed by: 6. The Girl-child; 7. Women and the Economy; 8. Women in Power and Decision-making; 9. Violence Against Women; 10. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Cameroon is ranked at 111 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*. Its National Women's Machinery is the Ministry of Women's Affairs. In 1999, a Multisectoral Plan of Action on Women and Development and the National Plan of Action on the Integration of Women in Development were adopted by the Government. Cameroon ratified CEDAW in 1994.

Since 1995, women's concerns have been increasingly taken into account in the major reforms being undertaken at national level. The participatory approach adopted in connection with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) made it possible for 30%–40% of Cameroon's women to become involved in that process. The Millennium Declaration further inspired the PRSP to place particular emphasis to Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The Ministry of Women's Affairs extends its services to the provinces, departments and districts and has rural group leaders whose role is to provide leadership and guidance to grassroots women's groups. Neighbourhood Women's Advancement Centres also provide informal education and training in basic trades to women and girls.

An Appropriate Technology Centre aims to reduce the hardship of women's work and popularise appropriate technologies, and a National Women's Observatory to monitor the progress of women is being established.

Sex-disaggregated data is available in a number of sectors, for example, the multiple indicator cluster survey (2000), the 'social logbook' on the situation of women in Cameroon (1999), household surveys (1996, 1999), and various statistical yearbooks. The UN Population Fund is supporting the Government in establishing a socio-economic database that will include over 200 sex-disaggregated variables. The main data collections institutions – the Central Bureau for Censuses and Population Studies and the National Statistical Institute – are under the control of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Programming and Territorial Development.

Human Rights of Women

Government policy expressly promotes equality between the sexes. It also commits itself to protecting the rights of women, combating violence against them and eliminating gender discrimination. It is working towards making access to justice easier for women, disseminating knowledge on women's rights and raising awareness of the importance of CEDAW.

Women and Poverty

The PRSP goals relating to women include: enhancement of the economic status of women, especially rural women; elimination of gender disparities in schools; facilitation of access to reproductive health and information services for women of childbearing age and female adolescents; promotion of appropriate technologies in order to ease the women's workload; improvement of women's access to credit and means of production factors; and encouragement of entrepreneurship among women.

Among the programmes undertaken by the Ministry of Women's Affairs are the National Agricultural Extension and Research Programme which provides

Box 7.1: Women, the Economy and Environment

Nine sectors have been identified for the promotion of women's interests in the Cameroon economy: agriculture, stock-breeding and fishing, forestry, environment, trade, industry, arts and crafts, tourism and employment. These sectors also form part of the PRSP.

The Government has drawn up an integrated strategy for rural development whose principal elements are: modernisation of production mechanisms, restructuring of the institutional framework, improvement of available incentives and sustainable management of natural resources. The strategy places special emphasis on gender-based and participatory approaches.

Among the various programmes which deliver this strategy, the National Micro-financing Programme seeks to improve rural people's access to micro-financing institutions and to strengthen those institutions; the Agricultural and Community Micro-Projects Investment Fund forms part of a food security effort and seeks to increase the purchasing power of beneficiary groups and encourage self-advancement among rural people; and the National Agricultural Extension and Research Programme aims at raising farmers' productivity by improving their technical abilities. The Decentralised Rural Credit Fund supports rural people's economic initiatives.

Women are involved in a number of promising agricultural developments such as pepper and watermelon growing and horticulture. In poultry-keeping and pig-breeding, traditionally done by women, better support is being given through measures designed to reduce stock mortality.

A project to install community telecentres and thus facilitate rural people's access to information and communications technologies has been developed. The objective is to also improve quality of life, create employment and income-generating activities and prevent population drift from the countryside.

In trade, activities have been undertaken in co-operation with businesswomen's organisations with a view to deriving greater benefits from new export opportunities provided by the American Growth Opportunity Act.

Women and the Environment

Cameroon seeks to manage its forests and natural resources on a sustainable basis. The framework for activities on flora and fauna preservation is the Sectoral Forests/Environment Programme.

Women are widely involved in the management of community forests. The National Environment Management Plan includes a 'Women in Environmental Programmes' section. Its goal is the integration of women in environmental programmes and the promotion by women of the use of environmental protection methods.

locally based services to rural women; a micro-credit programme, undertaken with the UNDP's Global Programme for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality, which financed 240 women's micro-projects; and the Family Incomes Improvement Programme which receives assistance from the African Development Bank and sets aside much of its support for women's economic activities.

In other projects, savings and credit co-operatives have been set up which have given loans to women's micro-projects; and training has been provided in responsible parenthood, managing community development activities, managing income-generating projects, taxation and regulation matters.

Women and Health

The health strategy adopted by the Government in 2001 emphasised the special place of women in the programme to combat sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. Women are not only the most affected by HIV/AIDS but also the most vulnerable social group – prevalence among young women is double that of young men.

Measures to prevent parent-to-child transmission and safe-sex practices are recommended. Enhancing awareness of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, better education leading to an improved economic status (and thus less financial vulnerability) are among the programmes being undertaken.

The Government has also adopted a

Community leaders work towards getting more parents to send girls to school

Roll Back Malaria programme whose goal is to halve morbidity and mortality by 2010, especially among young children and pregnant women.

Education and Training of Women

Primary education is free for all children. The Government, however, recognises that special efforts have to be made to ensure girls are sent to school and to eliminate illiteracy among adult women.

More than 600 community group leaders have been trained to work towards getting more parents to send girls to school. Pictorial teaching aids have been developed for their use. A ceremony called 'Excellence – Feminine Gender' was held to distribute prizes to the 152 best girl students in the general and technical secondary schools in 2002/03.

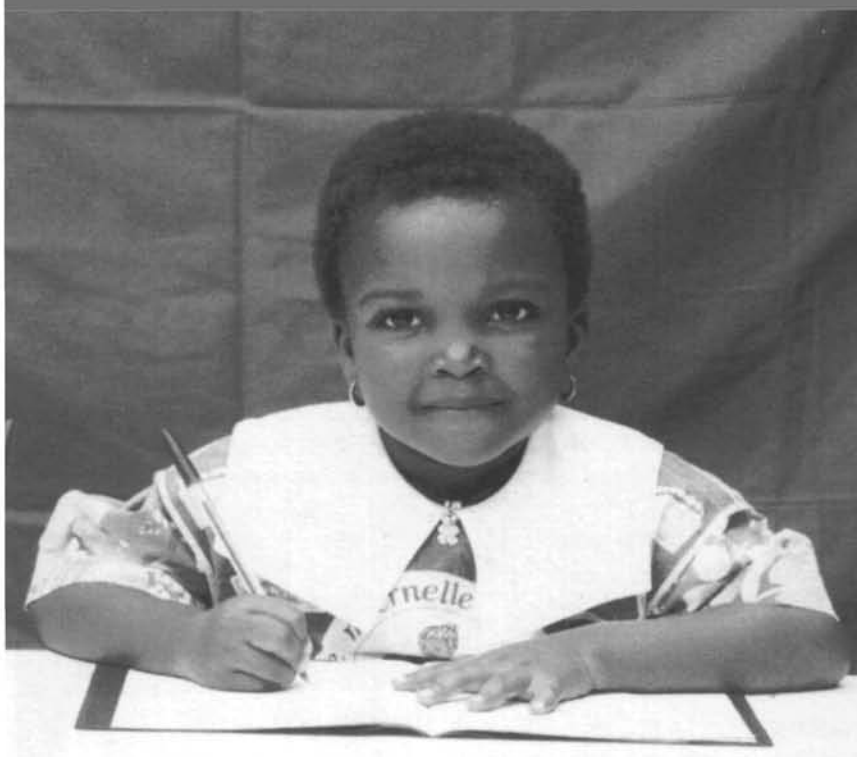
Literacy programmes for adult women are conducted by rural and community group leaders who are themselves women. The 31 Women's Advancement Centres and the Appropriate Technologies Centre provide civic, moral and normal education to women and girls.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery was first set up in the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1984 and in 1998 was reorganised as the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Affairs. The Presidential decree reinstating it as the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1997 said that it would be 'responsible for drafting and implementing measures relating to respect for women's rights and strengthening guarantees of gender equality in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.'

The budget of the Ministry has risen from 390 million CFAfr for 1996/1997 to 3,538 million CFAfr in 2004.

The Ministry works closely with other government departments and agencies where gender focal points represent it. The Women's Advancement Centres and Appropriate Technology Centre are part of the Ministry.



Partnerships

The Ministry has close ties with international organisations, agencies and CSOs working towards gender equality. Some NGOs are involved in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and also in other activities; the Association Fighting Violence against Women, for example, is conducting awareness-raising on gender-based violence.

Concerns for the Future

Combating poverty among women is seen as central to wider political, economic and social development. Improving women's education and training, representation in power and decision-making levels will therefore be priorities. Ministries and government departments will be encouraged to take gender equality concerns into account when drawing up their budgets and in training.

Better educated women are also seen as important to efforts to improve the health, nutrition and education standards of the family. Emphasis will be on developing policies on education for girls; increasing the percentage of girls attending school and lowering the drop-out rate; promoting science and technology subjects among girls; and eliminating gender stereotypes from schoolbooks.

The Gambia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	900	1,100	1,300
Female population (% of total)	50.6	50.6	50.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	45	45	45
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	7.6	12.2
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	80.3	75.5	70.3
Male	68.3	62.3	56.3
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	42	57	66
Male	60	72	71
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	12	..	29
Male	24	..	41
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	1	..
Male	..	2	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	51	54	55
Male	47	55	52
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	103	96	92
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	2.2
Male	..	..	0.9

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
 .. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of The Gambia has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Education and Training of Women
2. Women and Health
3. Women and the Economy
4. Women in Poverty
5. The Girl-child

Followed by: 6. Women in Power and Decision-making; 7. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. Women and the Environment; 10. Violence Against Women; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

The National Women's Bureau and the National Women's Council of The Gambia make up the National Women's Machinery. The country has acceded to or ratified a number of international human rights instruments, including CEDAW (1993). The country is ranked at 125 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Education and Training of Women

The education of girls and improving literacy among females as a whole is top priority for The Gambia. In 2000, the adult female illiteracy rate was a high 70.3% (though a decline from the 80.3% of 10 years before); net female enrolment had risen from 42% to 66% in that period, though those numbers fell away for secondary school enrolment. Constraints to female education persist and include parental preference for enrolment in religious schools, distance and the family economy.

Various projects and programmes have therefore been implemented to give more training and educational opportunities to females. Entry requirements have been lowered for females at the Gambia College and more women are encouraged to enter the University of The Gambia and other tertiary institutions. Adult literacy classes are also conducted. All these have

combined to produce the improved figures.

Women and Health

Gender issues have been addressed through the HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Programme, and the establishment of the National AIDS and Population Secretariats have resulted in gender sensitising of issues related to the disease and women's health and reproductive rights. Maternal mortality is high at 1,100 per 100,000 live births and the figure is higher in rural areas. Maternal and child health and other health sector programmes are being implemented by the Government and NGOs. Among other programmes, a study on female genital mutilation was carried out in collaboration with UNICEF.

Women and the Economy/Women in Poverty

The gendered nature of poverty is integrally linked with hunger, poor sanitation and hygiene, illiteracy, lack of access to education and health services, high fertility rates, prostitution and child labour. The majority of women are rural-based and engaged in agricultural production, mainly as food producers, but also in various stages of the fish industry, fresh food production and selling of crafts. Figures show that they make up 70% of the unskilled agricultural labour force (and in contrast only 2.6% of professionals). Though there have been some advances in female employment opportunities, the disparity with those for men is still high.

Among initiatives are the UNDP/ILO programme Fight Against Economic Exclusion to improve the sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable groups, especially women and young people. The Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Co-ordinating Office, which co-ordinates the National Poverty Reduction Programme, works closely with the Women's Bureau on various programmes. The Social Development Fund integrates gender issues and gives loans and grants to women, especially those who are rural-based.

The Women's Bureau has approached



the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs to consider introducing gender-responsive budgeting which will ensure budget allocations for addressing gender equality issues.

Women in Power and Decision-making

More females are taking up leadership positions. In 1999, The Gambia reported that 30.9% of the Cabinet was female. In 1999, female MPs, made up 2% of parliament, and in 2003 13.2%. Three women were members of the Cabinet at the time of reporting and the percentages of women in executive positions has also risen. More women are being appointed as Directors and Permanent Secretaries.

The Girl-child

The Gambia believes that significant and sustainable advances for women can only be attained if the problems of the girl-child are addressed. These problems include early marriage, unplanned pregnancies, lack of employable skills resulting in economic dependency, and inadequate concern to the special problems of the girl-child.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery comprises the National Women's Bureau and the National Women's Council. An Act of Parliament established the Women's Bureau in 1980 as the executive arm of the National Women's Council whose mandate is to advise Government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women. The Bureau is the executive arm and it administers policies and co-ordinates programmes. Under the 1999–2009 National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women, the

Bureau serves as the support base of the Council.

The Bureau is under the Office of the Vice-President and Department of State for Women's Affairs. An Executive Director heads the Bureau and reports to the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice-President and the chairperson of the National Women' Council.

The Bureau collaborates with the planning units in education, health and agriculture, as well as the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, and that for Trade in mainstreaming of gender issues in policy, planning and programmes.

Partnerships

The Government and Bureau collaborate with a number of international partners in gender equality programmes. The UNDP and ILO have introduced socio-economic programmes for vulnerable groups, such as women and young people. The Commonwealth Secretariat has helped the Bureau with gender mainstreaming and capacity-building programmes. The Bureau collaborates with NGOs and civil society organisations on projects but reports that there have been some problems with co-ordination between them.

Concerns for the Future

The National Women's Machinery believes that education of the girl-child, increased participation of women in decision-making, and increased awareness of and access to women's health needs will be important in the coming years. Equal education opportunities for both females and males are guaranteed under the 1997 Constitution and the President's Empowerment and Girl's Education Project underlines this as the top priority.

Ghana

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	15,100	17,300	19,300
Female population (% of total)	50.3	50.2	50.2
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	51	51	51
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	52.8	44.7	36.8
Male	29.9	24.6	19.7
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	57
Male	..	..	60
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	28
Male	..	..	33
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	0	1	2
Male	2	2	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	61	58
Male	56	58	56
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	74	65	58
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	3.4
Male	..	..	1.4

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Ghana has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women in Poverty/Women and the Economy
2. Violence Against Women/Women and Health/Education and Training of Women/The Girl-child
3. Human Rights of Women/Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
4. Women in Power and Decision-making
5. Women and the Environment/Women in the Media

Followed by: 6. Women and Armed Conflict.

(For ease of implementation Ghana has placed equal priority on some of the critical areas.)

A Decade of Action

In Ghana, women's rights are increasingly recognised. Affirmative policy guidelines have been set to remove gender imbalances; gender issues are mainstreamed in sector policies; and the survival and development of the girl-child is given high priority. An enabling environment has been created for the advancement of women through legislation and people are more aware of negative socio-cultural and traditional beliefs and practices that impede the advancement of women. Programmes have been put in place to reduce poverty and women's economic activities are given a boost by specific micro-credit facilities and food processing assistance.

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. Ghana ratified CEDAW in 1986 and has been a signatory to its Optional Protocol since 2000. The country is ranked 104 on the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women in Poverty/Women and the Economy

Gender concerns have been written into the National Poverty Reduction Strategy

Women's rights have been increasingly recognised

which provides for a number of wealth-creation ventures, such as those in cassava and starch production, promotion of handicrafts for export, emergency social relief for poor disadvantaged communities and a micro-credit fund, the Women's Development Fund, for women. The micro-credit fund has been heavily subscribed.

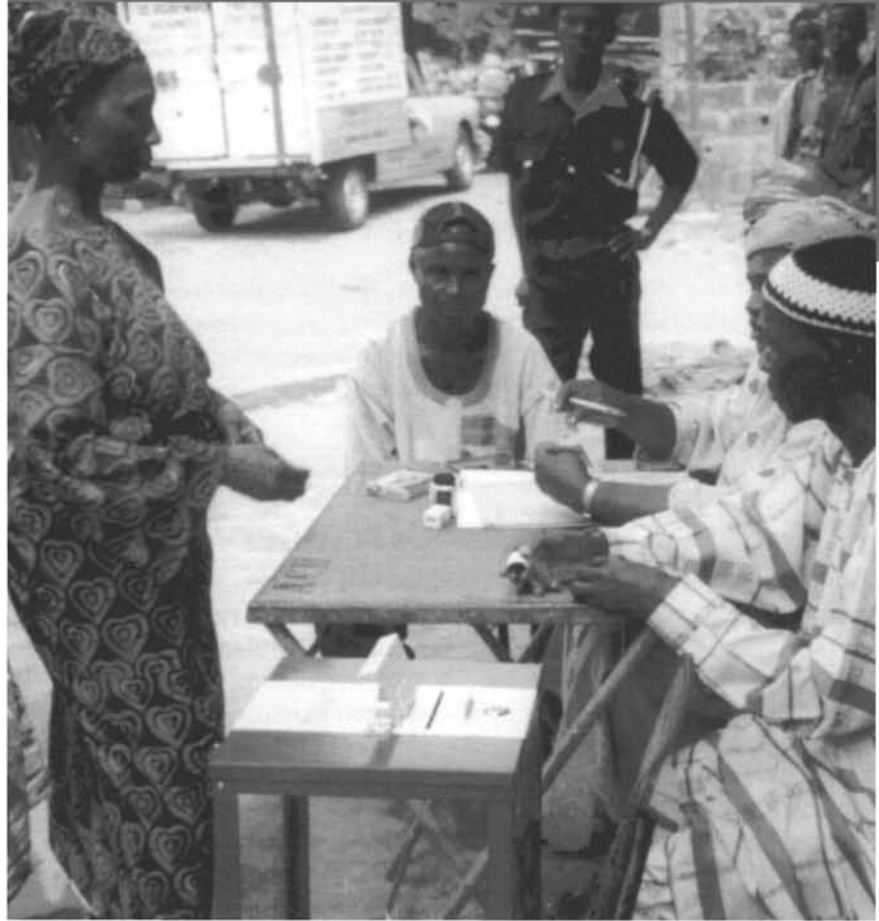
Policy-makers, parliamentarians and planning and finance officers are being sensitised to the importance of gender-responsive budgets.

Violence Against Women/Human Rights of Women

The Government and NGOs have intensified efforts to address violations of women's and children's human rights. The number of Women and Juvenile Units have been expanded in the 10 administrative regions of Ghana. Legislation on sexual and other gender-related violence has been amended, a draft bill on domestic violence formulated and its contents widely publicised, and affirmative action policies adopted to correct gender imbalance. Further legislation is required on property rights of spouses when marriages dissolve. Despite information dissemination, many women are still unaware of their rights or cannot afford legal assistance. Gender-sensitive education on human rights is also provided to law enforcement agencies.

Women and Health

The national reproductive health programme has expanded in the following areas: safe motherhood; family planning; prevention and management of unsafe abortions and post-abortion care; discouragement of harmful practices that affect the reproductive health of men and women (e.g. early marriage, female genital mutilation); the integration of pre-conception care into health care and the expansion of maternity and obstetric care. Protocols have been developed for providing abortion services, male involvement in reproductive health is encouraged, counselling continues on sexually responsible behaviour and the



management of cancers has improved. Constraints include a shortage of staff, especially midwives and nurses, and a need to intensify addressing gender in health issues.

Ghana's HIV/AIDS infection rate runs at 3% (2001) in the 15–49 age group but the number of infected women is five times that of men. A multi-sectoral approach has been taken to combat the disease which is seen as a developmental and social issue. All ministries, departments, agencies and a number of civil society organisations have formulated sector-specific plans and activities. The NWM's programmes and activities are targeted at HIV/AIDS orphans and widows, and parent-to-child transmission issues. The Minister of Women and Children's Affairs is a member of the National AIDS Commission which is chaired by the President.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The elevation in 2001 of the status of the NWM to that of a Ministry in the Cabinet has enhanced co-ordination of gender-related programmes and activities. The establishment of the Women's Development Fund as a micro-credit facility has also helped efforts to reduce poverty among women. The NWM has introduced affirmative action policy

guidelines to redress gender imbalance and gender focal points have been established in all ministries, departments and agencies to ensure that all policies and programmes are gender-sensitive. Guidelines have been prepared for the gender focal points and training organised on gender-responsive programming and planning. Affirmative action is being applied to some extent in appointments to policy-making bodies at national and district levels.

The Girl-child

A girls' education unit has been established and the post of Minister of State for primary, secondary and girl-child education created to underline the importance Ghana places on the development of girls. Girl-friendly environments in schools are being introduced and gender stereotypes removed from textbooks. At the same time, syllabi are being made more gender-sensitive. Special science and mathematics classes are being set up at district levels and food provided to girls in selected schools in deprived areas. Scholarships for girls are offered and special incentive schemes begun to attract women to teaching and thus serve as role models for girls.

Gender bias in classrooms still persists, contributing in some areas to girls' low

self-esteem, as do traditional perceptions of the role of girls by families and communities. Teenage pregnancies contribute to the girls' drop-out rate. The NWM believes that challenges include providing free compulsory education for girls and placing schools closer to homes so that travel time for girls is shortened.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The NWM has reported that in 2003, the ratios of women to men at decision-making levels were as follows:

Table 9.1: % Women in Decision-making Positions, Ghana (2003)

	Female %	Male %
Parliamentarians	9	91
Ministers	19	81
Public servants	32	68
Chief Directors (Permanent Secretaries)	11	88.9
Directors-General	1	99
Judiciary (Supreme Court)	2	98
Local Authority	24	76
Council of States	2	98
Local Administration (District Chief Executives)	12	88

Women hold a number of key positions including that of Director-General of the Education Service, General Secretary of the National Association of Teachers, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Commandant of the Police College, Commissioner of the

Immigration Service, Managing Director of the Ghana Commercial Bank, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service and Chief Director of the Ministry of Justice.

National Women's Machinery

The National Council on Women and Development was established in 1975 and has undergone structural changes since 1995. It has operated since 2001 as a department responsible for women with the establishment of a Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs and is now responsible for implementing policies and programmes. The ministry is the National Women's Machinery and is headed by a Cabinet Minister. Its roles include policy formulation, planning, advocacy and co-ordination, and monitoring and evaluation.

The ministry has two departments – the Department of Women which is the National Council on Women and Development, and the Department of Children which is the Ghana National Commission on Children. It has regional secretariats in all 10 administrative regions and gender focal persons in the 110 district assemblies. At the time of reporting, resource constraints have left the ministry short of staff. Of an approved staff complement of 468, only 139 posts have been filled – 64 (of 214) in the Department of Women and 45 (of 214) in the Department of Children. Only 10 of 110 district focal positions have been filled. The ministry's total budget has

increased from the establishment of the ministry from 0.101% to 0.4% of the national budget (2003).

Partnerships

The NWM collaborates with various development partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders to facilitate the integration of women's and children's issues in national development.

Concerns for the Future

Ghana believes it will be important to continue to tackle poverty among women and to provide wealth-creation opportunities. Education and training of women and girls especially in science and information and communications technologies is also important for female advancement, as are health strategies, especially to reduce maternal mortality and to promote safe motherhood. The Government hopes to increase women's participation at all levels of decision-making through affirmative action at national and district levels.

Gender concerns have been written into Ghana's poverty reduction strategies



Kenya

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	23,000	24,700	30,100
Female population (% of total)	50.3	50.3	49.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	46	46	46
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	28.4	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	39.2	31.1	24.0
Male	19.1	14.8	11.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	69
Male	..	..	68
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	23
Male	..	..	23
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	1	3
Male	2	2	3
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	53	47
Male	55	52	47
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	63	73	77
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	13
Male	..	..	6.4

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Kenya has identified the following for priority action:

- Women and Poverty
- Violence Against Women
- Education and Training of Women
- Women and Health.

A Decade of Action

Kenya has introduced many programmes to advance the progress of women in recent years. It seeks to enhance these through the National Policy on Gender and Development which was approved by the Cabinet in 2000. The Sessional Paper to facilitate discussion in Parliament was approved by Cabinet in August 2002 and at the time of reporting has yet to be discussed. The policy provides the framework for gender mainstreaming in policy, planning, programming and human relations. It highlights the various factors that perpetuate inequality and advocates new strategies to overcome them.

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Women's Bureau in the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services. Kenya acceded to CEDAW in 1984. It is ranked at 114 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

More than half the population live below the absolute poverty line and women are more vulnerable to poverty than men. For example, 69% of the active female population work as subsistence farmers as compared to 43% of men; the physical energy spent on searching for water and fuel, especially on nutritionally poor diets, limits women's productive potential thus extending the poverty cycle. In urban areas, the proportion of poor female-headed households is higher than male-headed households. Women contribute higher labour inputs to small-scale commercial farming, perform over 50% of agricultural activities and all domestic tasks, but have little control

Free compulsory education allows a larger number of girls to access some form of schooling



over domestic decision-making in expenditure or access to the means of production (land and capital) and little access to basic social services. Low-income households find it difficult to keep girls in school.

Only 25% of women (compared to 40% of men) are engaged in formal employment; the rest work in the informal sector where they lack social security and access to credit facilities. The regulatory framework in this sector also does not support women's entrepreneurship and women lack safe places for petty trade.

The National Poverty Eradication Plan (1999–2015) acknowledges that the poverty of women requires special attention. A key aim is to reduce the time spent on domestic work by increasing the economic productivity of women and reducing the time they have to spend on searching for water and fuel. Laws asserting women's right to land and removing constraints of customary law will also be enacted. More focused sectoral activities and intensive action in selected districts are planned. The Government recognises that women need to be part of the decision-making process at all levels if they are to emerge from poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which is the core of the above Plan, has provided an opportunity for the NWM, women as a group and civil society to influence the national development agenda.

Violence Against Women

Kenya has ratified and is party to a number of international legal instruments. Domestically, a number of pieces of legislation are going through Parliament: The Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Bill which will strengthen Government efforts to deal with gender-based violence; the Criminal Law Amendment Bill which removes inconsistencies between penalties for sexual offences against minors and against women, and stiffens penalties for sexual offences; the Public Officer Ethics Bill which outlaws all forms of sexual harassment in the public sector; and the Equality Bill which outlaws all forms of

sexual harassment in all spheres of society, prohibits discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity for all persons.

An initiative, developed with assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat, has been adopted as a National Action Plan on an Integrated Approach to Combating Violence against Women. Within its framework are strategies which respond to the needs of survivors, deal with perpetrators of gender-based violence, and facilitate a clearer understanding of the problem, and structural changes needed to combat violence.

Together with NGOs, the Government has taken steps to raise awareness of the issue among law enforcement officers, including the development of a draft training curriculum on gender-based violence for police officers. Women-friendly police stations are being established to handle reports of domestic and sexual violence. The officers involved have had special training thus making it easier for women to come forward. A centre has also been set up at the Nairobi Women's Hospital offering free medical care, support and counselling for abused women. This is a private sector initiative.

To eradicate female genital mutilation (FGM), which is practised by some communities, the Children's Act was passed in 2002 which makes it criminal to circumcise a child below the age of 18. The government-NGO initiative National Focal Point on Female Genital Mutilation monitors the practice and supports eradication initiatives.

Education and Training of Women

Affirmative action over the years has increased the number of women and girls pursuing education at various levels. In both public and private universities gradual increases have been registered both in numbers of females as well as in the ratio of male to female enrolment. In public universities, the increase is due to improved female access to the various

parallel and special degree programmes, to special financial help – the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) sets aside 60% of the total bursary fund for the education of girls – and the lowering by one point of admission qualifications for girls. HELB funds also go to girls enrolling in private universities. Many females who attain minimum public university entrance qualifications but are unable to get in due to competition for spaces, enrol in private universities.

Table 10.1: % Females Enrolled in 6 Public Universities, Kenya

(academic years)

Year	Total Enrolled	% Female
1997/98	43,591	29.2
1998/99	40,613	30.5
1999/2000	41,825	30.5
2000/2001	42,508	31.7
2001/2002	52,906	32.2

Table 10.2: % Females Enrolled in 6 Private Accredited Universities, Kenya

(academic years)

Year	Total Enrolled	% Female
1997/98	3,646	50.3
1998/99	3,888	46.7
1999/2000	6,920	54.5
2000/2001	6,999	52.9
2001/2002	7,639	54.5

When the Government implemented its policy of free compulsory education in 2003, an unprecedented 1.3 million new enrolments were recorded, most of them girls. Various measures have been put in place to prevent girls from dropping out of school: a specific share of Ministry of Education bursaries given to children from needy families is set aside for girls; and pregnant schoolgirls are allowed a year off to have their babies. Counselling on pregnancy and family life education is also part of the curriculum.

The Children's Act also prohibits forced early marriage and other traditional and

Table 10.3: School Drop-out Rates, Kenya

	Primary Education			Secondary Education		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Enrolment	2,993,054	2,874,554	5,867,608	348,133	313,691	661,824
Drop-outs	150,242	138,599	288,841	16,142	15,847	31,989
Drop-out Rates	5%	4.8%	4.9%	4.6%	5.1%	4.8%

cultural practices which could negatively affect a child's life, health, welfare or development. Provincial Administrations are empowered to act in these cases.

Statistics show low drop-out rates at the national level and insignificant gender disparities (*see above*).

Literacy rates among women have also improved from a national rate of 60.8% in 1990 to 76% in 2000. Male literacy rates, improved from 80.9% to 88.9% in the same period. For both sexes, literacy in rural areas was much lower.

Women and Health

HIV infection rates stood at 3.1% in 1990, rising to 13% in 2001 and dropping to 11% in 2002. Deaths from full-blown AIDS average 700 daily. Among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics, infection rates of 6%–15% and 25%–40% are reported in the low and high prevalence areas respectively but are believed to be higher. The highest concentration is in the 15–25 age group where the infection rate among females is double that for males. Kenya has implemented many programmes, such as those on blood screening, early diagnosis and promotion of safe sexual practices, and set up voluntary counselling and testing centres.

Constituency AIDS Control Committees promote positive health, seek the participation of youth to initiate behaviour change and encourage income-generating activities to accelerate poverty reduction among youth, women and other vulnerable groups. Women's groups work closely with the National AIDS Control Council to provide educate through churches, women's group meetings and social gatherings. NGOs assist with the distribution of free condoms, and anti-retroviral and other drugs are provided through the Ministry

of Health. No tax is imposed on local pharmaceutical companies which import generic drugs to fight the disease.

National Women's Machinery

A National Commission on Gender and Development is being established – at the time of reporting, its Bill is awaiting a third reading in Parliament. Once set up, the Commission will comprise senior government officials from the home affairs, education, health, finance, labour and agriculture ministries, the Attorney-General, and eight others, four of whom will be nominated by the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation and the National Council of Women after consultation with other NGOs (with one of these having expertise in gender, disabilities and the law). Others will include an economist, social scientist and one person nominated by the Kenya Law Reform Commission. The Minister of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services will appoint a person eminently qualified in gender issues as chairperson. The Commission's role will be wide ranging including helping to formulate national development policies, generally monitoring implementation of national gender policies, planning, supervising and carrying out activities on gender issues, liaising with government departments and advising the Government on gender mainstreaming and resources.

The Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services was created in 2003 and the National Machinery for the Advancement of Women was elevated to a full department within it. At the time of reporting, the Department of Gender, which will have a broad mandate for co-ordinating and mainstreaming gender issues in all spheres of development, is still in the process of being established.

In addition to the Women's Bureau, the Government has established gender focal points to mainstream gender concerns in a number of key ministries such as those for health and reproductive health, education, planning and national development, agriculture, home affairs, labour, environment, children, and population and development.

The NWM works closely with all relevant ministries and departments.

Partnerships

The NWM collaborates with NGOs in gender development and equality programmes. The first women's NGO, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake, was formed in 1952 and many others have followed – currently, 232 registered NGOs deal directly or indirectly with gender issues. Their efforts to promote more women as political leaders, for example, resulted in a record 17 women MPs after the 2002 general election.

The Government and NGOs have also formed the National Focal Point on Female Genital Mutilation. This is a collaborative centre, which brings together 67 government departments, local NGOs, bilateral agencies and development partners to monitor the status and support initiatives to eradicate the practice. The Government and NGOs are also acting together to raise awareness among law enforcement officers about violence against women. A draft curriculum on gender-based violence has been developed by the NWM, Federation of Women's Lawyers Kenya and the Police Department.

Concerns for the Future

HIV/AIDS will continue to be a health and socio-economic concern especially for women. In general, movement in health indicators is positive at national level but there is a need to concentrate new health programmes on the poorest districts and poorer households. Improved access to family planning services by poor households is one key priority area for action. Efforts to lift women out of poverty will continue under the National Poverty Eradication Plan (1999–2015).

Lesotho

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	1,700	1,900	2,000
Female population (% of total)	50.8	50.6	50.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	37	37	37
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	47.1	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	10.5	8.2	6.4
Male	34.6	30.9	27.4
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	81	76	82
Male	65	65	75
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	20	22	25
Male	10	11	16
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	2	3	3
Male	1	2	2
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	53	44
Male	56	51	44
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	102	97	92
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	26.4
Male	..	..	12.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action the Government of Lesotho has ranked the following, in order of priority:

1. Women and Poverty/ Women and the Economy
2. Education and Training of Women/ Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
3. Women and Armed Conflict/ Women in Power and Decision-making/ Human Rights of Women
4. Women and Health
5. Violence Against Women/The Girl-child
6. Women in the Media; and
7. Women in the Environment.

(Some Beijing areas of concern have been linked as they to fall under one priority area in Lesotho's Gender and Development Policy.)

A Decade of Action

Lesotho has demonstrated its commitment to gender equality in a number of ways. It has acceded to a number of international conventions and is a signatory to the 1997 SADC Gender and Development Declaration. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Department of Gender which is in the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation. A Gender and Development Policy was approved in March 2003 to provide a framework for addressing gender inequities and inequalities. The department is now working on a Policy Implementation Plan which will direct gender mainstreaming.

Lesotho acceded to CEDAW in 1995 and to its Optional Protocol in 2004. The country is ranked 111 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

Half Lesotho's population lives below the poverty line and women are the group most affected by poverty. Combating poverty therefore directly implies economic empowerment of women which in turn will improve the economic performance of the country as a whole. The NWM reports, however, that Lesotho's Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and the

A better water supply helps women and families

national programme for the Millennium Development Goals have still to be engendered (save in the latter case on the goal for gender equality).

Human Rights of Women

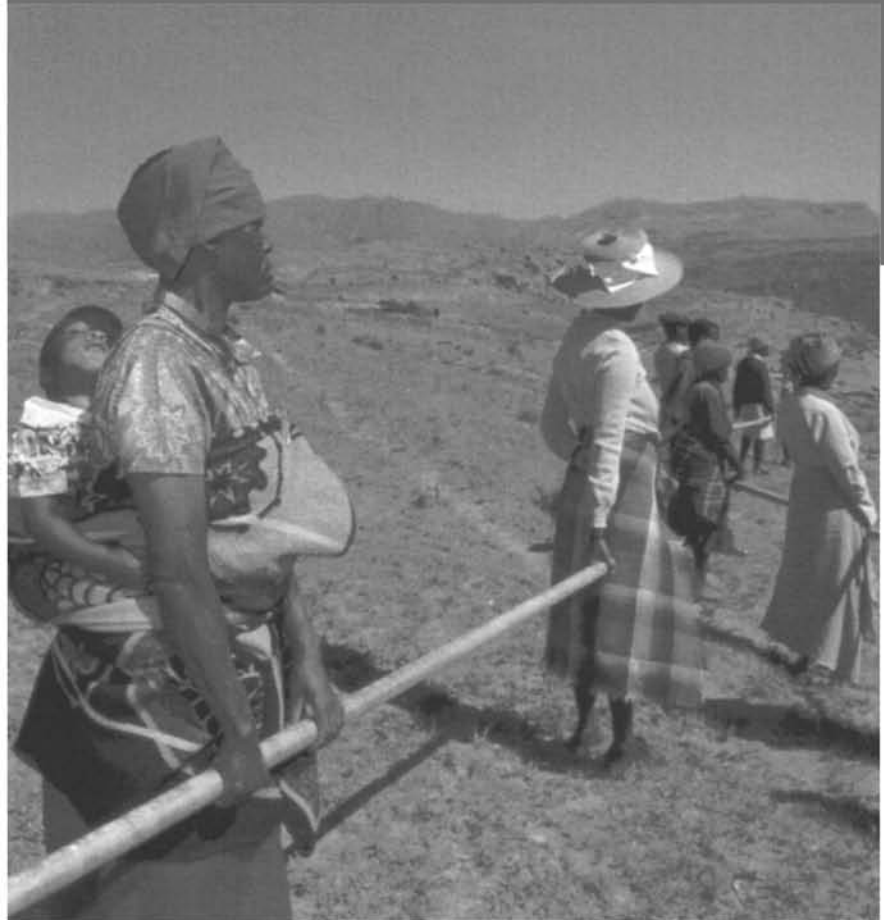
The NWM undertakes intensive advocacy on women’s rights and gender equality. Towards redressing existing gender disparities, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 was passed by Parliament and, at the time of reporting, consultations on a Married Persons Equality Bill are proceeding. The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights has been designated a reporting ministry and is due to submit the initial CEDAW report.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Activities to raise awareness of the importance of women assuming leadership roles intensified in the 2002 elections resulting in an increase to 36% of women in the Senate and to 12% (14 out of 120) in the National Assembly. The NWM used public gatherings in the rural areas, workshops in towns, TV and radio programmes as well as the print media to get its message across. Staff members took the opportunity to hold informal discussions with members of the public in taxis and buses. Highly influential members of the public were also approached.

Women and Health

In 2001, the HIV/AIDS infection rate was running at 31% in the population’s 15–49 age group. In the 15–24 group, 26.4% of females were infected, more than double the rate of males. The NWM has run advocacy campaigns on gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights and hosted radio programmes as well as public gatherings on the subject. To assess the extent gender and development issues are integrated with the National HIV and AIDS Policy, the NWM undertook gender analysis of the policy with the assistance of the Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service. The NWM reports that the policy was gender insensitive and plans for this to be



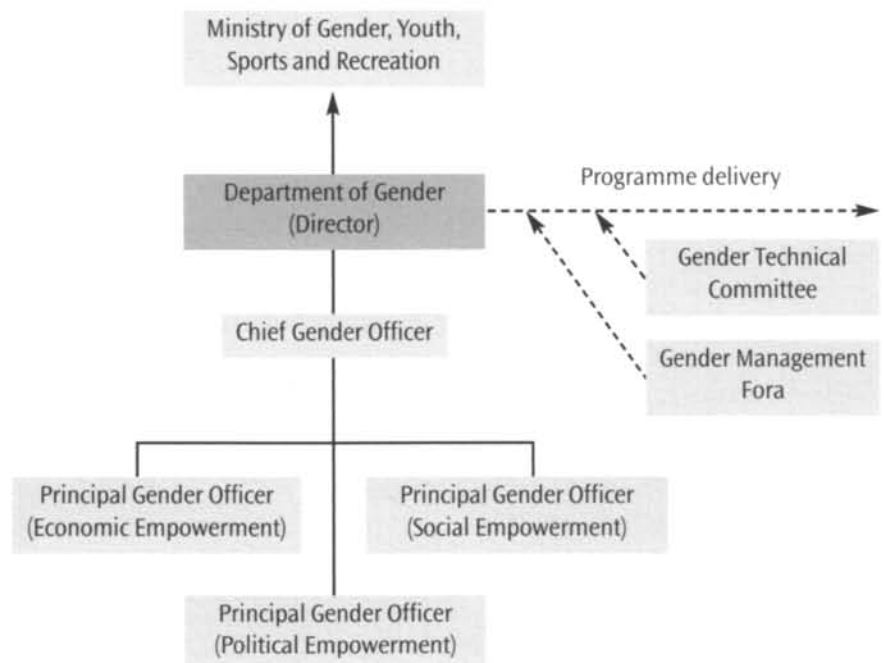
reversed when gender mainstreaming in policies, programmes and budgets commences with the Policy Implementation Plan in 2004.

of Environment, Gender and Youth Affairs. It is now part of the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation. It is headed by a Director and is a fairly new structure still in the process of being established – staffing began in 2000. The Director is accountable to the Ministry’s Principal Secretary. Other staff include a Chief Gender Officer, 3 Principal Gender Officers for Economic Empowerment, Social Empowerment and Political

National Women’s Machinery

The Department of Gender was established in 1998 at part of the Ministry

Chart 11.1: The Lesotho NWM Organisation Chart



Empowerment, and support staff.

The department's programmes will be implemented with the assistance of the National Gender Machinery which is made up of the Gender Technical Committee (GTC) and the Gender Management Fora (GMF). The GTC comprises the gender focal points in various institutions and some civil society organisations. The GMF comprises Directors of various divisions within institutions at national and district levels. Under the policy on gender and development, a Gender and Equality Commission is to be established.

As a small department within a wider ministry, the Department of Gender operates on a small budget. It was, however, successful in formulating and gaining Cabinet approval for the Gender and Development Policy in 2003 and for some legislation and advocacy programmes.

As the NWM, the Department of Gender has ties with all relevant ministries and government departments. It expects this collaboration to be strengthened through the gender mainstreaming programme.

Partnerships

The Department of Gender works with many NGOs and civil society organisations, some of whom are members of the GTC or its sub-committees. It believes that these organisations would benefit from training to strengthen their capacities.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has assisted Lesotho in the following areas: micro-enterprise development, gender planning and development, gender-based violence, reducing the impact of HIV and AIDS on human resources in the public service, and leadership roles for women in public sector management. The Department of Gender is keen for further assistance especially in the area of engendering the national budget.

Concerns for the Future

Lesotho believes that addressing the existing gender disparities will give provide pathways out of poverty. These areas are: gender, poverty and economic empowerment; gender, power, politics and decision-making; and gender-based violence, HIV and AIDS, and human rights.

Malawi

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	8,500	9,200	10,300
Female population (% of total)	50.9	50.6	50.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	50	49	49
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	63.8	58.8	53.5
Male	31.2	28.4	25.5
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	48	100	..
Male	52	98	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of females to males)*			0.85
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of females to males)*			0.39
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	45	42	39
Male	44	42	39
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	146	133	117
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	15.3
Male	..	..	7

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* 2000–2001 figures in the Human Development Report 2003. For net primary enrolment, the % figure of females to males was 1.07

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Malawi places priority on the following:

1. Women and Poverty
 2. Education and Training of Women
 3. Women and Health
 4. Violence Against Women
 5. Women in Power and Decision-making
- Followed by: 6. The Girl-child; 7. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 8. Human Rights of Women; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Malawi's economy is dependent on agriculture and therefore on world commodity prices, especially for tea and tobacco. Fluctuating world prices, together with the loss of skilled workers largely through HIV/AIDS, and attendant healthcare costs, has caused growth to slow and the economy to shrink. The incidence of HIV/AIDS in the adult population is about 15%, with the incidence of females infected in the 15–25 age group double that of males.

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Gender and Community Services. Malawi acceded to CEDAW in 1987 and to its Optional Protocol in 2000. It is ranked 134 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

The 1997 National Platform for Action and the 2000 National Gender Policy identify women and poverty as a key gender issue. This is underlined by the 2002 Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), where gender is a cross-cutting issue. Apart from attempts to mainstream gender in the four pillars of the PRSP – sustainable pro-poor growth, human capital development, improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable, and good governance – a gender and empowerment strategy has been developed specifically for rural



communities where the majority of women live below the poverty line.

Several issues have been addressed, including strengthening institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming, engendering planning and budgeting, promoting informal and formal legal environments that are gender-responsive, reducing gender-based violence and the promotion of women's participation in politics and decision-making.

The Government has therefore implemented a pro-poor poverty reduction programme that empowers women socially and economically through:

- Extension and research programmes targeting women farmers;
- Training in business, credit and appropriate technologies;
- Provision of agricultural and other credits for women;
- Reviewing laws to ensure that women's rights are promoted in all areas of life; and
- Promotion of gender budgets in selected public sector institutions.

In addition, a strategy to eliminate gender-based violence has been developed with a view to encouraging women to operate freely thus helping to reduce their poverty. The Employment Act was also reviewed to make provisions for maternity leave and provide a conducive environment for the employment and retention of women in the formal sector.

Other specific initiatives in place include:

- Mainstreaming gender in agriculture, irrigation and food security programmes;
- Training women in business, credit-access and appropriate technologies;
- Capacity-building in gender budgeting for six ministries (Finance, Economic Planning and Development; Education, Science and Technology; Health; Agriculture; Gender and Community Services; and Water Development);
- Capacity-building in gender analysis for focal persons in sectoral ministries, the private sector and NGOs/CSOs.

Women and Health

While Malawi's fertility rate has declined in recent years, maternal mortality has increased from 620 per 100,000 in 1995 to 1,120 by 2003. The high HIV prevalence rate (15% of adults) has contributed to this increase. In the 15–25 age group, women account for 60% of the new HIV infections; and over 58% of women and 40% of expectant mothers are HIV positive. Even though knowledge about HIV/AIDS is high (at 99% among women and 100% among men) by 2003, sexual behaviour has not changed much.

Infant mortality rates are still very high, although this has declined since 1995, while under-five mortality rates are at 189 per 1,000 live births, having declined from 234 in 1995. Malnutrition is one of the biggest contributing factors to child mortality.

A reproductive health policy and safe motherhood programme was introduced in 2000, but although about 97% of men and women know about contraception, use of contraceptives is still low at 34% in 2003. This, however, is an increase over the 13% usage rate of 1995. Use of antenatal facilities has increased to 100%.

In the past decade, a behaviour change communication strategy on issues of gender and HIV/AIDS has been developed. By 2003 it had reached 10,000 community members, 500 trainers, peer educators, traditional leaders and women leaders. The safe motherhood programme has led to 24 baby friendly hospitals. Sensitisation programmes on sexual, reproductive

health, HIV/AIDS and gender issues have reached over 3.5 million people.

The work of a number of NGOs complements government's efforts in reproductive health. This work includes information on education, family planning services, provision to HIV/AIDS counselling and adolescent work. Efforts to reduce child mortality have increased and 20% of all children between 6–49 months who attend antenatal clinics have been given additional Vitamin A dosages.

Violence Against Women

The NWM reports that gender-based violence is prevalent in workplaces, public places – such as education institutions, hospitals, prisons, police cells and lake shore areas – and the domestic arena. It can be psychological/mental, physical, economic, social or sexual.

The incidence among women and children victims is much higher than that for men.

Table 12.1: Gender-based Violence Reported at Kanengo Police Station, Malawi

Year	Women	Men	Children**	Total
2001	19	1	0	20
2002	119	5	0	124
2003	300	10	32	342
2004	10*	0	0	10

* For 2004, January figures only

** Most children's cases are sexual abuse (rape) from age 2 to 16 years.

Table 12.2: Reported Workplace Abuse of Women by Sector in 1999 (%), Malawi

Form	Agriculture	Commercial	Industry	Other Institutions
Economic	63.4	38.9	53.9	44.4
Psychological	16.1	11.1	17.6	40.2
Physical	1.8	2.8	0.0	40.2
Sexual	3.6	8.3	2.0	2.6
Other (social)	11.6	38.9	26.5	6.8

Source: MHRRC, 1999

NOTE: Due to rounding up of figures, the totals do not add up to 100%

Workplace abuse tabulated by the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre also shows different forms of abuse (see table 12.2, page 57).

Other forms of violence include forced prostitution, trafficking and harmful cultural practices. The sexual exploitation of women is growing in rural areas.

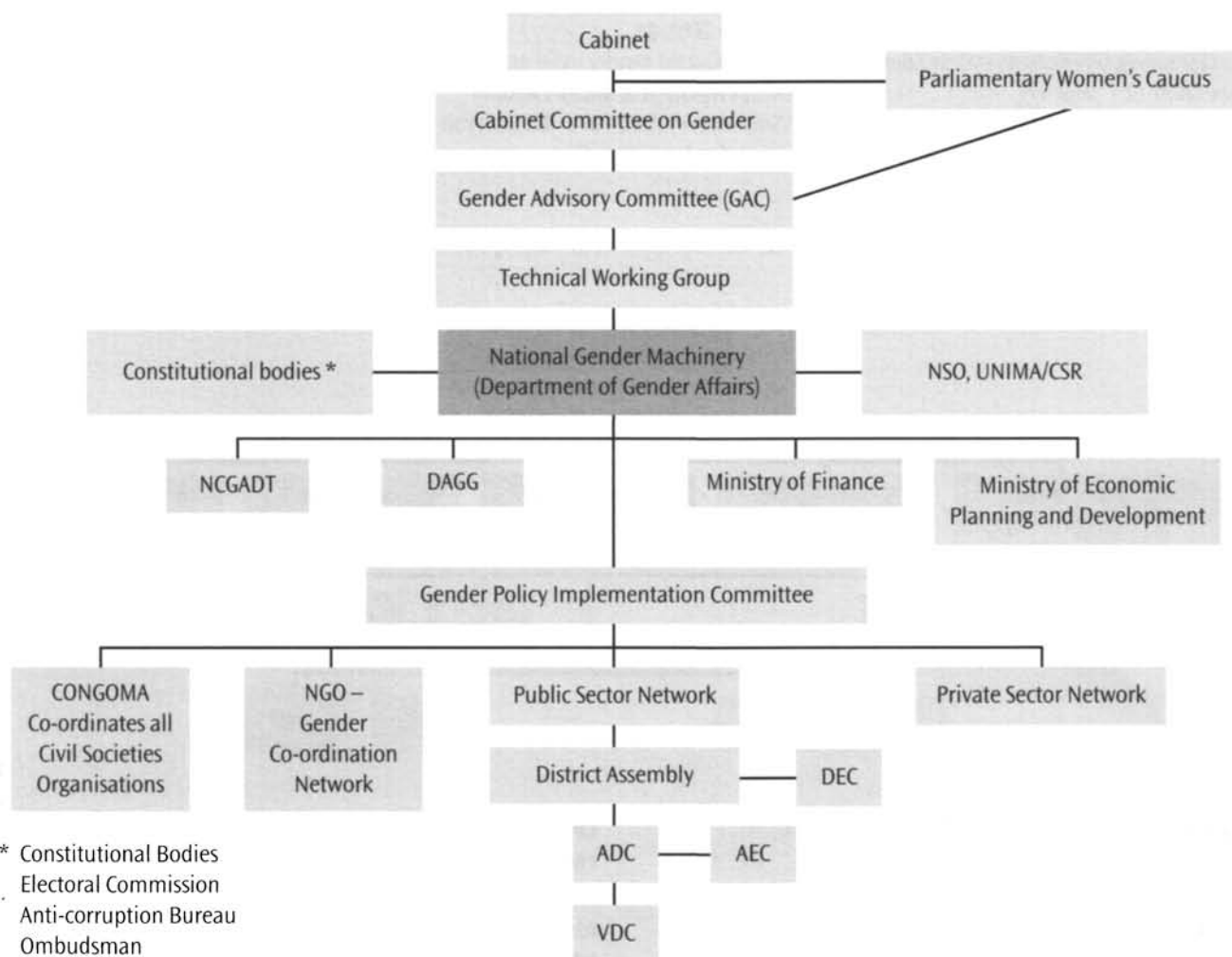
Currently, there is no law on trafficking and exploitation of women for sexual purposes. There are, however, mechanisms to support the rehabilitation of victims and the reform of offenders. These mechanisms are not adequate enough.

In 2002, Malawi held a 16-day

campaign against gender-based violence in urban and rural areas. A national strategy to combat such violence was also launched that year and the draft of a Domestic Violence Bill should be completed by the end of 2004. To end the practice of widows not receiving any inheritance, the Wills and Inheritance Act is being reviewed. Community Policing and Victim Support units have been launched. Community Action Groups on gender-based violence with communities taking a centre stage in reporting cases, as well as a network against gender-based violence within the NGO Gender Co-ordination Network have been established.

Mobile legal clinics to provide advice to victims and offenders have also been

Chart 12.1: Institutional Structure of National Gender Policy Implementation, Malawi



* Constitutional Bodies
Electoral Commission
Anti-corruption Bureau
Ombudsman
Law Commission

Note: The various networks are supposed to have sub-networks that will comprise the 6 thematic areas in the National Gender Policy.

set up, and the police and judiciary sensitised to treat gender-based violence more seriously.

National Women's Machinery

Following the Beijing Conference in 1995, the Government re-structured in 1999 the Ministry with responsibility for women's affairs, creating a Ministry of Gender, Youth and Community Development. By 2003, the Youth portfolio was de-linked. The NWM is the Ministry of Gender and Community Services through its Department of Gender Affairs. The head of the NWM is the Principal Secretary.

The Ministry's mandate is to spearhead the formulation, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Gender Policy, programmes, projects and activities at all levels. Its key role is to mainstream gender and provide a backstopping service to its stakeholders (see Chart 12.1, page 57).

A structure of the Ministry of Gender and Community Services, integrating

gender activities with those for social and community services has been proposed (see Chart 12.2, below). It has yet to be implemented. In order to ensure that the policy structure (Chart 12.1) is operational, the NWM structure has been further reviewed and awaits approval.

The NWM enjoys close relations with other Ministries and government departments. It has thus been able to develop gender budget and mainstreaming guidelines, Gender Focal Points in ministries and a national gender programme.

Resources

The budget for the NWM has increased from Malawi Kwacha (MK) 30 million (US\$666,666) in 1999 to MK80 million (US\$1,777,777) in 2000 and MK145.38 million (US\$3.2 million) in 2002/03. This has decreased to MK119.7 million (US\$2.6 million) in 2003/04.

Budgeting for gender mainstreaming activities was fixed at MK20.9 million (US\$465,000) in 2002/03. In 2003/04 this decreased to MK8.59 million

(US\$191,000).

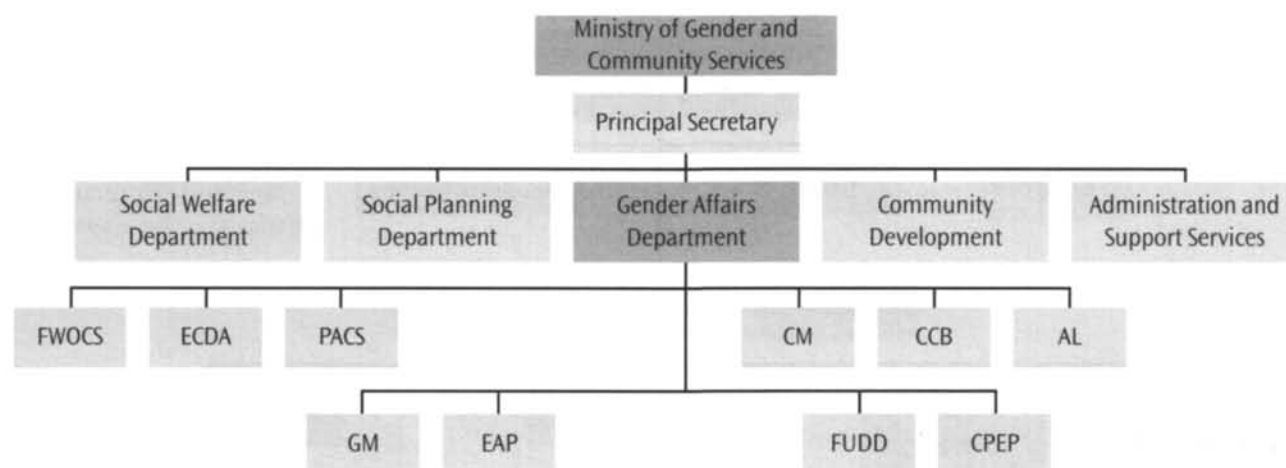
Since 2001/02, the Ministry has also benefited from aid relief with most of its resources coming from Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) relief and pro-poor activity sources. This aid relief has decreased in recent years.

Partnerships

The NWM works with a number of CSOs, for example with the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre on combating gender-based violence by setting up Victim Support Units. It works with other CSOs on women's rights issues and rights of the girl-child, legal reform and new legislation, legal education and the participation of women in politics, in girl-child education, and in other areas relating to gender-based violence.

The NWM has received assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop a National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence. It has also benefited from SADC initiatives on gender equality, and from assistance from the UK Department for International Development, British

Chart 12.2: Proposed Organisation Chart for Gender and Community Services, Malawi



FWOCs Family Welfare and Orphan Care Services
ECDA Early Childhood Development Activities
PACS Probation and After Care Services
GM Gender Mainstreaming
EAP Economic Activities Programme
FUDD Food Utilization and Dietary Diversification

CPEP Community-based Population Education Programme
CM Community Mobilisation
CCB Community Capacity Building
AL Adult Literacy
HRMD Human Resources Management and Development

Council, Tanzanian Gender Network Programme, and the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute.

Concerns for the Future

Malawi will concentrate on the following areas in the next five years:

- Gender mainstreaming and budgeting in the public sector, especially targeting central and local government structures. Guidelines will aim at assisting stakeholders to address gender capacity in their planning and budgeting processes. The plan is to build the capacity of Focal Points who will lead in the initiative;
- The review of existing legislation to incorporate regional and international instruments, and develop new laws, including a gender capacity building and equality Act. This Act will guide the implementation of gender equality initiatives and ensure that mainstreaming is implemented;
- Economic empowerment for poor women. The entrepreneurial development programme will focus on the provision of technical and managerial skills for women in business. The plan is to introduce new technologies that add value to products and widen and improve credit and savings schemes.

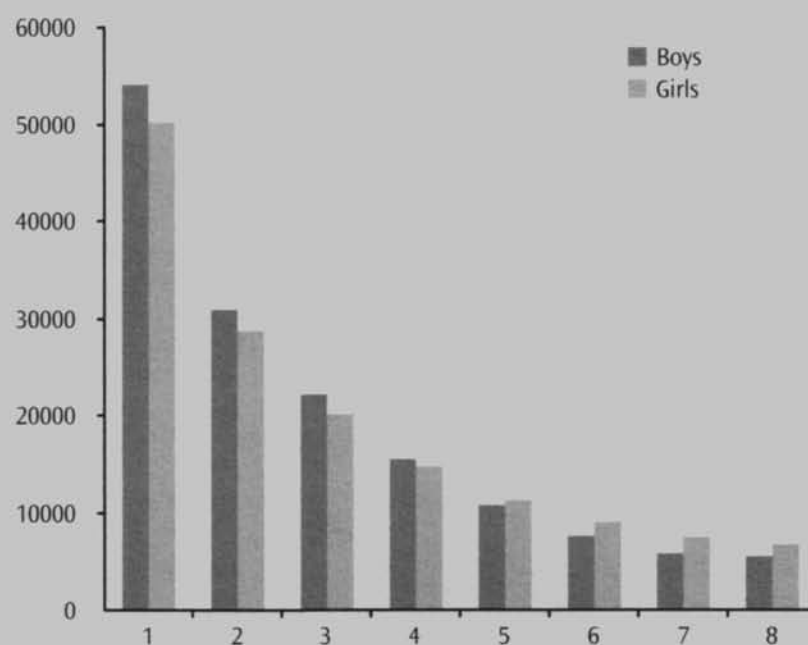
Box 12.1: Education and Training

Malawi recognises that education and training are key to eradicating poverty. Free primary education was introduced in 1995/96 and enrolment increased from 1.9 million to 3.2 million. This resulted in the employment of 22,000 untrained teachers to handle the large numbers of pupils in classrooms. Programmes, such as Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE), provided tuition for girls who passed examinations; when introduced in secondary school enrolment increased from 68,689 in 1995 to 91,524 by 1999. By 2000, this figure decreased to 66,205 because the GABLE tuition was phased out. Through GABLE, however, community attitudes to girls' education began to change.

The objective now is to increase secondary school female enrolment from 25% of the total to 50%. More females are entering university in line with the SADC Declaration of Gender and Development that commits governments to ensuring that at least 30% of decision-making positions are filled by women by the year 2005. The female university intake in 2003 was 30% in 2003, up from 25% in 1995.

When free primary education was introduced, to cope with the large numbers of pupils, some 22,000 untrained teachers were employed. To ensure better quality teaching, this number was reduced to 9,000 by 2003. The Government, development partners, CSOs and communities are working together to improve the quality of education in primary schools.

Table 12.3: Number of Pupils Dropping Out By Class and Sex, Malawi



Source: Education Basic Statistics 2003

The Government is also seeking to ensure that girls, once enrolled, remain in school. The retention rate at primary school has increased from 5% in 1995 to 12% in 2003 and at secondary school it has increased from 4% to 11% over the same period. Pregnant girls are no longer dismissed from school; they are readmitted a year after delivery. To ensure that children remain in school, an early childhood development policy has been launched. The number of trained caregivers in these centres increased from 432 in 1995 to 1,050 in 2003 and the number of development centres increased from 865 in 1995 to 2,850 in 2003. A bursary scheme for orphans and other vulnerable children is also in place.

In order to cope with the increasing number of secondary school pupils, Distance Education Centres have been converted into Community Day Secondary Schools and new school buildings constructed. Enrolment at vocational training centres increased from 1,007 in 1995/96 to 1,504 in 2000.

Female education has also been emphasised in a nationwide adult literacy programme. Materials for adult literacy have been reviewed to incorporate developmental issues such as food production, business management, gender capacity, nutrition, reproductive health and rights and social and community mobilisation.

Mauritius

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	1,100	1,100	1,200
Female population (% of total)	50.1	50.1	50.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	30	32	33
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	13.9	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	25	21.7	18.8
Male	15.2	13.6	12.2
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	95	96	95
Male	95	96	95
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	61	65
Male	..	56	63
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	3	6	13
Male	4	6	10
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	73	74	76
Male	66	67	68
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	21	20	16
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Mauritius has ranked the following in order of priority:

1. Violence Against Women
2. The Girl-child
3. Women and the Economy
4. Education and Training of Women
5. Women and Poverty

Followed by: 6. Human Rights of Women; 7. Women and Health; 8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 9. Women in Power and Decision-making; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women in the Environment; and 12. Women in Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Mauritius has developed a number of programmes to advance women's progress and gender equality and introduced legislation and appropriate structures to support them. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare.

Mauritius acceded to CEDAW in 1984 and to its Optional Protocol in 2001. The country is ranked at 55 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Violence Against Women

A 1998 survey showed that 96% of victims of domestic violence were women, 56% of them suffering violence almost daily. The majority of victims were financially dependent and had low levels of education. In 1997, the Protection from Domestic Violence Act was passed. Soon after, a Domestic Violence Intervention Unit with a 'hot line' for reporting, was set up for rapid reaction. Its 5 sub-units work closely with the police, Ministry of Health and other institutions to assist victims. Its staff comprises police officers and social workers supported by legal experts and psychological counsellors.

A Model Framework for an Integrated Approach to Combat Violence against Women and the Girl-child was prepared in 1999 with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Girl-child

Of major concern is the commercial sexual exploitation of children. A 2001 study showed that prostitution is prevalent and exists in both urban and rural areas with over 3,800 adults and 2,500 children involved. A national plan to combat this was launched in March 2003. A Child Protection Act was passed in 1994 and national laws have been harmonised in line with the international Convention on the Rights of the Child. The definition of 'harm' has been extended to include sexual harm and medical and school staff now have a duty to report cases of suspected abuse.

A Child Development Unit was established in 1995 and works with various agencies and the police department which provides a round-the-clock 'hot line' service for children at risk of abuse, and free legal assistance and psychological counselling. A pilot Child Protection Unit was also set up as have Area Child Protection Committees and child watch network groups, comprising social workers, officials, volunteers and NGOs, whose objective is early detection of abuse. Shelters provide medical, legal and psychological assistance to children.

A foster care system is being introduced to provide temporary shelter whenever a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or ill-treatment. At the time of reporting, 25 families have been registered as foster parents and 13 children placed.

Women and the Economy

Mauritius is working towards the economic empowerment of women to enable them to work in more employment categories, lessen their financial dependence, lift them out of poverty and thus decrease opportunities for their exploitation.

Working women tend to concentrate in a small number of industrial sectors. In 2001, the top 3 industries for women accounted for 62% of women's employment; the top 3 industries for men absorbed 49% of men's jobs thus showing a more even spread. In 2003, some 49,970 men and 16,503 women (about one-third)



were employed in the central and local government services. Although the professional category appears balanced – 3,381 men to 2,948 women – this is largely due to the fact that nurses and midwives fall within this category.

A 1999 survey, however, showed that women spent quadruple the time on unpaid work than men:

Table 13.1: Employment for Unpaid Work (Mean hours per week for over 12 year-olds), Mauritius

Type of work	Female	Male
Shopping for food	0.9	1.7
Cooking and dishwashing	13.6	1.9
Clothes washing and ironing	4.7	0.3
Cleaning the house	4.8	1.0
Clearing the yard/garden	0.9	1.1
Looking after the sick, elderly and children	5.2	2.0
TOTAL	29.9	8.0

The National Women Entrepreneurs Council, a parastatal body under the aegis of the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare, is the driving force for the promotion of women entrepreneurs. It offers counselling, information, training and marketing facilities, micro-credit projects, international links, and access to

exhibitions and trade fairs. It also organises training, especially for young female would-be entrepreneurs.

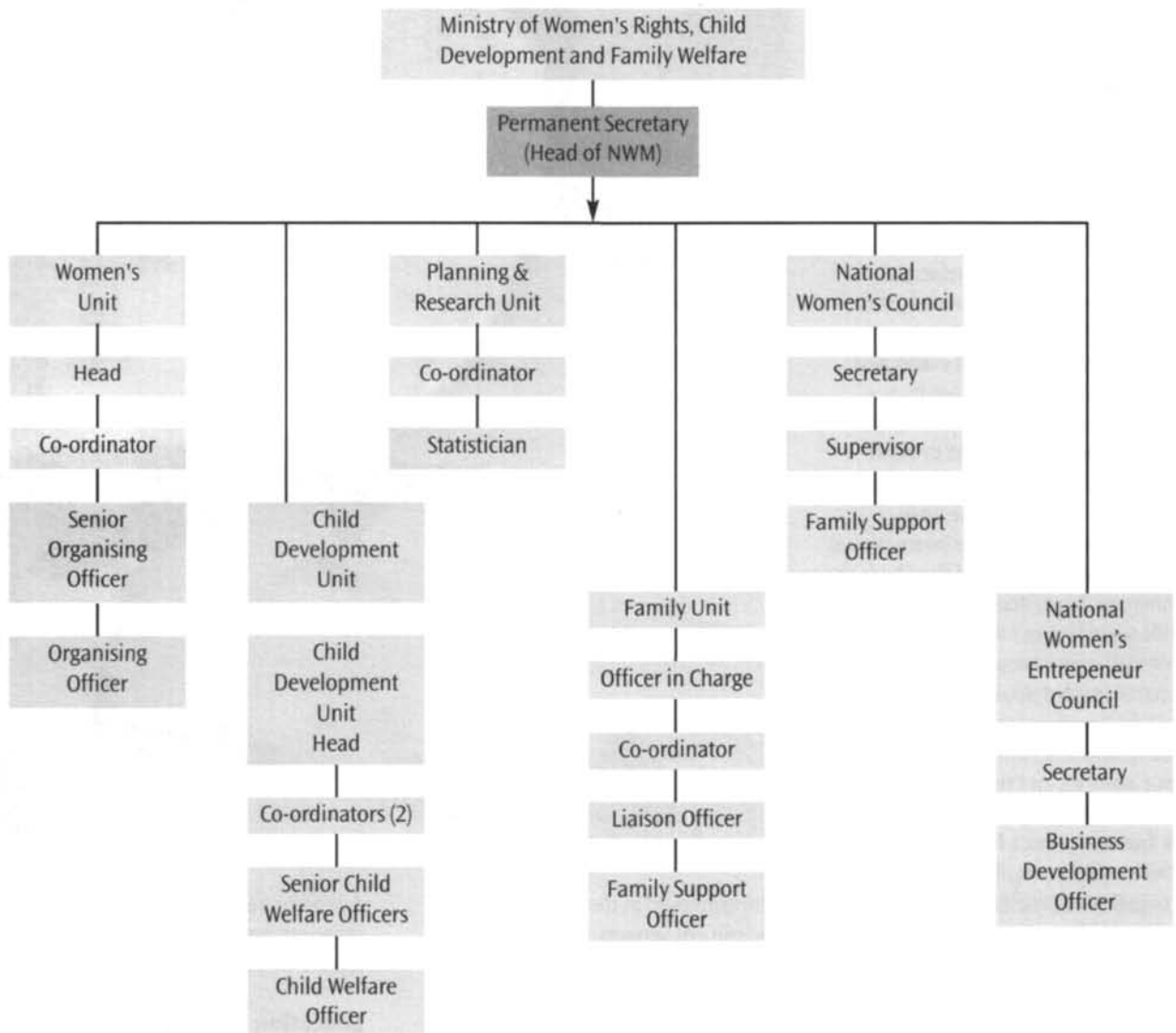
Education and Training of Women

Education is free at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and primary education is compulsory. High levels of and relatively gender balanced school enrolment are recorded. School exam results generally show girls outperforming boys. At present, the ratio of girls to boys attending pre-vocational schools is 1:2. Government scholarships are awarded equally to girls and boys, and assistance given to needy students for the purchase of books and payment of examination fees. In tertiary education, however, high numbers of females are recorded. In 2003, 47.7% of the graduating class of the University of Mauritius were women and enrolment figures in some other tertiary education institutions show women at 63.3%.

Women and Poverty

Various micro-credit schemes have been introduced to encourage women entrepreneurs in micro-, small- and medium-sized businesses, including one launched with the International Fund for

Chart 13.1: Organisational Structure of Mauritius NWM



Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2001. Some individual and group loans without collateral are available. By March 2003, Rs17 million had been disbursed by IFAD to 529 projects, 85% run by women. Similar facilities have been set up in the island of Rodrigues. Other poverty alleviation programmes have been set up by various ministries. A study on the feminisation of poverty has been conducted.

Human Rights of Women

The Sex Discrimination Division set up under the National Human Rights Commission, following the Sex Discrimination Act 2002, will receive and enquire into written complaints, endeavour reconciliation and make recommendations as necessary. Among other legislation introduced or amended are clauses to increase penalties for offences against children, including sexual abuse, and the introduction of the offences of sexual harassment, the

abandonment of a pregnant spouse and failure to pay alimony. Since 1995, female Mauritians have been able to obtain citizenship for foreign spouses. And the Constitution was amended in 1995 to make it clear that discrimination on the basis of sex is unlawful.

Women and Health

Mauritius has a low HIV/AIDS infection rate – about 0.1% of the population aged between 15–49 in 2001 and the male to female ratio is 8:1. The prevalence in one high risk group, sex workers, exceeds 5%. The infection rate, however, shows signs of increasing and the Government will intensify prevention, detection, care and support programmes.

Other Concerns

As a means of promoting gender equality, the NWM is implementing the Gender Management System, based on the Commonwealth model, in order to ensure

gender mainstreaming in all government policies. This is done through the gender focal points in all ministries.

Mauritius is also committed to Commonwealth and SADC targets on political empowerment of women. However, at the time of reporting there was only 1 woman out of 26 Cabinet Ministers (and she is the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare). The Rodrigues regional assembly has 17% female representation – 3 out of 18 elected members. The percentage of senior women in the Civil Service is: 10 of 28 Permanent Secretaries, 23 of 65 Principal Assistant Secretaries and 70 of 129 Assistant Secretaries. Very few women are elected as municipal, village or district councillors.

National Women's Machinery

The Women's Unit within the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare is a focal point for

women's issues and functions through a network of 12 women's centres and other women's associations. One of its main functions is to strengthen gender mainstreaming. It works in collaboration with other government institutions and NGOs and implements policy and projects through national, bilateral and multilateral funding. The budget of the NWM in 2003/2004 was Rs59,768,000 (US\$1,900,000).

Since 1997, the number of women's centres has risen from 5 to 12 to cover all regions. These services range from training, information, education and communication on such matters as economic empowerment, the environment, legal education, home economics, weight management, leisure, sports and stress management.

The Family Welfare Unit offers services through the Family Counselling Service at the Family Support Bureau. This service, which has existed since 1986, organises individual and group counselling on all family-related problems. The Family Welfare Unit operates from the Ministry's headquarters and has a network of 6 regional offices known as Family Support Bureaux.

The unit develops appropriate policies, strategies and activities to promote family welfare. It co-ordinates activities relating to domestic violence and family welfare and organises group counselling and talks on family-related issues.

The National Women's Council, set up in 1985, assists with the implementation of government policies. Its objective is to establish and maintain communications with women and women's organisations. The council has 5 regional committees with connections to about 1,000 women's organisations.

The NWM has helped steer through the Sex Discrimination Act 2002, set up a Sex Discrimination Division within the National Human Rights Commission and a high-level committee on gender-responsive budgeting plus an action plan, conducted training on women and gender issues and on entrepreneurship, and carried out sensitisation campaigns on legal empowerment and domestic violence. It has conducted studies on the commercial sexual exploitation of

children, developed a plan to combat it, implemented a micro-credit scheme for women entrepreneurs and developed a national children's policy.

The NWM has close working relations with relevant ministries and government departments.

Partnerships

The NWM has forged close partnerships with NGOs and civil society organisations. The Women's Unit functions through women's centres and associations and the National Women's Council's regional sub-committees have connections with over 1,000 women's associations. The NWM is providing training for key NGOs.

The NWM also works closely with international partners. The Commonwealth Secretariat has assisted it in the development of a Model Framework for an Integrated Approach to Combat Violence against Women and the Girl-child. It has also helped in the training of officers on the management of credit schemes for rural women entrepreneurs, and on gender policy and planning for economic development.

Concerns for the Future

Mauritius will continue to place a high priority on the girl-child given the large numbers of children involved in prostitution. Studies have shown that many of these children are from broken homes, have been sexually abused within and outside the family, are early school drop-outs, are substance abusers and their families and peers have been of negative influence. The majority also come from poor families. Dealing with the problem as well as its underlying causes will continue.

Mozambique

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	14,200	15,800	17,700
Female population (% of total)	50.7	50.6	51.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	48	48	48
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	81.6	76.9	71.3
Male	50.7	45.4	40.0
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	38	34	50
Male	49	45	59
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	5	5	8
Male	8	7	11
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	0	0	0
Male	0	1	1
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	45	46	44
Male	42	43	41
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	143	133	126
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	14.7
Male	..	..	6.7

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
 .. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Mozambique places priority on the following:

- Women in the Economy
- Women in Power and Decision-making/Women in the Media
- Women in Poverty/ Violence Against Women/ Human Rights of Women
- Women and Health/Women and the Environment
- Education and Training of Women/ The Girl-child
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

A Decade of Action

Mozambique acceded to CEDAW in 1997. The country is ranked at 139 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women have been established. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women and Co-ordination of Social Welfare. An Operational Group for the Advancement of Women exists as an inter-sectoral co-ordination and evaluation body (see *National Women's Machinery, below*). Sectoral Gender Units have also been set up in some ministries.

The education and training of women and the girl-child is a priority area because of the high rate of female illiteracy – 71.3% in 2000. The rate of female enrolment in secondary schools also contrasts sharply with that for primary schools. A gender perspective has been integrated into the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in an effort to reduce female poverty. The PRSP is revised every year and the NWM has a seat on a body which monitors poverty and the performance of the MDGs. Gender mainstreaming has been introduced into the agriculture, health and education sectors.

The HIV/AIDS infection rate stood at 13% in the 15–49 year old age group (2001). For females in the 15–24 age group, the infection rate is more than twice that of men in the same group. Mozambique has a national, gender-aware multi-sectoral strategic plan on HIV and AIDS. It

is awaiting a national HIV/AIDS policy.

National Women's Machinery

In 1995, women's issues were handled by the Ministry of Co-ordination for Social Action. From 1999, however, this was renamed the Ministry of Women and Co-ordination of Social Welfare. In 2000, a National Directorate for Women was created within the ministry. The Directorate defines and promotes the implementation of programmes that support, assist and foster the development of women and the family. Its work is supported nationally through Provincial Directorates and it works closely with other ministries.

The Directorate has two departments, the Department of Women and Family and the Department of Gender and Development. The Department of Women and Family co-ordinates strategies and plans related to the family and vulnerable women. The Department of Gender and Development supervises and implements policies in the field of women and gender.

An Operational Group for the Advancement of Women also exists. This is not a mechanism of the Directorate but an inter-sectoral co-ordination and evaluation created by the Government to supervise and follow-up the implementation of government policies and programmes. Among its tasks is the evaluation of the implementation of government policy on women. Its members are representatives from ministries, Eduardo Mondlane University, private organisations and other individuals and organisations whose expertise may be required from time to time. The group co-ordinates its activities with the Directorate and is chaired by the Minister of Women and Co-ordination of Social Welfare.

Partnerships

Mozambique involves other partners in its work on advancing gender equality issues. Private organisations and individuals play an important role in the Operational Group for the Advancement of Women which has a key role in evaluating



programme implementation. The NWM also works closely with the Women's Forum, a network of national and foreign organisations and institutions, on gender equity and women's empowerment activities.

Mozambique has worked closely with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, SADC, the Commonwealth Secretariat and other international partners on women's issues. It has received technical assistance from the Secretariat on the drafting of the national plan to combat gender-based violence, and seeks further assistance in the area of women in the economy, gender analysis of budgets and gender training.

Concerns for the Future

Mozambique will continue efforts to lift women out of poverty. A gender perspective is already reflected in the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. It will also work towards decreasing violence against women; a national plan to combat violence has been drafted. Creating opportunities for women in the economy and ensuring they benefit from it will also continue.

Namibia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	1,400	1,600	1,800
Female population (% of total)	51.1	50.9	50.6
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	40	41	41
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	21.1	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	27.6	23.1	18.8
Male	22.6	19.8	17.2
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	93	97	84
Male	86	89	79
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	36	44	44
Male	26	33	32
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	4	10	7
Male	2	6	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	58	47
Male	56	56	47
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	65	61	56
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	19.8
Male	..	..	9.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
 .. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Namibia places priority on the following:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women in Power and Decision-making
 3. Violence Against Women
 4. Women and Health
 5. Education and Training of Women
- Followed by: 6. Women and Poverty/Women and the Economy; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. Women in the Media; and 10. Women and the Environment.

A Decade of Action

Namibia acceded to CEDAW in 1992 and to its Optional Protocol in 2000. It is ranked at 101 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Initially, the National Women's Machinery (NWM) was a department headed by a civil servant until it was upgraded to ministry level in 1996. It is now the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Child Welfare headed by a Cabinet Minister.

The percentage of women in decision-making in Namibia has risen from 14% to 28% especially in local authorities where there are many female mayors and councillors. The numbers of female Permanent Secretaries and school principals have also risen to an estimated 30% in 1999. Although women continue to be under-represented in the National Assembly, they have sought to maximise their presence. In 1996, for example, female legislators formed a women's caucus in the National Assembly to review legislation for gender sensitivity.

Gender-based violence, especially beatings and rape, is increasing. A national plan to combat such violence has been drawn up and two pieces of legislation passed: the Combating of Rape Act 2000 and the Domestic Violence Act 2002. In the former, rape has been defined in broader terms and allows for the prosecution of rape within marriage. Longer prison sentences are provided for and ministers speak out against violence. The police have



Women are trained in the gemstones industry

also undergone gender sensitisation. Centres for abused women and children have been set up and staffed by specially trained female police officers. Safe houses have been opened.

The infection rate of HIV/AIDS is 22.5% of all people in the 15–49 year age group with about 1 in 9 females infected. Among the females in the 15–24 year age group, the rate is almost 1 in 5 and is over double the rate of males in the same age group. The NWM is running a UNFPA-supported programme on mainstreaming gender in young people's sexual and reproductive health programmes.

The NWM has been involved from the outset with national poverty reduction plans. A gender perspective has been integrated in the National Development Plan and gender development projects have been run countrywide. The NWM hopes to establish a National Women in Development Council to which all NGOs will affiliate and which will lead in promoting women's economic activities.

The Namibian Constitution prohibits discrimination against women, including employment discrimination. The Married Persons Equality Act prohibits discriminatory practices against women married under civil law. In practice, however, women married under customary law often continue to be discriminated against.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM was a department within the Office of the President until it was upgraded to ministry level. It is now the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare headed by a Minister. Its staff has grown from 32 to over 100 officers, including those in regional offices. It enjoys closest relations with the Office of the President, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Namibian Mission at the UN in New York. The women and gender directorate of the NWM works towards ensuring gender mainstreaming in all public and private sector programmes to achieve gender equality.

Partnerships

The NWM works with NGOs and civil society especially on projects to economically empower women. It works closely with international partners. It has received information and assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat on gender-responsive budgeting, Gender Management Systems, and violence against women and children. Regionally, the SADC Trade Fair, organised by the Women in Business Network, has helped women entrepreneurs reach markets abroad.

Concerns for the Future

Namibia will focus on combating violence against women and children, and on women and health as statistics show that both are on the increase.

Nigeria

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	96,200	111,300	126,900
Female population (% of total)	49.8	49.7	50.7
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	35	36	37
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	5.3	15.4	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	61.6	52.8	43.9
Male	40.6	34.0	27.8
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	2	2
Male	..	6	6
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	58	47
Male	56	56	47
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	114	112	110
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	5.1
Male	..	..	2.5

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Nigeria places priority on the following:

1. Human Rights of Women
 2. Violence Against Women
 3. Women in Power and Decision-making
 4. The Girl-child
 5. Women and the Economy
- Followed by: 6. Women and Health; 7. Education and Training of Women; 8. Women and Poverty; 9. Women and Armed Conflict; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women in the Environment; and 12. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women.

A Decade of Action

Following the 1995 Beijing conference, the Nigerian Government held a series of workshops in order to sensitise the public on the outcomes and what they meant. The long years of military rule, however, stymied the advancement of women until the return to civilian democratic rule in 1999. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) was upgraded from a commission to a full federal ministry and is now the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Youth Development.

A National Policy on Women, launched in 2000, recognised and placed emphasis on a multi-sectoral approach to the implementation of the gender agenda. A National Consultative and Co-ordinating Committee has been established to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the African Plan of Action.

Nigeria acceded to CEDAW in 1985 and to its Optional Protocol in 2004. It is ranked at 122 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Human Rights of Women

Women's human rights are important to Nigeria and are the basis for advocating the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and the girl-child, and women's enjoyment of basic rights. Achievements thus far include the establishment of a Human Rights

The education and training of women is being increasingly emphasised

Commission, National and Zonal Task Forces on the girl-child, and legislation against early marriage, widowhood and harmful traditional practices affecting women and girls, including female genital mutilation. Gender Desks have also been established in police stations to handle reports on gender-based violence which is a widespread problem.

Sexual exploitation on a commercial basis is also a serious problem and is linked to international trafficking of women and the spread of HIV/AIDS. Nigeria is engaged in combating the trafficking of women but, according to the Nigeria's 4th and 5th CEDAW Periodic Reports (2002), such traffickers are rarely apprehended and successfully prosecuted; law enforcement is too weak and the profits from trafficking too attractive for deterrents to work.

In the northern areas, *sharia* criminal law has not always checked discrimination against women, and in the south, customary laws and practices such as widowhood rites and women's succession and inheritance of property have impeded the promotion and protection of human rights.

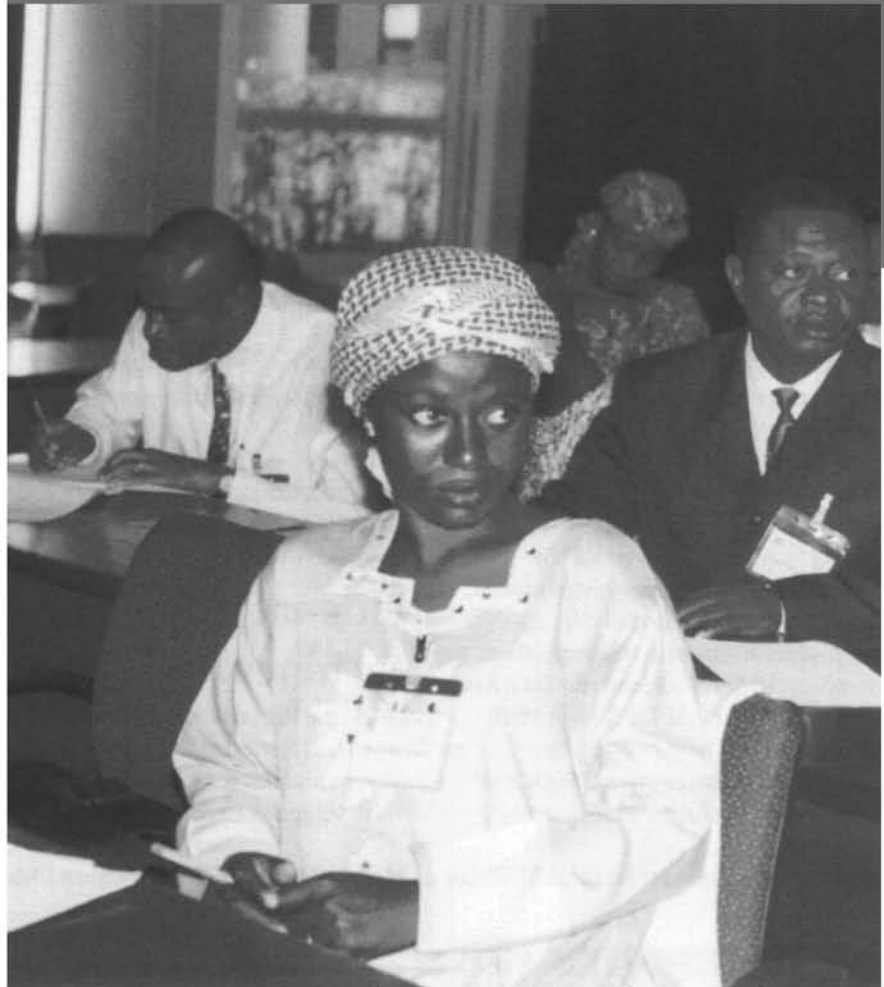
To help spread awareness of the rights of women, Nigeria has translated CEDAW into the three major Nigerian languages.

The Girl-child

Nigeria reported continued widespread and deep-rooted discriminatory practices against the girl-child, especially in access to education. Measures taken to redress this include the Child Rights Bill, a National Summit on Children (2000) which discussed the development of the girl-child and a special emphasis on encouraging girls in the revised National Policy on Education. NGOs have been especially active in programmes on the girl-child.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The 2000 National Policy on Women provided for affirmative action to increase to 30% the ratio of women representatives in the legislative and executive arms of government and in the leadership



hierarchies of political parties. In 2002, Nigeria reported that 13.6% of federal ministers and 27% of Parliamentary Secretaries were female. The number of female political representatives, however, was low (2002): 2.8% in the Senate and 3.3% in the House of Representatives.

A number of women now head some national institutions and agencies. There have been major gains, too, in the judiciary where most states and the Federal Capital Territory have female High Court judges, who now make up 30% of the numbers country-wide.

The NWM has set up a National Action Committee on Women in Politics to develop strategies for the effective mobilisation and participation of women to register, vote and stand as candidates in the electoral process.

Women and the Economy

Women's economic self-reliance is recognised as a tool for all-round empowerment if sustainable development is to be achieved. There are no manifest discriminatory practices against women in recruitment and employment though the reality is different. In banking, for example, female recruits must commit to not marrying for a period of time. Female employment,

moreover, largely runs on traditional lines: typists, secretaries in the urban areas; agriculturalists and working in the informal sector. Widespread female unemployment has also forced many women into prostitution or made them prey to traffickers.

Defeminisation of poverty is also a high priority. The National Economic Policy, National Poverty Eradication Programme and the Poverty Reduction Strategies Programme all recognise the importance of a gender equality perspective. Gender issues have been integrated into the MDGs and indicators developed on the various goals to enhance monitoring and various programmes are being implemented sectorally.

A National Poverty Alleviation Agency has been established with special grants to women. The national poverty eradication programme, established in 2000, granted about 160 million Naira (about £85,000) to small-scale enterprises run by women. Funds were disbursed through the national umbrella women's NGO. Also, most Women Development Centres in all the local government authorities are designated as poverty alleviation centres.

The lower house of the National Assembly has recommended the

implementation of gender-responsive budget initiatives to the Executive for the 2004 budget and efforts are being made to generate and analyse data on women's activities in the informal sector.

Women and Health

Gender issues have been effectively integrated in the development of various health policies, including HIV/AIDS. A multi-sectoral approach has been taken to combat HIV/AIDS (the infection rate has risen from 1.8% in 1992 to 5.4% in 1999) with all partners fully involved. Key partners include government, NGOs and development agencies. Strategic actions

to address gender issues in HIV/AIDS include:

- Approval by the Federal Government for a national curriculum on sexual education;
- A national reproductive health policy;
- A national blueprint on HIV/AIDS; and
- A national emergency response action plan on HIV/AIDS.

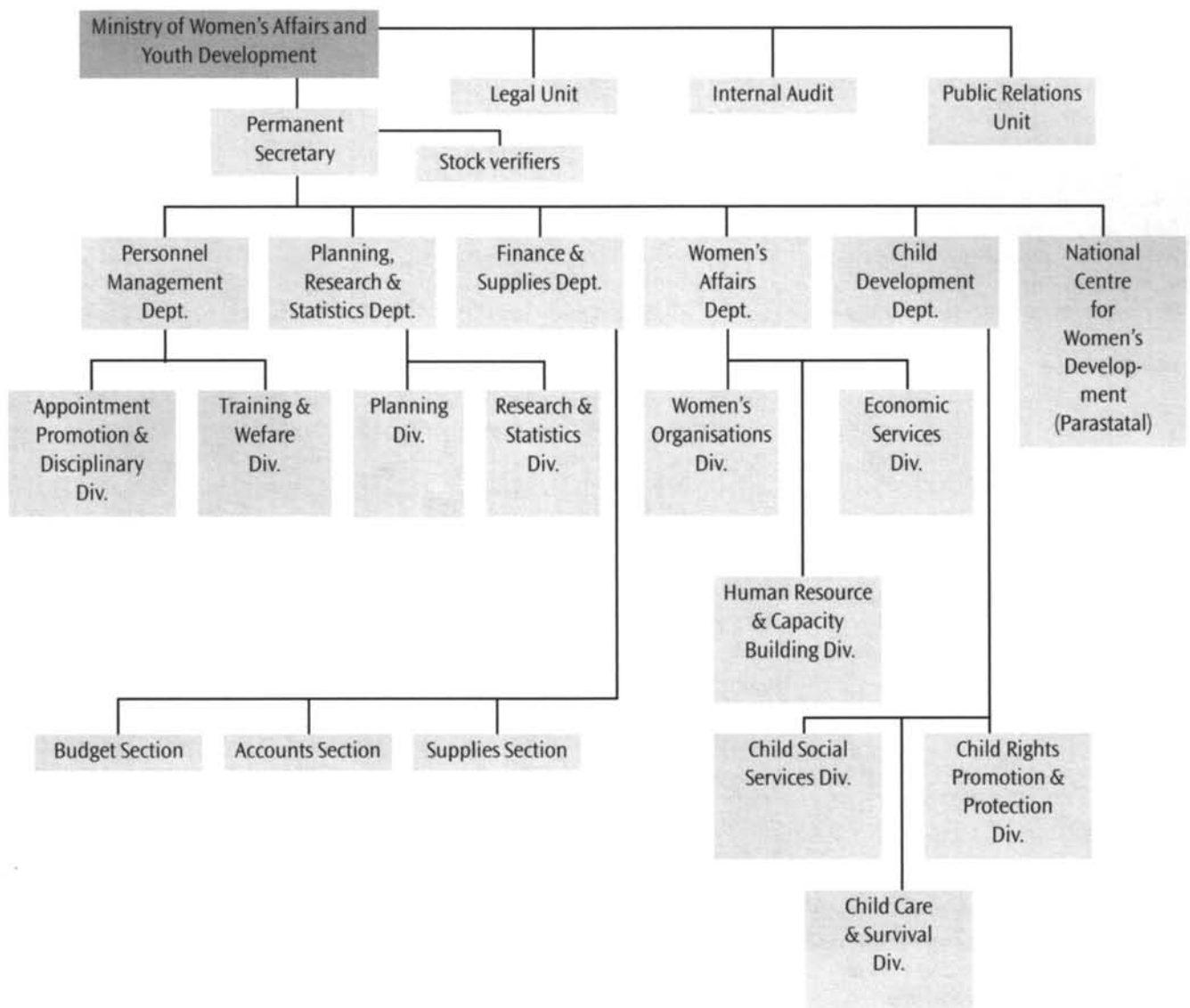
National Women's Machinery

In 1995, the National Commission for Women was converted into a ministry with responsibility for women's affairs, child development, social welfare and

rehabilitation. By 1999, the social welfare and rehabilitation departments had been moved to another ministry and replaced by the youth department. Since then, the Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Youth Development has been Nigeria's NWM.

The senior Minister is in charge of women's and children's issues and the Minister of State is responsible for youth development. Staffing levels have risen from 366 in 1995–99 to 530 in 1999–2003. During the same periods, the ministry's budget allocation rose from 0.2% of the national budget to less than 1%, one of the lowest for a federal ministry. Since 2001, the ministry as NWM has

Chart 16.1: Nigerian Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs Organisation Chart (2004)



worked with other sectors of government to pass legislation at national and state levels on harmful traditional practices affecting women and girls. During this period, inter-ministerial and sectoral collaboration with the NWM on gender issues has increased and more policy-makers and opinion formers sensitised on women's rights, and gender and development concerns. The NWM reports that virtually all sectors, e.g., agriculture, health, environment, water resources and education, take gender concerns into account in their development programmes.

Constraints

The advancement of women faces several constraints. Traditional and cultural practices remain entrenched; the NWM's low budgetary allocation and similar under-funding for other gender machineries restrict activities; affirmative action policies are not implemented; literacy, especially among women (about 56%), remains low; and population growth (2.9% annually between 1975 and 2001, and projected to grow by 2.3% annually between 2001 and 2015) puts a strain on resources.

Partnerships

The NWM has worked closely with NGOs to advance gender equality. NGOs were fully mobilised and involved in the writing of Nigeria's 4th and 5th CEDAW Periodic Reports. The Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative

and BAOBAB for Women's Rights, in particular, have helped in fighting the three cases where women had been sentenced to be stoned to death under sharia law. The NWM hopes that with a larger budget allocation, partnerships and commitments can be broadened and activities streamlined.

NGOs and community-based organisations have also been involved in setting up Family Law Centres to assist women to pursue their rights through the courts, combating trafficking in women and children, and educating, sensitising and promoting women's rights.

The NWM works closely with international partners. It has benefited from the Commonwealth Secretariat's published materials and looks forward to technical support in gender-responsive budgeting and mainstreaming, assistance in capacity building, more information materials and exchange programmes.

Concerns for the Future

Nigeria will concentrate on the basic tools which are a prerequisite for women's advancement: gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive budgeting and analysis, promotion of women's rights, gender advocacy and sensitisation, and strengthening institutional mechanisms. It will include capacity-building at all levels for relevant sectors, sensitising policy-makers and domesticating major international instruments.

Seychelles

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	100	100	100
Female population (% of total)			49.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	74	75	76
Male	67	68	69
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	17	18	10
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Seychelles places priority on the following:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Women and Poverty
 3. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 4. Women and Health
 5. Women in Power and Decision-making
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. The Girl-child; 9. Education and Training of Women; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women in the Environment; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

The Seychelles Government ratified CEDAW in 1992 to eliminate discrimination against women. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Social Development Division within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.

Violence Against Women

A gender audit conducted by the NWM has brought into focus the priority action areas of combating violence against women and the need for existing legislation to be strengthened. The Penal Code was amended in 1996 making it easier to prosecute offenders for sexual abuse. A Family Tribunal was created in 1998 to settle family disputes and in 2000 was given the same powers as courts to hear domestic violence cases. Since then, the number of cases has decreased but remained high, it is believed, because more victims are coming forward. The number of violent cases has decreased.

In Seychelles, it is compulsory for girls and boys to attend school for 13 years

Table 17.1: Registered Cases of Domestic Violence, Seychelles

Year	Total Number of Cases	Number of Violent Cases
1995	387	123
1996	485	106
1997	328	106
1998	273	68
1999	264	61
2000	274	85
2001	146	91
2002	246	60

The Government and NGOs have worked together to discourage domestic violence and the media trained on covering such violence with sensitivity.

Women and Poverty/Women and the Economy

Through various welfare programmes, families have been provided with safety nets, especially single parent households and households on very low incomes. Programmes include the Unemployment Relief, Beautification and Home Care schemes. The unemployment scheme provides six months' temporary employment and statistics for March 2003 showed that 80% of the recipients were women.

Women in full-time employment have access to day-care facilities. The Seychelles Industrial Development Corporation provides credits for men and women to set up small businesses and encourages entrepreneurship. In 1997, 41% of the approved loans went to women. NGOs have helped by organising skills training for women (e.g., budgeting, book-keeping) and educating families on the advantages of home-based revenue generating activities and cottage industries.

The Social Development Division is responsible for the implementation of strategies to combat poverty and, with all the stakeholders, will formulate a National Plan of Action on Social Development to, among other things, alleviate poverty and develop poverty monitoring mechanisms. As more single women are poor, this action plan will address the gender impacts of



macroeconomic policies.

The influence of global markets has increased the participation of women in employment in such sectors as offshore banking. The Indian Ocean Tuna Industry also employs a large number of women.

Women and Health

A Strategic Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS has been adopted. It has recognised that most of the emphasis in the past has been on women and young girls as they are at higher risk of infection. Little emphasis was therefore put on the education and sensitisation of males, especially in the 24–45 year group. Yet, statistics show that young girls are sexually involved with older men. The Ministry of Health is therefore striving to involve more male participation in health care services and peer education, and is targeting older men who may be abusing young girls.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The Government has created an environment for women to have the same opportunity as men in being promoted to decision-making positions. In addition to directly elected representatives, Parliament is made of nominated

members from political parties based on the percentage of votes they receive. Any party which has received 10% of the votes nationally but has won no constituencies may nominate members. This gives political parties the opportunity to increase female representation. As a result, 22% of the nominated members of Parliament for 2002 were women. In Parliament as a whole, the percentage of women representatives has risen from 23.5% in 1997 to 29% in 2004. Women make up 27% of the Seychelles Cabinet.

Women are especially represented in local government where they make up 58% of District Administrators, all of whom are appointed. In the police and defence forces, the judiciary and the diplomatic service, however, women are under-represented. There is no accurate information on the number of women in decision-making positions in the private sector.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming in the human resource plans of parastatals began in 1994 with a six-year Human Resource Development Plan. It is most advanced in the education and health sectors – though in the latter what is missing are male-oriented programmes and services,

especially in reproductive health and disease control.

In education, it is compulsory for both girls and boys to attend school for 13 years. In 1996, education policies, programmes and activities were amended and reviewed to incorporate gender in all aspects, including the school curriculum and material. In 2002, the Ministry of Education drew up a plan of action in response to the 'Education for All' goal of gender equity in education.

One of the major problems, however, is the lack of sex-disaggregated data for the monitoring and evaluation of gender activities. This data is necessary if government and NGOs are to implement policies, programmes and activities with greater gender sensitivity. There is also a lack of both quantitative and qualitative research on the attitudes and perceptions of women and men on various issues pertaining to gender equality.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Social Development Division in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and is operated through the Gender Unit in the Population and Development Section of that division. Since 1995, the NWM has been housed in different institutions: Ministry of Administration and Manpower Development (1995 - 1998), Ministry of Social Affairs and

Manpower Development (1998–2001) and since 2001 in its present ministry.

Staffing in the NWM's Gender Unit has always been limited to two or three people and it is clearly understaffed. Since 1995, the budget for activities has been included as part of the overall ministerial budget of the ministry and apportioned to the Social Development Division. There is no separate budget allocation for gender issues.

Until 2000, a National Gender Committee existed which adopted an integrated approach and brought together all government agencies and departments involved with gender issues. This committee is now being revived. The NWM has close relations with a number of ministries and departments.

Since 1997, the NWM has co-ordinated an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Strategy for Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) which especially emphasises teenage pregnancy and accessibility to services. Among other things, it has conducted a gender audit (2002) and, with an NGO, organised the media training on domestic violence which brought journalists face to face with some victims.

Partnerships

The NWM works with civil society to advance gender equality and development. NGOs are represented on several committees including that which oversees the co-ordination of the IEC

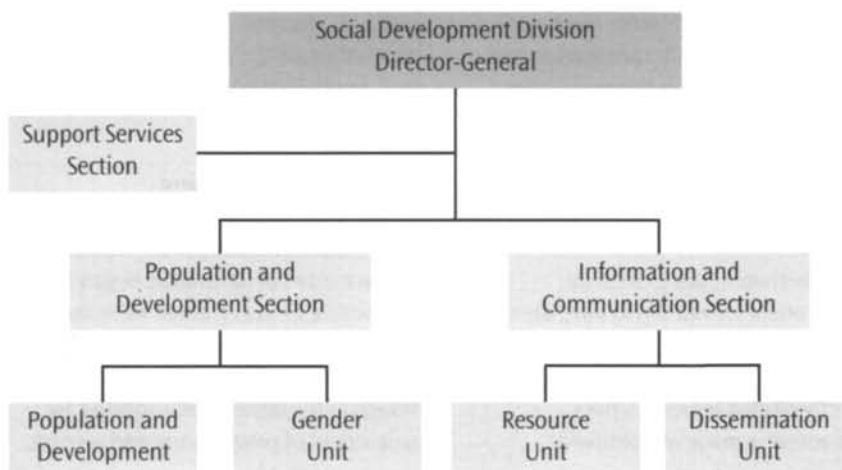
Strategy for ARH. The NGOs also join government officials in the monitoring and evaluation of the African Plan of Action.

The NWM works with a number of international partners on gender equality issues. It has benefited from the Commonwealth Secretariat's various publications, especially those on gender management systems. It looks towards technical support in the future and for support for the National Gender Committee when it is revamped.

Concerns for the Future

The Seychelles NWM reports that the top priority for action for the future in both Seychelles and the region should be violence against women. The second priority for the region, though ranked fifth for the Seychelles, should be the issue of women and decision-making. The NWM believes that the greater participation of women in the region would bring a fairer representation of ideas and add a gender perspective to policies, programmes and activities. It suggested that there was a need to research the underlying causes for the poor representation of women in politics and decision-making levels, and the role of institutions and women themselves in promoting gender equality.

Chart 17.1: The Structure of the Seychelles NWM (Social Development Division of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment)



Sierra Leone

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	4,000	4,500	5,000
Female population (% of total)	50.9	50.9	50.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	36	36	37
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	24
Male	..	..	29
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	0	0	1
Male	2	2	3
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	37	37	39
Male	34	35	36
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	185	182	180
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	2.9
Male	..	..	1.2

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined, the Government of Sierra Leone places priority on the following:

1. Peace (includes the issues: violence against women, human rights of women, and women and armed conflict)
2. Women and Poverty
3. Education and Training of Women
4. Women and Health

Peace, though not one of the Beijing priority areas as such, was chosen as a label which includes three priority areas affected by the decade of war against rebels.

A Decade of Action

Sierra Leone has identified its critical concerns based on the national realities of a country emerging from a decade of internal conflict which has resulted in thousands of civilians dead or disabled, an internal displaced persons problem consisting largely of women and children, and administrative and other governing structures ruptured. The Peace Accord was signed in 1999 but it was not until 2001/02 that rebel troops were disarmed and democratic elections held in May 2002.

After the 1995 Beijing conference, the priority areas were identified through workshops and seminars with policy-makers, development practitioners and the NGO community. Institutional structures have been established: the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (the National Women's Machinery or NWM); various women in development units/focal points in sectoral ministries, departments and agencies; the gender research and documentation centre at Fourah Bay College; and numerous NGOs.

Sierra Leone ratified CEDAW in 1998 and signed its Optional Protocol in 2000.

Peace

Sierra Leone has grouped the issues of violence against women, human rights of women and women in armed conflict under the umbrella priority of peace.

After the 1999 Peace Accord, various women's groups took the initiative to complement government efforts to restore a stable and peaceful environment. The Women's Movement for Peace was formed nationally, as was the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network, which involved women from Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia where conflict had spilled over. A large number of women were included in the peace media mission in Lomé in 1999.

Conflict has left an appalling aftermath. The NWM has involved civil society organisations, NGOs, educationalists, the police, and ministers and parliamentarians in efforts to curb violence against women and committees on gender-based violence now exist in the regions. The Family Support Units of the police and the Rainbow Centre of International Rescue Committee offer counselling and treatment to victims. About 35 cases of rape and gender-based violence are reported every month. A Legal Assistance Centre, with branches in the south, east and north has been established.

Various human rights organisations have also sprung up and work to raise awareness of the various international conventions highlighting the rights of women. The NWM disseminates information on CEDAW. Sierra Leone has yet to produce a CEDAW report and the convention itself needs to be

domesticated in national law. A Law Reform Commission will address legislation and a workshop has recommended amendments to remove discrimination against women.

In 2003, the NWM, government institutions, UN agencies and various civil society organisations held workshops, consultations and mobilisation rallies to help women make their submissions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) set up after the conflict. The TRC's report is being compiled and the question of reparation for survivors remains.

Women and Poverty

This too is an umbrella label which includes the Beijing priority areas of women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. Combating poverty is important to maintaining peace and stability and government policy has a strong focus on women and young people. A number of NGOs are also active. UNDP figures indicate that between 1990 and 2001, 57% of the population lived on less than US\$1 a day and that 46% of the entire population was malnourished. A Commonwealth expert is working to engender the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) now being prepared.

In rural areas, where 70% of the population live, subsistence farming

predominates and 55% of these farmers are women. Men control cash crop farming which accounts for the bulk of the country's agricultural production. Men therefore have control of the economic decision-making and women's work has become socially invisible and their contribution consequently undervalued. They lack opportunities for social, economic and, invariably, empowerment, advancement. The government budgetary allocations in various sectors are gender blind.

When micro-credit schemes were introduced for women, many of the recipients unfortunately assumed these payments were political compensation. The government has thus replaced this scheme with micro-financing. The Social Action and Poverty Alleviation Division of the National Social Action Commission will be transformed into a micro-financing institution that will work through providers to help women and other vulnerable groups. Much still needs to be done to help women improve their economic positions in terms of entrepreneurial training, accessing credit facilities without collateral and ownership of land.

More progress also needs to be made in the area of women in leadership positions. Their position vis-à-vis men is apparent from the table below:

This disparity is seen in other public areas. A proposal that a 30% quota be reserved for women and vulnerable groups in local government elections is being debated.

Table 18.1: Percentage of Women in Public Office and Government Departments (2003), Sierra Leone

Posts	Number of positions	Number of Women	Percentage of Women (%)
Presidential Candidates (2002)	9	1	12
Members of Parliament	112	16	15
Cabinet Ministers	22	2	14
Deputy Ministers/Ministers of State	17	3	18
Permanent Secretaries	30	2	7
Commissioners in 12 Commissions (including TRC)	21	6	29
Paramount Chiefs	149	9	7
Paramount Chiefs in Parliament	12	2	17
Judges	17	5	30
Magistrates	11	1	10
High Commissioners/Ambassadors	16	2	13
District Officers & Assistants	22	0	0
Provincial Secretaries	3	0	0

Women and Health

Improvement is high on the Government's agenda with a special emphasis on primary health care, reproductive health issues and HIV/AIDS. A National Secretariat for AIDS is now established in the Office of the President with focal points in all sectoral ministries, departments, agencies and NGOs. Gender concerns are being included in HIV/AIDS, malaria and reproductive health programmes.

After a decade of internal conflict, Sierra Leone is building a better life for its children

Education and Training of Women

The education system has been restructured to, among other things, place more emphasis on the education of the girl-child. There is an education master plan, the revised Education Act, affirmative action for promoting girls' education in the north and east, and sensitisation programmes on the importance of educating girls.

National Women's Machinery

In 1996, the incoming democratic government created the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to promote and advocate the rights and welfare of disadvantaged groups, especially women and children. In 1998, the ministry was merged with another to become the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs. The NWM operates from the Division of Gender and Children's Affairs. Unfortunately, as of late 2003, this division had no professional staff or director and relied on consultants from the Commonwealth and UNIFEM to carry out its work. The process of recruitment has, however, begun.

Two policies have emerged: one for gender mainstreaming and another on the advancement of women. These policies have resulted in the training of focal points, top civil servants and the creation of a parliamentary gender caucus.

The NWM has close relations with other ministries and departments.

Partnerships

The NWM's relations with NGOs and civil society are especially close as, in the absence of staff in the NWM's operational section, they are prominent in many activities including those on education for girls, gender-based violence and law reform. To make such partnerships more effective, the NWM believes it would be useful to monitor and evaluate the numerous registered NGOs.

Since the Peace Accord was signed in 1999, international partners have been helping Sierra Leone's national recovery. The Commonwealth Secretariat has



provided the ministry with gender experts and training workshops. The NWM looks forward to receiving Secretariat assistance in training and capacity-building the professional staff in the Gender and Children's Affairs Division.

The Secretariat and other international partners also supported the 2001 national consultation on post-conflict reconstruction where the gender impacts of conflict were discussed and a national action plan formulated. In 2002, the West Africa/Sierra Leone workshop on women in parliament brought together a wide range of international partners, including the Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, as well as political parties and the media.

Concerns for the Future

Education will be crucial for the development and advancement of women. Females make up over half the population and the adult illiteracy rate is about 80% so affirmative action will be required where there is inequity, especially in the education of women and the girl-child.

Reform and harmonisation of legislation will also be important. Laws

that discriminate against women need to be changed and CEDAW domesticated for gender equality to emerge.

Gender mainstreaming needs to be introduced nationwide rapidly if poverty reduction and equality targets are to be met.

For West Africa as a region, the adoption of the ECOWAS gender policy, mainstreaming and proposed gender management system will help countries in their quest for gender equality.

South Africa

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	1,254	1,450	1,602
Female population (% of total)	51.7	51.4	50.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	47	46	45
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	21.5	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	29.7	25.0	20.2
Male	34.3	30.0	25.5
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	97	83	86
Male	90	79	82
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	36	40	65
Male	31	..	61
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	3	5	4
Male	3	6	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	51	39
Male	55	49	39
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	45	50	74
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	34.3
Male	..	..	15.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. Figures not available.

This summary was compiled from South Africa's First Progress Report on the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and a draft Global Report to various international organisations (2004).

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of South Africa has identified the following for national action:

- Women and Violence/Human Rights of Women
- Women and Poverty
- Women and Health
- Women and Education
- Women and the Economy
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
- Women in Power and Decision-Making.

A Decade of Action

In support of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and within the context of South Africa's own national transformation goals, the Government has concentrated on adopting and passing policies and legislation for overall transformation and gender equality.

Key gains have included the development of a comprehensive machinery for the advancement of gender equality. Important milestones towards the establishment of a National Gender Machinery include: the Constitution; the drafting of the Women's Charter (1994); the Women's Economic Empowerment Policy, which lays the basis for the Government Gender Policy framework; and the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

South Africa ratified CEDAW in 1996. It is ranked at 96 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Violence Against Women/Human Rights of Women

The Government is committed to a strong, proactive and integrated programme to enable women to live a life free of violence and fear. Since the democratic government inherited a highly violent society from the apartheid state in 1994, it and, to a large extent, CSOs have done much work to address this problem.

South Africa initiated the development of the SADC Declaration on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children, which was adopted by SADC Heads of State

as an addendum to the SADC Declaration on Gender Development. Successful programmes and projects undertaken in respect of this national priority area include:

- Victim Empowerment – providing guidelines on handling victims of sexual offences, changing the profile of service advisers, and raising awareness through outreach activities, among others;
- Law Reform – introduction of the Domestic Violence Act 1998; the Recognising Customary Marriage Act 1998; the Maintenance Act; the Employment Equity Act, which also covers sexual harassment; and the Promotion of Equity and Prevention of Discrimination Bill, whereby gender violence constitutes gender discrimination; and
- Institutional Transformation – which involved the development of a National Action Plan on human rights and integrating the eradication of gender-based violence; establishment of a National Co-ordinating Committee on gender-based violence; establishment of Joint Management Centres on Crime; the development and implementation of specific gender policies dealing with violence against women; and mobilising all government levels, parastatals and civil society in the pursuit of gender equality.

In South Africa, 120 of 100,000 women report rape to the police. A co-ordinated attempt to understand the levels of this crime and respond across government in a comprehensive way is being put in place. The Cabinet has approved the Anti-Rape Strategic Framework which calls for a balanced approach in dealing with victims/survivors and perpetrators.

Progress has also been made in combating domestic violence, especially in the development of legislation, policies, programmes and identification of institutional mechanisms. Harassment remains a serious problem in schools – sexual violence amounts to 34% of reported violence in schools.

Human resources to tackle gender-based violence, including rape, however, remain scarce. For example, for effective



implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, South Africa needs sufficiently trained magistrates, prosecutors, court clerks, police officers, health and social workers and prison officials. Training is therefore an important on-going task.

Government action in tackling the trafficking of women and girls is still in the early stages with the South African Law Commission in the process of specific legislation to address the issue. South Africa has signed a number of international conventions on trafficking.

Women and Poverty

The Government places a high priority on poverty alleviation. Women, especially among the majority African community, are more likely to be poor than men. About 60% of female-headed households live in poverty, compared to about 30% among male-headed households. There is also a growing phenomenon of child-headed households, affecting especially the girl-child who has to support the family as a result of the death of parents for HIV/AIDS-related reasons.

The Government has sought to make a difference by initiating projects to improve access to basic infrastructure and services – safe water, sanitation, energy and fuel, and housing. Women have difficulty acquiring land tenure and access to economic resources such as credit facilities. In the small, micro and medium

enterprise sector, women continue to find access to credit a serious problem.

A number of government departments have launched programmes addressing the eradication of poverty among women. Projects to transfer technology have led to 1,459 women becoming involved in a range of activities from beekeeping to paper-making and food production. Another project assists rural craftswomen to add value to their craft by adding precious minerals to their products.

Women and Health

The Department of Health estimated that at the end of 2001, about 4.74 million, or 1 in 9, South Africans were HIV-positive – 56% of them women. Women's vulnerability to being infected and affected by HIV/AIDS is inextricably linked with gender equality at all levels. Key areas of concern include prevention of parent-to-child transmission, provision of anti-retroviral drugs in the public sector, and legislation regarding post exposure prophylaxis.

The HIV/AIDS/STD Strategy Plan for South Africa 2000–2005 recognises that the imbalances and inequalities between women and men have placed women in a position not to be able to negotiate safer sex with their partners. The gendered dimension of the epidemic, however, has not fully been taken into consideration.

No less among other women and

The majority of workers in the service industry are women who fill jobs at the lower levels

health concerns are maternal care and delivery, greater access to health facilities and antenatal care, maternal mortality, fertility and knowledge of contraception methods.

Women in Power and Decision-making

An area in which substantial progress has been made is that of advancing women in political and decision-making positions. In 1994, 25.4% of the Legislature were women; in 2003, this figure stood at 31.2%. At provincial levels, however, on average women make up 24% of lawmakers with only three provinces having 30% women's participation.

Women make up 33% of the Cabinet (that is, nine out of 27 Ministers) and the percentage of women Deputy Ministers is 50%.

The pace of change in local government has been slower though some progress has been made – in 2002 less than 17% of Councillors were women but in 2003 this had risen to 28%.

Progress has also been slow in management positions in the public sector, where the national percentage of women's representation is 23.9% – below the 30% target in 1999 which the Government had set for itself. Women comprise only 9.5% of municipality managers and 13% of officials in the Planning and Implementation Support Centres.

Table 19.1: Representation of Women Senior Managers in the Public Service (%), South Africa

Year	Female	Male
1997	13	87
1998	14	86
1999	17	83
2000	20	80
2002	24	76
2003	23.9	76.1

Education and Training of Women

The South Africa Schools Act 1996 provides for equal education for boys and girls and facilitates access to schooling for mothers and young women. The Department of Education established



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gender equity structures, including a gender sub-directorate to address gender equity functions; a Gender Co-ordinating Committee comprising Gender Focal Points from 10 departments of education; and the Gender Equity Directorate within the Department of Education. Successful programmes and projects included Education and Training of Women: Curriculum 2005; Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service; Students and Youth Programmes; and Human Rights: Constitutional and Human Rights education incorporated into curriculum 2005.

Women and the Economy

The Women's Budget Initiative (WBI), introduced in 1996, is a successful practice in engendering women's participation in economic structures and decision-making (see Box 19.1, page 81). It ensures that every item in the government budget is examined for the differential impacts it may have on women and men. The WBI has been successful in bringing gender issues to the attention of policy-makers and has helped to build linkages with critical players in the legislative, civil society and amongst statutory bodies. Some of the success factors in terms of the Department of Finance's input into the process have been its commitment to:

- Developing a statistical database on impact by gender;
- Targets and indicators of gender equality;
- Performance review mechanisms; and
- Unpaid labour and GDP.

As part of its affirmative action policy, the

Government has set targets for increasing the representation of women in the public service. Employment Equity legislation also aims in part to increase the representation of women in decision-making roles in both public and private sectors.

Since 1994, the Government has worked to fast-track women into the economy, especially by creating an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in trade and small and medium enterprises. In the Black Economic Empowerment Strategy, the Government tries to ensure that black women will be targeted for opportunities. Women-owned enterprises and co-operatives are supported under the National Small Business Act and in its Technology for Women in Business programme, the Department for Trade and Industry supports women's advancement through technology.

South Africa also addresses the low female employment rate (33.3% in the 15–65 year age group, compared to 46.6% for males in 2001), with 63.9% of the women in the workforce concentrated at the clerical level and 14.7% of women in the crafts and related trades. Unemployment among women is also increasing – from 27.8% of the female workforce in 2000 to 34.7% in 2002. More women, however, have access to benefits and better working conditions.

Legislation

With the active input of women, a significant number of laws and initiatives that touch on central gender issues have been passed since 1994, including:

Box 19.1: The Women's Budget, South Africa

Gender-responsive budgeting (sometimes known as 'Women's Budgets') are allocations of public spending that take account of a gender perspective to ensure that a government's national and international commitments to achieve gender equality goals, such as in work or education, are reflected in resource allocation.

The South African Women's Budget Initiative, which began in the mid-1990s, contains two elements:

- Re-writing of the Tax Tables in 1995;
- The liberalisation of abortion in 1996;
- The sexual harassment code in the Labour Relations Act of 1996;
- The maternity provisions and breastfeeding code in the Labour Relations Act of 1996;
- The Customary Marriage and Domestic Violence Acts of 1998;
- Support on finance for Women's Budget initiative;
- Introduction of separate taxation for married men and women;
- Provision for ownership by women in land and housing legislation;
- The women's lobby in parliament influenced the passing of the Termination of Pregnancy Act and the inclusion of gender concerns in the criteria in the Films and Publications Act, the Maintenance and the Domestic Violence Acts of 1998.

Women and men have equal rights with regard to the acquisition, change and retention of nationality. Marriage to a non-citizen or the change of nationality of a husband does not affect a woman's nationality. Clauses and laws guaranteeing women's rights as human rights include:

- The Equality Clause in the Bill of Rights;
- Provisions for affirmative action, including legislative and other arrangements to protect or advance those who have been disadvantaged;
- The clause on freedom and security of the person who provides for the right to make decisions concerning reproduction and control over one's body;
- The clause guaranteeing legal and other measures to promote land reform and equitable access to natural resources to redress past effects of racial discrimination;
- The Statement that in conflicts between the Constitution and the Customary Law, the Constitution will take precedence;
- Constitutional provision for socio-economic rights to housing, health care, food, water and social security;
- Bill of rights provision to basic and further education.

- The first is a process largely 'outside' government, in which NGOs (in collaboration with parliamentarians) monitor and critique the gender-sensitivity of budgetary allocations. This process attempts to involve citizen participation in the area of budgets from which many people – especially from disadvantaged social groups – have long been excluded;
- The second element is a government initiative co-ordinated by the Finance Ministry to undertake gender analysis of the budget.

Perhaps the most visible result of the 'inside' government initiative was the inclusion of discussion of gender issues in documents tabled on budget day in 1998 and 1999. These discussions were published within the documents rather than separately in order to promote recognition that gender is a mainstream issue.

Another significant result concerns the medium-term expenditure framework. The Department of Finance has accepted that the money amounts, in addition to physical outputs and outcomes, be disaggregated by a number of factors, including by sex.

National Women's Machinery

The National Gender Machinery (NGM) comprises an integrated package of structures located at various levels of state and civil society, and within the statutory bodies. This structure evolved from the belief that the function of gender mainstreaming in South Africa lies with all government, civil society and NGO bodies. The components of the gender machinery are the facilitators of the gender programme and all have co-ordinating and monitoring roles.

Within the Executive Branch, the NGM comprises:

- The Cabinet: As outlined in the National Policy Framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, the functions of the Cabinet Cluster Committees in addressing gender issues are to adopt and implement the national gender policy; ensure that Cabinet discussions are engendered; provide access to information; ensure that the integrated co-ordination framework results in measurable sector-specific outputs; and make recommendations on policy and legislation with regard to gender;
- The Office on the Status of Women (OSW): The OSW is located in the Presidency and is the principal co-ordinating structure for the national machinery on gender equality. It is the centre for developing and maintaining a national gender programme and responsible for developing national action plans and for monitoring

progress. It also liaises with CSOs;

- Gender Focal Points within National Departments: At the operational level, the main responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the National Gender Policy rests with individual government departments through the Gender Focal Points or Gender Units.
- Within the Legislature, the NGM consists of:
- The Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement of Quality of Life and Status of Women: The committee monitors progress and also assesses whether government policy implements national and international commitments on gender equality. It also monitors gender mainstreaming in government policies and programmes, including the national budget and fiscal framework;
 - The Parliamentary Women's Caucus: This Committee, formed in 1994, brings together women from all political parties. Its main object is to bring women parliamentarians together to examine issues that affect them. It also looks at the transformation of parliament and creating an enabling environment for women MPs and works closely with the Women's Empowerment Unit on training and skills development for women MPs;
 - The Women's Empowerment Unit: This Unit is located in the Speakers' Forum, a structure that brings together speakers from the national and provincial legislatures. It identifies

issues that hinder women's full participation in the law-making process. Its main focus is training and skills development for women lawmakers.

The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), established in 1997, is an integral part of the NGM. It is an independent statutory, advisory, and research body. The Commission comprises a Secretariat and Commissioners, who are nominated by the public and appointed by the President following the recommendations from a Multiparty Parliamentary Committee. There are currently 11 Commissioners.

The key functions of the Commission include monitoring and evaluating of policies and practices of the government, private sector and other organisations to ensure the promotion and protection of gender equality; reviewing of existing and proposed legislation from a gender perspective; providing public education; investigating inequality and complaints on gender related issues and monitoring and reporting on compliance with international conventions.

NGOs and civil society groups and organisations are also part of the NGM.

Partnerships

The Government liaises and consults with international organisations, civil society bodies such as NGOs, business and church organisations in response to its national and international commitments to the advancement of gender equality and the implementation of its Gender Action Plan.

Concerns for the Future

South Africa, at the time of reporting, has yet to articulate a strategy for women's empowerment and gender equality. Across the board, co-ordination also remains a principal challenge for the Gender Programme both at national and provincial levels. While recognition of gender issues is demonstrated at Cabinet level, at the administrative level this remains a critical gap in advancing gender mainstreaming.

At the policy level, the gender mainstreaming strategy has been adopted but expertise of resources has not been put in place to effect this. Key policies therefore do not often reflect gendered dimensions of the Beijing critical areas of concern.

The lack of sufficient financial and human resources for the gender machinery has also been cited as a key constraint to mainstreaming gender.

Swaziland

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	800	900	1,000
Female population (% of total)	50.8	50.8	51.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	37	38	38
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	30.1	25.3	21.4
Male	26.3	22.0	19.2
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	88	94	94
Male	87	93	92
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	36	41	47
Male	30	34	40
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	3	5	4
Male	5	6	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	60	46
Male	54	55	45
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	77	78	101
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	39.5
Male	..	..	15.2

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Swaziland has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Human Rights of Women
- Violence Against Women
- Women and Poverty
- Women and the Economy.

A Decade of Action

A major achievement of the Government's commitment to gender equality is the inclusion of gender and development issues in the National Development Strategy (NDS). The NDS is a 25-year vision governing national development initiatives, and a major objective is to achieve the goal of equality between women and men and recognise it as a necessary ingredient for sustainable national development.

The Government has introduced the Millennium Action Programme as a monitoring tool for gender equality and the empowerment of women. This reporting framework provides a matrix on specific areas, strategies, actions and target dates.

The National Gender Machinery is the Gender Co-ordination Unit in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Swaziland acceded to CEDAW in 2004. The country is ranked at 109 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Women are under-represented in positions of power and decision-making in Swaziland. To redress this, the Gender Co-ordination Unit has conducted a training of trainers workshop on women in politics and decision-making and a *Voter Education and Training Manual* produced as a training tool and resource kit for trainers. In 2003, the Government, in collaboration with local NGOs, conducted a campaign entitled, *Vote and Vote for a Woman*, targeting the national elections in October of that year. These initiatives have

increased women's representation in politics from 12% to 19%.

Efforts have been made to 'engender' the draft constitution. A workshop was held with the Women's Caucus to discuss the draft. The Gender Co-ordination Unit, in collaboration with NGOs, also reviewed the draft constitution and made recommendations to the Constitutional Drafting Committee on 'engendering' the document.

A considerable number of women have been appointed to Parliament by the Head of State and the House of Assembly has elected a woman to the position of Deputy Speaker.

Human Rights of Women

A national workshop was held on women's legal and human rights issues. An outcome of the workshop was the launching of a campaign to remove the minority status of women. The Government has also initiated, with the assistance of the local UNDP office, a Gender, Law Reform and Human Rights project aimed at building capacity in the Attorney-General's Office to enable gender and human rights perspectives to be incorporated into its activities. The Law Reform exercise has begun and is targeting three pieces of legislation: the Marriage Act, Deeds Registry Act and Administration of Estate Act.

Violence Against Women

The Government is working with local NGOs, such as the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAAGA), to eradicate gender-based violence. SWAAGA has increased the number of Drop-in Clinics throughout the country as part of an effort to decentralise their services. Police officers have been given special training on how to deal with gender-based violence, such as rape. The Government has established a Child Protection Unit within the Department of Police to deal with, inter alia, cases of child abuse.

Women and Poverty

Access to and control over land and capital, particularly by women, are crucial



issues for the attainment of sustainable economic development in Swaziland. The issue of land ownership is being tackled in various forums, including the Urban Development Project, the Land Policy and the Settlement Policy. Lack of access and control over resources has been a major factor in the relatively high incidence of poverty, particularly among women. This vulnerability, combined with the minority status of women in Swaziland, has led to the feminisation of poverty. The Government is addressing these disparities through a process of legal reform, with a focus on family law issues.

The Government has established a Poverty Task Force with the responsibility of producing a national Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan (PSRAP). Gender is one of the eight priority areas identified by the task force. The PRSAP provides an analysis of the linkages between the causes of poverty, macro-structural and sectoral policies. A gender perspective will be included in all the priority areas outlined in the final document.

Gender Mainstreaming and Budgeting

An integrated approach to gender equality has been initiated as a

programme with technical and financial assistance from UNDP. The programme aims to enhance awareness of the need for gender balance and equip targeted sectors with the necessary skills to bridge gaps. It also harnesses the support of policy-makers, development agents, women and men in support of gender equality. The strategy for promoting gender equality under this programme is based on six mutually reinforcing approaches:

- Participatory and Rural Communication Appraisal;
- Media Awareness;
- Social and Economic Gender Analysis;
- Research into Custom and Tradition;
- Gender-focused responses to HIV/AIDS;
- Gender, Law and Development.

Gender-sensitive planning and budgeting is part of the SADC Plan of Action whereby member states are urged to promote the effective implementation of gender and development activities. Participants from central ministries and the national machinery in Swaziland attended a regional training workshop on gender-sensitive planning and budgeting for national machineries for the advancement of women. A workshop for Gender Focal Points and the Gender Consortium (for NGOs) followed with the

aim of sensitising them to gender budgeting and introducing it in Swaziland. A workshop for policy-makers and planners to facilitate the process of engendering budgets is planned as the next step in the process.

National Women's Machinery

The current institutional framework for effective implementation of the National Gender Policy consists of the Gender Co-ordination Unit, Gender Focal Points (government sector) and the Gender Consortium (NGO sector).

The Gender Co-ordination Unit, established in 1996, is under the Ministry for Home Affairs and is mandated with the responsibility for co-ordinating all gender issues in the country and facilitating the mainstreaming of gender concerns in all areas of development.

A Gender Policy Statement has been formulated by the Gender Task Force as a forerunner to a wider national policy. The Gender Co-ordination Unit, together with UNDP and other stakeholders, has further consulted with the wider sectors of society on this policy and has produced a final document, which is awaiting Cabinet approval at time of reporting.

The Government has set up the Swaziland Committee on Gender and Women's Affairs (SCOGWA), comprising governmental, non-governmental and private sector representatives. The committee is responsible for developing the gender programme through lobbying and advocacy. SCOGWA assisted the national representation at the 1995 Beijing conference and was instrumental in preparing a position paper.

Swaziland has prepared a profile of the National Gender Machinery for the United Nations Division on the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) and drafted a national proposal for the capacity building of the national gender machinery.

Partnerships

Swaziland develops its work on gender in collaboration with national NGOs, international organisations and regional agencies.

Uganda

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	16,300	19,200	22,200
Female population (% of total)	50.3	50.2	50.0
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	48	48	48
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	1.3	2.1	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	56.5	49.7	43.2
Male	30.7	26.4	22.5
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	83	106
Male	..	92	113
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	10
Male	..	..	14
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	1	2
Male	2	2	4
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	47	44	43
Male	46	44	42
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	100	90	81
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	7.8
Male	..	..	3.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Uganda places priority on the following:

1. Women in Poverty/Women in the Economy
2. Women and Health
3. Human Rights of Women/Women in Power and Decision-making
4. The Girl-child/Education and Training of Women
5. Violence Against Women

A Decade of Action

Wide consultations following the 1995 Beijing Conference led to the adoption of the National Action Plan of Women (NAPW) for 1999–2004. This plan defines Uganda's priority areas for action (above) and sets out monitoring indicators for accessing progress. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Directorate of Gender and Community Development in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Uganda ratified CEDAW in 1985. It is ranked at 113 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

Women are one of Uganda's hidden growth reserves, providing most of the country's agricultural labour (over 70%), but their productivity is constrained by widespread inequality ranging from access to education and health care, to employment and decision-making at different levels. This acknowledgement is critical if Uganda's target of reducing the proportion of the population below the absolute poverty line from the current level of 35% to less than 10% is to be met by 2015.

Strategies to address poverty, income generation and economic empowerment of women are embedded in the country's Poverty Eradication Action Plan. Poverty has been defined as the lack of basic needs and services such as food, clothing, bedding, shelter, paraffin, basic health care, roads, markets, education, information and communication; also the

lack of opportunities for survival and employment, as well as a group's exclusion from accessing certain services or benefits or from having a say.

In these definitions, women emerge as the majority among the poor. Statistics also show that though Uganda has managed to reduce the proportion of the population living below the poverty line (i.e., on less than US\$1 per day) from 56% in 1992 to 35% in 2000, fewer women than men have moved out of poverty.

Increasing women's access to credit has been a key strategy for economic empowerment. There are several micro-finance institutions, 69% of whose borrowers are female mainly in commerce (72%), services (63%), animal husbandry (60%), and manufacturing (48%). However, most of these institutions are small and have a very low resource base. Most are also urban-based, whereas over 80% of women live in rural areas and therefore women's credit needs are not fully addressed.

Statistics for 1993–2000 show that although there is steady improvement in narrowing the income gap, gender inequality persists. In 1993, the women's average wage per day in agriculture was (at about US 40 cents) 83% that of men's; in 2000 the gap had closed to 91% (at about US 51 cents). During that period, women's average income per month from small agricultural household enterprises in the informal sector fell from 82% (at US\$16.15) that of men's to 63% (at US\$23.94). In 2000, females made up 35% of employers, up from 15% in 1993.

Women and Health

The objective of the National Health Policy and Health Sector Strategic Plan is to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights is a key component of this strategy and aims to contribute to the reduction of neonatal, infant and maternal morbidity and mortality.

In spite of a number of initiatives, however, key indicators are still alarming. The maternal mortality ratio has reduced modestly from 700 per 100,000 live births in 1988 to 505 in 2000, and the total fertility rate stagnated at a high 6.9%



between 1995 and 2000. Poor access to health facilities, limited public confidence, inadequate staff and skills, poor infrastructure (roads), and the lack of equipment, drugs and other supplies such as blood, are some of the reasons.

In some districts, however, innovative measures have been introduced to bring down the high maternal mortality ratio.

HIV/AIDS was first identified in Uganda in 1982. It is estimated that 1.9 million Ugandans contracted HIV/AIDS since the onset of the disease; most have died. Of the 948,000 deaths caused by AIDS alone, 427,000 were women and 95,000 were children below 15 years. A Ministry of Health report in 2002 shows that of the 1,051,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Uganda, 51% are women and 10% children below 15 years. Infection rates are higher among women. The HIV prevalence rate, however, has fallen from over 18% in 1992 to 6.5% in 2001. It is estimated to have dropped to 6.1% in 2002 (*Uganda Human Development Report 2002*).

The pandemic has produced an increasing number of AIDS-related orphans; about 2.4 million children have lost either one or both parents to the disease, severely over-stretching the traditional African extended family social network. One in every four families cares

for orphaned children, who usually bear the brunt of domestic work. Worse, orphaned girls are vulnerable to the HIV infection through early marriages and sexual abuse.

National strategies recognise the intersection between gender and HIV/AIDS. Statistics show that the infection rate of HIV among adolescents of 15–19 years is six times higher for girls than boys. The Government is planning home-based HIV/AIDS Care Support Programmes, intensifying prevention of parent-to-child transmission, upgrading voluntary counselling and testing services, and strengthening communication for positive health living.

Human Rights of Women

Since 1995, efforts have been made to implement CEDAW in social, economic and political sectors. Thus far, three CEDAW country reports have been submitted and Uganda is in the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol.

The 1995 Constitution domesticates CEDAW in fundamental ways, providing for gender equality in all fields, prescribing affirmative action for women, and outlawing cultures, traditions and practices that undermine the welfare, dignity and interests of women.

Other laws that protect women's rights include the Penal Code, which forbids sexual intercourse with girls below 18 years of age and has a maximum penalty of death upon conviction. A requirement for spousal consent on matters concerning matrimonial land has also been included in the Land Act.

Concerns have been expressed that the Penal Code does not protect boys below 18 from sexual exploitation and abuse though a Bill to that effect has been prepared. The marriage, divorce and inheritance laws also continue to discriminate against women. Efforts at reform are in a draft Domestic Relations Bill which has unfortunately attracted resistance from religious quarters, some men and women, and institutions which argue that it would cause domestic disharmony, and harm culture and religious practices. The most contentious issues in the Bill include co-ownership of matrimonial property and regulation of polygamy. The Government and CSOs are trying to obtain consensus on these issues.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The number of women in top decision-making positions has increased since 1995. Key among the reasons is the Constitution and its affirmative action measures for women representatives in the National Assembly and quotas in local council structures.

The Constitution provides for one woman Member of the National Assembly

(MNA) per district and reserves at least one-third of local council positions for women. Following this example, women are now entering top positions in other fields as well.

Table 21.1: % Females in Public Office, Uganda

	1996 %	2003 %
Members of National Assembly	18.7	24.5
Cabinet Ministers	8.6	14.2
Ministers of State	10	26.6
Chairpersons, District Local Govts	0	1.8
Councillors, District Local Councils	42.3	38.9
Sub-county Chairpersons	1.6	2.3
Councillors at Sub-county level	48.5	44.5
Civil servants at highest scale (excluding teachers)	..	17.3
Chief Administrative Officers (Technical Heads of Districts)	..	15.3

Source: Africa Gender and Development Index (Uganda)

However, although there are more women in the National Assembly, very few are in top decision-making positions within the legislative assembly.

The Girl-child/Education and Training of Women

Under the Education Sector Strategic Investment Plan 1997–2003, all primary school-age children have benefited from

Universal Primary Education. Primary school enrolment increased from 2.7 million pupils in 1995 to 5.3 million in 1997 and 7.3 million by 2002 with girls forming 49%. This is as a result of sensitising communities to the importance of education for girls and also government and CSO education strategies for the girl-child.

Unlike primary education, however, secondary education in Uganda has significant financial implications for parents, guardians and students since they have to pay for it. Enrolment is therefore relatively low – 2000 figures show 10% of girls in that age group enrolled, compared to 14% for boys.

In order to improve literacy, the Government and CSOs have implemented adult literacy programmes, with over 80% of the learners being female.

Violence Against Women

A draft national strategy on gender-based violence for 2001–2003 was developed. It prescribed inter-sectoral as well as government, local government, CSO and development partner linkages. It identified concrete steps for the Government and other organs to respond to every type of gender-based violence. Government programmes include extensive gender sensitisation in communities and the police, and education on legal rights. Reporting and response to complaints have improved.

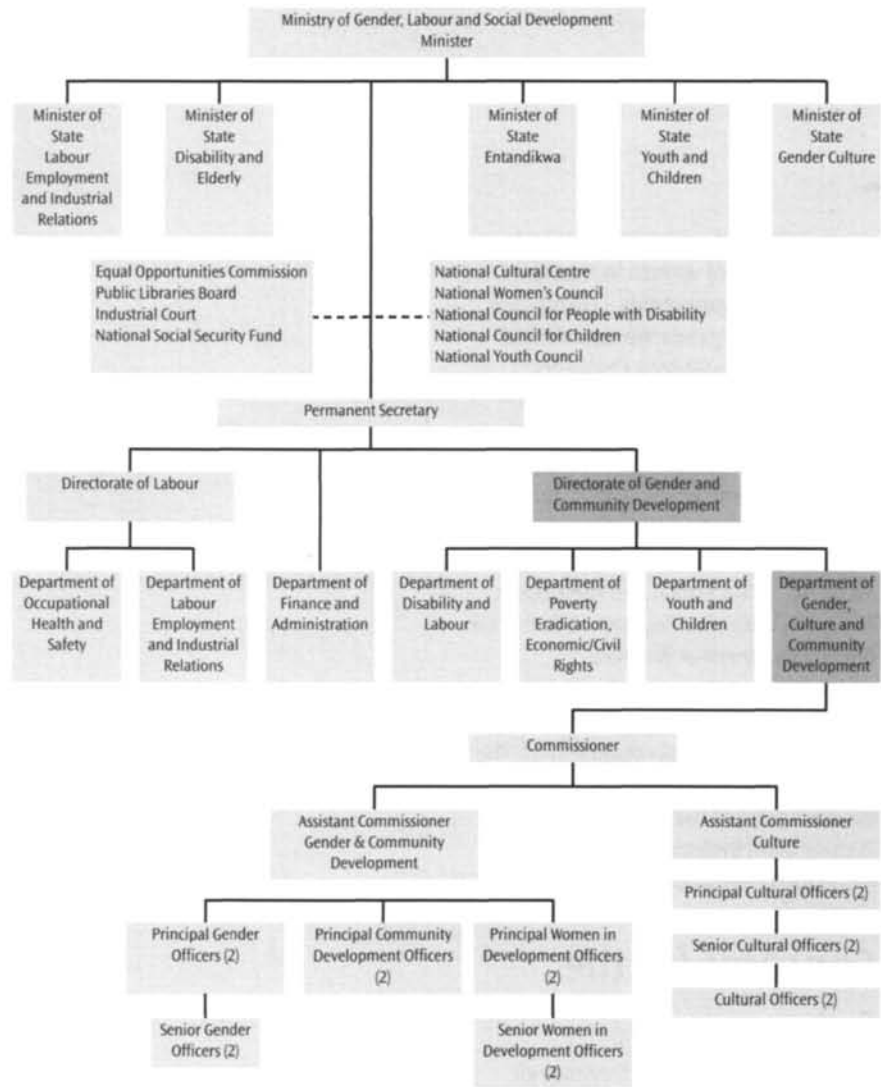
Government institutions in charge of addressing violence against women include the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Law Reform Commission, the judiciary (formal courts of law), local council committees (informal courts), the police and the Uganda Human Rights Commission. Family and Child Protection Units in the police and the khadi (Muslim) courts are also involved.

Unfortunately, law enforcement institutions, such as the police and courts are still ill-equipped to conduct investigations and to prosecute. They are further hampered by the fact that there are few statistics illustrating the extent and type of gender-based violence, especially domestic violence. Further, sex-

Women and children are the hardest hit by armed conflict



Chart 21.1: The Organisational Structure of the Uganda NWM



disaggregated data are lacking though most organisations note more reported cases of women and children. There have been deliberate efforts to involve CSOs, especially women's organisations in the process of law reform, legal education and issues of violence against women. The Government needs to commit sufficient funds to facilitate the implementation of the strategy, and more advocacy that domestic violence is a development concern.

Unlike elsewhere, trafficking in women has been defined in Uganda as procurement in the Penal Code, that is the luring of rural girls, especially orphans, with offers of employment in urban areas, usually to be forced into prostitution. In addition, armed conflict in the north has resulted in many young girls being abducted to serve as slaves to members of the rebel army and subjected to sexual slavery.

Public and institutional awareness of this trafficking is lacking. There is no specific policy and set plan to address the problem and few studies have been done to determine its extent. Hence, there are no clear targets and no budget for action.

National Women's Machinery

Between 1995 and 1998, the NWM was located in the Ministry of Gender and Community Development as a full directorate with two departments, one for gender affairs and the other for legal affairs. After a change in the administrative set-up, the NWM has been located in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. Since 2000, the Ministry has been the lead institution in for social development.

The NWM is supervised by a Director responsible for gender and community development. The technical arm of the NWM, however, is now a division (the Department of Gender, Culture and Community Development) which is one of four departments under the Director. The effect of this restructuring has been a reduction of staff gender specialists from 25 to 8.

The work of the NWM is strengthened by the Uganda Gender Forum, a

mechanism for the co-ordination of gender mainstreaming. The forum was conceived under the Commonwealth-led Gender Management Systems project, and brings together gender experts and advocates from government, civil society, development partners and academia.

Other institutional mechanisms that reinforce the NWM are the Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University; the National Women's Council which mobilises women from grassroots to national level; the Directorate of Gender and Mass Mobilisation in the Movement Secretariat; the Uganda Human Rights Commission; the Uganda Law Reform Commission; the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association; and the National Association of Women Organisations in Uganda, an umbrella organization for CSOs.

An Equal Opportunities Commission is to be established.

The NWM interacts with all ministries. Strengthened partnerships are envisaged under the Social Development Sector working group established recently by the ministry to engage in sector budget and

planning processes.

Resources

Funding of the NWM has remained low. The budget allocation for the NWM is approximately Ug. Shs.10 billion (US\$5 million), approximately 0.2% of the national budget. About Ug. Shs. 50 million (US\$25,000) is allocated to gender mainstreaming annually. Additional funds for gender mainstreaming activities are accessed through the District Development Project (DDP) covering six districts. The total support amounts to US\$600,000 and is provided by the Japanese Women in Development Trust Fund and the United Nations Capital Development Fund for three years ending 2005.

Partnerships

Collaboration between the NWM and NGOs is increasing especially in health, the economy, education, in implementation of the national gender policy and advocacy for women's rights. This collaboration has contributed

significantly to the advancement and empowerment of women in Uganda. Professional organisations – such as the Association of Uganda Women Medical Doctors, and the Women Engineers, Technicians and Scientists in Uganda – and country chapters of international organisations are also active. Uganda is also host to some international women's organisations such as Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange, Akina Mama wa Afrika, and the Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women.

Uganda has also worked with UN agencies, the Commonwealth Secretariat and other multilateral organisations. The Secretariat has supported the establishment of the Gender Management System in Uganda which has helped ministries and CSOs forge closer links.

Concerns for the Future

A Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (2003–2008) defines the strategic interventions for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in Uganda. They include:

- Strengthening the legal framework to protect women's rights. This will include the reform of family law, paralegal education and sensitisation of communities about the human and legal rights of women;
- Strengthening gender-planning capacity through training of planners and implementers as well as carrying out gender analysis of sectoral and local government budgets;
- Supporting relevant sectors (through mainstreaming) to address specific constraints faced by females e.g. high drop-out rates among girls in top primary classes and post-primary education, high maternal mortality ratio, the high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate especially among women, and the participation of women in market oriented agricultural production.

The major constraints to implementing the above are limited resources, both financial and human.

United Republic of Tanzania

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	25,000	29,600	33,700
Female population (% of total)	50.6	50.5	50.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	50	49	49
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	4.2	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	49	41.1	33.5
Male	24.5	20.1	16.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	52	48	48
Male	51	47	46
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	5
Male	..	..	5
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	0	0	0
Male	0	1	1
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	52	50	45
Male	49	47	44
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	102	103	104
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	8.1
Male	..	..	4

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Human Rights of Women
2. Women and Poverty/Women and the Economy
3. Women in Power and Decision-making
4. Education and Training of Women

In support of implementation, the Government has concentrated on: capacity-building (institutional strengthening of the National Women's Machinery for gender mainstreaming); gathering and disseminating sex-disaggregated data; and advocacy.

A Decade of Action

National policies for women and gender and community development have been implemented for some years. The women and gender policy outlines how women can advance socially, culturally, economically and politically and special focus has been placed on gender mainstreaming, women's ownership of property, their participation in decision-making and accessing technology and credit facilities for business.

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children. The United Republic of Tanzania ratified CEDAW in 1985. The country is ranked at 131 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Human Rights of Women

Over the years, the Government has repealed and reformed many laws which discriminate against women; it has also enacted gender-sensitive legislation. The protection of the dignity of women and children is now afforded in cases pertaining to rape, incest, female genital mutilation (FGM) and other sexual offences where hearings are held 'in camera' to ensure justice and fairness to both the victim and accused. The Land Act and Village Land Act 1999 provide for

complete gender equality in ownership, use and disposal of land, including village land which is normally held under customary law. The Tanzania Law Reform Commission has reviewed various laws relating to marriage, inheritance and the child with a view to proposing amendments.

Information on legislation on the rights of women and children is distributed to women in order that they may assert their rights when needed.

The United Republic of Tanzania has ratified a number of international conventions on women's equality.

Women and Poverty/Women and the Economy

Women's advancement and gender equality have been written into a number of key national documents, including the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (1999), the National Poverty Eradication Strategy, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the Tanzania Assistance Strategy which encompasses the joint efforts of the Government and the international community. Together, they form a framework for attaining gender balance, combating female poverty, strengthening institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming, incorporating gender perspectives in many sectors and organisations, and providing women with access to credit facilities and education, and owning the means of production.

Women agriculturalists and entrepreneurs have often found themselves with no means of acquiring capital. Various credit schemes aim to redress that. The Women's Development Fund, established by the NWM, provides credit to women entrepreneurs at grassroot levels with district councils contributing 10% of their revenue to women's and youth credit funds. Small government grants also support economic activities run by women. NGOs, the private sector and donor agencies have been encouraged to establish similar credit facilities. Some thought is being given to establishing a Women's Bank.

Businesswomen have also benefited from training in managerial and entrepreneurial skills and their presence

Box 22.1: The Gender Budget Initiative Campaign

The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) is a NGO that was registered in 1992. It is mainly engaged in facilitating the achievement of women's empowerment through social transformation, gender equity and equality.

The objective of TGNP's Gender Budget Initiative (GBI) is to strengthen consensus-building and advocacy skills for various groups in order to campaign effectively for gender equality. The aims of the exercise are:

- Broadening women's participation in policy-making and their exposure to management structures of public resources;
- Examining the budgeting process in the United Republic of Tanzania so as to see how budgets are allocated and the eventual utilisation of budgeted resources;
- Gauging the impact this allocation of resources has upon women and other less fortunate groups; and
- Laying the foundation of an effective consensus-building campaign to influence the public, decision-makers, law-makers and technocrats on the necessity to increase resources budgeted towards sectors where women and other less fortunate members of society are disadvantaged.

The ultimate aim of the GBI project is to influence a more appropriate allocation of resources through parliament to achieve more effective or efficient utilisation of available resources as per gendered community needs.

at domestic and international trade fairs has been facilitated.

The Government is working with NGOs to implement gender-responsive budgeting (*see Box 22.1*). Guidelines have been issued to ministries on ensuring that sectoral budgets reflect gender implications. The policies and programmes of the ministries of education, planning, agriculture and the Treasury have undergone gender analysis.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Efforts have been made to encourage more women to enter politics and step into decision-making and other leadership roles. In 2000, the Constitution was amended to increase the special seats in Parliament from 15% (1995) to 20%. The percentage of women MPs has thus increased from 18% in 1995 to 22.7% in 2000. The percentage of women's special seats in local councils has increased from 25% to 33.3% in the same period.

The NWM and NGOs have jointly encouraged women to contest elections, and workshops and seminars have been organised to improve the quality of women parliamentarians. Women MPs have also established a caucus to enable them to participate more effectively in Parliament.

Two funds, The Training Fund for Tanzanian Women and the Capacity Building Fund for Women, have run workshops to gender sensitise decision-makers in the civil service, NGOs, the private sector and MPs. Policy makers are

similarly being sensitised.

These efforts have led to an increased number of women in higher administrative and other posts:

Chart 22.1: Percentage of Females in Selected Decision-making Posts, Tanzania

Positions	1997 %	2002 %
Government Ministers	11	15
Deputy Ministers	19	29
Permanent Secretaries	15	22
Regional Commissioners	5	10
Directors/Public Sector	20	25
Regional Administrative Secretaries	20	20
District Administrative Secretaries	10	14
Judges	7.14	14
Resident Magistrates	24.2	27
District Magistrates	12	15
Magistrates, Primary Courts	..	21

.. Figures not available.

Other highly placed women include the Accountant-General, a Justice in the Court of Appeal, the Administrator-General in the Attorney-General's Chamber and a Registrar in the Commercial Court.

Education and Training of Women

Traditional gender stereotyped roles and psychological factors continue to limit

Women and men work on setting up solar panels... more women are taking up vocational training

girls' access to formal education especially in institutions of higher learning. The Tanzania Education and Training Policy 1995 encourages female enrolment. A drive to encourage female education has been implemented, and counselling given to girls for confidence-building and improving their performance in examinations. Boarding schools for girls have been established and the curriculum reviewed to remove gender stereotyping. In teachers training colleges, trainees are introduced to gender-sensitive classroom interaction, and more women are now reportedly joining vocational training colleges in non-traditional skills. Girls (and boys) who drop out of school can also attend a special programme through which they could return to formal education

In 2000, roughly equal numbers of boys and girls were enrolled in primary schools – 48% of girls from their age group, 46% of boys. This meant, however, that over half the girls and boys of primary school-going age were not attending school. The enrolment figures fell away rapidly in the secondary schools where about 5% of girls in that age group were enrolled – about the same for boys.

The overall increase of female student enrolment in tertiary education has been small – 3.21% between 1994 and 2002. The Government continues to provide encouragement by offering remedial studies to females who have not reached minimum grades for mathematics and science courses, and sponsoring an additional 50 female students a year for a limited period of time.

The situation in vocational training institutions is even less favourable for females as there are few technical secondary schools for girls to act as 'feeder' schools and girls generally score less well than boys in mathematics and science. In 2001, female students comprised 12.88% of total enrolment in these colleges, a small increase over the 12.28% in 1998.

The Training Fund for Tanzania Women has trained a total of 462 women between 1998 and 2003. Of these, 82 were trained in management and 188 attended gender sensitisation, legal and entrepreneurship skills courses.



Sensitisation seminars for management teams on gender-responsive budgeting and audit are being carried out, mainly in the education, health, agriculture, water and livestock areas.

The Government, in collaboration with NGOs and development partners, has also facilitated the participation of over 700 women in Dar es Salaam international trade fairs for the past seven years.

Women and Health

HIV/AIDS is a serious health and socio-economic problem. Infection runs at over 7% among the adult population (15–49 years), but four times as many women are infected than men. That the average life expectancy for women has dropped from 52 years in 1990 to 45 in 2000 is largely attributable to the impact of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. Women are infected at a younger age.

National programmes supervise planning and implementation of HIV/AIDS programmes, and co-ordination and mobilisation of resources. A strategic framework for community-based protection of women and children against HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections is in place and women are encouraged as health care workers. Special programmes to teach women and girls to prevent or seek treatment for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections are conducted.

The health of women and the girl-child is also a priority in other areas. Rates for

maternal mortality and morbidity, and infant mortality, remain high, and many women do not get proper nutrition during pregnancy. The Government has required all women of childbearing age to be vaccinated with tetanus toxoid and to take Vitamin A supplements, and targets for improvement were set for 2003. Use of modern family planning methods has increased from 6% in 1996 to 16% in 1999, but urban women are more likely to use contraceptives than their rural sisters.

Other government programmes are for safe motherhood, on adolescent reproductive health, and on the eradication of FGM. Health Services related to maternal and child health are provided free of charge and family life education is taught in schools. A programme, called SARA, addresses, among other things, issues that affect the welfare, social well-being of the girl-child and children's sexual rights.

A national plan of action for combating violence against women and children is in place and campaigns have been held to sensitise women on their and children's rights and on laws that protect them.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery was established in 1985 and was raised to the status of a Ministry in 1992. It is now the Ministry of Community Development, Women's Affairs and Children. Sections on

women's development and gender mainstreaming have been incorporated into the structure. The Government has also established Gender Desks in all Ministries, Regional and District Councils to facilitate gender mainstreaming in sectoral plans.

In addition, some thought is now being given to the establishment of a national women's body which will not be politically affiliated and which will co-ordinate programmes which advance women.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with NGOs, civil society organisations and international organisations in a number of areas – for example in the establishment of credit facilities and participation of women at trade fairs; on the gender budget initiative; in encouraging more women to take up political and other leadership roles; and in health matters. A joint campaign in the media to make reproductive health an acceptable subject for public debate has led to more open discussion and greater exchange of information.

Concerns for the Future

The NWM expects continued effort in its areas of concern, especially combating violence against women and children, improving the collection of sex-disaggregated data, and promoting gender analysis, and the human rights of women and the girl-child.

Emphasis will also be put on education programmes for women, and programmes for women's economic empowerment and strengthening implementation of gender equality policies, including gender mainstreaming.

The NWM will also continue its efforts to address gender issues in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and to promote the use of information communications technologies among women.

Zambia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	8,122	8,978	10,089
Female population (% of total)	50.2	50.2	50.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	46	45	45
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	13.7	16
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	41.3	34.8	28.5
Male	21.4	17.9	14.8
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	74	65
Male	..	76	66
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	14	18
Male	..	19	20
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	11	2
Male	3	4	3
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	50	46	38
Male	48	45	38
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	108	112	112
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	17.8
Male	..	..	8.2

Source: World Bank Database of Gender Statistics.

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000).

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Zambian Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women in Poverty;
2. Education and Training of Women;
3. Women and Health;
4. Women in Power and Decision-making;
5. The Rights of the Girl-child.

A further six underlying and cross-cutting issues address the five areas of concern: The critical role of the media at all times and at all levels; the need for sex-disaggregated data; the establishment of effective institutional mechanisms; promoting the human rights of women; consideration for the implications of cultural, traditional and Western influences in all areas; and the rural/peri-urban trichotomy of the Zambian population.

A Decade of Action

Zambia's National Gender Policy, adopted in March 2000, provides guidelines for mainstreaming gender into policies and programmes. The policy has been translated into seven local languages. Following wide consultation, an implementation plan for the policy has been drawn up and awaits Cabinet approval. This plan would involve the public and private sectors, civil society, co-operating partners as well as individuals.

Zambia's National Gender Machinery (NGM) is the Gender in Development Division (GIDD), located since 1996 in the Cabinet Office of the President of Zambia. The country ratified CEDAW in 1985. It is ranked 133 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

Gender has been mainstreamed into the 2002–2004 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). A number of programmes aimed at empowering disadvantaged groups, including women, have been put in place. GIDD reports, however, that

these programmes have yet to benefit from in-depth gender analysis and therefore do not adequately address the practical needs of women and men; poverty reduction measures have also not fully addressed the worsening situation of women due to limited financial resources and lack of awareness of the existence of these programmes; the various relevant institutions lack co-ordination, thus reducing impact. In 2001, however, GIDD disbursed US\$134,123 to women's community-based organisations to help combat poverty.

Education and Training of Women

Zambia's National Education Policy 1996 acknowledges that the State has an obligation to protect and advance the education of all Zambians, especially women. A Programme for the Advancement of Girls Education addresses gender imbalances at all levels of the education system. Measures include affirmative action such as a 50:50 enrolment ratio between girls and boys at Grade 1; special bursary schemes for girls at primary and secondary school levels; lower pass marks for girls; and a 25% bursary allocated to female students at university.

By 2000, the enrolment ratio for females in tertiary education had doubled. Stereotyped images and language have been removed from textbooks and educational materials since 1994 and children's rights and human rights included in the curriculum. Girls who drop out of school because they are pregnant can now be re-admitted to continue their studies. However, poverty was one of the main reasons behind the fall in both male and female primary enrolment figures since 1990.

Women and Health

Zambia has a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection. In the 15–24 year age group, more than twice the number of females as males are infected. Life expectancy has decreased from 50 years in 1990 to 38 years for females in 2000 (48 years to 38 for males). HIV/AIDS has thus also become a development issue, and gender issues

are reflected in the National Plan of Action against HIV/AIDS.

The Primary Health Care programme has been restructured to focus on the high risk to underprivileged and vulnerable groups, mostly women. At national level, areas of concern include the nutritional status of girls, maternal morbidity and mortality, high fertility rates, access to and utilisation of family planning services, safe motherhood and HIV/AIDS.

Polices are being drawn up to include new and emerging issues (e.g., adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and the recurrence of tuberculosis and malaria); Family Planning and Reproductive Health guidelines have been issued at national, provincial and district levels; an integrated health approach to basic health services enables individuals, especially women who are culturally responsible for caring for the sick, to access different health services during a single visit (instead of several visits as in the past).

Sensitising the public on gender, reproductive health, reproductive rights, and promoting male involvement in family health and other related issues continues.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Zambia has made some strides towards ensuring that more women are placed in decision-making positions – 30% by 2005.

Table 23.1: Percentage of Females in Decision-making Positions, Zambia

	1995	1998	2003
Minister	9%	8.3%	23.8%
Deputy Minister	2.6%	7.3%	9.75%
Members of Parliament	3.8%	10.1%	13.66%

* Source: Parliament of Zambia

These figures, however, remain low overall. A selection of decision-making positions (Cabinet and deputy ministers, MPs, Secretary and Deputy to the Cabinet, Secretary to the Treasury, Permanent Secretaries, Special Assistants to the President, and the Anti-Corruption and

Electoral Commissions) showed that women held only 14.44% of positions in 2003. GIDD and NGOs are working to encourage more women to take up leadership roles.

Other Concerns

Zambia believes that unless gender is mainstreamed into all policies, programmes and activities, women will continue to be marginalised, and that existing equalities will persist. GIDD has made some efforts to mainstream gender in the 2003 General Policy Framework, Poverty Alleviation Programme and the Agriculture Sector Investment Programme. Laws are especially being strengthened to deal with violence against women. In macroeconomic issues, the Transitional Development Plan (2002–2005) acknowledges gender as one of the central issues in development, but GIDD reports that gender concerns are far from being taken up. A programme started in November 2003 to support women in the informal economic sector and GIDD continues to work with the Ministry of Finance and National Planning on making the national and sectoral budgets gender-responsive.

National Women's Machinery

The National Gender Machinery was established in 1987 as a Desk staffed by one officer in the Sector Department of the National Planning Machinery of the Government. It was first upgraded to a unit and then in 1990 to the Women in Development Department under a Director. In June 1996, in further recognition of the importance of gender issues, and to strengthen the department in terms of authority and resources, it was elevated to the Gender in Development Division in the Cabinet Office.

GIDD's role is to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Gender Policy – and all gender-related policies and programmes – to ensure the attainment of equity and equality between the sexes. In doing so, it facilitates institutional capacity building, co-ordinates mainstreaming of gender



into macro- and sectoral policies, initiates and improves the dissemination of information to increase awareness and knowledge of gender issues, and facilitates the integration of regional and international instruments on gender into national laws, policies and programmes.

The division also acts as the secretariat for a national Gender Consultative Forum set up to advise the Government on gender mainstreaming and any issues related to gender and development, identify emerging issues and ensure that policies being implemented are gender sensitive. Members of the Forum are drawn from the executive, legislature, judiciary, private sector, employment sector, finance sector, academic and research institutions, traditional authorities and civil society.

GIDD enjoys close relations with other government departments. It was involved in the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the drafting of the 2000–2002 National Transitional Development Plans, and with the Ministry of Finance and National Planning on engendering the national budgetary process. It is assisting the Ministry of Lands in reviewing the Land Policy and in implementing the policy of allocating 30% of land to women, with the remainder being competed for equitably by both sexes.

At sector level, Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have been designated in all ministries, provincial administrations and other public sector institutions. At district

level, which is the focus of implementation of gender and development, District Planning Officers have been appointed as GFPs. GIDD plans to move away from concentrating on GFPs by involving all planning units in departments in mainstreaming gender equality.

GIDD has its own government budget allocations which have increased in recent years. Funding from co-operating partners, however, has decreased.

Constraints to the implementation of gender and development activities include inadequate information flows and networking between public sector agencies, among NGOs and between the public sector and civil society; limited knowledge and institutional capacity; concentration of activities in urban areas; and unclear objectives by most NGOs, leading to lack of focus, duplication and sub-optimal utilisation of resources.

Partnerships

GIDD works closely with its co-operating partners, other government agencies, and NGOs, such as the Non-governmental Co-ordinating Committee, Women in Law in Southern Africa, Women in Law in Development in Africa, and the Young Women's Christian Association. Civil society organisations play an important role in the advisory Gender Consultative Forum and were involved in the drafting of the National Gender Policy and its implementation plan. GIDD consults NGOs on legal reform and the

constitutional review and works closely with them in the disbursement of funds to community-based organisations. Strengthening institutional mechanisms through gender training, information production and dissemination, and networking would enhance these partnerships. So would decentralising and strengthening institutional structures at district and community levels for gender mainstreaming.

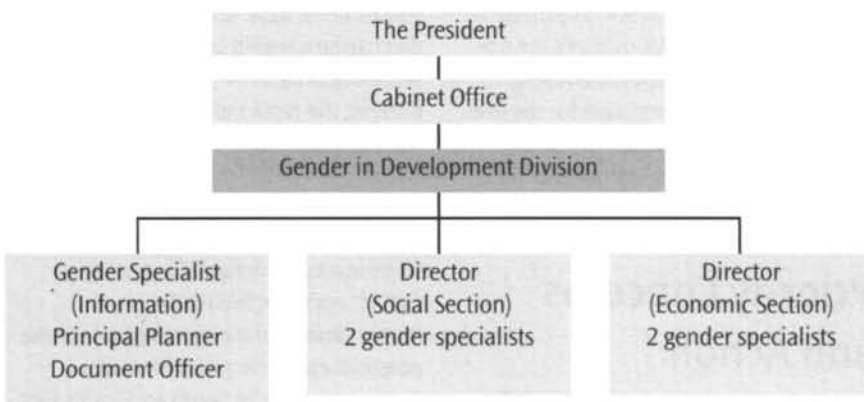
Concerns for the Future

Because of the limited capacity to deal with gender issues in the public sector and at provincial and district levels, gender mainstreaming will be a top priority for Zambia in coming years. The training of government and public officers in gender analysing skills and techniques will therefore be crucial for national development. Poverty and the feminisation of poverty – 90% of Zambia's poor, identified in a 1996 survey, were women – continues to result from biases in society, including unequal opportunities in education, employment, lack of security, and access to credit and other means of production.

Women's health remains a major source of concern, especially the incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, girls' nutrition, maternal morbidity and mortality, high fertility rates, access to and utilisation of family planning services and safe motherhood.

While limited knowledge and capacity to deal with gender are constraints, so is the reduced funding for gender and development activities by Zambia's co-operating partners.

Chart 23.1: GIDD's Organisation Structure within the Cabinet Office, Zambia



States Parties reaffirm their belief that discrimination against women is incompatible with human rights and dignity and with the welfare of the family and society; that it prevents women realising their social and economic potential and their participation on equal terms with men in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country, and is a serious obstacle to the full development of their personality and in their contribution to the social and economic development of their countries.

– Article VI, SAARC Social Charter, 2005

Regional Profile

Asia: Building on Progress

Over 70% (1.3 billion) of the total population of the 53-member association of Commonwealth nations and therefore about 70% of the Commonwealth's female population live in Commonwealth Asia. The populations of these countries vary from over 1 billion (India) to 276,000 (Maldives); these two countries contrast again, India as part of a sub-continent of the Asian land mass and Maldives as a string of 1,190 islands and atolls.

In the three South-East Asian member countries (Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore), a negligible number of people live on less than US\$1 a day, while in other countries, over 30% do. For example, Singapore has made much progress in attaining the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through improved basic social provisions like housing, universal primary education, child mortality and maternal health. South-East Asia also experienced strong economic growth, though countries such as Malaysia suffered in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 1997/98 and governments responded by strengthening the safety net.

Since 1990, the South Asian region has experienced rapid GDP growth, averaging 5.5% a year, which has helped to reduce poverty – India by 5–10% since 1990, and most other countries registering significant reductions, except for Pakistan, where poverty has stagnated at around 33%. South Asia also lags in infrastructure. Across the region, in 2000, only 85% of people had access to water from an improved source and 37% to improved sanitation facilities¹. Many roads are not paved. National strategies to address these problems are important for the lives of all people, women and men, to be improved. Some of these strategies are outlined in the country reports which are summarised in this section.

Priority Concerns and Action

Asian countries responding to the 2003/04 Commonwealth survey of progress of the

Beijing Platform for Action priorities, emphasised poverty and economic empowerment of women as being of priority concern, along with health and education needs. Women's rights as human rights, better institutional mechanisms to promote and protect women's rights, and combating violence against women were also priorities.

Poverty Reduction and Attainment of MDGs

Based on indicators of social progress, South Asia has achieved success in some areas. For example, mortality in children under five years has decreased from 129 to 99 per 1,000 live births, especially in Bangladesh (144 to 77). School enrolment and completion rates have increased, and the gender balance in schools continues to improve. In India, for example, the Department of Education, with the help of the Panchayati Raj institutions, NGOs, volunteers and women's self-help organisations, is taking innovative measures to improve literacy in 45 districts where female literacy rates is below 30%.

At the same time, South Asian regional problems, such as child malnutrition, maternal mortality, and gender disparities in education, remain. Over half of all children under the age of five are malnourished and youth illiteracy is high – over 20% for males and 30% for females. While sustained growth would be necessary for poverty reduction, concomitant basic service delivery mechanisms would be essential for achieving progress in all other MDGs. At present, the region will fall short of the MDG poverty reduction target by 2015².

HIV/AIDS

There is an urgent need for a holistic, vigilant and effective HIV/AIDS Programme for the region because of the potential epidemic given the large population base. In South and South-East Asia, the number of people infected with

HIV/AIDS population figures presently stands at over 8 million with a prevalence rate of 0.4%–0.8%. Some 330,000 – 590,000 deaths have been recorded.

Three South-East Asian countries have already had to contend with serious nationwide epidemics: Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand. Although they are not Commonwealth members, they have close business and tourist ties with their Commonwealth neighbours.

Asia has a higher total of HIV infections and annual AIDS deaths than any region except sub-Saharan Africa. The prevailing poverty, low education and other demographic dynamics combine to make conditions ripe for a pandemic to quickly spread. While Bangladesh and Pakistan have low HIV infection rates, their large populations (129 million and 152 million respectively) place them in the 'high vulnerability' category as poverty remains a major challenge. Infant mortality stands at 113/116 for male/female children per 1000 live births. India's life expectancy stands at 63 years, with a fertility rate of 3.1% and a literacy rate of 65% (75.85% for males, 54.16% for females). Thirty-five per cent of the population live below the poverty line.

Sri Lanka has a low prevalence of HIV but is also a highly vulnerable country especially with the continuing 20-year-old civil war and the instability it brings.

Political Empowerment

Women's participation in politics in Asia is still low although Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan have or have had female Heads of State or Government. Female parliamentary representation remains below 10% in most countries of the region.

India, however, has achieved success through affirmative action. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Indian Constitution have been the breakthrough in ensuring more women participate in political power structures. These Amendments provided for the reservation of 33% of elected seats for women in all local government authorities. There is also a one-third reservation for women to the posts of chairpersons of these local bodies. Women have come forward in



large numbers and have begun to assert themselves and take decisions.

Countries recording increases in women's representation in parliaments were Malaysia from 7% in 1999 to 9.1% by 2003, and Singapore from 6.5% to 16%. In other countries, decreases have been recorded – Bangladesh from 11.2% in 1999 to 2% by 2003, Sri Lanka by 4.9% to 4.4%. Brunei Darussalam still has no parliament.

Women and Peace-Building

Women's contribution to peace-building in the region is being encouraged and supported by multilateral and bilateral agencies, the Commonwealth Secretariat, governments and civil society. At least four member countries in the region are directly involved in peace-building and conflict resolution activities: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Strategic Resources for Capacity Building

Country experiences show that strategic targeting of financial resources can influence the ability of National Women's Machineries (NWMS) to implement programmes and gain access to additional funds, resources, and specialist assistance. Gender-responsive tools are powerful initiatives that can identify who gets what and how much, and can assist governments to maximise decisions

regarding budgetary expenditure and taxation measures. Analysis of India's national budgets of 2001/02 and 2002/03, for example, provided an objective analysis of the budgetary allocations to programmes that benefit women and in which sectors.

Constraints to gender mainstreaming include the lack of resources, inability to use ICTs and little access to user-friendly data, knowledge and information. This could be overcome through more effective dissemination of existing knowledge, materials and resources between governments, national and regional partners, training institutions, NGOs/CBOs, and international partners.

Regional Platforms for Equality

A review of the laws of the countries in the region shows that while some progress has been made, governments still face many challenges. The areas in which most progress has been made are those of constitutional guarantees to safeguard the human rights of citizens and prevent discrimination against women. All Commonwealth Asian countries have such guarantees.

In many cases, however, the supporting laws and mechanisms are still lacking, and where laws have been enacted, enforcement is still a challenge. A few countries have adopted specific human rights and gender equality

instruments but many of these standards are not being effectively applied for the benefit of women, partly because some countries have not yet incorporated them into domestic law.

Ratification of international and regional instruments and enactment of domestic legislation are only the first steps towards the realisation of women's human rights. Besides being state parties to the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and Social and Economic and Cultural Rights, national governments in the region have put into place practical measures to ensure that women fully enjoy their human rights on the same basis as men.

A number of laws have been revised and significant progress has been recorded. Women's access to justice has been strengthened. The Commonwealth's Asian member countries have all ratified CEDAW, with the exception of Brunei Darussalam, and Bangladesh was among the first countries to sign its Optional Protocol. Even though India still has some reservations to CEDAW, it has passed over 22 laws during the last two years dealing with gender equality and women's rights issues.

At the regional level, the ASEAN Declaration for the Advancement of Women was signed on 5 July 1988 in Bangkok. The Declaration aims principally to promote the status of women and enable them to achieve their fullest potential. The implementation of the Declaration is monitored at the ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting, which is the highest decision-making body in ASEAN.

Member countries' progress reports on the implementation of the Beijing PFA are submitted to the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) on a regular basis. These reports are disseminated to all member countries during annual ACW meetings to promote the exchange of best practice.

The progress reports are also submitted regularly to regional and international bodies concerned with gender equality, for example, to the meetings of the Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs and Commonwealth Heads of Government, and to the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Division for

Box 24.1: Milestones in Gender-responsive Budgeting and Gender Analysis

As part of the Commonwealth gender-responsive budget initiative, Sri Lanka has undertaken a gender analysis of its 1996 Public Expenditure. The findings were as follows:

- Women constituted 34% of the labour force, having moved away from traditional activities into export-based activities in the garment and apparel industries which have facilitated economic growth and global market integration;
- Rural and urban female workers made up 26.5% of all workers in the informal sector, agriculture and self-employment, but had a low participation in decision-making processes, and benefited less from extension services, training and agricultural credit and revolving funds for export agriculture;
- Women had a low participation rate at policy level and in the management of programmes, except for the health sector;

Women made up 22% of employment in the Public Services, yet over 90% of the highest paid posts and 75% of managerial posts were held by men.

As a result, Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance made a commitment that the Six-Year National Plan would be more gender-sensitive and reflect the needs of women and men, with more equitable delivery systems, increased participation of women in policy formulation and management of programmes, and gender-aware planning mechanisms. Corrective measures were identified for the education, agricultural and industrial sectors.

Initiatives taken by India have also raised awareness among policy-makers, planners and administrators of the need to ensure that the funds and benefits from other development sectors do not bypass women. India's committed and systematic approach to mainstreaming gender has resulted in the following:

- The National Policy for Empowerment of Women requires all Central and State Ministries to draw up time-bound plans to translate the policy into a set of practical actions. Gender Development Indices and evaluation mechanisms will be developed and gender auditing undertaken. Sex-disaggregated data will be collated by all primary collecting agencies, research/academic and financial institutions;
- Under the Women's Component Plan, at least 30% of the social sector financial allocations of the National Five-Year Plan is targeted to activities that will benefit women. The three-year gender budget programme which started in 2001 will enable the results to be evaluated;
- The Tenth National Development Plan reinforces commitment to gender-responsive budgeting in order to establish a gender-differential impact and translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. This action links up the two complementary processes of the Women's Component Plan and Gender-responsive Budgeting to provide an efficiency factor in all women-related general development programmes.

the Advancement of Women.

The ACW initiates and implements regional development projects to advance the status of women. Currently, pending and on-going projects cover a wide range of issues, such as gender mainstreaming and gender-awareness training, violence against women, capacity building in ICTs, poverty reduction, livelihood management and trafficking of women.

ACW works closely with the ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organisations (ACWO). As a confederation of national women organisations in the region, ACWO also plays an important role in implementing the plans and commitments adopted and approved by the ACW.

ASEAN member countries have

adopted another Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in 2003. The issue of violence against women, including trafficking of women and girls, remains one of the key concerns for South-East Asia. ASEAN has also endorsed the *Declaration for the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region*.

The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Social Charter was signed by SAARC Heads of State at their summit in January 2004. The Charter's Article VI speaks to the need for commitment and promotion of the status of women in the region.

Combating the Exploitation of Women and Children

SAARC has a special technical committee on women and children though the girl-child issue varies in importance for countries in the region. The SAARC Regional Workshop on the Status of the Girl-Child was hosted by Sri Lanka in April 2003. It reinforced the need for a stronger role for national and local government in the production and delivery of adequate and affordable social services for women as a whole and women in poverty, especially in such areas as health, education, child and elderly care, as well as access to water and sanitation.

The SAARC workshop recommended the:

- Extension and expansion of educational programmes to include girls and women of all ages who have been excluded from education during their childhood and adolescence – this being recognition that adult literacy, non-formal education, awareness-building and skills training are some of the ways to empower poor women and enable them to participate in the labour market;
- Analysis of the impact of economic liberalisation on women living in poverty, based on region-specific data and information disaggregated by sex and age;
- Development of educational and training policies and programmes to enhance the capabilities of girls and women through formal and non-formal education – these policies and programmes to aim at breaking the gender-stereotyped provision of knowledge and skills, and promote images of women and girls in positions of power, value, prestige and public presence;
- Identification and strengthening of training and re-training, as well as vocational education in non-traditional areas to expand women's employment opportunities with empowering implications, and promote vocational training in sectors with growth potential, especially for young women.

Bangladesh and India have Plans of

Box 24.2: Women's Rights as Human Rights

India has a National Commission for Women, set up by an Act of Parliament, which acts as a watchdog and advocate for women's rights under the Constitution and other laws. In addition, a National Council, to be chaired by the Prime Minister, has been set up to oversee the implementation of the human rights agenda as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Commonwealth PoA.

Malaysia has declared that widows will continue to receive pensions even if they re-marry which was not the case under the 1980 Pensions Act. Malaysia has also amended the Employment Act to provide for flexible working hours and put into place a Code of Practice on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace in 1999. It is investigating the possibility of setting up a Family Court to resolve the present practice of multiple courts to settle matters involving matrimonial or property rights.

Singapore has made extensive amendments to its Women's Charter since 1996, including widening the scope of family violence beyond physical violence or threats; empowering the Court to issue Personal Protection Orders (PPOs) on the principle of 'balance of probabilities' rather than 'beyond reasonable doubt'; and setting up a Family Court. By 1997, there was a clear increase in the number of PPOs applied for and issued. A new enactment of the Criminal Procedure Act in January 1999 enabled evidence to be given through live-video or television link involving witnesses under 16 years of age for certain criminal offences, such as rape. In 1998, the Penal Code was amended to include a section on Enhanced Penalties for Offences against Domestic Maids after reports of employer abuse.

Action to combat trafficking and the commercial and sexual exploitation of women and children that are consistent with the broader *SAARC Convention on Prevention of Trafficking of Women and Children in Prostitution and the SAARC Decade of the Girl-Child 1991–2000 for Survival, Protection and Development of the Girl-Child*.

Country Reports

The following pages present summaries of reports submitted by Commonwealth Asian countries on the progress of women and gender equality.

Women working in weaving in Brunei Darussalam



End Notes

1 The situation in individual countries can vary significantly. In Maldives, for example, 100% of people have access to water from an improved source and 56% to improved sanitation.

2 The MDG target is to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than US\$1 a day.

Bangladesh

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	110,00	120,100	131,100
Female population (% of total)	48.2	48.3	49.6
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	42	42	42
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	1.9	2.3	3.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	76.3	73.1	69.8
Male	55.7	53.2	50.6
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	60	..	88
Male	68	..	87
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	12	..	24
Male	24	..	42
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	2	4
Male	7	9	8
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	55	59	62
Male	55	58	61
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	96	75	54
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. Figures not available.

This report has been compiled from Bangladesh's 2003 fifth periodic CEDAW report

Priority Concerns

The major goals of the Bangladesh National Policy for the Advancement of Women are to:

1. Establish equality between men and women in all spheres
2. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls
3. Establish women's human rights
4. Develop women as a human resource
5. Recognise women's contribution in social and economic spheres

Followed by: 6. Eliminate poverty among women; 7. Establish equality between men and women in administration, politics, education, games, sports and all other socio-economic spheres; 8. Eliminate all forms of oppression against women and girls; 9. Ensure empowerment of women in politics, administration and the economy; 10. Develop appropriate technology for women; 11. Ensure adequate health and nutrition for women; 12. Provide housing and shelter for women; 13. Create positive images of women in the media; and 14. Adopt special measures for women's equality in especially disadvantaged situations.

A Decade of Action

Bangladesh acceded to CEDAW in 1984 and to its Optional Protocol in 2000. It submitted combined third and fourth periodic reports on CEDAW in 1997, and a fifth periodic report in 2003. The country is ranked at 110 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs.

Following the Beijing conference in 1995, the Government of Bangladesh adopted a National Policy for the Advancement of Women (1997) and then developed a National Action Plan (1998) through a consultative process which included civil society. The Beijing Platform for Action's 12 critical areas are at the core of this plan.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women is increasing despite efforts to curb it. The following



are the most prevalent types of violence against women in the country:

- Acid-throwing;
- Rape and murder;
- Trafficking; and
- Torture to get a dowry and financial help from wives or their relatives.

Throwing acid on women – usually young women and, increasingly, wives for failing to meet the demands of dowry – is a recent phenomenon. In 2002, Parliament passed two laws, the Acid Crime Prevention Act and Acid Control Act, restricting the import and sale of acid in open markets. Under the Acid Offences Act 2002 the death penalty is fixed as a maximum penalty for acid throwing offences that result in death.

Awareness campaigns on the evils and effects of acid throwing have been carried out, victims are given medical, financial and legal assistance as well as rehabilitation, and special tribunals will be formed to ensure speedy disposal of acid-throwing cases. There has been some decline in these offences since the stiffer laws were introduced.

The trafficking of women and children, and its related violence, is also increasing with women and children being forced into bonded labour and prostitution. Regional gangs, whose networks spread over the whole of South Asia and beyond are sometimes involved. The Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 provides deterrent punishments for offences ranging from cruelty, injury, rape or death.

Assistance for victims of rape and other forms of violence include one-stop crisis centres providing medical, legal and police assistance; DNA testing for rape victims; shelters for oppressed women, special tribunal courts at district levels; and units at national and district levels which can take action against offenders and offer legal advice to victims. Shelters not only provide refuges but also skills training to encourage women to be more self-reliant.

CSOs are especially involved in raising awareness of violence against women and in community mobilisation against it. Traffic Watch Bangladesh Northern Region is a network of 25 NGOs committed to addressing the issue of trafficking.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Since 1991, both the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition have been women and increasing numbers of women cast their votes and stand for political office.

Until recently, 30 seats in Parliament were reserved for women who were elected by those Members of Parliament (MPs) who had been elected by the people. In addition, women could contest any of the 300 general parliamentary seats. Thus, in the 1996 general election, women won direct election to 7 seats and with the 30 reserved seats made up 12.3% of MPs. The provision for reserved seats for women, however, expired in 2001. In the general election that year, women won direct elections to 6 seats and with no reserved seats made up only 2% of MPs.

The governing party and Opposition have committed themselves to reinstating, and possibly increasing, the reserved seats. A Bill to re-introduce the reserved seats and raise the number to 45 is now being examined by a Parliamentary Standing Committee.

Women are entering politics at the lower levels of government in increasing numbers. One of the most important decisions was to reserve 3 seats for women to be directly elected in each Union Parishad¹, Zila Parishad and municipality. The number of reserved seats for city corporations depends on population size.

Steps have also been taken to ensure that elected women play a role in decision-making. Among these are:

- Increasing the number of Union Parishad Standing Committees from 7–12 to ensure that women members participate;
- Expanding the number of Union Parishad Project Implementation Committees and mandating that a quarter of these committees be chaired by women;
- Making provisions that 3 women Union Parishad members be nominated to Upazila Co-ordination Committees; and
- Creating social welfare committees at every female ward and assigning the position of chairperson to the women members.

Table 25.1: Number of Seats Reserved for Women in Local Government, Bangladesh

Rural and Local Government Tiers	Number of Seats Reserved for Women
Union Parishad	4,479 Union Parishads x 3 = 13,537
Zila Parishads	64 Zila Parishads x 3 = 192
Pourashava (municipality)	183 municipalities x 3 = 549
City Corporations (4)	
Dhaka	30
Chittagong	10
Khulna	10
Rajshahi	10

Unfortunately, in many Union Parishad Standing Committees, women members have not been assigned with specific responsibilities. In most cases, women members are expected to be looking after education, family planning and health care issues.

Women's progress in politics is also held back by a lack of appropriate and adequate organisational arrangements in political parties for women's participation, a low inclusion of women, especially in decision-making hierarchies, and lack of political training.

A quota system has been introduced for public sector positions, with 10% of recruitment to gazetted posts and 15% to non-gazetted posts reserved for women. Women may also compete with men for posts outside the quota. Special initiatives have been taken to appoint women in senior levels of administration, such as to Deputy Secretary and Joint Secretary posts.

Although more women are entering public service, they still make up only 10% of all employees. Utilisation of the job quota has varied from 37% to 100% from year to year, depending on civil service exam results.

Many women, however, are employed outside the reserved quota for women. Nearly two-thirds of the women in the professional and technical cadre were employed on merit or through other quotas (tribal, district, etc.).

Education and Training of Women

Primary education is free and compulsory under the National Policy on Education 2000. Education for girls is a top priority and literacy and enrolment rates are improving – female literacy (age 7+) rose from 31.4% in 1996 to 42.5% in 1998 and the girls' drop-out rate at primary level decreased.

The enrolment of girls in secondary school has also risen between 1995 and 2000 (12%–44% of the age group) following the launch of the Female Secondary School Assistance Project in 1993. Its objectives are to increase enrolment of girls in secondary schools, give such support that would assist them to pass School Secondary Certificate or

equivalent exams, increase the number of teachers in the schools taking part in this project, raise the proportion of women teachers, and promote a community environment supportive of girls' education.

In spite of the increase in enrolment, drop-out rates remain high in secondary schools – in 1999, 52.1% of girls dropped out. To tackle this problem, the Government has made girls' education free up to Grade 12 and gives a cash allowance to all enrolled girls up to this grade. The girls' drop-out rate has been gradually decreasing.

As an incentive, the Government gives poor families a stipend of Tk100 and Tk125 a month for keeping in school one and more than one child (girl or boy) respectively.

There is a provision to reserve 60% of all vacancies for primary school teachers for women – this has already raised the percentage of women teachers at this level from about 21% in 1991 to 37.86% in 2001.

More girls are also being encouraged to take up science, technical and vocational subjects. The male to female ratio in medical education is 60:40. About 12% of students at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology are women, 6.3% in the Bangladesh Agricultural University and 7.33% in the two campuses

of the University of Science and Technology.

Different ministries offer women training in livestock, fisheries and other agro-based industries. Training in co-operative management, social awareness raising, formal and non-formal education and adult literacy classes are also offered to women.

Non-formal education programmes include a country-wide programme for adolescent girls and boys and women between the ages of 14–45 which was launched by the Department of Non-formal Education in the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.

National Women's Machinery

The Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs is the NWM and its implementing agencies are the National Council for Women's Development, Women's Development Implementation and Evaluation Committee and the *Upazila* and District Women in Development Co-ordination Committee. The NWM is headed by the Ministry's Secretary and its agency within the Ministry is the Department of Women's Affairs.

A Women in Development (WID) focal points mechanism has been set up to enable inter-ministerial co-ordination to

Women queue outside a health centre



ensure gender mainstreaming in projects and programmes of sectoral ministries. To increase collaboration, a WID focal points network headed by the Ministry's Joint Secretary has been set up. Constituting sub-WID focal points in all the implementing governmental agencies has further strengthened the mechanism.

In addition, a separate WID focal point committee has been set up in the Planning Commission/Ministry of Planning to incorporate gender mainstreaming issues in the National planning process.

The National Council for Women's Development, set up in 1995, is the highest policy making body which monitors and oversees women- and children-related activities in various sectors. The council is chaired by the Prime Minister and has 48 members, including 10 representatives from civil society. The NWM acts as its secretariat.

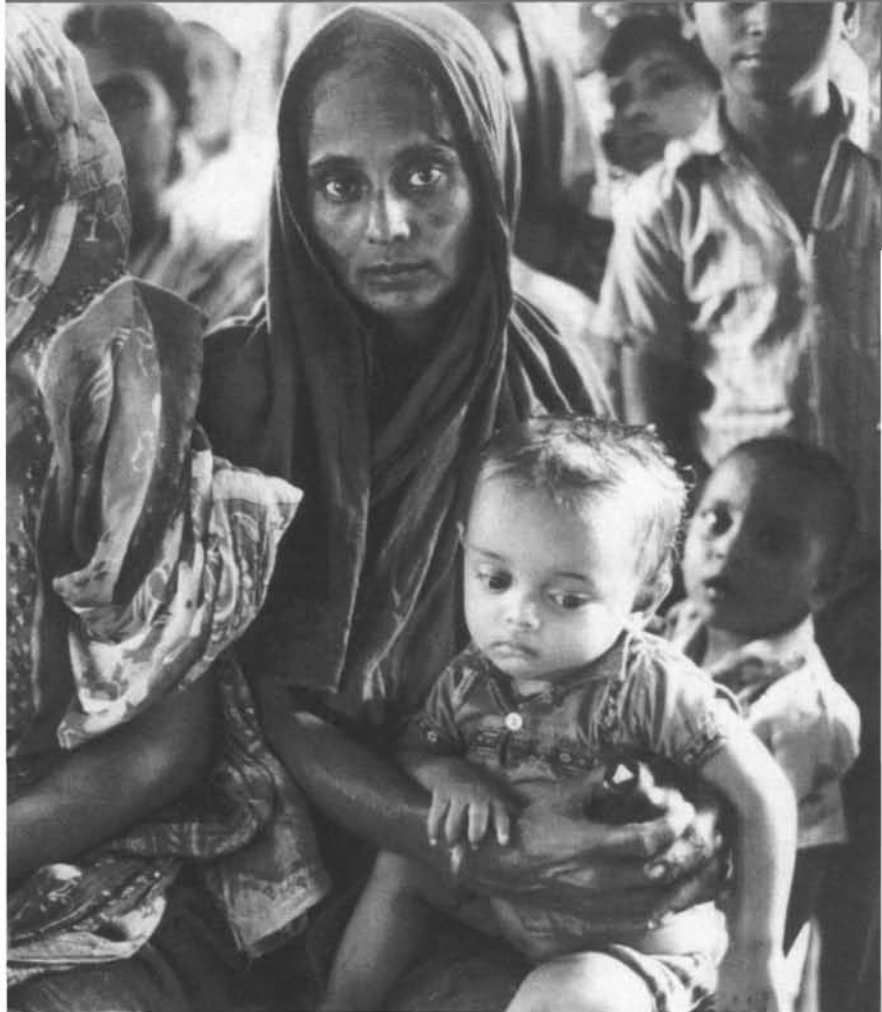
The Women's Development Implementation and Evaluation Committee was set up in 1998 to monitor the progress of the National Action Policy and other WID-related activities. It is chaired by the Minister of Women's and Children's Affairs.

The *Upazila* and District WID Co-ordinating Committees have been set up to ensure co-ordination between policy and implementation at these levels. District and *Upazila* level officers and representatives from civil society are committee members.

There is also a Parliamentary Standing Committee which examines relating to women and gender equality. It is headed by the Prime Minister.

Partnerships

CSOs are involved in policy-making, monitoring and co-ordination at all levels from the National Council for Women's Development to the *Upazila* and District WID Co-ordinating Committees.



End Note

1 Two distinct types of local government prevail in Bangladesh – one for rural and another for urban areas. Local government in rural areas has a four-tier system: (a) Gram Parishad, (b) Union Parishad, (c) *Upazila* Parishad and (d) Zila Parishad.

The urban local government institutions are: (a) Pourashava (municipalities) and (b) City (or municipal) Corporations.

Brunei Darussalam

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile 1990 1995 2000

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	256	338	351
Female population (% of total)	47.1	47.2	47.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	32	34	36
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	20.6	15.5	11.9
Male	9	6.9	5.4
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	90	93	..
Male	92	93	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	75	71	..
Male	67	64	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	4	9	16
Male	4	6	8
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	76	78	79
Male	72	73	74
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	10	8	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2003 (2002)

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Brunei Darussalam has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women and Poverty/Women and Health/Violence Against Women/The Girl-child
2. Education and Training of Women
3. Women and the Economy.

A Decade of Action

Brunei Darussalam has not yet ratified CEDAW and has no designated national women's machinery or specific policy on gender issues. However, women's concerns have been incorporated into all development programmes, including the 8th National Development Plan. Women have equal opportunities in all sectors.

Women and Health

Life expectancy has improved for both women (79 years) and men (74 years) and the infant mortality rate is low. All citizens, regardless of sex or age are provided with free medical care. A nominal registration fee of Br\$1 is charged to adults only. Pre- and post-natal medical care for women is also free, and seminars, workshops and other awareness programmes on breast cancer, breast-feeding, HIV/AIDS and a healthy lifestyle are conducted by women's NGOs and government agencies.

Education and Training of Women

Literacy levels are high and continue to improve. Enrolment for primary and secondary education is also high for both boys and girls. In tertiary institutions, females sometimes represent 80% of those enrolled. Scholarships are given on merit. The number of female scholarship holders in University Brunei Darussalam and in universities abroad far outweighs that of males.

The 8th National Development Plan has set aside funds for the development of ICTs as proficiency in ICTs will further empower women and men economically, and underpin development programmes.

The education and training of women is given high priority in Brunei Darussalam

Girls and boys are being introduced to computers in primary school. Students in higher institutions of learning, and staff in government and non-government sectors are encouraged to become proficient. The Brunei Information Technology Council, with members from various government agencies, advocates development in this field.

Violence Against Women

Since the establishment of a Domestic Violence Unit in the police force in 1999, there has been a marked increase in reported cases – about 104 in 2001 compared to 57 in 1997. Issues of violence against women and children have been on top of the agenda of a National Committee on Social Issues which was set up in 2000. This committee comprises representatives from the Government and from NGOs who are appointed by the Head of State. The Community Development Department (CDD) in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports is the committee's national secretariat.

Married women are protected against ill-treatment and discrimination under Islamic family law. Non-Muslim women are similarly protected under the Married Women's Order 1999. These laws cover matters concerning divorce, maintenance and custody of children.

The CDD has set up special rehabilitation homes for women and children who need protection and the CDD Director has been legally designated as Protector of these homes.

Women and Poverty

Due to its extensive resources of oil and gas, and its small population, Brunei Darussalam is one of the world's richer countries – its GDP per capita in 2001 was US\$12,840. Female poverty is therefore not a serious problem especially as the Government, through the CDD, pays a monthly welfare assistance allowance to individuals and families who are less fortunate than others. About 85% of the recipients are widows and divorcees. In addition, the CDD is planning to establish skills training programmes for female recipients of the monthly assistance



allowance to enable them to find employment and be self-sufficient financially. Citizens over 60 receive payments through an Old Age Pension scheme introduced in 1954.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The number of women in decision-making levels is low though in recent years, a female ambassador and judge have been appointed. There are several female directors in the Public Service.

National Women's Machinery

There is no National Women's Machinery in Brunei Darussalam. A government department exclusively devoted to women's and gender issues has not yet been established and there is therefore no specific budget for gender issues. Issues pertaining to women, children and the elderly are the responsibility of the Community Development Department of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Partnerships

Non-government partners sit with government representatives on the National Committee on Social Issues

which addresses, among other things, violence against women and children.

Concerns for the Future

Focus will be put on advancing women in the economy, women in decision-making and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.

India

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	849,500	932,200	1,015,900
Female population (% of total)	48.3	48.4	48.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	31	32	32.4
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	17.7	20.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	64.1	59.4	54.6
Male	38.1	34.8	31.6
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	76
Male	..	..	91
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	4	5	9
Male	8	8	12
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	59	62	64
Male	59	61	62
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	84	74	68
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.6
Male	..	..	0.4

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of India has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Education and Training of Women
 2. Women and Health
 3. The Girl-child
 4. Women and Poverty
 5. Women and the Economy
- Followed by: 6. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. Violence Against Women; 9. Women in Power and Decision-making; 10. Women and Armed Conflict; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and the Environment.

A Decade of Action

India ratified CEDAW in 1993 and its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Department of Women and Child Development (WCD) in the Ministry of Human Resource Development. According to the 2001 census, there are 495.75 million women in India, representing 48.3% of the population, and the NWM takes a life-cycle approach to the development of women, with specific attention to the different phases of life.

India is ranked 103 on the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Education and Training of Women

Free and compulsory education is a fundamental right for all children in the 6–14-year age group. Specially targeted programmes, such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) which was launched in 2000 by the Ministry of Education, aim at reaching all women and girls and is perceived to help the goal of Education for Women's Equality. The SSA is working towards bridging the gender gap at primary level by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010. Special provisions for girls include free textbooks

A special programme aims at raising the level of female literacy in 45 districts where the literacy rate among females is below 30%. The District Primary

India has adopted a multi-pronged strategy in its approach to attaining gender equality

Education Programme has already recorded significant results through a mixture of methods including removing gender bias and stereotypes in textbooks and curricula, creating a more gender-sensitive education system and appointing gender-sensitive teachers, appointing more women teachers at primary level (at least 90%), reducing drop-out rates and introducing special incentives to retain female students. The Mahila Samakhya Programme focuses specially on socially excluded and landless women; education enables them to raise questions, critically analyse problems and seek answers.

Life-long learning through correspondence courses, distance learning and self-study programmes is encouraged, and the girl-child living below the poverty line is especially targeted with financial support until completion of secondary education. Women are encouraged to enrol for vocational training and the network of such training centres is extending into all districts and sub-districts. The Department of Education also focuses on the emerging trades with high employment potential for women, such as electronics, computer applications, bio-engineering, bio-technology, food processing, fabric designing, communications and media.

The Ministry of Education has drawn up plans to provide free education for girls up to college level.

Women and Health

Women's multiple roles as mothers, income-earners, decision-makers and carers, among other things, have made health a priority issue throughout their lives. Some of the Ministry of Health's programmes focus on maternal health, and basic reproductive and child health care; their aim: to reduce maternal and infant mortality. Steps have been taken to improve the access and utilisation of services at the Primary Health Centre level, especially to poor rural or urban women, and also to check the declining sex ratio of females to males.

Since 1997, the ministry's Family Welfare Programme has involved the

community and community leaders, such as village heads and self-help groups of women in planning and strategising. The Reproductive and Child Health Programme aims at the reduction of maternal and infant mortality, and greater gender awareness in health care. Better facilities, drugs and treatments are included under this programme, as well as community-based initiatives.

The National Population Policy 2000 envisages an integrated and comprehensive package of reproductive and child health services by the Government, the voluntary sector and industry working in partnership. The long-term objective is to attain a stable population growth by 2045. Legislation has also been introduced to address the problem of female foeticide by preventing the misuse of medical technologies and pre-natal diagnostic techniques. Sterner penalties for conduct of illegal abortions are also proposed.

The WCD has an integrated Child Development Services programme which aims at the holistic development of children below six years, and at pregnant and lactating mothers. Combating malnutrition in children and mothers is one of the major components of the programme. Supplementary nutrition is given to pregnant and lactating mothers. UNDP figures suggest that about 24% of the population is undernourished.

The prevalence of HIV infection is relatively low in India – 0.79% of the population between 15 and 49 years, but in a country of over 1 billion people, this comes to 8 million adults, 1.5 million of whom are females. There is, moreover, some concern that in the vulnerable 15–24 age group, prevalence of infection among females is nudging ahead than that for males.

Special programmes have been

launched to check the problem of parent-to-child transmission of the disease and other sexually transmitted infections. These are aimed at vulnerable groups, including women, in both rural and urban slums. In addition, Phase II of the National AIDS Control Programme of 1999, looks at the gender dimension of the disease and takes a holistic approach from communication on change in sexual behaviour to treatment. The disease is beginning to be considered more as a development problem than just a public health issue.

The Girl-child

Gender equality and a better life for women begins with the girl-child. India is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and a National Plan of Action was drawn up. The juvenile sex ratio is the most sensitive indicator of the status of the girl-child in society and legislation on female foeticide and infanticide has been made tougher.

Various programmes focus on the health and nutrition, immunisation and educational needs of the girl-child. For the girl-child in especially difficult circumstances – such as working and street children, children with HIV/AIDS, those with disabilities or who are destitute – their problems are addressed in various sectoral programmes which integrate girl-child issues.

Women and Poverty/Women and the Economy

UNDP figures (1990–2001) indicate that 34.7% of the population live on less than US\$1 a day. Poverty reduction programmes are closely linked with improvements in the social development sectors. These efforts to improve income



Box 27.1: Holistic Framework for HIV/AIDS in India

The second phase of India's National AIDS Control Programme, launched in 1999, specifically focuses on strengthening the capacity of the Central and State Governments to respond to HIV/AIDS in a holistic manner, while taking into account the gender dimensions of the disease. Targeted interventions include behaviour change communication, counselling, providing health care support, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.

National AIDS Prevention and Control, and National Blood policies were approved on the basis that AIDS is a developmental problem and not just a public health issue. Other proactive actions taken by India included scaling up the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV programme; and implementing a Family Health Awareness Campaign to address the management of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS through awareness-raising among the vulnerable groups, including women, and residents of rural and urban slums.

are closely linked with access to quality education and health facilities, especially for women.

Ongoing poverty alleviation programmes have been strengthened to address specifically the needs and problems of women. A 'group approach' is proving more successful and therefore steps have been taken to mobilise women into self-help groups (SHGs) and through necessary support services to enhance their joint capabilities.

Training-cum-employment generation programmes have also been expanded to create more employment-generation opportunities and to cover as many women as possible who are living below the poverty line. As a step forward, the micro-credit programme of the government-funded Rashtryia Mahila Kosh is closely linked with the SHGs for financing various employment-cum-income generating activities. Other schemes include training to improve the knowledge and skills of poor women with no assets in traditional sectors such as agriculture, animal husbandry and handicrafts.

Women from traditional sectors get increased opportunities for employment as the traditional sector has now been linked to the global market. While outsourcing and sub-contracting have created new opportunities for home-based work, women often have to work for long hours, earn well below the minimum wage and have no safety nets. Increasingly, many jobs traditionally performed by women are now mechanised. The abuse of technology, such as the Internet for trafficking, has claimed victims in India too.

Ensuring that the impact of globalisation on women's lives is beneficial is an underlying theme of the WCD and is one of its biggest challenges.

Violence Against Women/ Human Rights of Women

India is a signatory to CEDAW with one

reservation (concerning compulsory arbitration by the International Court of Justice), and two declamatory statements (on marriage and family relations, and on compulsory registration of marriage). A task force reviewed women-specific and related legislation and suggested reviews.

Different ministries have moved to amend legislation and to strengthen women's access to justice. For example, all-women police stations have been set up in 14 States to facilitate the reporting of crimes against women, and special answering facilities in police stations have been created to handle reports on gender-based violence. Voluntary Action Bureaus and Family Counselling Centres also operate in police stations and Family Courts set up to adjudicate family disputes. The National Commission of Women (NCW) looks into specific complaints of atrocities, harassment, denial of rights and exploitation of women, and takes remedial action to restore women's legitimate rights. Amendments to the Penal Code have been made to impose greater penalties on offenders and recommendations have been made for overhauling the country's rape laws.

Table 27.1: Crimes Against Women, India (2002)

Type of crime	Relative incidence (%)
Torture	32.4
Molestation	23.3
Kidnapping & abduction	10.6
Rape	11.7
Sexual harassment	7.8
Dowry death	4.9
Immoral traffic	6.7
Dowry Prohibition Act	2.0
Others	0.5

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, 2002

Crimes against women made up 7.2% of all crimes committed under the Penal Code.

In accordance with directions from the Supreme Court, a Code of Conduct was formulated by the NCW. Accordingly a Complaints Committee has been set up in every organisation, whether private or government, for investigating complaints of sexual harassment in the work place.

Programmes have been established to provide for women and girls who are victims of trafficking.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Amendments to the Indian Constitution in 1993 provide for the reservation of a third of elected seats for women in both rural and urban local bodies. There is also a one-third reservation for women in posts as chairpersons of these bodies. Thus, of 475 district Panchayats (the district-level local governments), 158 are chaired by women. In addition, nearly one-third of mayors of municipalities are women.

The number of women representatives in parliament is also increasing – 73 in both the upper and lower houses of Parliament in 2001. A strong affirmative action strategy has been adopted. The 8th Constitution Amendment Bill, seeking to extend the one-third reservation of seats for women in all Assemblies up to the National Parliament, has been tabled though not adopted at the time of reporting.

The number of women in the central Council of Ministers continues to be low, but with a marginal increase of 0.8% between 1985 and 2001. Of these, 1 is of Cabinet rank and 5 are Ministers of State. The WCD believes these trends point to the need for affirmative action if women's concerns are to gain political prominence.

Representation of women in decision-making levels of the premier services, the Indian Administrative Service and Indian Police Service, which stood at only 5.4% in 1987, increased to 7.6% in 2000.

Women's organisations are now working in a variety of fields, including income-generation, business, ICTs, politics, health and education



Gender-responsive Budgeting

India has adopted a comprehensive approach to gender-responsive budgeting and intends that action is not restricted to a post-audit of public accounts but is a continuous spiral that aims at mainstreaming gender issues into all aspects of public life. The purview of gender audits extends to all policies, programmes, public expenditure, and outcomes and benefits.

Gender analyses of the Union Budgets of 2001/02 and 2002/03 show an increase of over 3% in the budgetary allocation to 'women-specific' schemes, and that the increase for schemes identified as 'pro-women' increased by 7%.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM, the Department of Women and Child Development (WCD), was set up in 1985 as part of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. In addition to formulating plans, policies and programmes, it enacts and amends legislation affecting women and children, and co-ordinates the efforts of both government and NGOs.

The WCD has four autonomous organisations working under its aegis: The

for women in the informal sector for entrepreneurial activities; and the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), which is an umbrella body for networking with state social welfare boards and voluntary organisations. All are mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and are fully funded by the Government.

One Parliamentary Standing Committee scrutinises the WCD's demands for grants. A Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women examines the reports of the NCW and reports on the Government's measure for improving the status and conditions of women.

Other ministries and government departments look after specific issues related to women and children, such as for health, education and employment. The WCD has overall responsibility for co-ordinating their activities and Women's Cells in the ministries and departments

empower women economically.

The budget allocation for the WCD is 2001/02 was Rs. 1,703.79 crore (revised estimate, approximately £241.8 million), for 2002/03 Rs. 2,138.41 crore (revised estimate, £303.5 million), and for 2003/04 Rs. 3,240.32 crore (£460 million).

Partnerships

Voluntary organisations implement many of the WCD's schemes, especially for literacy, support services, micro-credit for women, employment and income generation, gender sensitisation, organising women into self-help groups, and combating violence and other atrocities against women and girls. The CSWB supports a country-wide network working at grassroots level and other co-operative partnerships illustrate how government-NGO co-operation can result in better opportunities for women.

India works with a number of international organisations on gender-related programmes.

Concerns for the Future

Indian women have moved from being recipients of welfare to the targets of basic needs programmes, to actors in the development process. The three main current and future priority areas are:

- Education and training: Education has been recognised as the prerequisite for improvement in women's status;
- Women and health/nutrition: Women's health is a public health priority throughout the life cycle, from birth through old age; and
- The girl-child: Prioritising the needs of the girl-child as deserving of special attention is a principal guiding state action.

Chart 27.1: Organisational Structure of India's NWM



National Commission for Women (NCW), which supports WCD in protecting women's rights and privileges; the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development, which undertakes research and training related to women; the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, which has forward and backward linkages

have developed strong links with the WCD. Most State Governments have departments at state level which look exclusively at issues concerning women and children. Many have set up Women's Development Corporations which help women access benefits of different schemes designed for them, and

Malaysia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	18,200	20,600	23,300
Female population (% of total)	49.3	49.3	49.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)*	..	43.5	46.4
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	25.6	20.8	16.6
Male	13.1	10.7	8.6
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	100	97
Male	..	100	97
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	73
Male	..	..	66
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	7	10	27
Male	8	14	25
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	73	74	75
Male	68	69	70
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	16	11	8
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.1
Male	..	..	0.6

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* Government of Malaysia statistics with a 2001 figure in the 2000 column

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Malaysian Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
2. Violence Against Women
3. Human Rights of Women
4. Women and Poverty
5. Women and Health

Followed by: 6. Education and Training of Women; 7. Women and the Economy; 8. Women in Power and Decision-making; 9. Women in the Media; 10. The Girl-child; 11. Women and the Environment; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Malaysia ratified CEDAW in 1995. Since 2001 it has elevated its National Women's Machinery (NWM) to the level of a ministry (the Ministry of Women and Family Development) to ensure effective implementation and co-ordination of programmes for women and families. The country is ranked at 52 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The Ministry of Women and Family Development has responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives into development. To do this, it has established several inter-ministerial working committees to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Women's Policy, National Plan of Action, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, Commonwealth PoA and various international instruments.

In addressing specific issues, the ministry established several technical working groups, chaired by the minister, on legislation, and on women and ICTs, among other subjects. Women's Development Offices have been established at state level, and the National Council on Women and Family set up at state, parliamentary and district levels. The council has a co-ordinating

role between federal and state governments.

Women are able to obtain assistance from the Rumah Nur (women's services centres) set up in all state capitals and in some districts. Rumah Nur are referral and one-stop centres for information on services and programmes such as counselling, legal literacy and information on entrepreneurship.

Violence Against Women

The Domestic Violence Act was passed in 1994 and implemented in 1996. To ensure effectiveness, awareness-raising campaigns and training of enforcement officers have been conducted. In 2002, the Women Against Violence (WAVE) campaign was launched and as of July 2003, 1,700 women and men were registered as volunteers and trained. The Act itself is being reviewed to examine the difficulties in obtaining Interim Protection Orders for spouses, the power of judges, the need for counselling and the lack of understanding of the provisions of the Act.



and this position does not change on marriage. The Government is looking at the possibility of setting up Family Courts to handle matters involving matrimonial or property conflicts which give rise to complex cases that have to be heard in multiple courts.

Since independence in 1957, women have played prominent roles in political and public life. The percentage of women MPs in the lower house has risen from 7% in 1995 to 9.1% in 2000, and that of

gravitate towards traditional 'women's' occupations (e.g., teaching, nursing, secretarial) but the pattern is slowly changing as women are being encouraged into other fields, such as science, technology and management.

Paid maternity leave is granted to every female employee in the public and private sectors, with paid paternity leave of up to 7 days granted to males in the public sector. Women also have the option to be assessed separately for tax.

Table 28.1: Reported Cases by Type of Crime, Malaysia

Crime Type	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Domestic Violence	5,726	6,041	3,806	3,468	3,107	2,755
Incest	247	317	275	213	246	306
Molest	1,311	1,318	1,316	1,234	1,363	1,472
Rape	1,323	1,489	1,469	1,217	1,386	1,431

Source: Royal Malaysian Police

In 1999, the Ministry of Human Resources issued a Code of Practice on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. This contained guidelines to employers on the establishment and implementation of in-house preventive and redress mechanisms on sexual harassment.

Women in Power and Decision-making/Human Rights of Women

The rights of women as citizens to participate in the political and public life of the nation are guaranteed under the Federal Constitution. Generally, women have the same rights as men to own, acquire, manage and dispose of property,

women in the various State Assemblies from 4% to 6% in the same period. The Government's Nur Bestari programme aims at building women's leadership skills and motivation.

Women and the Economy

The labour laws do not discriminate against women and some provisions apply exclusively to women. Women have equal opportunities to undergo vocational training and re-training, including apprenticeship and the female labour force participation has increased. Flexible working hours are provided under the Employment Act.

There is a tendency for women to

Women and Health

The health services recognise that women have different health needs because of biological, demographic and socio-economic circumstances. Under the Family Health Programme, 1996, women's health was looked at from two perspectives: family health, comprising maternal and child health, immunisation, family planning, early cancer detection and nutrition; and diseases affecting women with the emphasis on the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

A programme for pregnant mothers who have HIV has been introduced at all antenatal clinics. In the vulnerable 15–24 age group, the prevalence of HIV infection

is six times that for males. In 2001, the infection rate for people between 15 and 49 years was 0.35%.

Both public and private hospitals are being made conscious of the need to be women- and elderly-friendly as life expectancy, especially for women, increases.

Education and Training of Women

The New Economic Policy of 1970 stipulated equal access to educational opportunities for boys and girls. Girls' access to education has improved through the building of more schools, notably girls-only primary and secondary schools, and similar residential schools in the rural areas. For lower income groups, financial aid is given in the form of junior scholarships and bursaries, a textbook loan scheme, free uniforms and subsidised transport to schools irrespective of sex. Figures for gross enrolment for tertiary education show a higher percentage of females.

Women and Poverty

Efforts by the Government and NGOs to reduce the incidence of poverty among women include the provision of micro-credit facilities to about 22,850 women through Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia for small businesses and training single mothers. In view of the rising number of female-headed households from 15.1% in 1997 to 16.1% in 1999 and the parallel rise in poverty among them, efforts are being made to ensure women in female-headed households have the capacity to care for their families. Approaches to dealing with female poverty within the Muslim community have also been explored with the Islamic Development Bank.

Other Concerns

In implementing gender mainstreaming strategies, the Government focuses on encouraging each government department, NGOs and the private sector to be concerned about and work together for gender equality. A pilot project on gender-responsive budget analysis was agreed on in 2002 involving the ministries

Box 28.1: Economic Crisis and Macroeconomic Policy

Malaysia reported that during the East Asia financial crisis of 1998, a total of 36,284 women workers were retrenched from January to December that year, the majority being from clerical and production levels. Data also suggested that the percentage of semi-skilled and skilled workers laid off was higher for women than men in the same category.

Compared to men, women faced greater difficulties in getting jobs during the economic slowdown and in some cases only 4% of vacancies were reserved for women. A study revealed that out of 245 employers, only 9% asked for women candidates. Women were only wanted being recruited as sales agents or in administration or teaching, whereas men were recruited in all sectors. Employers were also less likely to recruit women where extensive training investment was required.

It was found that during this period, women were cutting back on their intake of nutritional and high-protein foods, in particular milk products, beef, fish and vegetables. Thus, women as care-givers for the family were doubly affected in their incomes and quality of life.

Around this period, Malaysia introduced a series of programmes targeting single mothers, including the provision of facilities such as child care, and assistance in education and health. These arose out of the increase in the number of female-headed households, from 15.1% in 1997 to 16.1% in 1999, which was accompanied by a rise in the incidence of poverty in this group.

of education, health, rural development and human resource.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM began as the Women's Affairs Division, later upgraded to the Women's Affairs Department, in the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development. In 1999, the department was transferred to the Prime Minister's Department. Recognising the need to further enhance the effectiveness of the national machinery, the Ministry of Women and Family Development was established in 2001. This ministry is now the NWM.

The staff of the Department of Women's Development in the ministry has grown from 15 in 1995 to 101 by August 2003 and the budget for the department during that period has risen from RM3,459,300 to RM99,050,700 (about £15 million at April 2004 exchange rates). The NWM is headed by the Secretary-General of the ministry. The ministry is assisted by a National Advisory Council on Women which was set up in June 1976 as a co-ordinating,

consultative and advisory body. This council comprises 29 people from various fields, such as politics, the professions, academia, NGOs and the government, and are appointed by the ministry. The ministry has also established the National Council for Women and Family and set up several technical working committees.

The ministry set up an inter-ministerial committee and consultative committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Women's Policy and National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, Commonwealth PoA and other international instruments.

Among the NWM's achievements are amendments to legislation and regulations allowing widows to retain their pensions on remarriage, easier provisions for stay for foreign spouses and low-cost housing priority for single mothers. A Family First: Bring Your Heart Home campaign (2002) to strengthen family life, a 'smart start' package for newlyweds and a WAVE campaign (2003), were launched.

The construction of a sex-

disaggregated database is one of the key initiatives of the ministry's long-term developmental strategies. This will provide the ministry with information for planning, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of programmes and projects.

Partnerships

The Ministry of Women and Family Development has formed 'smart partnerships' with NGOs to implement programmes for women, and funds have been disbursed to NGOs in order to do so. The ministry has worked closely with civil society and NGOs on programmes such as WAVE, the Nur Bestari training series aimed at building women's leadership skills and motivation, and another programme called Nur Bikerz, launched to provide business opportunities to women, especially single mothers.

The ministry also works with international organisations – for example, with the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNIFEM on an Asian regional workshop on gender-based violence in 2002.

Concerns for the Future

The Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001–2005) outlines plans to provide women with skills and knowledge for their twin responsibilities of family and career. The top two priorities among the eight strategic thrusts for women's advancement are:

- Providing more education and training for women, including to meet the demands of the knowledge-based economy, pursue non-traditional fields of study (e.g. engineering), and have access to re-training opportunities and to improve ICT skills; and
- Promoting legislation on women's rights as human rights by reviewing existing laws and regulations to eliminate provisions that discriminate or have adverse effects on women.

Asia Regional Workshop on Strengthening Partnerships for Eliminating Gender-based Violence, hosted by the Government of Malaysia in 2002



Maldives

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	218	253	276
Female population (% of total)	48.7	48.7	49.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	42	43	43
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	5.4	4.3	3.2
Male	5	3.9	3
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	99
Male	..	..	99
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	33
Male	..	..	29
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	61	66	70
Male	62	65	67
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	80	67	59
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.5
Male	..	..	0.3

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Maldives Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
2. Education and Training of Women
3. Women and Health
4. Violence Against Women
5. The Girl-child

Followed by: 6. Women in Poverty/Women in the Economy; 7. Women in Power and Decision-making; 8. Women in the Media; 9. Human Rights of Women; 10. Women and the Environment; and 11. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Maldives consists of 1,190 islands, of which 199 are inhabited. A quarter of the population is classified as urban and live in the capital, Malé. All laws are based on *sharia* law. Maldives ratified CEDAW in 1993 and its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Gender and Development Section of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Security. The National Development Plan has a separate section on gender.

Institutional Mechanisms

The NWM is the lead agency in advocating and mainstreaming gender issues and promoting the participation of women in all spheres of society. A Gender Management System (GMS), based on the Commonwealth model, was put in place in 2001 to facilitate gender mainstreaming and a Gender Equality Council, headed by the President, was established that year. Work continues on strengthening the GMS through capacity building and advocacy.

The sixth National Development Plan reaffirms gender mainstreaming as a priority and cross-cutting issue. The first-ever codified Family Law came into effect on 1 July 2001, which spells out the many rights available to women under *sharia* law, such as pre-nuptial agreements and the rights of women in cases of divorce and polygamy.

Education and Training of Women

There is no gender discrimination in the provision of education, and literacy among women and men is high. Barriers to women, however, persist, such as lack of schools close to where girls live. There is a greater emphasis now on selecting equal numbers of females and males for higher education opportunities, but there are no universities in Maldives and females are often disadvantaged by being unable to go abroad in pursuit of higher education.

There are no quotas for females for scholarships, and no preference for females in drop-out schemes. In addition, vocational training tends to offer traditionally male subjects. However, the Island Development Committees facilitate and provide technical training for island women to increase their opportunities for income generation.

Women and Health

Various programmes are being conducted to address women's health issues, malnourishment and deficiency diseases, reproductive health issues and the importance of breastfeeding. Population education has also become part of the school curriculum. The geographical make-up of the country and small island populations make it difficult to establish health care facilities, especially specialist health care, on every island. The policy of relocating populations to larger islands may improve the situation.

The incidence of HIV/AIDS is low (11 cases among locals since 1991). There is a high level of knowledge about the disease and how it is transmitted; this information is also included in the school curriculum. The risk factors, however, are high: the high rate of divorce (59% of marriages) and remarriage, a large youth population, increasing drug abuse, and large numbers of men working away from their homes for long periods. A new HIV/AIDS policy is therefore under consideration.

The Girl-child

Opportunities for and problems in



education of the girl-child have been outlined in the education section (*above*). For the girl-child facing physical, psychological or sexual abuse and neglect, or whose rights have been compromised, the Unit for the Rights of Children has been specially set up within the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Security. Child Protection Workers, who work with vulnerable children, are based on all inhabited islands. Work needs to be done, however, to establish legal systems and structures to deal with and support victims of abuse.

Violence Against Women/Human Rights of Women

In 1997 all laws were appraised for gender bias and there are no laws that discriminate against women although some socio-cultural factors may restrict the ability of females to use available resources. Females can administer property and are equal before the courts, except where *sharia* law restricts the weight of their testimony.

There are no specific laws dealing with gender-based violence, and women have been reluctant to report assaults because of the social stigma, the lack of an enabling environment or support system and the view that domestic violence is a private matter (*see National Women's Machinery section, below*).

Women enjoy full political rights except that they cannot contest the presidency. Few female candidates stand for election; in 2001, 5 of 50 members of the *majlis* were female (2 elected and 3 nominated). The Government is encouraging more females to come

forward. Since 2000, one-third of members of Atoll Development Committees must be female, and women have a small representation on Island Development Committees.

Women and the Economy

Women's employment continues to conform to traditional stereotypes. This is partly due to cultural resistance to women seeking jobs on other islands. The traditional responsibility for rural women is to look after children, the home and island-based agriculture, while men are often away fishing for a living or are employed elsewhere.

Women do work in the agriculture and fish processing sector though the latter is now declining as industrial methods are introduced. Where women undertake agricultural marketing and selling, the facilities are often inadequate.

National Women's Machinery

In 1979, a Preparatory Committee for the International Decade was established under the then National Planning Agency. This was renamed the National Women's Committee in 1981 and renamed again in 1986 as the National Women's Council. In 1989, it was re-formed as the Department of Women's Affairs, which was elevated as the Ministry of Youth, Women's Affairs and Sports in 1993. In 1996, it was renamed the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Welfare, and in 1998 the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Security. The NWM is the Gender and Development Section within the ministry.

With Maldives transiting from an empowerment and integration approach to a gender equality and mainstreaming approach, gender issues should not be the sole responsibility of the ministry. The NWM assists in the analysis and incorporation of gender issues in policies, plans and development projects that will be implemented by other ministries.

A Gender Equality Council was established in December 2001, on the lines of the Commonwealth Gender Management System model. It is headed by the President. Gender Focal Points have been appointed in all sectors though they require further training and capacity building if they are to be effective.

problem has been aired in the media and discussed elsewhere. Training has been given to police and medical officers, officials from the family court, Ministry of Justice, NGOs, community activists and staff of the NWM itself. The outcome is an action plan for a multi-sectoral support system to assist victims. The plan also drives ongoing work on this issue.

Discussions are under way to draw up specific legislation on violence against women and a draft is expected to be ready by the end of 2004.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Security works closely with all other ministries, and is currently sensitising the media on gender issues. Generally it is

awareness about gender issues, and women's reproductive health and family issues, especially in Malé.

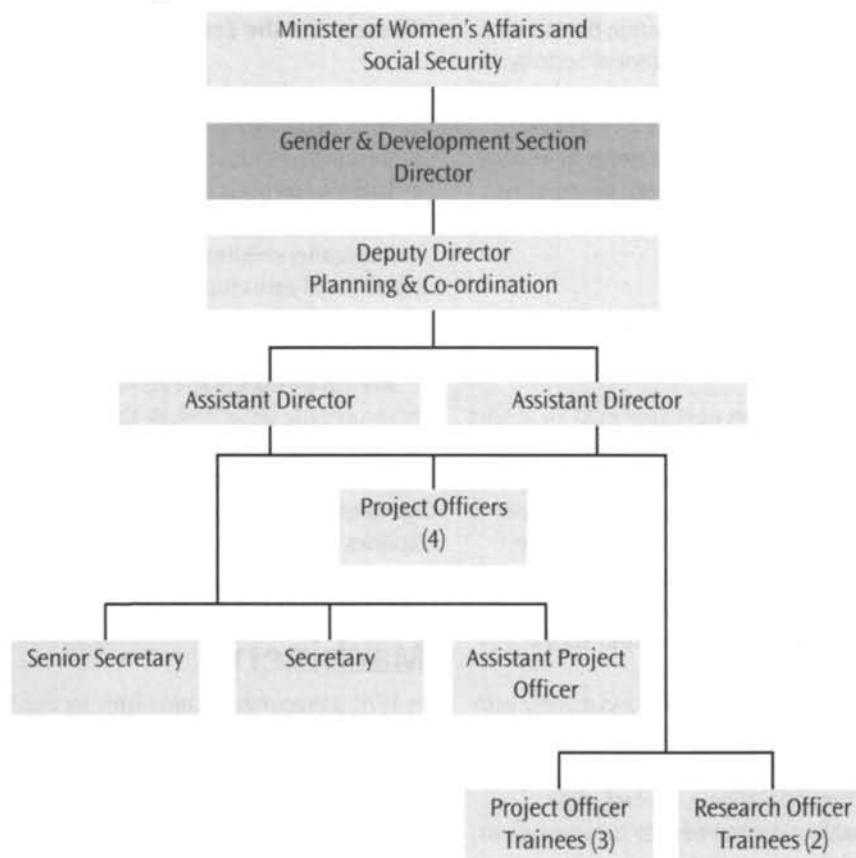
Among the international organisations, the Commonwealth Secretariat has provided technical assistance in setting up a GMS.

Concerns for the Future

Maldives hopes to introduce legislation that specifically deals with violence against women. There is no such legislation at present. Meanwhile, awareness programmes on such violence have been launched.

More work is needed to create clarity on key concepts and principles regarding women's rights in order to properly implement CEDAW. At present there is inadequate information on the convention, men's traditional patriarchal role still dominates, and there are widely held cultural assumptions on women's roles, often mistakenly assumed to be religious beliefs.

Chart 29.1: Organisational Structure of the Maldives NWM



The NWM has been able to put the issues of domestic violence and the wider violence against women on the public agenda. Traditionally, victims have been reluctant to report violence and sexual abuse because of the social stigma and the lack of an enabling environment. Since 2001 and 2002, however, the

hampered by inadequate sex-disaggregated data on which to base planning and monitoring.

Partnerships

NGOs have been established in Maldives only fairly recently. Already, however, they have contributed significantly to creating

Pakistan

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	108,00	122,400	138,100
Female population (% of total)	47.7	48.5	48.2
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	24	26	29
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	0.9	13.7	17.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	79.9	76.2	72.1
Male	50.7	46.5	42.6
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	39	48	62
Male	82	89	84
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	12	..	24
Male	24	..	42
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	2	3	..
Male	4	4	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	60	62	64
Male	58	60	62
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	96	90	81
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Pakistan has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women in Power and Decision-making
 2. Education and Training of Women
 3. Violence Against Women
 4. Women and Health
 5. Women in Poverty
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 9. Women in the Media; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. The Girl-child; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

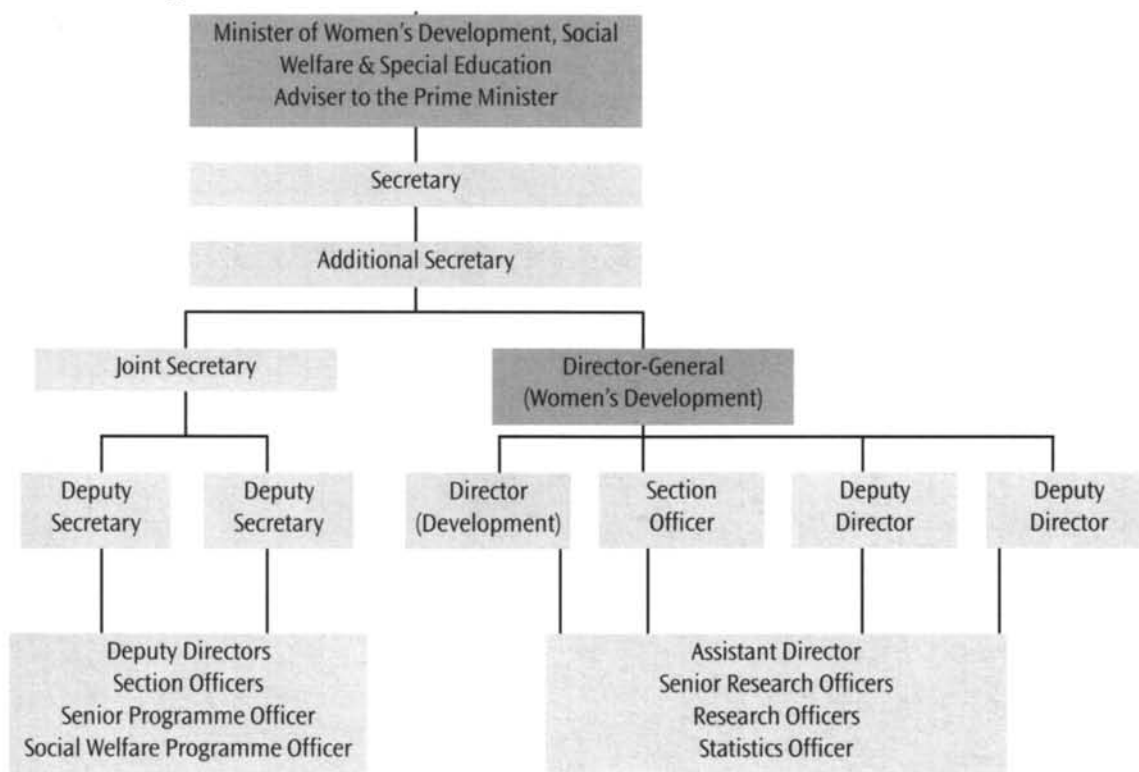
The National Women's Machinery (NWM) of Pakistan is the Ministry of Women's Development, Social Welfare and Special Education. Pakistan acceded to CEDAW in 1996. At time of reporting, it has yet to submit a national report on CEDAW. The country is ranked at 120 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Low social indicators underline the need for the prioritisation of the areas of Women in Power and Decision-making, Violence Against Women, Education and Training of Women, and Women and health. The following reflect progress in these areas:

- Formulation of the first-ever National Policy on Development and Empowerment of Women;
- The 33% quota for women's representation in local bodies – over 35,000 women councillors have been elected;
- The Women's Political Participation project (see Box 30.1, page 121);
- The school nutritional project Tawana Pakistan (see *National Women's Machinery, below*);
- The Women's Health Project; and
- Education sector reforms.

A permanent National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) was established in 2000. Its objectives are the emancipation of women, gender equality and elimination of all forms of

Chart 30.1: Organisational Structure of Pakistan's NWM



discrimination against women. In partnership with civil society and the Government, it promotes initiatives for the empowerment of women to enable them to realise their full potential alongside men.

The NCSW comprises 20 members. At the time of reporting, it is headed by a former High Court judge who is a woman. It is funded entirely by the Government of Pakistan.

The Commission has reviewed the Hadood Ordinance, Qisas and Diyat Ordinance (religious regulations based on Islamic beliefs), the Citizenship Act and other legal reforms. It has also reviewed and analysed employment patterns of women in the public sector.

The NWM reports that the non-availability of sex-disaggregated statistics and data, and insufficient gender sensitisation of most of the government machinery have been constraints in the implementation of the Beijing PFA.

National Women's Machinery

The head of the NWM is the ministry's Secretary and the Women's Development Wing is headed by a Director-General. The head of the ministry is an Adviser to the Prime Minister on women's development, social welfare and special education.

The first major government institution on women's issues was established in 1979 when a Women's Division was set up

as part of the Cabinet Secretariat. In 1989 this was elevated to a full Ministry of Women and Development. In 1993, the youth affairs portfolio was added to this ministry and in 1996 removed. In 1997, with the addition of two new portfolios, the Ministry of Women's Development, Social Welfare and Special Education emerged.

In 1993, the staffing strength of the Women's Development Wing was reduced from 180 to 154 posts. In 1996, this was further reduced to 102 posts, and between 1999 and 2003 to 77 posts. Amid the downsizing, the Women's Rights Wing, Research Wing and Monitoring and Evaluation Wing were removed from the NWM's structure.

Financial Resources

The budget allocation for the Women's Development Wing has been erratic but has increased substantially over the years.

The Ministry's allocation for 2004/05 is 0.56% of the national budget.

About Rs 385 million (US\$6.58 million) have been allocated for a Gender Reform Action Plan which aims to structurally 'genderise' the entire federal and provincial government machinery.

Key Achievements

The first-ever National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women was drawn up by the NWM after consulting CSOs and other key stakeholders, and launched in 2002 by the President. It encompasses areas such as education, health, law and access to justice, violence against women, family and community, poverty, access to credit, remunerated work, the rural economy and informal sector, sustainable development, and power and decision-making.

A large project, Tawana Pakistan, was

Table 30.1: Budget Allocations, Pakistan Women's Development Wing

Year	Budget Allocations		Total (Rs million)
	Public Sector (Rs million)	NGO Sector (Rs million)	
1980-81	40,000	0	40,000
1990-91	144,000	67,200	211,200
1995-96	8,000	38,000	125,000
2000-01	30,502	16,237	46,739
2004-05	501,512	38,488	540,000

launched in October 2002 to raise nutrition levels in young girls. Under the project, for a complete food cycle of two years, a meal a day and food supplements are supplied to over half a million girls (age 5–12) in low-income communities in 29 high-poverty districts, two of which are in the northern areas.

Crisis centres for women in distress have also been set up, with free legal aid, medical relief and counselling services. A 24-hour separate reporting centre where abused women can lodge reports has also been set up on an experimental basis.

A watershed for political empowerment of women came with the Devolution Plan of 2001. Under the Local Government Ordinance of that year, one-third of representation at all tiers of local government had to be reserved for women. At the time of reporting, 35,963 seats were occupied by women.

Collaboration

The NWM works closely with all relevant ministries and government agencies. For example, it worked with the Ministry of Finance to ensure mainstreaming of gender issues in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), and with the Planning and Development Division on gender issues in the Public Sector Development Programme and the 10th Five Year Plan (2004–2008).

It has worked with the ministries of Law and Justice and the Interior to amend or repeal laws that discriminate against women and to develop a code of ethics for gender equality in the work place.

Partnerships

The NWM funds a number of CSO projects, such as skills development for women, the provision of safe drinking water, and supports facilities for working women and educational institutions, and for mother and child health programmes.

Representatives of CSOs are also invited to various conferences, seminars and workshops on women's issues. The NWM's leading partners are Aurat Foundation (Women's Political School), Pakistan Federation of Business and Professional Women (working women's hostel and day care centre), Behbood



Box 30.1: School for Politics

Pakistan's Devolution Plan, 2001, proved to be a watershed for the political empowerment of women in Pakistan. Under the Local Government Ordinance of that year, at least one-third of positions at all levels of local government were to be filled by women. This resulted in the emergence of 35,963 women councillors.

Following that, the Women's Political Participation Project (W3P) was launched to help develop the ability of these councillors to participate in decision-making processes.

W3P faced enormous challenges: Women councillors were spread thinly throughout the country and most were non-literate. Many had hardly ever left their homes or made decisions for themselves; for the most part, they lived in conservative communities, and had diverse ethnic and class origins. Most were in politics for the first time.

The response was to develop a 'mentoring and nurturing' method. Selected women councillors from the districts were made lead mentors who then passed what they had learnt to *tehsil* (sub-district) councillors. These, in turn, shared what they had learnt with the greater number of women councillors at a lower level. In this way, a resource pool of about 500 lead mentors had multiplied its reach more than 50 times over.

W3P formally ended in December 2003, having covered about 80% (27,000) of elected women councillors. Aside from the resource pool of lead mentors and 50 research analysts, W3P also produced:

- A training kit with six editions of the six-module curriculum, a pictorial guide, training charts, monitoring and evaluation material, Local Government Ordinance books, and guidebooks for councillors;
- Documentary training films and CDs;
- A complete data profile of women councillors;
- 100 case studies;
- 21 community newsletters;
- A Women's Interactive Network and E-dialogue Forum; and
- 200 women councillors trained in information communications technologies.

To ensure that W3P gains are consolidated, a long-term, second-generation initiative is being planned. The Women's Political School is the first step in institutionalising the process of motivating, enabling and empowering women to seek public office at all levels so that their issues and concerns will be raised and addressed through public policy.

Pakistan's NWM concludes: 'Enhancing women's political participation does not only span the life of the project. It encompasses the entire life situation of women generally characterised by exclusion from decision-making. Structural and attitudinal barriers must be addressed to ensure women's full, equal and informed participation in economic, social and political decision-making at all levels of governance.'

Association (working women's hostel), Bunyad (micro-credit programme for rural women), Shirkat Gah (synthesis of reports of women commissions and committees) and Rozan (gender sensitisation training).

The NWM has also consulted other CSOs on the formulation of the national policy on development and empowerment of women, and the National Plan of Action for Women. The ministry believes that this process could be greatly streamlined if the CSOs formed a representative body at national level.

The NWM works with assistance from international organisations, such as the regional SAARC, UN agencies and the Commonwealth Secretariat in a number of relevant areas.

Concerns for the Future

Structural adjustment programmes and the globalisation of the economy have had a negative impact on women in Pakistan. Traditional customs and taboos have also constrained women from having equal access to opportunities and from exercising their rights in the family as well as society.

The Government of Pakistan will therefore concentrate on the following three areas in the near future: improving the status of women in poverty and in the economy, and combating violence against women.

These issues are addressed in the PRSP,

annual development programmes and in the 10th Five-Year Plan, under preparation at the time of reporting. A National Fund for Rural Women, with seed money of Rs 100 million (about US\$1.7 million), has been established to launch programmes and projects aimed at the economic empowerment of women in rural areas.

Singapore

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	2,722	2,987	4,018
Female population (% of total)	49.7	49.6	48.7
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	39	39	39
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	1.3	2.8	5.1
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	16.8	14	11.7
Male	5.6	4.6	3.8
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	93	..
Male	..	92	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	15	31	..
Male	22	37	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	77	79	80
Male	72	74	76
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	7	4	4
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.2
Male	..	..	0.2

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2003 (2002)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

The Singapore Government has identified all the critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action as of equal priority (except for Women and Armed Conflict which is not applicable). It has said, however, that education and health lay the foundation for the substantive advancement of the status of women.

A Decade of Action

The guiding principles that shape Singapore's policies on gender equality are meritocracy based on equal opportunity, people's development, treating women as part of the mainstream and not a special interest group, and strengthening the family. At the heart of it, the primary means to achieve true advancement is to ensure that women have equal and universal access to education.

Singapore acceded to CEDAW in 1995. It is ranked at 28 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Report 2004*.

Education and Training of Women

Ready access to quality education has been a key strategy in advancing the status of women. By 2002, the literacy rate among females over 15 was 90.6%. Six years of primary school education is compulsory; females made up 52.5% of the intake in polytechnics and universities in 2001/02; the wage gap closed from 16% in 1992 to 8.3% in 2002 for professionals, and from 39% to 24.6% for technical and crafts persons.

The 2002 level of women principals in primary (70%), secondary (58%) and junior colleges (67%) is high. More females are also entering traditionally male domains. In 1997/98, 1 in 4 first-year engineering students were female; this improved to 1 in 3 in 2001/02.

Singapore's Masterplan for IT in Education has also produced results. All schools are equipped with computers. In 2001, more females were taking up science (67%) and computing subjects (32%) in universities. Home ownership of computers is high and one survey

Ready access to quality education is key to advancing the status of women

reported that 47.1% of Internet home users were female.

Skills training and lifelong learning are emphasised. The Government has doubled the Lifelong Learning Fund from S\$500 million to S\$1 billion since April. The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) runs a Skills Redevelopment Programme at highly subsidised rates for members. In 2002, 47% of the trainees were women.



Women and the Economy

In May 2002, Singapore ratified the ILO Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration. A few months later, government, labour and employers reaffirmed their commitment to equal pay for equal work and a Code of Responsible Employment Practices was issued. The proportion of women in the professional, administrative, technical and management positions has risen from 31.3% in 1992 to 37.6% in 2002.

With better education and employment opportunities, in 2002, the female wage on average reached 72% of the male wage. Among young professionals and managers in the 25–29 age group, women earned respectively 2% and 9.5% less than their male counterparts, compared to the overall difference of 8.3% and 15.9% in those categories for all ages. For young sales and service workers aged 25–29, women earned 4.2% more than men.

Technical assistance schemes for small and medium enterprises are accessible to both genders. The Government budget is non-discriminatory and is equally accessible to both genders. Some measures, however, specifically benefit women, such as maternity and childcare-related benefits. In the 2002 financial year, S\$59.2 million was disbursed as childcare subsidies and S\$23.5 million as Third Child Paid Maternity Leave. S\$72 million was disbursed as the Baby Bonus.

Women and Poverty

The Government works closely with the community and private sector to help lower-income families by encouraging re-training and skills upgrading. Special

attention is paid to the children from these families. Programmes include schemes to provide monthly allowances to meet day-to-day expenses, meeting rent and maintenance charges of those living in public flats, childcare services, pre-school education and education subsidies.

Lower income families also have access to affordable medical care. Medifund is a special scheme to help the poor meet medical costs.

Violence Against Women

Singapore is working towards a violence-free environment for families. The endemic form of family violence is spousal abuse, comprising 79% of the Personal Protection Orders (PPOs) issued by the Subordinate Courts in 2002. On average, 64% of PPO applicants were wives and 9% husbands. About 6% were ex-spouses.

Through the Many Helping Hands approach, community partners such as the police, social service agencies, crisis shelters and hospitals meet regularly to improve operational procedures and provide co-ordinated assistance to families and to victims of violence.

The Women's Desk, which is the National Women's Machinery (NWM) located in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, works with other agencies and the media to educate the public on the issues. It has a website which explains different forms of abuse and how victims and perpetrators can obtain help; a play on violence during dates was also shown to secondary schoolchildren to teach them how to deal with it. A new initiative in 2003 was a pilot

project on combating abuse of the elderly.

Training continues for professionals who handle family violence cases. The courts have also established a Family Transformation and Protection Unit as a one-stop centre to manage family violence cases.

Women and Health

The health and quality of life of women has improved. Maternal and infant mortality rates have fallen, and female life expectancy has reached 80.6 years. This and other statistics have implications for the ageing population. A wide range of services are thus implemented to help families and the elderly remain active in the community.

HIV/AIDS prevalence is very low – approximately 0.2% of the 15–49 year age group in 2001. The main gender issues arise from the mode of transmission which is through heterosexual contact with commercial sex workers. Males account for 88% of those infected, women 12% with 62% of them married. The National AIDS Education Programme targets high-risk behaviour, protection through safe sex or abstinence and the benefits of early detection. All antenatal women are advised to get screened for infection.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Women occupy important leadership positions in various capacities. They make up over 30% of corporate managers, 62% of the higher ranks of Division I and above in the civil service, 45% of Subordinate Court judges and 23% of

Supreme Court judges. More women are participating in management committees of grassroots organisations. Singapore women play a significant role in the media; a woman heads the main broadcaster's radio network and main TV service.

National Women's Machinery

The Women's Desk in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports is the National Women's Machinery (NWM). It was set up in May 2002 and given an operational budget. The Desk is headed by the Director for Family Policy who reports to the Co-ordinating Director for the Family Development Division.

Women's issues cut across all government ministries and the public sector and are dealt with through the Inter-Ministry Committee on CEDAW, set up in 1996, and at policy levels across government. The Women's Desk provides secretariat support to this committee.

The Ministry of Community Development and Sports' Strategic Planning and Research Division compiles relevant statistics to track women's progress and involvement.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO), the National Trade Union Congress Women's Committee and the People's Association's Women's Integration Network Council to promote the status and well-being of women. Together they represent more than 90% of the women's groups in Singapore. It works with the SCWO to raise awareness of CEDAW. The Women's Desk will continue to work with women's groups on the re-skilling of women, work-life balance and financial literacy.

Singapore plays an active part in APEC Ministerial Meetings on Women and the ASEAN Committee on Women.

Chart 31.1; Structure of Singapore's NWM within the Ministry of Community Development and Sports



Concerns for the Future

Singapore considers finding a work-life balance is important for the next few years because human capital is one of its few natural resources. To maximise that human capital, people are seen as whole individuals who function best when their work and personal responsibilities are in harmony. The Work-Life Unit in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, set up in 2000, aims to foster a work-life friendly culture in organisations. The strategy is overseen by a committee drawn from government, labour and employer representatives.

Sri Lanka

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	16,300	17,300	18,500
Female population (% of total)	48	48.3	50.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	34	36	37
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	23.5	19.7	11.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	15.3	13.1	11.0
Male	7.1	6.3	5.6
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	4	4	..
Male	6	6	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	73	74	75
Male	68	69	71
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	22	19	17
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.1
Male	..	..	0

Source: World Bank database on Gender Statistics
 .. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Sri Lanka has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
2. Human Rights of Women
3. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
4. Women and Poverty
5. Women and Health.

Decades of civil strife, political instability and the resultant drain on the economy have had a severe impact on the implementation of the Beijing PFA and have exacerbated the incidence of violence in society. This has led to the determination of the areas of priority concern.

A Decade of Action

Sri Lanka's efforts in promoting gender equality have been characterised by many achievements, particularly in respect of high social indicators. However, the benefits of these achievements have been offset by continued civil strife, militarisation and political instability. The resultant drain on the economy and the increase in the incidence of violence in society have therefore determined the choice of areas of priority concern in the post-Beijing period.

Sri Lanka acceded to CEDAW in 1981 and to its Optional Protocol in 2003. It is ranked at 73 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Violence Against Women

Curbing violence, particularly violence against women, has been a top priority. The revised Penal Code provisions of 1995, giving wider coverage to acts of violence against women and children, have motivated law enforcement personnel and civil society leaders to act. Thirty-four special Women's and Children's Desks have been set up in main police stations and the Police Women's Bureau, a co-ordinating body in Colombo

Sri Lanka was one of the first Commonwealth countries to undertake a gender-responsive budgeting exercise

with a 24-hour hotline service, has been strengthened.

From 1998 onwards, handbooks and information materials have been produced and disseminated by the Women's Bureau and the National Committee on Women (NCW) to create greater understanding of the application of the Penal Code provisions on violence against women. Free drop-in counselling centres have been set up under a government initiative to provide redress for women victims of violence. Awareness-raising through public discussions on women's human rights have been conducted in local languages, using the Sri Lanka Women's Charter as a tool. Counselling services are also publicised. A research study on domestic violence has been commissioned and a Domestic Violence Bill drafted.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of women

At the time of reporting, 45 Gender Focal Points have been appointed and their roles and functions upgraded. Gender mainstreaming concepts are being discussed and efforts are being made to incorporate gender perspectives in the national budgeting, planning and monitoring processes, with positive interventions from the ministries concerned.

Additional initiatives to reinforce gender mainstreaming include the introduction of a Gender Module in the Distance Education Project for Public Servants and the preparation and dissemination of a National Sex-disaggregated Data Handbook.

A proposed Women's Act will include a National Commission on Women to replace the National Committee on Women, and an advisory body, the Women's Council. In 2003, a National Steering Committee on Gender Equity was set up to monitor the priority action area for combating gender discrimination under the poverty reduction policy, Regaining Sri Lanka.

Women and Poverty

The National Poverty Alleviation Scheme,



Samurdhi, has been operating since 1995 and targets families living in poverty which constitute approximately 40% of the population. The 2002 Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP) includes a programme to combat gender discrimination and a set of action priorities to deal with gender gaps. A special Steering Committee on Gender Equality was set up in January 2003 for follow-up action under the leadership of the NWM. The Women's Bureau continues to provide micro-credit to the poorest women for income-generating activities. A self-help savings and credit scheme, Vanitha Shakti, was launched on a pilot basis and has been found to be viable and suitable for replication.

Some of the constraints affecting the realisation of the Beijing PFA include the impact of poverty and prevailing free market trends on women, given the limited protection guaranteed them. There is a lack of gender expertise to cover the technical aspects related to gender mainstreaming and a dearth of high quality gender trainers.

Women and Health

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS is low in Sri Lanka compared to other South Asian countries. However, returning migrant workers and the faster increase in the number of infected women is a cause for concern. The Health Ministry HIV/AIDS Prevention Project targets both women

and men. The Reproductive Health Promotion Project of the Women's Bureau, funded by UNFPA, specifically addresses gender concerns and reaches out to low-income groups throughout the country.

Women in Power and Decision-Making

A woman is Head of State of Sri Lanka. The rights of women to participate equally in power and decision-making, however, continue to be debated at all levels. Temporary special measures, such as quota systems, are not yet popularly accepted and are major barriers to be overcome.

Women and the Economy

The 2002/2003 gender budgeting dialogues, spearheaded by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with technical support from UNIFEM, have resulted in budget pledges for the women's budget and for 10% reservations in all development projects and programmes.

Unemployment has pushed more women into migrant labour, both within and outside Sri Lanka. The social costs of their vulnerability to physical and sexual exploitation are not reflected or considered under market-controlled macroeconomic conditions. The application of gender-responsive budget principles and techniques should

There is an increase in the number of widows and female-headed households



therefore be useful in reviewing macroeconomic policy.

National Women's Machinery

The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women's Affairs, one of 32 Cabinet-level ministries. The National Committee of Women (NCW) and the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka are under its umbrella.

A Gender Complaints Centre was added to the NCW in 1999 to enhance its capacity to receive and deal with complaints on gender discrimination as part of its mandate according to the Women's Charter of 1993. Gender mainstreaming is a new initiative under the Ministry and a

10% budget allocation for the integration of gender concerns into the action programmes of other Ministries and line agencies was made for 2004. Gender Focal Points are being technically strengthened to enable them to act as catalysts for action within their own agencies.

Partnerships

Sri Lanka continues to work in close partnership with SAARC countries. The Regional Workshop on the Status of the Girl-child was hosted, with SAARC support, by Sri Lanka in April 2003. The Social Charter was signed by SAARC Heads of State at the 12th SAARC Summit in January 2004. Article VI is on the Promotion of the Status of Women.

The efforts of UNIFEM/SARO (New

Delhi) in fostering and co-ordinating partnerships in such areas as sharing country experiences of gender-responsive budgets, and biennial review meetings on gender equality with government and non-government participation have been valuable.

The NWM continues to work with NGOs and civil society to ensure technical and resource support, maintain linkages with specific gender interest groups and share research and information.

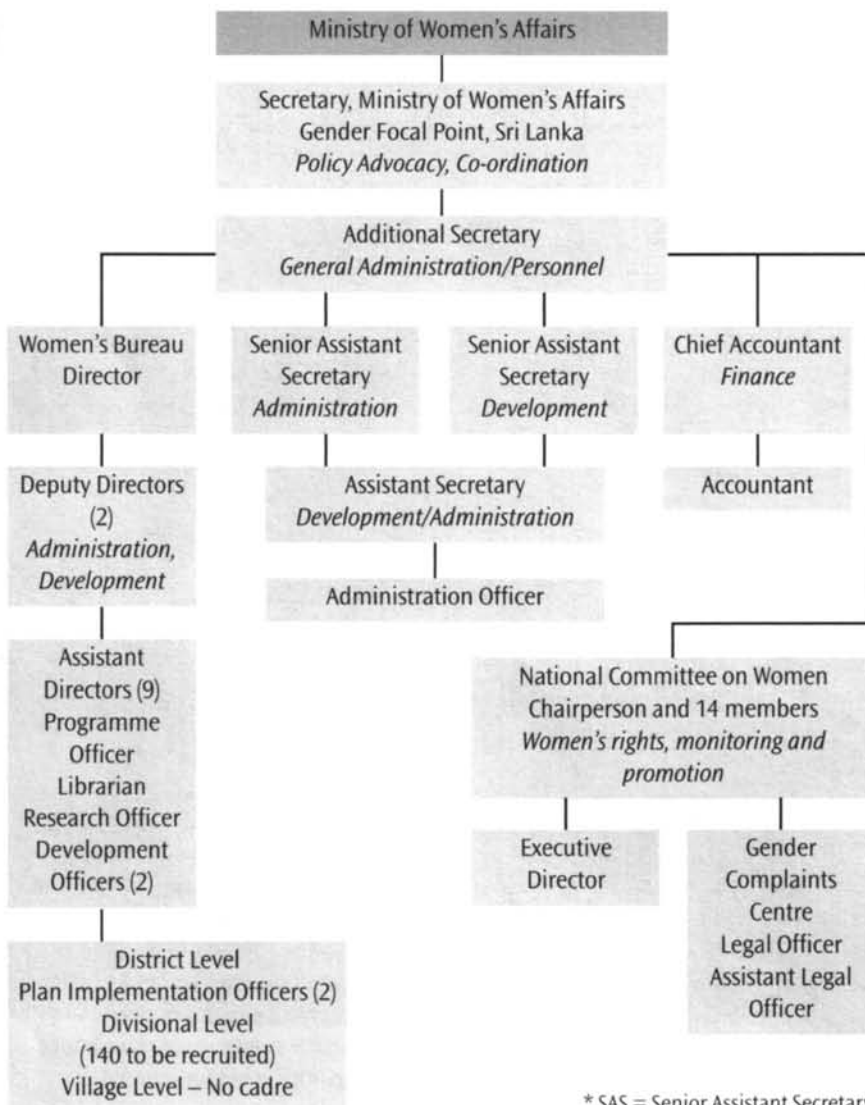
Concerns for the Future

The efforts of the NWM, particularly in gender mainstreaming, require greater and sustained policy and technical input and support.

There is a need to put in place adequate mechanisms and resources to address the effects of long-term armed conflict, the resultant internally displaced families, and the increase in the number of widows and female-headed households.

Barriers to allowing women the right to participate equally in power and in decision-making processes need to be overcome.

Chart 32.1: Organisational Chart for Ministry of Women's Affairs, Sri Lanka



* SAS = Senior Assistant Secretary

While it is now widely recognised that gender is a key issue that must be taken into consideration when formulating development policies and plans and programmes, it has been more difficult to translate the rhetoric about the importance of gender into policies that improve Caribbean women's condition and their position of disadvantage vis-à-vis that of Caribbean men, and into programmes that meet the specific needs of men and women in Caribbean society.

– *Women, Gender and Development in the Caribbean: Reflections & Projections by Patricia Ellis, 2003*

Regional Profile

Caribbean and the Americas: Overcoming the Barriers

The countries that make up the Commonwealth Caribbean and the Americas region are diverse. Among member countries is Canada, the second largest country in the world, one of its richest, ranked fourth in the UNDP's 2004 Human Development Index (HDI), with a GDP per capita of US\$29,480, and a combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools of 95%. Canada is also a key member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Organisation of American States (OAS), Asian and Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) and G8 economic groupings.

Other countries in this region are small states, mainly belonging to an archipelago of small island states, clustered in and around the Caribbean Sea (though The Bahamas is in the West Atlantic). Some are relatively well off and have fairly sophisticated economies. Others have populations under 100,000, still rely on the export of bananas and sugar for income, and are thus open to fluctuations in global trade.

Revisions and reviews of trade initiatives, such as the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), including the Everything but Arms amendment, and trade-related aspects of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, will affect Commonwealth Caribbean small states in view of the fact that World Trade Organisation (WTO) regulations will determine the agenda and thus shape bilateral agreements.

Off-shore banking and financial services, E-commerce and tourism have emerged as important industries for some Caribbean countries. However, these small states are also prone to climate and environmental disasters, as experienced

with Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Some are classified as Disadvantaged Countries. One country, Guyana, has been recognised as a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC).

No Commonwealth Caribbean country is at the low human development end of the HDI. Five states – Barbados, St Kitts and Nevis, Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, and Antigua and Barbuda – are ranked as having high human development.

The quality of life has generally been rated as 'medium' to 'high', yet many people still live below the poverty line and the feminisation of poverty is evident. Over the past decade, the proportion of households headed by women, both poor and non-poor, has continued to increase. Women heads of households are often the sole breadwinners for their families, but earn significantly less than their male counterparts.

The incidence of poverty is lower in Latin America and the Caribbean, but progress in further reducing poverty has been slow. Greater improvement is required if the region is to attain the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving poverty by 2015.

The advancement of gender equality in the Commonwealth Caribbean and Americas has been uneven. On the one hand, there has been clear progress in enshrining equality in countries' constitutions, eliminating direct forms of discrimination, adapting legal frameworks, and developing innovative laws on electoral quotas and domestic violence. On the other hand, it is evident that existing barriers facing women not only reduce their access to employment, but also to health care, education, social

Box 33.1: Increasing and Strengthening Capacity

The Centres for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies have developed institutionally in the post-Beijing decade, and continue to play a strategic role in providing gender training in a range of fields for undergraduates, post-graduates and mid-career professionals in the public and other sectors.

NWMs in the Caribbean have also sought to overcome capacity constraints through:

- The use of United Nations Volunteers;
- Upgrading staff training to post-graduate levels;
- The use of networks on planning committees/commissions;
- Co-operation with training institutions; and
- Increased collaboration with the civil society and the private sector.

Other NWMs have expanded their areas of specialisation, collaborating with experts from other ministries. Canada and St Vincent and the Grenadines reinforced their small but highly skilled teams by using outside experts on specialised issues, and making effective use of gender networks, civil society/NGOs, professional and academic associations, research and training institutes, and linkages with umbrella organisations.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has also assisted in capacity-building through introduction of the gender mainstreaming approach based on the Gender Management System (GMS) framework. St Kitts and Nevis became the first Caribbean country to pilot the GMS, with the assistance of a Commonwealth expert on a nine-month assignment. Jamaica has applied the GMS to its health sector through its Ministry of Health. By 2000, St Kitts and Nevis and Barbados, with the support of the Secretariat, were able to run gender-responsive budget initiatives.

networks, and participation in political, economic and social decision-making processes. In addition, while some women attain an average level of schooling, male underachievement in education has been an emerging issue.

Gender socialisation, which impacts on traditional notions of gender roles both in and out of the home, as well as poverty and lack of employment, limited access to information, and resources and barriers to skills development can contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Some countries like Canada, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago have put in place national HIV/AIDS policies and programmes, while others like the Bahamas are in the process of developing their programmes.

Priorities for Action

In response to the Commonwealth Survey 2003/04, all countries in the region ranked women's poverty and violence against women, especially domestic violence, among their top priorities for national action. Most countries in the region have linked progress in women and the economy with the eradication of poverty among women. They have similarly linked the development of laws and institutions dealing with the human rights of women with combating violence against women. Overall, they identify the development and strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women as priority areas.

Gender, Poverty and Employment

Where there is a lack of competitiveness in trade, globalisation impacts negatively on women. This is currently the case for most Caribbean countries, for example, Jamaica with its primary/low value-added products such as sugar, bananas and garments. These sectors employ a high percentage of women and further fallout would result in a disproportionate loss of employment among women.

Jamaica is addressing the issue of lack of competitiveness by pursuing measures to reduce production costs through improved technology and other efficiencies. Constraints include a level of crime and violence that dictates high

insurance rates and security costs for businesses.

In the region, country-led initiatives have been promoted for guiding poverty eradication efforts, supported by donors and partners. Sector programmes and budget support are placing new emphasis on co-ordination, complementarity, and integration with government processes and procedures. Thus, budgets and public financial management systems in general have received increasing attention.

Barbados, Belize and St Kitts and Nevis, with support from the Commonwealth Secretariat, piloted gender-responsive budgeting. Governments in the region while faced with tough choices and budget discipline must continue to earmark a significant portion of resources for gender equality programmes in order to sustain the overall pro-poor development gains for women and men, girls and boys alike. For example, in The Bahamas, the appointment of the Task Force on Domestic Violence was a good start to co-ordinating the resources in the country.

Future initiatives need to ensure that resources are properly utilised and not wasted through the duplication of services/projects/programmes by the various splinter agencies.

Education and training have been linked to poverty eradication. Education

remains a priority focus with technical and vocational training being used as an avenue to reach unemployed women and high school drop-outs.

Belize's National Gender Policy recognises that many of women's concerns are as a result of being the poorest of the poor. The Government is committed to implementing programmes to address the issues of unemployment and wealth-generation. It also recognises that violence and HIV/AIDS affect women more because of their financial dependency on men, inability, in some cases, to negotiate safe sex, being forced to drop out early from the education system, and having limited skills and access to jobs.

In The Bahamas, all persons on the government welfare system are encouraged to pursue additional training at the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute. To those who qualify, the government pays all of the students' costs for participating at the Institute. All courses are available to women and the government continues to maintain its onsite day care facility for mothers who require this service.

In Canada, women make up close to half of the labour force and the majority work full-time. However, women still do most of the unpaid work in the household, especially for the care of

Women are trained in non-traditional skills in Trinidad and Tobago, here in making cabinets

children. They also have greater difficulty in accessing opportunities in high-wage growth sectors of the economy. Tackling poverty, especially for single-parent households, remains a challenge but improvements are being made.

National Women's Machineries

All countries in this region have National Women's Machineries (NWMs). These are located in different government structures with varying degrees of influence. At the time of reporting, a small number of countries still have no gender policy though for many of these, such policies are in the process of formulation or approval. Public policies have been developed in a number of sectors that address gender concerns.

National policies based on gender mainstreaming have been developed in most countries in the region. Guyana, for example, is working towards the gender mainstreaming of its National Development Plan.

The need for training in gender mainstreaming and its component concepts (gender analysis and gender planning) was also accepted at the Second and Third Caribbean Ministerial Conferences on Women. The Port of Spain Consensus, adopted at the Third Conference in 1999, also recommended that the Gender Management System (GMS) developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat be adopted by the region as an approach to gender mainstreaming. However, a review of progress in 2004 indicates that this has not been fully implemented. Institutional changes and mechanisms have not been made fully operational.

Much responsibility is placed on the NWMs to take forward gender equality in the region. Inter-ministerial committees to co-ordinate mainstreaming of gender equality programmes have been set up in Jamaica, Guyana, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago. The gender mainstreaming framework, based on the multi-stakeholder approach, has, however, yet to be fully institutionalised.

To be effective such structures and processes require political commitment, resources and capacity-building support.



Unfortunately, structural adjustment and cutbacks in the public sector have impacted significantly on the social sector. In turn, this has had budgetary implications for NWMs which are located mainly in the social sector ministries.

On the whole, NWMs in the region still face constraints in terms of declining levels of staffing and resources. Issues of leadership, authority, influence and skills are also challenges. The efficacy of gender training for the public sector and other sectors is constrained by traditional attitudes and cultural factors. There is also a lack of capacity for monitoring and evaluation, making it difficult to measure impacts and successes. There is a lack of sex-disaggregated data, a critical need for NWMs if they are to influence policy and for the sectors to mainstream gender equality.

Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is one of the top priorities for all Commonwealth countries

in this region. For some years, Caribbean women's organisations, Canadian government structures, NWMs, civil society, the courts and the police have been engaged in dialogue and action to ensure protection and justice for victims of such violence, most of which is domestic violence.

Some progress has been recorded. Data from Canada indicates that the incidence and severity of spousal violence against women appears to have decreased. Elsewhere, however, countries report fluctuating results. Some studies have shown an increase in rape and sexual offences. In The Bahamas for example, domestic homicides made up at least 42% of all killings in 2000 and 53% in 2002. It has not helped that the quality of data on violence against women in the Caribbean is inadequate, thus making efforts to monitor progress difficult.

Caribbean countries have been making use of model legislation prepared by the Commonwealth Secretariat and Caribbean Community (CARICOM). These model laws

Box 33.2: Gender and Trade Issues

The International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN) is an international network of gender advocates working to promote equitable, social, and sustainable trade. The IGTN is made up of seven regional networks (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America and Pacific) of women involved in research, advocacy and economic literacy around issues of trade and development.

The network was established following a Strategic Planning Seminar on Gender and Trade in Grenada in December 1999. The IGTN produces a bulletin that provides analysis on gender and trade issues and updates on World Trade Organisation negotiations from its Geneva representative.

IGTN has been an invaluable partner of the Commonwealth Secretariat in collaborating on the GMS series publication *Gender Mainstreaming in the Multilateral Trade System: A Handbook for Policy-makers and other Stakeholder* by Dr Mariama Williams. Many of the modules of the manual first appeared in article format or primers on the IGTN website (www.igtan.org).

In the Caribbean, IGTN works closely the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) based in Trinidad and Tobago.

have contributed to speeding up the enactment of gender-sensitive laws on sexual harassment, sexual offences, domestic violence, maintenance and maintenance orders.

By 2000, most Caribbean countries had ratified the Inter-American Convention on the Protection, Prevention and Eradication of All Forms of Violence Against Women. Most countries in the region have enacted laws on domestic or family violence.

A multiplicity of actions have been taken particularly on domestic violence. The implementation and enforcement of laws have been strengthened through police training and sensitisation of magistrates and judge. Other activities include the establishment of safe houses, crisis centres, hotlines for reporting, counselling services and victim support. Public campaigns on the undesirability of domestic violence are also conducted. Other programmes seek to empower women economically and through better educational opportunities.

Laws on sexual offences now also include changes that comply with the recommended CARICOM model law provisions on, for example, the criminalisation of rape within marriage. Countries like Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Dominica have made court proceedings, in relation to sexual offences, more sensitive to the needs and interests of both adult and child victims. In The Bahamas, it is now an offence for a person infected with HIV to knowingly have sexual intercourse with any other person without disclosing their HIV status.

Among other forms of violence, Canada is addressing key issues such as trafficking in women and race-based as well as gender-based violence against Aboriginal women.

HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is emerging as a threat to development in the region. Caribbean small states have the highest HIV prevalence of any region outside of Sub-Saharan Africa. The prevalence rate ranges from approximately 3.5% (in The Bahamas) to 1.2% (in Jamaica) among adults. More than one country regards

HIV/AIDS as a development problem which diverts resources from elsewhere and threatens economic productivity.

Small island developing states are most vulnerable to the pandemic as their small populations cannot withstand the loss of human capacity. In the Caribbean, efforts to identify HIV/AIDS have been sustained and standardised by the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre/Pan American Health Organisation (CAREC/PAHO). According to CAREC/PAHO, a total of 24,567 AIDS cases have been reported between 1982 and 2002 by 20 of its 21 member countries. Given the margin for under-reporting, projections could be in the range of 30,000 to 35,000 cases. The annual incidence of AIDS cases could be 52.43 per 100,000 persons, compared to 13.6 per 100,000 in 1991.

AIDS is now the leading cause of death in the 15–45 year age group in the Caribbean. The epidemic is essentially a youthful one with 15–24 year olds, and specifically female in that age group, most at risk. Data shows that although there is a higher absolute rate of AIDS cases among males (a ratio of 2:1), the incidence of AIDS among females in the 15–24 age group is three to six times higher than that of males.

The most recent national estimates shows that HIV prevalence among pregnant women has reached or exceeded 2% in five Commonwealth countries, namely, The Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, St Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. As result of the high rate of heterosexual transmission of HIV, mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) now accounts for 6% of reported AIDS cases – estimated to be 600 cases in 2002. It is estimated that half of all HIV positives are women, in part because of the sex trade in young women and impacts of tourism.

Brain-Drain

Another issue of concern in the Caribbean is the loss of teachers, skilled professionals and health workers as a result of migration and targeted recruitment by other countries. Their departure from the economic and social life of their countries has placed strains on the education and health services that

women, especially poorer women, need to access.

The international migration of professionals is now a global problem and some efforts have been made to regulate it. In 2003, a Commonwealth Code of Practice for the Recruitment of Health Workers was adopted and signed by three Caribbean states: Barbados, Dominica, and Trinidad and Tobago. In 2004, a similar Protocol for the Recruitment of Commonwealth Teachers was adopted by Commonwealth Ministers of Education.

Regional Platforms for Equality

Regional integration is a very important process and is spearheaded by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The CARICOM Secretariat's Bureau of Gender Affairs has been instrumental in promoting gender equality issues in regional development strategies and programmes. CARICOM has also developed a regional Plan of Action for mainstreaming gender equality into its key programmes. With other partners, such as the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), UNIFEM, the Centres for Gender and Development Studies in the three campuses of the University of the West Indies and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CARICOM has been central to the co-ordination of the baseline research for regional reports.

The CARICOM initiative undertaken under the umbrella of the Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, illustrates a functional co-operation approach to accelerating the region's response. The region has made progress in the provision of treatment and care for persons living with HIV/AIDS. However access to anti-retroviral treatment is still unequal across the region, due largely to price discrepancies for the drugs.

Canada continues to promote its gender equality priorities in key multilateral organisations including the OAS, Inter-American Commission on Women, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) grouping.

Partnerships and Links

Civil society organisations, regional and international agencies have played a prominent part in advancing gender equality in the region. For example:

- UNECLAC has conducted various studies in the region and provided technical assistance, as well as supported national and regional initiatives;
- The Regional Co-ordinating Unit of the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of West Indies has played a direct role in the development of relevant research programmes, gender analysis and planning modules to support capacity building in the region;
- CIDA's Gender Equality Programme supports work at the national level on gender mainstreaming and strengthening inter-agency collaboration;
- The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, a regional NGO, has played a central role in lobbying on issues including violence against women, and for gender and trade, and advocating for gender mainstreaming;
- The Commonwealth Secretariat held regional gender mainstreaming workshops, shared its GMS resources, and provided short and long-term experts for countries.

Model legislation prepared for Caribbean member countries by the Commonwealth Secretariat and CARICOM focused on:

- Citizenship;
- Equality for women in employment;
- Equal pay;
- Inheritance;
- Maintenance and maintenance orders;
- Sexual harassment; and
- Sexual offences.

In the Caribbean and Americas region, as in other regions strategic linkages have been forged to maximise the work on gender equality. The regional framework facilitates and supports in a most effective manner the adoption and implementation of global approaches to gender mainstreaming, and enhances cross-collaborative work and advocacy at all levels. Most Caribbean countries have adopted the Charter of Civil Society.



National, regional and international agencies, women's organisations and other civil society partners play a key role in the region as advocates, supporting capacity building in partnership with NWMs and other government departments.

Some countries reinforced their small NWM teams by using specialists and outside experts, gender networks and other links (see Box 33.1, page 130). Belize has established a National Women's Commission, to support the participation of NGOs, and a Women's Issues Network to ensure that the wider constituency of women, including community-based organisations, is able to communicate directly with government on issues of concern. Grenada and St Lucia have established similar structures.

Regional analysis indicates the need for the development of a regional or Knowledge-Based Network to improve communications and share experiences and resources. Canada has in place a National Clearing House on Family Violence, a central reference, referral and distribution service for information on prevention, protection and treatment. Training institutions, such as the University of the West Indies, have clearing house facilities for training resources and policy materials. In addition, the Commonwealth of Learning based in Vancouver, Canada, manages a Gender Training Electronic Database as part of a UN-Commonwealth initiative¹ to support capacity-building for gender mainstreaming and gender equality issues.

The Way Forward

There is a critical need for further advocacy, policy focus, strategic actions and investment in gender equality issues in the region. Capacity-building and

technical support is required in many areas in order to make gender equality a reality. This need is all the greater because of poverty, HIV/AIDS, unequal power relations between men and women, and the strategic role of men, boys and young people as partners.

Country Reports

On the following pages are summaries of reports submitted by Commonwealth Caribbean countries and Canada on the progress of gender equality.

End Note

¹ Gender Training Resources Collection, a web-based collection of materials for capacity-building for gender mainstreaming from the United Nations and Commonwealth Systems, from 1990s to 2000s. This houses many useful resources on the Commonwealth Secretariat's GMS publication series and other development materials. Visit website : www.col.org/GenderResources

Antigua & Barbuda

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	79	65	68
Female population (% of total)	..	..	57.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	5.6	..	..
EDUCATION**			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	12	..	..
Male	..	..	10
Primary education***			
Ratio of girls to boys	..	..	1.63
Secondary education***			
Ratio of girls to boys	..	..	2.53
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	76	77	78
Male	71	72	72
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	..	18	13
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

** Female figures 1960 estimate (Unesco), male figure from CIA Factbook 2003

*** Human Development Report 2003 (UNDP, 2003)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Education and Training of Women
 2. Women in Power and Decision-making
 3. Women and Poverty
 4. Violence Against Women
 5. Human Rights of Women
- Followed by 6. Women and Health; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Women and the Environment; 9. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Economy; and 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Antigua and Barbuda acceded to CEDAW in 1989 and is also party to the Declaration to Eliminate Violence Against Women and other international conventions related to the rights of women and children. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Directorate of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Health and Social Improvement. There is no legal discrimination against women in any field and women's suffrage was achieved in 1951.

Women in Poverty/Education and Training of Women

Jobs are being created for women in order that they may be able to improve their quality of life and give their children quality care. Many women and men are self-employed in the areas of craft production, clothing production, plant growing and the preservation of fruits and vegetables and the NWM conducts skills training which helps women take advantage of income-generating opportunities and earn more. Evening literacy classes are planned for adults by the Co-ordinating Council of Women, an NGO. Current educational enrolment for females is high.

Young people are torch-bearers for Commonwealth values, including development and democracy, gender equality and peace

Women in Power and Decision-making

In 2004, Antigua and Barbuda had its first female elected representative in Parliament. The civil society has contributed towards the achievement of this milestone. However, no women have been appointed to Cabinet positions in the new government.

Over 60% of civil servants are women, with many serving in high positions.

Violence Against Women

The NWM is working with the Government, police and legal department to prevent and protect women from violence.

Women and Health

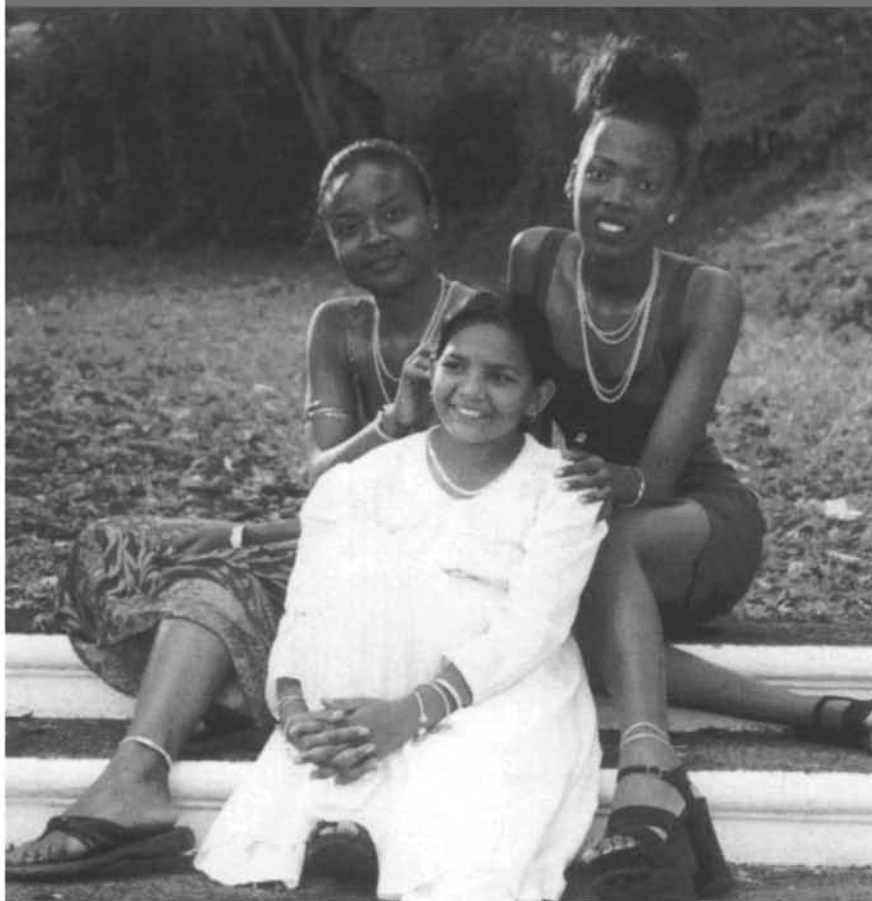
The Co-ordinating Council of Women works closely with the NWM and other NGOs on health matters. Training sessions are planned for volunteers who will work in the community.

National Women's Machinery

The Directorate of Gender Affairs is the National Women's Machinery and is located in the Ministry of Health and Social Improvement. It was originally set up in 1982 as a Women's Desk and was reclassified as the Directorate of Women's Affairs after the 1985 Third International Women's Conference in Nairobi. After the 1995 Fourth International Women's Conference in Beijing, it was renamed the Directorate of Gender Affairs.

The Executive Director of the NWM works with an Assistant Executive Director and project officers. The NWM works in the area of gender and development with the main focus being the family.

Generally, the NWM has been able to build collaborative relationships with all ministries and government departments.



Partnerships

The NWM works closely with the Co-ordinating Council of Women (which deals with family life), NGOs and civil society on various projects and programmes. Among its various international development partners, the Commonwealth Secretariat has provided support and assistance to the NWM since the 1980s in policy advice and publications. The NWM looks to further support in research and in training in family living and community improvement programmes.

Concerns for the Future

The NWM believes that Antigua and Barbuda needs to concentrate on the eradication of poverty in families and improvement in nutrition; promote greater awareness of the need to elect qualified women to Parliament who can work for the health and welfare of families; improve the education and skills especially among the illiterate; and encourage family values and support for development among prisoners and those in correctional departments.

The Bahamas

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	253	276	303
Female population (% of total)	50.4	50.5	50.8
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	46	47	47
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	12.5	11.8	9.7
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	4.8	4.2	5.5
Male	6.4	5.9	6.7
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	97	..	79
Male	96	..	86
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	88	..	79
Male	87	..	86
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	26	34	..
Male	11	16	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	73	73	74
Male	65	65	65
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	24	20	15
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	3
Male	..	..	2.6

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of The Bahamas has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Women and Health
 3. Education and Training of Women
 4. Women and Poverty
 5. Human Rights of Women
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Women in Power and Decision-making; 9. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

The Bahamas, one of the wealthiest countries in the region, acceded to CEDAW in 1993 and is preparing its first report. The Bureau of Women's Affairs is the National Women's Machinery (NWM) in the Ministry of Social Services and Community Development. The country is ranked at 46 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Violence Against Women

An Action Team, comprising the NWM, police and NGO community, collaborate to hold public forums on domestic violence which forms the majority of cases of violent. The police service has also introduced mandatory training of its officers and new recruits in handling such cases; a female senior officer heads the Domestic Violence Unit. The police have been able to travel through the archipelago raising awareness of the problem.

The Government continues to provide grants to the Crisis Centre of The Bahamas and to the newly launched Links Safe House for Women in Crisis. The latter is the first of its kind in the country and was realised through a partnership between the Nassau Chapter of Links, the British American Bank and the Ministry of Social Services and Community Development.

A Task Force on Domestic Violence has also been established, bringing together key agencies working in the field and those agencies from related areas. Consideration is being given to upgrading a local programme that caters to rehabilitating the offender. It has had a fairly good success rate, but is not a mandatory tool when dealing with offenders before the courts.

In terms of legal reform, the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act has been recommended for review to introduce stiffer penalties and to expand the definition of harassment which is now only limited to the workplace. Stalking will be introduced as an offence; and all persons, not just married persons as at present, will be covered by domestic violence legislation.

Women and Health

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS is approximately 3.5% of the adult population between 15–49 years and with unofficial statistics showing a higher rate in the female population than the male, special attention is being paid to HIV/AIDS programmes.

Since a UNDP-assisted project looked at gender-focused interventions in 1998, there is a greater awareness about the pandemic in the community. This has also been due to NGO efforts. There is greater collaboration between the National AIDS Office and the Bureau of Women's Affairs, and public discussions now focus on subjects such as discrimination by employers against workers who are HIV-positive.

Women in Poverty/Education and Training of Women

Education and training have been linked to poverty alleviation. Bahamians on the government welfare system are encouraged to pursue additional training at the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute and equip themselves with income-generating skills. For those who qualify, the Government pays all student costs.

Access to technical and vocational training is especially used as an avenue to



reach unemployed women and high school drop-outs. All courses are open to women and the Government maintains on-site day care facilities for mothers who require this service.

The poverty study carried out with assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank has been completed. The NWM was not part of this process.

Women in Power and Decision-making

No particular action has been taken to increase women's participation in politics or other leadership positions, but the Government continues to provide women with an enabling environment to do so.

As of September 2003, the Governor-General and Deputy Prime Minister are females. In addition, 7 out of 16 Senators are female (including the Senate President), 8 out of 40 MPs, and 4 out of 16 Cabinet Ministers (Financial Services and Investment, Transport and Aviation, Social Services and Community Development, and National Security).

Women have held various other strategic positions, including that of Chief Justice (who has now moved been appointed as President of the Court of Appeal).

Gender Mainstreaming

Not much focus has been put on this area. Additional assistance will be required at national level to promote the shift to gender mainstreaming and promote its benefits in the various sectors. There is still a very splintered approach to programmes to promote gender equality.

National Women's Machinery

The Bureau of Women's Affairs is the National Women's Machinery (NWM) and was established in 1981. It had originally been located in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but from 2002 has been in the Ministry of Social Services and Community Development. This has enabled it to extend its work outside the capital and into several of the other islands.

When the NWM was set up, it was headed by an Assistant Director who was subsequently reclassified as a Senior Assistant Secretary. The head reports directly to the Permanent Secretary of the ministry as the NWM does not fall under any ministerial department. The head has a Chief Executive Officer and support staff.

The NWM has never had its own budget and has relied on its host ministry for funds. For the first time in 2003, however, the national budget contained a budget line item of US\$5,000 against the NWM's name. All administrative costs are absorbed by the ministry. None of the funds are earmarked for gender mainstreaming activities, though limited funds may be available from the host ministry for this.

The NWM works with all ministries and departments, but especially with the Department of Statistics, the AIDS Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Department of Statistics, in particular, has taken advantage of training offered at regional level and compiles relevant statistics where available.

A key achievement of the NWM since 2001 was the reform of inheritance laws

Commonwealth Young Ambassadors for Positive Living Programme in the Bahamas: youth meeting on HIV/AIDS

by removing the rule of primogeniture, thus permitting all children, and not just the oldest male, to inherit from a parent who dies intestate.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with NGOs and civil society as it did with the National Organisation of Women's Associations in The Bahamas on reform of the inheritance laws. It also works with them on health awareness campaigns and domestic violence issues. The NWM hopes to involve the NGO community in discussions on various other areas of particular concern to women.

Concerns for the Future

The Bahamas will focus on combating violence against women, and HIV/AIDS and on improving women's health and education.



COURTESY: COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN YOUTH CENTRE

Barbados

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	257	266	267
Female population (% of total)	52.1	51.8	51.7
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	47	47	46
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	20.2	22.9	11.5
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	0.7	0.5	0.3
Male	0.6	0.4	6.3
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	77	..	105
Male	78	..	105
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	83
Male	..	..	86
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	30	34	54
Male	24	23	22
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	78	78	78
Male	73	73	73
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	14	14	12
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Barbados has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women and Health
 3. Violence Against Women
 4. Women and Poverty
 5. Women in Power and Decision-making
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. Education and Training of Women; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. Women in the Media; and 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Barbados was one of the first Commonwealth countries to ratify CEDAW (in 1980). Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Bureau of Gender Affairs located in the Ministry of Social Transformation. The country is ranked at 27 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

One of the NWM's main functions is to facilitate gender mainstreaming of national development policies and programmes. Each government department has a focal point trained to gender analyse plans and policies. In 2001, a National Advisory Council on Gender was established to identify, monitor and make recommendations to the minister responsible for gender affairs on various issues.

In 2002, a national symposium convened by the NWM, attended by a wide cross-section of people and organisations, met to identify gender issues and emerging trends and also to agree on the way forward for the NWM. In 2003, the NWM became a member of the National Social Indicators and Millennium Development Goals Committee, which is the component of a CARICOM programme on improving the

compilation of social/gender and environment statistics.

Women and Poverty

Pockets of poverty exist alongside prosperity and more women than men tend to fall below the poverty line. In 1998, the Poverty Alleviation Bureau was set up to address poverty issues, working with government agencies, NGOs, community-based organisations and individuals to avoid duplication and wastage. One of its aims is to create a climate for young people to gravitate towards the growth and development of small and micro-businesses. A Poverty Eradication Committee was established to consider applications to the Poverty Alleviation Fund which provides assistance to the most vulnerable groups.

The Relief 2000 programme aims to provide assistance to recipients of social assistance and other families in need who have been identified as extreme cases of poverty. Its core strategy is to meet employment, training, financial assistance and housing needs and thus break the poverty cycle. Follow-up programmes draw on public and private sector expertise and resources. One successful project involved the training of 25 unemployed single mothers in dining room services specifically for employment in the hospitality sector.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women remains prevalent. To reduce and eventually eradicate it, the NWM works to eliminate inequalities between women and men, and provides services for victims and offenders. In 1999, a shelter for battered women was established, funded by the Government and run by an NGO. The shelter provides counselling and operates a 24-hour hotline service.

Police are now trained in domestic violence intervention. In 1998, a Victim Support Group was set up by the police to offer emotional and practical support for victims of crime and domestic violence. Counselling is also offered by a number of social service agencies, and NGOs provide education and training in Domestic

Violence Intervention.

The NWM and NGOs have initiated various awareness programmes on domestic violence and the National Forum against Domestic Violence was established in 2002 to make everyone aware of the effects of domestic violence on individuals and groups, and to restore the family unit.

Table 36.1: Domestic Violence in Barbados, January–July 2003

Cases	Numbers
Murder	2
Assaults (major)	0
Assaults (minor)	68
Kidnapping	0
Sex crimes	0
Threats to kill	49
Other threats	18
Criminal damage	3
Harassment	2
Trespass	0
Disputes	241
TOTAL	383

Women and Health

Barbados is committed to equitable health care for everyone. Statistics show women having a long life expectancy, and low maternal and infant mortality. Prevalence of AIDS is about 2.5% but women constitute a growing number of victims. Education in risk factors and medical services are offered at all polyclinics, family clinics and in adolescent health programmes.

In 1995, the Government initiated a programme to administer AZT at the 14th week of pregnancy to every woman testing HIV-positive. This treatment has now been replaced by anti-retroviral drugs which are also given to the child 72 hours after delivery in order to reduce mother-to-child transmission. Anti-retroviral therapy is also available to all Barbadians who are HIV-positive.

The National Commission on HIV/AIDS under the Prime Minister's Office has conducted a campaign entitled *Speak Sister* which focuses on the vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS.

National Women's Machinery

In 1995, the Bureau of Women's Affairs, as the National Women's Machinery (NWM), was located in the Ministry of Labour and headed by a Director with one research officer and support staff. In that year, a project to strengthen the NWM as an institution began as a joint initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Government of Barbados. The purpose was to increase employment and income-earning opportunities for Barbadian women through programme support to the Bureau as the executing agency. A committee oversaw this project and temporary and other staff recruited.

In 2000, the NWM was re-designated the Bureau of Gender Affairs and in 2002 the project for institutional strengthening ceased. The NWM is now located in the Ministry of Social Transformation where it is one of eight departments. It does not possess the autonomy of most departments since the ministry provides all administrative and accounting services. The current staff is made up of a Director, 2 programme officers, 1 research officer and support staff.

The NWM is to formulate a national policy on gender and development. In this respect, a multi-sectoral approach will be adopted with inputs from the National Advisory Council on Gender, the inter-ministerial focal points, NGOs, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

For the 2002/03 financial year, the budget allocated to the Bureau was Bds\$1,016,598, which was reduced in 2003/04. While Bds\$84,615,414 has been allocated to the Ministry of Social Transformation, 0.87% or some Bds\$735,165 has been allocated to the Bureau.

As NWM, the Bureau conducted a national symposium on gender in January 2002 which brought together organisations and individuals to examine the current status of gender relations and equity. The need for further discussion of the concept of gender and factors contributing to gender inequality was emphasised.

The first phase of the training of focal points who assist with implementation of Gender Management Systems in all ministries and departments has been completed. In 2003, programmes on sexual harassment were conducted, and the role of the Bureau was publicised.

The Bureau especially enjoys close working relations with the Ministry of Health, which provides resource persons for HIV/AIDS workshops, and the Statistical Department. It also has good relations with key government departments such as the Ministry of Education, Labour Department and Child Care Board.

Partnerships

The NWM and NGOs work together in a number of areas. With the National Organisation of Women, the NWM has implemented a pilot school outreach programme on gender awareness, gender-based violence and conflict resolution. The NWM also provides grants to several NGOs to assist with the implementation of programmes. The Bureau's Director sits on the Board of Management of a shelter for victims of

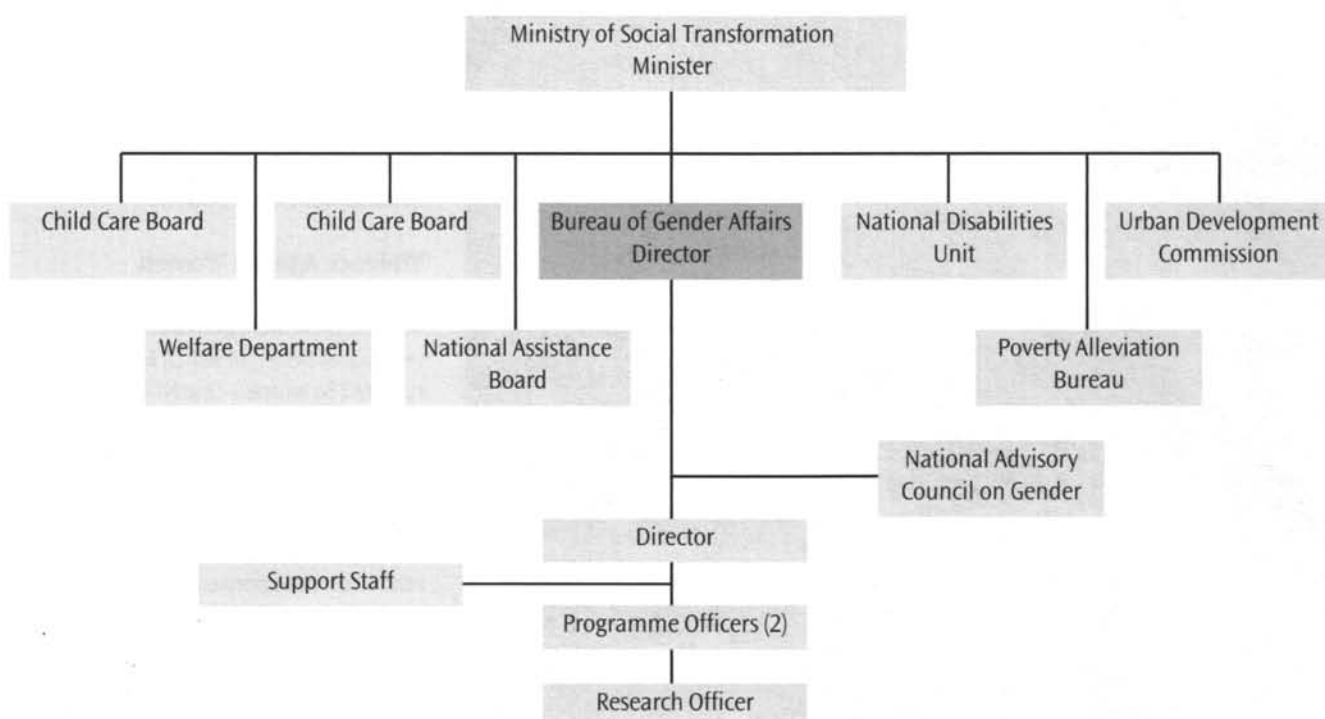
abuse run by the Business and Professional Women's Club. Financial grants have also been given to the Men's Educational Support Association.

The NWM has worked with the Commonwealth Secretariat on a number of activities. It uses the Secretariat publication's *Guidelines for Police Training on Violence against Women and Child Sexual Abuse* in the training of police officers

Concerns for the Future

The NWM will concentrate on developing a National Policy on Gender and implementing programmes for mainstreaming gender in all ministries and departments. An initial approach to ministries for submissions to assist with the development of a national policy met with little response. The NWM is now working on its own draft policy which will then be circulated to government agencies, NGOs and others for comment. It will also seek external assistance for this process.

Chart 36.1: Organisation Structure of Barbados NWM



Belize

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	189	216	240
Female population (% of total)	49.2	49.2	50
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	21	23	24
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	17.7	20.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	11.8	9.1	6.8
Male	10	7.7	6.7
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	97	99	102
Male	98	99	98
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	30	..	66
Male	27	..	61
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	1	..
Male	1	1	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	74	74	75
Male	71	72	73
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	39	36	34
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	2
Male	..	..	1.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Belize Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Education and Training of Women
 3. Women and Poverty
 4. Women and Health
 5. Women in Power and Decision-making
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 9. The Girl-child; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; and 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action was agreed, Belize has approved a National Gender Policy and a Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy. The Women's Department in the Ministry of Human Development, Local Government and Labour is the National Women's Machinery (NWM), and is represented on several multi-sectoral committees and commissions. The Department is at the heart of gender policy and programmes in Belize.

Belize acceded to CEDAW in 1990 and to its Optional Protocol in 2002. It is ranked at 80 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the Human Development Report 2004.

Violence Against Women

In 2001, there were 668 cases of domestic violence in Belize, of which 616 were reported by women. One NGO (the Belize Organisation for Women and Development) has claimed separately that 1 in 2 women were victims of domestic violence (1998) and that this may be under-reported. Belize has adopted a zero-tolerance approach. A multi-sectoral committee developed a plan of action and monitoring, family violence units have been set up at police stations across the country, and police, social workers and community leaders trained in the dynamics of domestic violence and basic

Belize Women's Department organises workshops and courses on conflict resolution, gender awareness, women's self esteem, HIV/AIDS and other health issues, in addition to basic counselling and initiated public education and awareness programmes on TV and radio including cultural activities

intervention techniques. The Ministry of Health, through its health information system, manages data on domestic violence collected by the various agencies using a single registration form, and implements a protocol for the management of domestic violence cases at hospitals and health centres. Several publications on domestic violence, including a basic counselling manual, have also been published.

A public education campaign was held and gender-sensitisation sessions organised for Cabinet Ministers and senior public officials.

Education and Training of Women

There has been a steady rise in the literacy and education statistics for women. The NWM has commissioned a study on discriminatory practices in the education system and a campaign to eliminate discrimination is being implemented. Skills training for women has been provided.

Women and Poverty

Employment opportunities for women are being improved though many women remain among the poorest of the poor. Belize has amended legislation to place an economic value on home care/child care in instances of divorce or separation; increased the minimum wage for domestic workers and shop assistants to that of other workers; and drafted legislation on equal pay for work of equal value. A Small Farmer and Business Bank was established to facilitate loans to women entrepreneurs. A gender perspective has reportedly not been applied to the national poverty strategy and action plan but a poverty assessment is being carried out and the NWM will seek to influence the resultant plan.

Women and Health

Statistics indicate that HIV infections are on the rise, especially among females. The World Bank reports that in the 15–24 year age group, female infections are nearly double those of males. Financial dependence on men has meant that

women cannot negotiate safe sex.

The NWM has run courses on HIV/AIDS and other health issues. It is represented on the National AIDS Commission, comprising government and non-governmental organisations and development agencies. Both the National Gender Policy and Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy cover AIDS issues.

Women in Power and Decision-making

A study was commissioned on women and decision-making. The NWM reports that in 2003, there was one woman among 25 Ministers, five chief executive officers in the public service, five women as heads of statutory bodies, and 14 women as heads of department in the public service.

Other Concerns

Legislation has been introduced or amended to recognise marital rape in the Criminal Code and common-law unions for the purpose of inheritance and property rights; to establish that custody of children no longer depends on a mother's private life; to increase social security benefits for widows and orphans; and to improve maternity benefits; The Sexual Harassment Act and Human Trafficking Prohibition Act have also been amended.

Other major activities, include the development (with an NGO) of a training manual on the definition of gender from a Belizean perspective. A Women's Agenda was developed as part of the campaign manifesto of the ruling party.

With the Commonwealth Secretariat's assistance, the national budget underwent gender analysis, focusing on expenditure for administrative purposes, mainly staffing. In 1997–1999, Belize set up an inter-ministerial committee to monitor and co-ordinate the gender mainstreaming process. It also set up a National Women's Committee to support the participation of NGOs and a Women's Issues Network to ensure that wider issues of concern were communicated to the government.

Domestic violence issues have been



mainstreamed into the health, education and home affairs (police) sectors. Gender sensitive indicators are among the social indicators being developed by the Central Statistical office and HIV/AIDS data is being disaggregated by sex.

The NWM ran workshops and courses on conflict resolution, gender awareness, women's self-esteem, HIV/AIDS and other health issues, in addition to basic counselling and initiated public education and awareness programmes on TV and radio.

National Women's Machinery

The Women's Department is one of four departments in the Ministry of Human Development, Local Government and Labour. The department is divided into two sections, one for developing policy, the other responsible for service delivery in the development, implementation and evaluation of women-specific projects. It is headed by a Director.

The NWM has a staff of 14 and works on a budget of an average of Bze\$125,000 annually.

Partnerships

The NWM works with all ministries and government agencies. Collaborative work with the Ministry of Health, the Police Department and Family Court, for example, has facilitated the development of the registration form on domestic violence and the management of statistics collected by the National Health Information System. It has worked especially closely with the Women's Issues Network of Belize in gender mainstreaming, campaigning for the elimination of discrimination in the education system, and the successful

minimum wage campaign. The department feels that women's NGOs in Belize need to be strengthened in order to assist with lobbying and advocacy work.

External partners include international organisations such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, and various UN and regional agencies. Commonwealth assistance has included policy assistance and advocacy, and technical assistance on gender-responsive budget initiatives. Commonwealth publications on gender mainstreaming, gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS, and on good practice have been especially useful.

Concerns for the Future

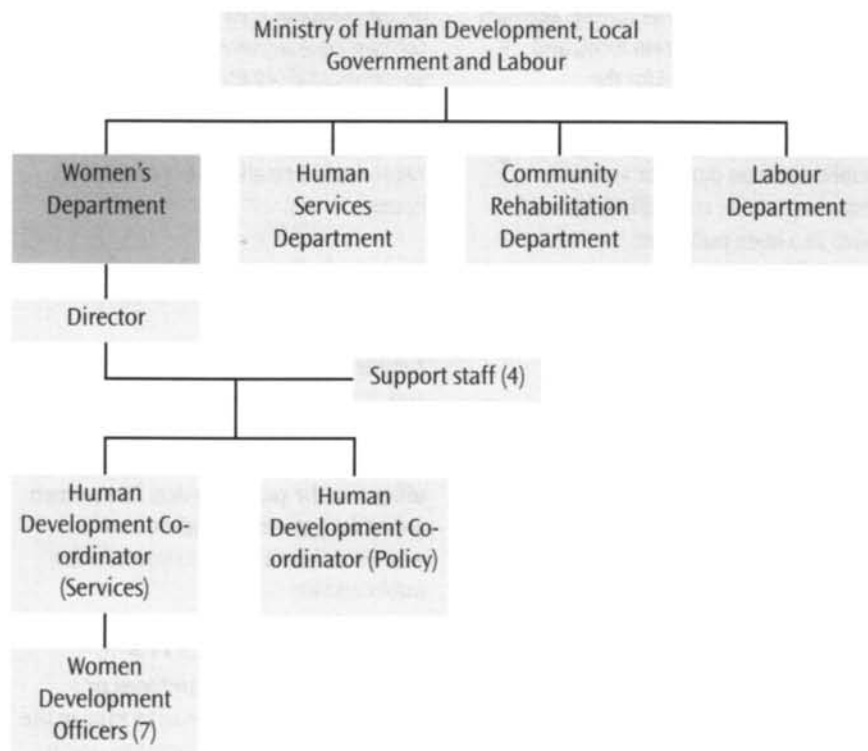
The NWM has identified three areas for future action:

Poverty continues to hold back the advancement of women, many of whom are the poorest of the poor. Violence and the rising incidence of HIV infection, for example, affect women more because of their financial dependency on men. The national gender policy is committed to addressing issues of unemployment and wealth generation.

Hitherto, national efforts have focused on domestic violence but with increasing reports of rape and sexual offences, work will be extended to encompass other forms of violence against women.

There is an upward trend for infection rates of HIV among women. The total number of cases from 1986 to the end of June 2003 was 2,250. However, of new cases tested between January–March 2003, 55 were women and 57 were men. In new cases from April–June 2003, 60 were women and 54 men. Action to redress unemployment and provide further education for women and men on the disease is planned.

Chart 37.1: The Position of the WD in the Ministry and its Structure in 2003, Belize



Canada

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	27,800	29,400	30,800
Female population (% of total)	50.4	50.5	50.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	44	45	46
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	8.1	9	6.7
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	97	94	100
Male	97	96	100
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	89	90	98
Male	88	92	97
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	104	95	68
Male	85	81	51
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	81	81	82
Male	74	75	76
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	7	6	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.1
Male	..	..	0.3

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
.. Data not available.

Priority Concerns

Canada is a federal state comprising 10 provinces and 3 territories. In the Canadian context, many of the critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 *BPfA* and the 1995 Commonwealth PoA and its 2000–2005 Update are interconnected rather than treated separately, and a number are areas of shared responsibility or fall primarily within provincial or territorial jurisdiction. Canada has a clear legal foundation for gender equality in its Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In addition, the federal and all provincial and territorial governments have adopted human rights legislation that prohibits discrimination based on such characteristics as race, nationality and ethnic background, colour, sex and disability.

Canada has highlighted those areas that reflect the priorities of the National Women's Machinery (NWM) and for which there is a common recognition among women's machineries across jurisdictions of where attention has been focussed in recent years¹.

These priority areas include:

- Women and the Economy including Women in Poverty;
- Human Rights of Women and Violence Against Women; and
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

A Decade of Action

Canada, geographically the second largest country in the world, has consistently ranked in the top 10 countries of the UNDP's Human Development Index. Canada ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and presented its report most recently to the CEDAW Committee in 2003. It acceded to the CEDAW Optional Protocol in 2003.

Due to its constitutional structure, although Status of Women Canada (SWC) is the central agency of Canada's NWM, it is not the sole component. Every federal government ministry is responsible for implementing the Government of Canada's commitment to gender-based

policy analysis within its mandate. There are also women's machinery offices in provincial and territorial governments that work with other ministries within their jurisdiction.

Canada is ranked fourth on the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and the Economy including Women in Poverty

Poverty reduction efforts are viewed as part of, not separate from, efforts to improve the economic well-being of women generally. Economic autonomy enables women to provide for themselves and their families, reducing the risk of poverty. Recognising the strong links between children's and women's economic well-being and the importance of early childhood development, providing support for families with children, especially low-income families, has been a priority.

In addition to amendments to the Employment Insurance Act in areas relating to parental benefits and compassionate care leave (*see Box 38.1, this page*) that enable families to better balance work and family life, Canada has undertaken numerous initiatives that contribute to reducing poverty. For example, the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) provides additional money to low-income families with children. In 2002–03, the CCTB provided C\$8.1 billion to 3.2 million families with 5.7 million children, or more than 80% of families with children in Canada. A progress report in 2002 estimated that as a result, approximately 55,000 children in 22,900 families were no longer living in a low-income situation. This meant that there were 5.1% fewer low-income families. The NCB Supplement was increased in July 2003 and further increases are planned for July 2005 and July 2006.

Further, in 2000, federal, provincial and territorial governments reached an Early Childhood Development (ECD) Agreement, including a federal transfer of C\$500 million per year in support of a range of ECD initiatives. In 2003, a Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care was approved to

Box 38.1: Balancing Work and Family Life

In 2000, the Government of Canada amended the Employment Insurance Act (EI) to extend parental benefits from 10 weeks to 35 weeks, resulting in a combined maternity/parental benefit period of one year. In addition, to improved flexibility, the second two-week waiting period, normally served by fathers claiming parental benefits, was dropped. Parents are also now allowed to work while receiving benefits, a change expected to help mothers make a gradual return to the workplace, if they so choose.

Initial results showed that there was a substantial increase in the number of employed parents staying at home with their newborn children. About 211,000 parents accessed benefits in 2001/02 compared to almost 180,00 in 2000/01, an increase of close to 18%. About 90% of new parental claims were for women. However, parental claims by men increased by almost 80% from 13,000 in 2000/01 to 23,120 in 2001/02, showing that the new rules gave fathers a greater opportunity to share the caregiver role during the first year of the child's life.

The success of this initiative is also due to the fact that all jurisdictions in Canada amended their labour legislation to enable parents to take advantage of the longer parental benefit period and still maintain job protection.

To respond to situations where a child is hospitalised during parental leave, in 2002 the parental benefit period was increased by the number of weeks of hospitalisation, up to a maximum of 104 weeks. Maximum benefits for parents claiming a combination of maternity, parental and sickness benefits (where the sickness benefits are related to the parent) for themselves was also extended from 50 to 65 weeks.

In 2000, EI amendments made it easier for parents returning to the workforce after an extended absence caring for children to qualify for regular benefits if they lose their jobs. Given that the duration of interruptions from the labour market is on average three times longer (4.5 years) for women than for men, women are more likely to benefit from the re-entrant parent provision.

Since January 2004, six weeks of EI Compassionate Care benefits are available to enable eligible workers to take a temporary absence from work to provide care or support to a child, parent, spouse or common-law partner who has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death within six months. Eight weeks of job protection for compassionate leave are provided for federally regulated employees. Six provinces and two territories also provide protection and in 2005, it is expected that other jurisdictions will introduce similar changes.

specifically support early learning and childcare, including a federal contribution of C\$1.059 billion over 5 years. Also in 2003, the federally funded First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative and Aboriginal Head Start programmes provided over 17,500 early learning and childcare spaces for children in Aboriginal communities.

In 2003, a federal Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs report resulted in the creation of a number of government commitments, such as the creation of a national Women's Economic Forum, the development and planning of an Aboriginal Women's Business Planning Guide entitled *Journey to Success*, and a new Canadian Women's Innovation Award.

Canada is also working to ensure immigrant women and men are better enabled to successfully integrate into the labour market and other aspects of life in Canada. Efforts are being made to simplify processes for the recognition of foreign

credentials, to provide additional language training appropriate to labour market needs, and to provide immigrants with comprehensive information on occupational requirements.

The federal government and most provincial and territorial governments have adopted pay equity laws or policies. At the federal level, the report of a task force created to look at potential for improvements to pay equity measures is being considered by the government.

In terms of employment equity, strengthened federal legislation covering women, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and Aboriginal people, that came into force in 1996 gave the Canadian Human Rights Commission the authority to conduct audits and gain compliance among federally regulated employers. As of March 31, 2002, 78 employers had been found in compliance although only eight had complied at the end of the initial audit. Of the remaining employers, the

majority signed undertakings to reach compliance.

Public pensions have been essential in reducing poverty among elderly women. The Canada and Quebec Pension Plans cover workers in all jurisdictions and provide retirement, survivor and disability benefits. They include provisions to help protect a contributor's benefits from periods of low or no earnings, including periods raising young children, credit-splitting and full indexation of benefits, features seldom available in private plans.

The other key component of Canada's retirement income system, the Old Age Security programme, includes support to low-income women, particularly through the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and the Allowance. These programmes are instrumental in improving the financial security of women by providing assistance to those with little or no other retirement income and are particularly important for women, who comprise 65% of GIS recipients and 91% of Allowance recipients.

Human Rights of Women and Violence Against Women

During the last decade, Canada has undertaken a number of initiatives to support the human rights of women including measures to address violence. In 2002, Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women released a report entitled *Assessing Violence Against Women: A Statistical Profile*, which indicated that the incidence and even the severity of spousal violence against women appears to have declined slightly over the past decade. This may be the result of several factors, including increased confidence in the administration of the criminal justice system (more reports to police), reduced societal tolerance for spousal violence, and the increased availability of shelters (from 18 in 1975 to 524 in 2002) and other needed services. In 2003, Ministers placed priority attention on the circumstances of Aboriginal women both on- and off-reserve, with violence as one of the priorities, and agreed to develop a plan of action to guide their work in this important area.

Box 38.2: Organisations and Action Groups

In Canada, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have been among agencies that have supported gender-sensitive budgets in recent years. In 2002, CIDA participated in a meeting with a number of key international partners, governments/agencies, government officials and international development programme officers to generate knowledge and experience from agencies that have made significant contributions to gender-sensitive budgeting and to identify common issues and challenges. Areas for action were identified and ideas for follow-up shared. CIDA has some on-going projects on gender and budgets and it remains an area of interest for the department. The document 'Budgeting with a Gender Focus', was produced in 2001 and continues to reflect the approach of the Government of Canada. Given the recent commitments of Commonwealth Finance Ministers to report on furthering gender-responsive budget initiatives, further collaborative work in this area between SWC and Finance has begun.

Outside of government there are many Canadian NGOs actively working on gender-sensitive budget initiatives including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA). The CCPA co-ordinates the involvement of over 50 organisations across the country, representing social action groups and trade unions in an annual process known as the Alternative Federal Budget. It is a complete budget within a macroeconomic framework that is presented as a 'social alternative' to the Government's annual budget. The Alternative Federal Budget is used as a tool for civil society mobilisation within Canada.

In 1997, the Government of Canada confirmed its commitment to reduce family violence in Canada, particularly violence against women and their children through the Family Violence Initiative (FVI). The first five-year report of the FVI, completed in 2002, described progress achieved and affirmed the need to continue the course. The FVI continues to make significant advances in enhancing the national capacity for policy-relevant data collection and analysis as well as research and evaluation. As a result, policy-makers, researchers and community groups are better equipped with timely information to support action. SWC, as part of its contribution, has allocated its share of the FVI allocation of C\$1 million over four years (2003/04 to 2006/07) to national initiatives by Aboriginal women's organisations.

Eight provinces and territories have implemented civil domestic violence legislation that provides avenues of support for victims of domestic violence in addition to protections offered under the Criminal Code of Canada. Several jurisdictions have also created Domestic Violence Courts, which provide a range of specialised services, such as advocacy and support for women and children. These have expedited court processing, and provided better victim co-operation and support. Conviction rates have improved and appropriate sentencing has included treatment for abusers.

Criminal law reforms initiated since 2001 include measures to create a new offence of voyeurism, and stronger child pornography provisions. There is also increased protection for children from sexual exploitation through the creation of new offences to target criminals who use the Internet to lure and exploit children or who transmit, make available, export or intentionally access child pornography. In addition, reforms were made to help ensure that participating in the criminal justice system is less traumatic for the victim or witness.

The regulations supporting the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) address key areas to better protect women from violence. A sponsorship bar against sponsors in the Family Class exists where they have been found guilty of criminal convictions for offences related to bodily harm or the threat of bodily harm in the context of the family, including common-law and conjugal partners. A sponsorship bar also exists for those with criminal convictions related to crimes of a sexual nature, or an attempt or threat to commit such an offence against anyone. The federal government also provides information to immigrants and refugees emphasising that there are laws in place to protect women from violence and abuse. Funding is also available to immigrant and refugee service-providing agencies for referral to existing services in the community.

The policy development process of the

Box 38.3: Trafficking in Persons

In March 2004, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police announced that it would establish a human trafficking unit to co-ordinate domestic and international human trafficking investigations. Also announced at the same time was the review of the Criminal Code to assess the need for additional reforms to strengthen the criminal justice system's response to trafficking in persons (TIP). This review is on-going.

In March 2004, a training seminar on TIP for police, prosecutors, immigration, customs and consular officials, was co-hosted by the federal Department of Justice and the International Organisation for Migration. Also in 2004, the federal government launched an anti-trafficking poster to inform Canadians about human trafficking in Canada and explain that it is a serious crime. The poster will be distributed through police stations, victim's services, community centres, refugee and immigrant centres and other places throughout the country as well as overseas. The poster complements an anti-trafficking brochure that is also being distributed overseas in 14 languages.

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act includes offences with penalties including life imprisonment and/or a fine up to C\$1 million. In accordance with the Trafficking Protocol, sentencing considerations include the presence of aggravating circumstances, such as physical harm, degrading treatment and sexual exploitation, suffered by the trafficked person. There may be situations where a trafficking victim may seek protection in Canada as a refugee.

IRPA is an example of how legislative measures are being adopted in Canada to strengthen human rights protection. The IRPA provides that individuals subject to a removal order from Canada may request protection prior to removal to a country where they may be at risk. In the course of their training, officers responsible for these determinations are given extensive guidance on how to apply international conventions, including CEDAW, as well as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Guidelines on Gender-Based Persecution. Sensitivity to protection issues affecting women, children, and in relation to sexual orientation is also provided. Further, IRPA includes new offences relating to trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling (see Box 38.3, this page).

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The Canadian Government is committed to building a society, which is inclusive and respectful of all Canadians. International agreements including the BPfA, Commonwealth PoA 1995 and its Update (2000–2005) have been important catalysts for progress towards equality. Canada's Federal Plan for Gender Equality, adopted in 1995, includes a government-wide gender-based analysis policy and over 300 commitments by a wide range of departments and agencies. The Federal Plan presented eight objectives, all linked to the twelve critical areas in the BPfA.

In 2000, the Government of Canada, building upon the foundation of actions taken under the Federal Plan for Gender Equality, approved the Agenda for Gender Equality (AGE) as a government-wide initiative to advance women's equality. The components of the AGE initiative include: engendering current and new policy and programme initiatives; accelerating implementation of gender-based analysis commitments; enhancing voluntary sector capacity; engaging Canadians in the policy process in a sustained, structured manner; and meeting Canada's international commitments and treaty obligations.

AGE is led by SWC, in co-operation with

other federal departments, including Justice Canada, Social Development Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and Health Canada. This interdepartmental framework for AGE highlights the importance of working horizontally across federal departments and in collaboration with various partners from both the public and private sectors to address gender issues and current gaps in public policy and programming.

National Women's Machinery

Canada has had a federal Minister Responsible for the Status of Women since 1971, following the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women which recommended establishing a policy agenda to achieve women's equality with the necessary structures and mechanisms to sustain progress over time. The Minister acts to ensure women's concerns are an integral part of government decision-making. Since 1976, a number of federal departments and agencies have

established mechanisms to integrate women's concerns into policy formulation. The creation of SWC in 1976 was a major step in this development.

As the federal government department mandated to 'co-ordinate policy with respect to the status of women and to administer related programmes, SWC provides leadership, expertise and strategic advice to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and to other federal departments and agencies on issues affecting women. Through policy research, analysis and development, international and intergovernmental activities, and communication, SWC actively promotes gender equality, the integration of gender equality in all federal government initiatives, and the full participation of all women in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada.

In 1995, SWC assumed new funding, research and additional public information responsibilities. The Women's Programme (established in 1973), within SWC as of 1995, is the primary source of financial and technical assistance to women's and other equality-seeking organisations working to advance gender equality. SWC's regional structure allows it to establish and maintain contact with women's organisations across the country. In addition, SWC's Policy and External Relations Directorate, guided by AGE, works in collaboration with other government departments to address gender issues in their programming and policy development. Through its Policy Research Fund, the department also

Canada GBA training in South Africa



supports independent, nationally relevant forward-thinking policy research on gender equality issues, policy gaps, and emerging trends.

Following the adoption of the federal Gender-based Analysis (GBA) policy within the 1995 Federal Plan for Gender Equality, SWC created a GBA directorate in 1999 to increase the understanding and the use of the federal policy on GBA as well as to enhance department's use of GBA through capacity-building (see Box 38.4, this page).

Partnerships

Under the Canadian Constitution, the provinces and territories have primary jurisdiction in the areas of education, the administration of justice, social services and health care delivery. The advancement of women's equality is thus largely influenced by actions taken by provincial and territorial governments. Municipal governments also have an important role to play in addressing gender equality issues. Among other recommendations, the 1970 Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women called for close partnership among governments to foster gender equality.

There are Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women at federal, provincial, and territorial levels supported by government mechanisms dedicated to advancing women's concerns. Many jurisdictions also have government-funded, arm's-length advisory councils on women.

Collaboration among the federal, provincial and territorial governments is undertaken through the FPT forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women. Meeting on an annual basis since 1982, the FPT Ministers, among other things, work together on policy issues and raise public awareness in areas of concern to women, providing leadership in promoting women's equality across Canada. They have addressed issues such as violence against women, education and training, gender equality in the justice system, work and family balance, and women's economic future. They have also collaborated with other FPT ministerial fora to advance women's and girls' equality.

Canada has a well-developed network of over 1,500 women's organisations as

Box 38.4: Mainstreaming Gender Analysis

In Canada's Federal Plan for Gender Equality, the Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that all future legislation and policies include, where appropriate, an analysis of the potential for different impacts on women and men. This was reiterated in the Agenda for Gender Equality, the strategy adopted by the Government in 2000 to advance gender equality and which builds on the Plan. Using a multi-faceted approach, Status of Women Canada (SWC) can address critical gaps in gender equality in a deliberate, strategic manner, in a structured and measurable way to achieve concrete results and create strengthened accountability mechanisms and tools.

SWC provides the lead and vision of the Gender-based Analysis (GBA) planning and implementation process across the Government of Canada. SWC's goal is to provide a common understanding of GBA, promote the use of common tools, processes and indicators, and demonstrate how to achieve better policy and programme outcomes that support gender equality. The role of the Gender-based Analysis Directorate within SWC is to encourage and assist federal departments, agencies and other interested parties to set up their own processes to ensure that GBA is incorporated into all of their policy and programme development activities.

Practical experience is starting to show that individual capacity-building is not sufficient to ensure sustainability of GBA. SWC is, therefore, moving toward the promotion and support of an organisational capacity-building approach.

well as equality-seeking groups, which play a significant role in progress toward gender equality. They contribute to setting local, regional and national agendas for gender equality, provide direct services to women and children and educate all sectors of the public and government on issues relevant to gender equality. The importance of violence against women on the public policy agenda is an excellent example of how women's voices and experiences have shaped legislation, policies and programmes in recent years.

SWC's network of regional representatives maintains regular contact with such organisations across the country and provincial and territorial governments operate similarly in their jurisdictions. Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women also meet with a wide variety of organisations. Consultation provides the government with information about the ideas and concerns of Canadian women on public policy issues affecting them. For example, SWC organised a roundtable on gender and homelessness in 2000 to discuss the gender implications of national data collection relating to women's transition houses. Women's organisations also participate in public consultations organised by other parts of government, for example, the consultation on the annual federal budget which was organised by the Department of Finance. Canada regularly includes NGO partners as part of official government delegations to international meetings, such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Concerns for the Future

Canada's main gender equality challenges include continuing to learn from, and build on, its own and others' experiences; accelerating GBA and gender mainstreaming activities and ensuring demonstrable results; identifying and addressing gaps in relation to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable women, particularly Aboriginal women; and improving accountability mechanisms.

While Canadian women have made many gains towards equality, especially in the formal sense, governments in Canada recognise that full substantive equality has yet to be achieved. Due to a public environment that largely perceives women's issues as 'solved', it proves difficult to mobilise adequate political attention and economic resources. Many challenges remain, both long-standing and new, including the fact that within positive overall trends for women, not all women are benefiting and some continue to be seriously disadvantaged or at risk of facing further barriers. The CEDAW Committee, at the presentation of Canada's 5th report in January 2003, for example, highlighted a number of issues of continuing concern, including poverty among women, the situation of Aboriginal women, trafficked women, live-in care-givers and the implementation of GBA across the federal government.

End Note

¹ Further information on Canada's work can be found at the SWC website www.swc-cfc.gc.ca

Dominica

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	82	73	73
Female population (% of total)	..	..	50
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	27.2	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	90
Male	..	..	93
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	84
Male	..	..	78
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	75	77	78
Male	71	73	74
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	19	17	14
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Dominica has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women and Poverty
 2. Violence Against Women
 3. The Girl-child
 4. Women and Health
 5. Education and Training of Women
- Followed by: 6. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 7. Women and the Economy; 8. Women in Power and Decision-making; 9. Human Rights of Women; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Dominica was one of the earliest Commonwealth countries to accede to CEDAW (1980). Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Women's Bureau in the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs.

Women and Poverty

Attempts are being made to integrate a gender perspective into national plans and programmes, specifically targeting impoverished women in poverty alleviation programmes. The National Development Foundation, which provides credit for small enterprise development, has encouraged women to access credit and been rewarded with an increase in numbers.

The Rural Enterprise Project has also sought to incorporate rural women in its programmes; however, reports indicate that greater focus is needed on women's employability and access to factors of production, such as land titles, which will help raise their productivity.

Through the 2003 Poverty Assessment Survey there is a better understanding of gender issues in health, education and the economy which are important to development goals. Recommendations will be included in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The National Council of Women umbrella organisation was represented on the Poverty Assessment

Many small states still rely on banana export which has been affected by globalisation. A facility for women to access credit for small development has been set up

Committee. The NWM was not invited to participate.

The Poverty Reduction Social Investment Programme targets vulnerable groups, especially poor women. The Government is also committed to a Land Registration Project which will facilitate land ownership and enable female as well as male landowners to raise the necessary capital for investment.

Violence Against Women

More women as well as men speak out against domestic violence. The Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (2001) has been passed and the police trained to handle reports. Other legislation introduced includes the Sexual Offences Act which deals with sexual abuse of the girl-child. A Legal Aid Clinic serves low-income women who wish to report violence. Various awareness programmes have introduced greater understanding on the causes and problems of domestic violence.

Women and Health

Much attention has been given to programmes relating to the reproductive health of women. A Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV Prevention Programme has been running for five years. Men have also been specifically targeted for awareness programmes. Dominica is rated second highest among Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECES) in absolute numbers of HIV/AIDS cases.

Women in Power and Decision-making

An increasing number of women are taking leadership positions in government administration and some professions, such as law, medicine and business. About 10% of Permanent Secretaries are women, and 81% at the next level down (Assistant Secretary). At the time of reporting, 12 out of 32 policewomen hold senior positions; and 10 of 15 secondary school principals and 14 of 44 medical officers are women.

In terms of political representation,



Dominica had 2 female ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary at the time of reporting. At the time of reporting, there were no female ministers. Two appointed women sit on the government benches in the Senate and two on the Opposition's. The Speaker of the House of Assembly is a woman. Women make up more than 50% of six village councils and are in substantial numbers in the two municipal councils.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Dominica is aware that it has to strengthen the capacity of its NWM through increased resources and better networking/collaboration if women are to advance. Although it is under-resourced, the NWM has been strengthened since 1995. The Women's Bureau has also enhanced its networking with local, regional and international agencies which has improved its information sharing and overall service delivery.

National Women's Machinery

A Women's Desk was established in 1980, with a staff of one – the Director. It has gradually evolved into the Women's Bureau, which is now the NWM, and has 6 staff. During its existence it has shifted

location from the Community Development and Social Affairs section of the Economic Development Unit in the Prime Minister's Office and is now in the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs. It was also dormant for some period but was revived in 1997.

The Women's Bureau is one of 6 departments in the ministry. A National Advisory Committee provides guidance and advice and the core bureau staff consists of the Director, Co-ordinator for Research and Programme Development, Field Officer, Field Assistant and two support staff.

The budget allocation for the Women's Bureau has been significantly reduced given the current economic and fiscal situation. It was reduced from EC\$271,919 to EC\$258,171 in 2003/04. The bureau receives the smallest share among all the departments of the ministry. Over the past few years, however, many of the Bureau's programmes have been funded by various donor agencies.

The original role of the Women's Bureau was envisaged as primarily co-ordinating and catalytic. Collaborative work has always been its prime mechanism for action, especially with limited financial and human resources. Its strategic objectives up to 2005 embrace four major programme areas: institutional strengthening, gender planning and analysis, entrepreneurial

development and advocacy. Work has begun in all areas but is far from complete and will have to be incorporated into the next five-year plan for the Bureau. More staff would strengthen the Bureau.

Despite its constraints, the Bureau has had some notable successes. In 2001, after much advocacy and lobbying, it influenced the enactment of the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act and has forged a closer relationship with the police on this issue. The Bureau also influenced the amendments to the Marriage Act (2001) which raised the weekly allowance per child from EC\$50 to EC\$75.

The Bureau offers counselling services to women, men and their families, has a fortnightly Talking Gender radio programme, and organises education campaigns and events such as the Day to Reject Violence against Women and International Women's Day.

A draft National Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming has been formulated, and forwarded to the ministry for submission to the Cabinet. Three national symposia have been held to illustrate the importance of gender mainstreaming. Senior appointments have been made in the ministry to assist in the introduction and management of a Gender Management System.

Through the multi-sectoral Advisory Committee, key departments make input on important issues and the Bureau's programme. The Bureau's Director also sits on several committees which plan or deliver services which impact on women and families. The Bureau hopes to improve collaboration with various agencies when the inter-sectoral national committee (part of the gender management system) is set up through the National Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming.

Partnerships

The Women's Bureau works closely on gender issues with regional and international organisations such as UNECLAC, UNIFEM, UNICEF, the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action and the Commonwealth Secretariat. It also works with local women's organisations, especially the umbrella organisation, the Dominica National Council of Women. The Bureau's Field Assistant works specifically with senior citizens and the Dominica Council on Ageing. Similar collaboration in the Rural Enterprise Project impacts on rural women and the Bureau's Director is a member of the board of directors of the National Development Fund which provides credit for small enterprise development.

The Bureau has used publications and other resource materials from the Commonwealth Secretariat in formulating the draft National Plan for Action for Gender Mainstreaming. The Bureau hopes to source expertise from the Commonwealth to take this plan forward.

Concerns for the Future

With single parents, especially teenage mothers, comprising the majority group among the 39% living below the poverty line, women and poverty will continue to be an area of focus. Rural women also need to be empowered if they are to lift themselves out of poverty. Gender mainstreaming will ensure that gender issues and concerns are incorporated into national and sectoral policies, plans and programmes.

Dominica also wishes to focus on violence against women and the girl-child, as well as women's economic empowerment and health (especially HIV/AIDS) issues.

Grenada

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile 1990 1995 2000

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	91	94	98
Female population (% of total)	..	..	51.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	12.7	37.1	21.2
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	80
Male	..	..	89
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	..	75	76
Male	..	69	69
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	30	26	21
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Grenada has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women and Poverty
 3. Education and Training of Women
 4. Violence Against Women
 5. Women and Health
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. Women in Power and Decision-making; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. Women in the Media; 10. Women and the Environment.

A Decade of Action

Grenada, the most southern of the Windward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean, signed CEDAW in 1980 and acceded to it in 1990. Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Division of Gender and Family Affairs in the Ministry of Social Development.

Women in Poverty, the Economy, and Education and Training

In the agriculture sector, with the decline in global demand, and therefore prices, of bananas, cocoa and nutmeg, many women, especially single parents, have become underemployed or unemployed. This has left many women exposed to domestic violence, prostitution and migration.

Some women follow tradition and look after the house and children; more, however, are now becoming educated and able to hold well-paid jobs. Others have started managing their own businesses with the assistance of the Micro-Enterprise Unit, 75% of whose loans went to women. The National Development Foundation has also offered training to women in many skills areas. There are some reports that women are taking up non-traditional pursuits such as building, drafting, brick-laying, masonry and car mechanics.

Grenada's Beijing +5 report stated that 91% of girls attained primary school education in 1995. The percentage of girls

More women in Grenada are becoming educated and holding jobs

enrolled in secondary school was 58.6%, against 41.1% for boys. Opportunities are therefore given for access to non-formal education to raise literacy rates.

Women and Health

Specific programmes for women have been on reproductive health, family planning, cancer, health services, ante-, post- and intra-natal care, and immunisation services. There is also some concern over rising HIV/AIDS infection rates, especially in the 15–24 year age group. Campaigns to raise awareness of the disease and safe sexual practices are conducted.

Violence Against Women

The NWM has undertaken many activities in collaboration with NGOs to sensitise people to the problems and causes of violence against women and child abuse. In the past, due to societal norms and cultural influences, family members, neighbours and even the victims were constrained from speaking out and reporting domestic problems. Now, however, the issue is being discussed in public, victims have come forward to describe their experiences, and reports on all forms of abuse are increasing.

The NWM has also set up Domestic Violence and Special Victims Units.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Since December 2003, Grenada has attained the 30% target of female representation in the Lower House of Parliament. The proportion in the Upper House already stands at 42% (5 out of 13).



There are currently 6 women Cabinet Ministers out of a total of 13, holding key portfolios such as: Communications, Works and Labour; Youth and Development; Tourism, Civil Aviation, Culture and the Performing Arts.

National Women's Machinery

Before 1999, the NWM was known as the Division of Women's Affairs. The NWM is headed by the Parliamentary Secretary responsible for gender and family affairs and comprises 4 Co-ordinators, one of whom is Co-ordinator of the Domestic Violence Unit.

Among the NWM's notable successes are the development of a National Gender Policy Framework, and establishment of Domestic Violence and Special Victims Units.

The NWM works especially closely with the Department of Social Services.

Partnerships

Close collaboration with civil society and NGOs has resulted in public commemoration, since 1999, of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Grenada also works with regional and international organisations, such as CARICOM and the Commonwealth Secretariat, on development and gender

equality issues. It has used Secretariat publications and material as tools to understand and promote gender perspectives, and further benefited from information exchange at workshops and meetings.

Concerns for the Future

Grenada is working towards the development of a National Gender Policy which will provide a clear statement of a course of action. Reform of legislation is also important for gender equality.

Guyana

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile 1990 1995 2000

POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	798	835	761
Female population (% of total)	51.3	51.4	51.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	31	33	34
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	18.1	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	3.6	2.8	1.9
Male	2.0	1.4	1.1
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	93	87	97
Male	93	87	100
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	73	68	72
Male	68	64	68
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	5	9	..
Male	6	10	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	67	68	67
Male	60	60	59
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	65	61	55
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	4
Male	..	..	3.3

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

The Government of Guyana's critical areas of concern under its National Plan of Action, which also link with components of the Beijing Platform for Action, are:

- Women and Poverty
- Education and Training
- Women and Health
- Violence Against Women
- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Women with Disabilities
- Situation of Indigenous Women
- The Girl Child.

A Decade of Action

Enshrined in the 1980 Constitution of Guyana is the recognition by the Government of Guyana of the principle of equality for women and men. This has been reinforced with the ratification of international instruments such as CEDAW (1980) and various constitutional and legislative reforms which were subsequently enacted.

The Women's Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Human Services, Social Security and Labour is the *de facto* co-ordinating mechanism for all policy implementation relating to gender equality.

Guyana is ranked at 81 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Human Rights of Women

Guyana's legislative framework has, to a large extent, made provision for women to have equality, that is, under the law women are entitled to equal occupational opportunities, health and safety programmes and facilities, the same right to vote and the same wage structure as men. While gender equality has not yet been fully achieved, significant advances have been made, constrained only by traditional patriarchal, social and cultural attitudes, and poor economic growth.

Significant legislative reforms have enhanced the legal status of women – the decade of the 1990s stands out as being the most important for women's rights in Guyana. That period witnessed the passage of a number of Acts, many in conformity with CEDAW:

- Married Persons Amendment Act (1990);
- Family and Dependents Provision Act (1990);
- Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1995);
- Equal Rights Act (1990);
- Domestic Violence Act (1996);
- Prevention of Discrimination Act (1997);
- Maintenance Amendment Act (1997).

The Prevention of Discrimination Act, which provides for the elimination of gender discrimination, particularly in the areas of employment, training, recruitment and membership of professional bodies, is especially significant. It has opened up opportunities for women entering traditional male-oriented or dominated fields. It also extends the provisions of the Equal Rights Acts by promoting 'equal remuneration to men and women in employment who perform work of equal value'. Under it, no discrimination shall be tolerated on the grounds of race, sex, religion, ethnic origin, family responsibilities, pregnancy, and marital or economic status.

The Act provides protection against unlawful discrimination, discrimination in employment; and discrimination in the provision of goods, services and facilities. It also promotes equality in remuneration. The legislation is extended to both public and private sector employees.

Despite Guyana's legislative reform programme, the goal of the eradication of all discriminatory customs and practices has yet to be attained. Unfortunately, it has been observed that both the Equal Rights Act and the Prevention of Discrimination Act have been minimally used by women to assert their rights.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Under the Constitutional Reform process in the late 1990s, provision was made to put in place mechanisms to ensure a substantial increase in women's representation in Parliament. Specific recommendations were made for a mandatory one-third representation of



women on the lists of all political parties contesting the General Election and Regional Elections in 2001.

While no provision was made to set aside a proportion of places for women on each list to represent parties in Parliament under the proportional representation system, there has been a significant increase in women's representation in Parliament. At the time of reporting, there are 20 women (30.7%) of 65 parliamentarians, an increase of 15.1% from 1997. One of these women is Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.

The number of women holding ministerial office has also increased from 2 (14.2%) to 4 or (21%) representing a 6.8% increase. For the first time in the history of Guyana a woman of Amerindian background holds ministerial office. She has been assigned the portfolio of Amerindian Affairs.

Though there was an improvement in women's representation at some senior levels in the Public Service between 1993 and 2003, their numbers are still relatively low. There are, however, indications that women are overtaking men at the middle level of management. In 2003, women accounted for 52% of all such positions compared to 42% in 1993. Women continue to dominate at the lower levels of the Public Service.

In 1997, the Government established a Women's Leadership Institute which works towards increasing the participation of women leaders in local government, community development, environmental activities, business and other fields. Under the UNDP-funded project, Building Capacity for Gender Equality in Good Governance, the institute works with the supporting resources of the National Resource and Documentation Centre (established 1998) under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Services, Social Security and Labour.

National Women's Machinery

Three bodies are key to the implementation of measures on gender equality:

- The Women's Affairs Bureau, within the Ministry of Human Services, Social Security and Labour, is the *de facto* co-ordinating mechanism for all policy implementation relating to gender equality;
- The Inter-Ministry Committee on Gender was formed under the aegis of the Women's Affairs Bureau and it is the responsibility of committee members to ensure that the programmes of their respective

Guyana has programmes to advance the progress of its Amerindians, especially women, seen here in the Iwokrama rainforest environmental project

ministries and agencies are gender-sensitive and conform to the policy of non-discrimination;

- The Women and Gender Equality Commission (formerly the National Commission of Women).

The Women's Affairs Bureau has organised various programmes to address the question of gender equality and discrimination, while also sensitising the general public to the issues involved.

Training programmes are organised for women to develop skills that will enable them to compete in the job market.

The issues of women with disabilities and the situation of indigenous women are of special concern to the Government and action has been initiated to determine the needs of women in these two critical areas.

Gender mainstreaming has also been introduced in the planning processes of major developmental sectors. A section on Women, Gender and Development forms part of the National Development Strategy which was presented to the Ministry of Finance and has since been put before Parliament. This initiative seeks to integrate women's needs, interests and concerns in the wider spectrum of the economic and social development of the country. Other gender mainstreaming initiatives, reiterate the need to address both



women's practical and strategic needs as different from those of men.

In 1996 a National Policy on Women in Guyana was approved by Parliament. In 1999, a National Plan of Action was drawn up reflecting a number of concerns (see *Priority Concerns, above*). This Plan is being revised and updated.

Concerns for the Future

Guyana is experiencing a number of difficulties in its attempts to attain the Millennium Development Goals, largely due to slow economic growth. However, the goal on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women remains important.

In general terms there has been steady progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. For example, gender disparities in school enrolment

and education have largely been eradicated, and action taken to remove gender stereotyping from schoolbooks. As already noted, there has been an increase in women's participation in Parliament and at some levels of the Public Service. Reforming legislation has also been put in place. However, there is very much more to be achieved in areas such as violence against women.

Jamaica

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	2,390	2,532	2,633
Female population (% of total)	51	50.8	50.8
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	46	46	46
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	23.1	22.5	22.5
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	13.9	11.3	9.3
Male	22	19.4	17.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	96	..	95
Male	96	..	95
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	65	..	76
Male	62	..	73
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	6	7	21
Male	8	9	11
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	75	76	77
Male	71	73	73
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	17	17	17
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.6
Male	..	..	0.4

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Jamaica has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Women in Poverty
 3. Women and Health
 4. Human Rights of Women
 5. Education and Training of Women
- Followed by: 6. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 7. Women in Power and Decision-making; 8. Women and the Economy; 9. The Girl-child.

A Decade of Action

Jamaica, the third largest island in the Caribbean, has a relatively large and diversified economy. The country became a signatory to CEDAW in 1980 and acceded to it in 1984. The Bureau of Women's Affairs in the Cabinet Office of the Office of the Prime Minister is the National Women's Machinery (NWM). Jamaica is ranked at 62 in the Gender-related Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Violence Against Women

Between 2001 and 2003, the incidence of crime and violence remained high. Over 120 women and children were murdered; violence, specifically against women, ranked high in crime statistics, with sexual abuse and domestic violence prevalent.

In that period, there were 15,440 cases of domestic violence, nearly three-quarters of them in rural areas, unlike other violent crime, including murder, which is more urban-centred. The spatial distribution of domestic violence indicates that it cuts across all social, economic and geographic boundaries.

Although the age of consent is 16, the number of reports of rape and sexual abuse of girls below that age is increasing. Another disturbing trend is the exploitation of women and girls through rape that occurs in some inner city communities; many families are threatened and terrorised if they do not hand over their teenage girls to community leaders, known as 'dons', who demand sex.

A worker in Jamaica... women are encouraged to be more self-reliant economically

National AIDS Committee statistics confirm that sexual abuse of young girls is on the increase, leading to a significant rise in HIV infections among young girls who are now three to six times more likely to be infected than their male counterparts.

Initiatives to combat this violence include an inter-agency campaign involving the NWM and NGOs which focused on work with the police, media, justice system and arranged chat sessions with children. Videos with strong messages on incest and domestic violence have been distributed; the media approached about appropriate portrayal on issues of violence and sex; and the police trained in domestic violence intervention.

Legislation is to be amended to stiffen penalties for offenders and a Sexual Harassment Act proposed. Child care and protection legislation is also proposed.

In 2000 and 2001, there was a 6.4% increase in female visits to hospitals for sexual assault, while visits by males declined by 30.6%. Reports of carnal abuse in 2001 were 41% fewer than in 1997. The number of cases of incest reported in 2001 was the highest since 1997.

Women and Poverty

The 1997 National Poverty Eradication Policy and Programme had as its priorities eliminating conditions leading to poverty in the most deprived communities, targeting interventions among specific vulnerable groups, and reforming the social safety net and income transfer programmes to emphasise a shift from 'welfare' to a developmental approach.

One of the main programmes in the reform process is the Programme for Advancement Through Health and Education, which targets 236,000 poor persons, including children (0–17 years), and pregnant and lactating mothers.

Assistance is also given, through a micro-enterprise financing scheme, to potential women entrepreneurs unable to otherwise get loans because they are at the bottom of the economic scale. The Rural Agriculture Development Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture provides



technical assistance to women for improving the quality of life in rural areas.

Over the past 5 years, programmes have targeted poor and rural women to be economically empowered through greater self-reliance. Women in agriculture are engaged in a wide range of activities including cultivation, casual labour, hawking and trading. The majority of female farmers work smallholdings for cash crops or subsistence production. On the technical and administrative side, women are employed as agricultural extension officers, food processors, agronomists, economists, technicians and administrators.

More women have been encouraged to train in non-traditional skills and in the professions. Notably, the Government and the Inter-American Development Bank trained 400 low-income women in masonry, tiling, bricklaying, welding, carpentry, joinery, plumbing, painting, electrical installation, and car and computer repairs, among other things to increase opportunities for income-generation.

Women and Health

HIV/AIDS is now a developmental issue. In 2001, 939 new HIV cases were reported, 511 male and 428 female. Of these, 66% were children. The National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI 2002–2006 adopts a multi-sectoral approach and the NWM has reviewed it to ensure a gendered approach is taken.

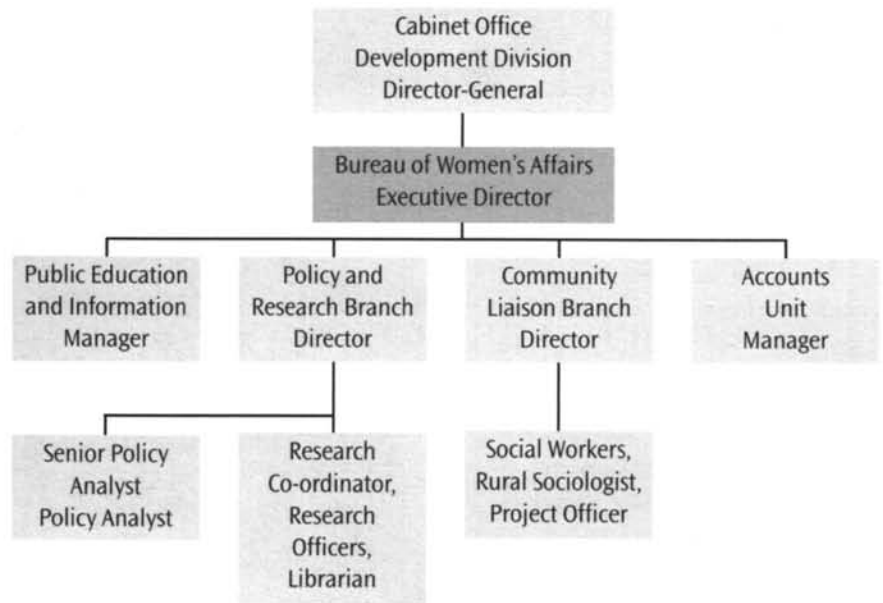
The strategic plan seeks to reduce by 2005 the new infections rate for HIV, with a particular focus on the vulnerable 15–24 year age group, and other vulnerable groups such as girls aged 15–19, especially in transactional or coercive relationships, sex workers and their clients, males who do not practice safe sex and their partners, homosexual males, bisexuals and their partners, prisoners, persons infected with STIs and their partners, and young persons in inner cities. The aim of the plan is to empower women to be able to negotiate safe sex, thus reducing their vulnerability to infection.

Media programmes to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS, safe sex, treatments and delaying sexual debuts have been carried out. Greater access to anti-retroviral drugs has also been provided, especially to pregnant women in an effort to decrease mother-to-child transmission. More health care workers have been trained.

Over the past 10 years, Jamaica AIDS Support, a voluntary organisation, has continued its mandate to 'love, care, support' those for whom there has been a reluctance to care for and treat (i.e., persons who have been ostracised by virtue of their HIV status or overtly risky lifestyles). Its activities include helping those who are HIV-positive to make a living.

There is no legislation yet which specifically addresses HIV/AIDS. A number of issues are being discussed, however, including discrimination against persons with AIDS in schools and the workplace.

Chart 42.1: Organisational Structure of Jamaica's NWM



Women in Power and Decision-making

Women have led political parties in Jamaica, but as of October 2002, only 18% of the Cabinet, 19% of the Senate and 10% of Members of Parliament were female. They are also under-represented in local government, with 1998 figures showing females making up 28% of mayors, 15% of deputy mayors and 26% of councillors. A woman is President of the Senate but women are still given the 'softer' Cabinet portfolios which are traditionally considered more socially oriented or 'nurturing'.

Women, however, are increasing in numbers at senior levels in the public sector. In 2002, 10 of 16 Permanent Secretaries were female, as were both Directors-General. In the Central Bank, while 2 of the 3 top positions were held by males, the rest of the corporate hierarchy is dominated by females except at the clerical level.

Men continue to dominate the leadership positions in statutory organisations (72%), the police and at the top levels of the judiciary and prosecution service.

In the private sector, there are very few women at the corporate boardroom level, on planning committees and even on school boards. The trade union movement is also male-dominated.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM was originally located in the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Sport in 1989, transferred to the Ministry of Tourism and Sport in 2000, and in 2002 moved to the Cabinet Office in the Office of the Prime Minister where it is located in the Development Division. It is headed by an Executive Director with 24 staff positions.

The primary focus of the NWM in 1995 centred around research and policy development, public education and training, and project planning and monitoring. Since then it has seen changes in its organisational structure and strategic responses. Following a 1996 evaluation, the Bureau shifted its

emphasis from a typical project-oriented approach to being more policy-focused.

A public sector management audit in 2002 led to recommendations that policy development functions should be enhanced and the Bureau's structure was further adjusted.

The budget allocations for the NWM over the past few years have been: J\$19.8 million (2001/02), J\$28.9 million (2002/03), J\$28.85 million (2003/04). There is no specific budget for gender mainstreaming from the Finance Ministry but the NWM allots funds from its general budget according to its programme objectives which include gender mainstreaming activities.

The NWM has close relations with the rest of the Cabinet Office with which it works on policy-related strategic issues, including the training of policy analysts on gender issues. It also works closely with the Legal Reform Department of the Ministry of Justice on the drafting and amending of laws.

Partnerships

The NWM works with a number of women's NGOs to advance gender equality. They include: the Jamaica Women's Political Caucus, Women's Media Watch, Women's Crisis Centre, Women's Outreach and Resource Centre, Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation and Centre for Gender and Development Studies. Together they organised workshops/seminars on issues such as violence against women and gender mainstreaming; training for women in public leadership and representative politics; and lobbying and advocacy for legislative reform and research initiatives.

Assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat has included training of health professionals and policy makers, Ministry of Finance and Planning officials and the NWM in Gender Management Systems (1998). The Secretariat has also provided training materials, reference guides and technical assistance.

Concerns for the Future

Women and poverty will be important challenge for Jamaica, especially in its current economic circumstances with its primary/low value-added products, such as sugar, bananas and garments, which employ many women. Jamaica is still not competitive in other economic areas. Constraints include a level of crime and violence that dictate high insurance rates and security costs for businesses.

HIV/AIDS is a growing concern. More public education is needed for girls aged 14–19 about the dangers of unprotected sex. Young men also need to be sensitised on these issues with a view to balancing male/female sexual power relations. There is growing evidence that the sex industry is being institutionalised with children of both sexes being involved in increasing numbers. This makes the anti-HIV/AIDS campaign more difficult.

Violence against women continues to be a major social and human rights problem, despite the initiatives at government, private and NGO levels.

St Kitts and Nevis

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	40	41	41
Female population (% of total)	..	..	..
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	31.3	25.8	20.9
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	100
Male	..	..	91
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	100
Male	..	..	83
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	69	72	73
Male	65	67	68
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	30	25	21
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2003 (2002)

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of St Kitts and Nevis places priority on the following:

1. Education and Training of Women
 2. Women in Power and Decision-making
 3. Violence Against Women
 4. Women in Poverty
 5. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
- Followed by: 6. Women and the Economy; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. Women and Health; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; 12. Women in Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

St Kitts and Nevis, in the northern part of the Leeward Islands group, acceded to CEDAW in 1985 and has submitted combined initial second, third and fourth periodic reports. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Department of Gender Affairs located in the Ministry of Community, Social Development and Gender Affairs.

Some progress has been made in the advancement of gender equality since accession to CEDAW. Despite gains in the material dimension by women, however, there are fewer gains in the ideological dimension: the portrayal of women in the media, treatment of women in interpersonal relationships and perception of women's roles are areas still in need of significant change.

The NWM reports that its work is constrained by its limitations (*see National Women's Machinery, below*) and culturally entrenched values. Efforts to facilitate change have included a male-specific programme, since working with men is integral to the dismantling of patriarchy and the realisation of gender equality.

Education and Training of Women

At the primary level, the enrolment ratio of females to males is almost equal, and at the secondary and tertiary levels, females outnumber males. Yet women continue to earn significantly less than

Box 43.1: Skills Training and Personal Development

Among the initiatives introduced by the National Women's Machinery of St Kitts and Nevis are:

Workforce Development

Under the project A Healthy Workforce is a Productive Workforce, employees in the manufacturing sector (98% of whom are low income-earning women) receive skills training and participate in personal development sessions on topical issues such as family planning and HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

In collaboration with other partners, the NWM has expanded the programme to include eye screening and the training of two persons in each establishment in basic health screening (e.g., for blood pressure) to facilitate health checks on the job.

Women in this sector are also able to access the counselling and mediation services of the Ministry of Community, Social Development and Gender Affairs at its satellite office located close to the industrial estate.

The programme also challenges society's negative views of women who work in the manufacturing sector. This is done by naming streets after long-serving employees and organising Christmas concerts which give employees an opportunity to showcase other talents.

Project Viola

In 1997, the Government approved a policy that gave teenage mothers the right to complete their secondary school education. The NWM then introduced Project Viola, a programme to support teenage mothers by providing them with emotional and, to some extent, financial support.

Each summer, UNICEF funds a programme in which teenage mothers are taught life skills, trained in marketing and tutored in areas of need within the school curriculum. A number of teenage mothers have returned to high school, and several others are pursuing tertiary education or are working.

In 2004, the summer programme was expanded to include four weeks of training in cosmetology. With assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency, a small salon was established at the Women's Training Centre which will be used by teenage mothers wishing to learn this skill.

The private sector has supported Project Viola, responding well to requests to provide educational scholarships for teenage mothers. It has also welcomed participants of the programme as interns during school vacations.

their male counterparts; they are positioned in larger numbers at the lower end of the labour market and constitute 59.3% of the poor. Women are also under-represented at many decision-making levels.

The NWM's top priority has been to provide skills training to help women increase their income-earning capacity. Each training programme has self-development and management components. These programmes introduce participants to financial agencies such as the Small Enterprise Development Unit and the Foundation for National Development and show them how to manage small to medium-scale businesses.

Programmes conducted by the Adult and Continuing Education Division include a Hospitality Entrepreneurship Skills Project which was undertaken in mid-2004.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Few women hold political office. At the time of reporting, St Kitts and Nevis had only two female parliamentarians out of 15 at the federal level and one female in a local island assembly of seven members. There are no female ambassadors.

To attract more women to stand for political office, St Kitts and Nevis is participating in an Organisation of American States (OAS) project, Women's Political Participation and Training in Democracy and Governance. In this project, public awareness of the need for women's participation will be raised, and training and support provided to women wishing to pursue political careers or aim for other decision-making positions.

In the light of national elections expected in 2005, the project leaders prepared a Women's Issues Manifesto highlighting women's concerns and making recommendations in areas such as poverty alleviation, gender mainstreaming, domestic violence, health issues, especially HIV/AIDS, and women's leadership and decision-making roles.

This manifesto was presented to each political party on 25 August 2004 and an invitation extended to each for further

discussions with the project's steering committee and other interested women.

Since 1995, more women are represented at public sector decision-making levels – about 33% of public sector management posts at the level of Permanent Secretary are held by women (that is six of 15 posts). The percentage is significantly higher in middle management.

None of the private sector companies has a female chief executive and women are under-represented on boards of companies.

Violence Against Women

In 2000, the Domestic Violence Act criminalised domestic violence. Under this legislation, requests for various orders associated with the Act can be filed by

victims and other people acting of their behalf. This eliminates the need for victims to pay for lawyers' services, which often prevents poorer people from coming forward.

Counselling services and other support activities are also available to victims of abuse. At the time of reporting, the NWM had secured *pro bono* services from the Bar Association for some victims. By the end of 2004, it was hoped that a State Legal Aid Clinic would have been set up. Funding has been obtained from UNICEF to raise public awareness of the issues and explain the Domestic Violence Act.

St Kitts and Nevis has also ratified the regional Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women which was agreed at Belem Do Para, Brazil, in 1994.

The NWM now enjoys greater collaboration with law enforcement officers, many of whom have been sensitised to the problems of gender-based violence. The Police Statistical Unit now includes a category for domestic violence.

Media houses regularly run advertisements urging people to help victims in violent situations or potentially violent situations. It has become common for people to report cases of domestic violence they witness, indicating that they no longer perceive it as a private matter.

A support group for victims, set up by the NWM, has achieved limited success. Older victims of abuse, many of whom have graduated away from violent domestic environments, continue to attend group sessions regularly. Younger victims, however, tend to only attend when they are in crisis. This affects the continuity of the sessions.

Women and Poverty

A poverty assessment report of 2000 has revealed a 30.5% and 32% poverty rate on the islands of St Kitts and Nevis respectively. Women account for 59.3% of all poor people.

A National Poverty Reduction Action Plan is being drawn up. Following its bottom-up participatory approach, both male and female community leaders have been identified and trained in the consultative approach. These leaders have already played a part in community mobilisation and the collection of data. Women have also been represented at community consultations.

The NWM continues to provide skills and entrepreneurship training for rural women in poor communities. Training is in traditional and non-traditional skills, marketing and life-skills.

Law Reform

As part of an exercise on family law reform by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), women's views on issues pertaining to marriage, divorce, maintenance, matrimonial property, unions other than marriage, juvenile justice and domestic violence were sought.



Trained mediators have already begun offering their services at the Magistrates' Court in cases on a range of issues including child maintenance. This service is an alternative to costly and time-consuming court proceedings.

Drafting has begun to amend divorce laws to recognise that marriages sometimes irretrievably break down through no fault of any one person and that people should be able to file for divorce on these grounds. Alternative dispute resolution is also being used to facilitate persons who would prefer to settle matters other than through a court.

Attachment of earnings is one of the pieces of legislation that will be part of OECS family law. This legislation would bring relief to women who are single heads of households and spend significant amounts of time in the courts on maintenance matters.

Three pieces of legislation – on sexual harassment, equality in employment and equal pay for work of equal value – were tabled in 2003 and are still going through Parliament.

National Women's Machinery

In 1995, the NWM was relocated from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Social Development so that it could work more closely with other service departments, such as that for Community Affairs, the Counselling Unit and the Department of

Child Protection and Probation Services. Since then, the NWM has utilised officers from these departments as resource persons and integrated gender concerns into their programmes.

The NWM reports it has had little growth since 1995 with human resource capacity only increased through the assistance of volunteers.

The NWM sits on a number of government committees, including the Minimum Wage Task Force, Promotion of Management and Labour Co-operation Task Force, HIV/AIDS National Task Force and National Emergency Management Agency – Food and Shelter Committee.

Close relations are also maintained with government departments, such as Justice and Legal Affairs, Planning, Youth, Health, Education and Labour. Co-operation with the Manufacturing Division enables the NWM to reach out to low-income women employed in this sector. A programme, A Healthy Workforce is a Productive Workforce, has been developed (*see Box 43.1, page 162*).

Partnerships

St Kitts and Nevis has benefited from its membership with regional organisations, such as CARICOM and the OAS. Encouragement from CARICOM for member states to establish teen mother programmes assisted in the setting up of Project Viola by the NWM. The OAS, through a regional project, has equipped many women in St Kitts and Nevis with

the skills to turn local agricultural produce into attractive and tasty processed food.

In 1999, the Commonwealth Secretariat assisted St Kitts and Nevis as the pilot country for testing the Gender Management System. It has had limited success because key recommendations on sustainability have yet to be realised. One of the recommendations was the need to upgrade the NWM; another was to give gender focal points in government departments more authority to implement decisions, policies and change.

The Canadian International Development Agency funded and the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action co-ordinated domestic violence sensitivity training for police and other frontline workers.

The NWM works closely with the private sector and provides support for non-governmental, community and faith-based organisations.

Concerns for the Future

In the next three years, attention should focus on:

- Women in Power and Decision-making – an increase in women's representation at these levels may lead to greater gender sensitivity in the development and implementation of policies;
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women – The effectiveness of policies and legislation that address gender equality is undermined by the lack of proper structural and institutional mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and
- Education and Training of Women – Poverty has a female face in the region. Women earn less than men yet are expected to provide support for the infirm, the elderly and the very young. Through education and training, women will increase their income-earning potential.



St Lucia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	150	158	156
Female population (% of total)	51.6	51.3	51.3
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	20.9	20.3
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group) (% of females to males)**	..	..	1.01
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of females to males)**	..	..	1.28
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio			
Female	..	..	24
Male	..	..	27
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	73	74	74
Male	69	69	70
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	20	18	17
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2003 (2002)

** 2002–2001 figures in the Human Development Report 2003

.. Figures not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of St Lucia places priority on the following:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Women and Health
 3. Education and Training of Women
 4. Women and Poverty
 5. Women and the Economy
- Followed by: 6. The Girl-child; 7. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 8. Women in Power and Decision-making; 9. Women and the Environment; 10. Human Rights of Women; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

St Lucia, part of the Windward Islands group in the Eastern Caribbean, acceded to CEDAW in 1982. It has yet to submit a CEDAW report. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Division of Gender Relations in the Ministry of Health.

Violence Against Women

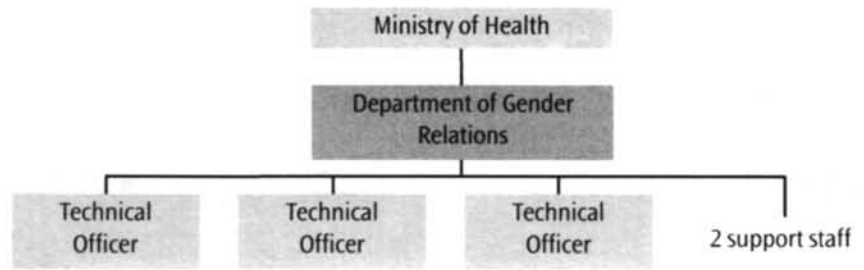
The NWM has reported a marked increase in the incidence and reporting of gender-based violence. Legislation in this area has been strengthened through the enactment of the Domestic Violence Summary Proceedings Act and the Criminal Code, as well as through the Sexual Offences Act which deals with offences such as rape, indecent assault and battery.

In 2001, the Women's Support Centre was opened to offer refuge to women and their children fleeing from domestic violence. It also offers counselling and other extramural programmes. Community Response Teams have been established to make initial interventions which can alleviate incidents or prevent them from escalating into more violent situations.

Women and Health

The health of the population is generally good and life expectancy fairly long. However, the incidence of HIV/AIDS is

Chart 44.1: Organisational Structure of St Lucia NWM



growing, especially among young women, with a recent study showing that 95% of infected people in the 15–19 year age group were female. Anti-retroviral drugs are available to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.

Education and Training of Women

Universal primary education has been in place for many years with every child between the ages of 5–15 guaranteed a place in school. School attendance, however, is variable with poverty keeping some children away in order that they may contribute to the family income.

The problem of teenage girls dropping out because of pregnancy is being addressed. At the time of reporting, there is an informal arrangement that girls may return to school after birth. Without care systems in place for infants, however, this will be difficult to implement successfully.

The NWM reports that St Lucia is well on its way to achieving universal secondary education by the year 2007.

National Women’s Machinery

The NWM was established in 1986 as a Women’s Desk before it was elevated as a department in the Ministry of Legal Affairs in 1994. In 1997, the department was assigned to the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. In 2001 it moved to the Ministry of Home Affairs and in 2004 reassigned to the Ministry of Health where it now resides as the Division of Gender Relations.

At the time of reporting, the NWM was understaffed, with two of the Technical Officer posts vacant. Budget allocations have not increased.

The NWM has closest relations with the Department of Human Services (Ministry of Health), Family Court (Ministry of Justice) and the Government Information Service (Prime Minister’s Office). The Family Court works with the Women’s Support Centre which assists victims of domestic violence. Staff members at the Centre occasionally attend the Family Court as observers.

The NWM’s best achievements have been:

- Establishing a shelter for victims of domestic violence and their children;
- Organising a national consultation (Round Table) on gender-based violence. Its objective was to bring together key players in the public and private sectors who were in a position to influence policy on gender-based violence;
- Running a comprehensive programme for the police to sensitise them and build their capacity to deal with domestic, gender-based violence.

Partnerships

The NWM works with a number of CSOs, including the St Lucia Crisis Centre, National Council for Voluntary Women’s Organisation and the National Council for Women. The Crisis Centre receives some financial assistance from the NWM.

Concerns for the Future

A misconception that the condition of women has improved has taken root in some sections of society and even officialdom. Some people believe, therefore, that women do not need special attention anymore and that it is men who are now in a state of crisis. There have been some calls for gender programmes that will improve the condition of men. The result, unfortunately, is a cutback in resources given to the advancement of women.

The St Lucia NWM believes that in the next few years, institutionalising gender mainstreaming must be a priority, and education and capacity building efforts stepped up to ensure implementation.

Box 44.1: Eco-Souvenirs in the Fight against Poverty

The alleviation of poverty through the creation of income-generating opportunities and promotion of micro-entrepreneurship is one of the primary concerns of the Government of St Lucia. The handicraft industry has been identified as ideal for both.

Craft production in St Lucia is largely at ‘cottage’ level, providing employment to women and unemployed youth. But while the Government encouraged the poor and disadvantaged to get involved in craft-making, producers had little access to markets and thus missed the opportunity that tourists, especially from Europe and the United States, presented.

Following a study on the handicraft industry in Choiseul district, where a higher proportion of women are engaged in handicraft production, the Government requested the Commonwealth Secretariat to work with the Ministry of Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs to expose craft makers on the island to design, manufacturing and marketing concepts for the development of eco-souvenirs.

Following a diagnostic and assessment phase, a workshop was held in early December 2003 for 20 participants to produce eco-souvenirs for the busy Christmas tourist season. The participants used tools and equipment customised for the products. The workshop was targeted at groups identified as most needing assistance – the disabled, women and youth – as well as exporters and trainers at skill centres.

Hundreds of products were manufactured at the workshop, giving birth to what is hoped will be a multi-million dollar eco-souvenir industry. Following the project, the St Lucia Ministry of Finance said: ‘This project will assist the large community of artisans and craft persons in St Lucia, especially the disadvantaged women, disabled and handicapped persons and other vulnerable groups.’

St Vincent and the Grenadines

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	11,700	13,400	15,100
Female population (% of total)	50.4	50.3	50
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	37	38	38
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	52.5	44.1	36.3
Male	31.3	25.8	20.9
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	93	82	99
Male	109	91	114
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	23	21	29
Male	33	30	36
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	1	4
Male	5	6	6
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	56	55	51
Male	53	52	49
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	85	92	95
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	7.8
Male	..	..	3.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of St Vincent and The Grenadines has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
 2. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 3. Women in Power and Decision-making
 4. Women and Health
 5. Education and Training of Women
- Followed by: 6. Human Rights of Women; 7. Women and Poverty; 8. Women and the Economy; 9. The Girl-child; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

St Vincent and the Grenadines, one of the Windward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean, has a relatively undeveloped economy but nevertheless a relatively high quality of life. The country acceded to CEDAW in 1981. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Gender Affairs Division which is located in the Ministry of Social Development.

Violence Against Women

Legislation on domestic violence has existed since 1984. The continued prevalence of gender-based violence, however, led to the introduction of further legislation in 1995 to provide protection by means of summary proceedings in cases involving domestic violence and related matters.

Other initiatives include the training of police and social workers in domestic violence intervention; a plan to open a crisis centre for victims of domestic violence in 2004; sensitising the public on the undesirability of such violence; and the annual observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

From being a domestic matter not to be taken outside the family, domestic violence is now openly discussed. In 2002, a panel of medical, social worker, police and Family Court representatives

The environment is a priority area for development, gender equality, food security and sustainable livelihoods. It can also provide opportunities for employment in the tourism sector (Photo credit A. Simmons)

discussed the issues as a national panel. A parallel exhibition showing how women are abused was mounted.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The Gender Affairs Division, taking over from the Women's Affairs Division in 2001, embarked on training staff members in gender and development. An inter-sectoral committee, comprising representatives from government and the private sector, was also established that year, and a system of Gender Focal Points set up. Training has also been given to focal points in media, trades unions and teaching.

One of the Government's major institutional initiatives was the setting up of the Family Court to which women can apply for family maintenance and other matters. Maintenance Orders for the support of children can now be enforced through this court. Protection Orders and Occupation Orders (for the offender to leave the home) can also be issued and enforced through the Family Court.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Women are beginning to enter the higher levels of power and decision-making. In 2001, two women were elected to Parliament and the first female Attorney-General appointed. For the first time, a female Deputy Governor-General has been appointed, as well as 2 female Senators representing women and youth. There are more female than male heads in administration in the public sector.

Women and Health

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among females fluctuated between 1984 and 1991, but between 1992 and 1998 increased steadily. The case fatality rate has been high (98.9% in 2000) and more than 80% of deaths are people in the 20-49 age group.

A strategic plan involving information, education, prevention, treatment and support has been put in place. Better treatment, including anti-retroviral



PHOTO: A. SIMMONS

treatment, is available. Condoms are distributed to promote safe sex; other programmes provide financial support and other services for patients and their families.

In order to eliminate mother-to-child transmission, mothers are encouraged to undergo testing for HIV during pregnancy.

Women in Poverty, the Economy and Education and Training

The Government's strategy to fight poverty includes budgetary assistance to the poorest; a multi-sectoral programme including government, NGOs, the private sector, international agencies, and individuals; financial measures to assist the rural poor to utilise their land and raise production levels; pursuit of economic policies which favour strong economic growth; and making education and the empowerment of the family vital tools in the struggle against poverty.

The National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), set up in 2002, is an advisory body to the Government and has the mandate to co-ordinate the poverty reduction programme. It comprises representatives from the public and private sectors, and from civil society.

NESDC has a number of working groups, including the Poverty Reduction Task Force on which the NWM is represented on. So far, this task force has put in place an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which will be the Government's guide to poverty reduction. This document includes strategies and recommendations for gender equity.

Other initiatives focus on education and training. Teenage mothers are now allowed to return to some secondary schools after giving birth, and there has been an increase in the number of places in secondary schools, where girls are a majority. Training females in non-traditional skills, such as plumbing, electrical engineering and woodwork has also been carried out.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM was initially established as the Women's Affairs Department in 1985 within the Ministry of Tourism, Aviation, Culture and Women's Affairs. It had a staff of one – the Co-ordinator. In 2001, it was renamed the Gender Affairs Division and now has a staff of four, including the Co-ordinator, Assistant Co-ordinator and 2 Project Field Officers. One of the Project Field Officers is male.

The NWM's budget has gradually increased from EC\$92,767 in 1995 to EC\$158,250 in 2003.

Among the NWM's notable successes are the establishment of new structures, such as an inter-ministerial committee on gender issues, training and gender-sensitisation sessions, and media and public awareness campaigns.

The NWM enjoys close relations with the inter-sectoral committee on gender; the Family Services Division which conducts training on handling domestic violence, assists displaced women and children and gives assistance to indigent women and their families; and the Ministry of Education.

Partnerships

The NWM enjoys close relations with the National Council of Women and other civil society and NGOs. It has received information materials and publications from the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Concerns for the Future

Preoccupations for the future will be on overcoming continued misunderstanding about the concept of gender; enhancement of the NWM; and the establishment of a national policy on gender equity.

Trinidad and Tobago

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile

	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	1,283	1,287	1,301
Female population (% of total)	50	50.1	50.1
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	31	33	34
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	24.2	20.2	16.8
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	4.4	3.2	2.3
Male	1.9	1.4	1.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	91	89	92
Male	91	90	93
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	66	..	75
Male	64	..	70
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	6	7	8
Male	7	9	5
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	74	75	75
Male	69	70	70
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	21	16	27
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.6
Male	..	..	0.8

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Trinidad & Tobago has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women and Poverty
2. Education and Training of Women
3. Violence Against Women.

A Decade of Action

Trinidad and Tobago, the most southerly of the Caribbean island states, acceded to CEDAW in 1990. Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Gender Affairs Division located in the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs. The country is ranked at 47 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Women and Poverty

The Government has adopted a multi-pronged approach, increasing welfare benefits and employment programmes specifically targeting women and addressing policy issues such as legislation aimed at creating equal opportunities for women and men.

The NWM serves on several inter-ministerial committees which address the issue of poverty. Some programmes specifically address women with low or no incomes, as well as those with no or very few skills, who are unemployed and may be heads of households.

Education and Training of Women

School enrolment is relatively high, as is literacy. The Government and NGOs continue to focus efforts on improving opportunities especially for females. Over half of the intake in all university faculties (except engineering) are females. More females are also taking up non-traditional skills in vocational training, including plumbing, tiling, woodwork and upholstery.

Other females are in programmes which provide training in areas such as agriculture, landscaping and care of the elderly. Over 5,000 women have

benefited from these programmes.

Violence Against Women

Violence remains a high priority area. Legislation introduced to combat it includes the Domestic Violence Act (1999) and amendments to the Sexual Offences Legislation (2000) which increases penalties for offenders and makes it a crime to refuse to act on a report made by a minor. A 24-hour National Domestic Violence hotline has been established, as have community-based resource centres and drop-in centres for domestic violence and other related problems.

Police and other social services providers have been trained in programmes run by the Government in partnership with local and international agencies.

National Gender Policy

The Government is in the process of developing a National Gender Policy and Action Plan based on the Commonwealth Secretariat's Gender Management System. Various interest groups have been consulted, and specialists have been reviewing policies and programmes in different sectors to identify gender gaps and work with those agencies to develop the action plan.

Consultants for the exercise are the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, at the St Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies, with the UNDP, the Canadian International Development Agency and UN/ECLAC as international partners.

Training for women in non-traditional skills



Gender-responsive Budgeting

In 2003, with support from the Government, the Network of Non-governmental Organisations undertook an exercise to introduce the issue of gender-responsive budgeting. This exercise will be repeated, this time targeting the senior financial managers and ministries, so that the impact can be seen in budgetary allocations for future programmes and projects.

National Women's Machinery

There have been major changes to the staffing and budgets of the NWM since 1995 when it was known as the Women's Affairs Division. Staff numbers stood at 8 in 1995, but increased to 25 as of October 2003. During the same period, the budget allocation rose from TT\$500,000 to approximately TT\$7 million.

The increase in staffing has risen from the expanded functions of the division, whose mandate has changed from women in development to gender and development, and whose mission statement is to promote gender mainstreaming in all government programmes, projects and policies.

Several units in the division deliver direct services, such as the Domestic Violence Unit, the Women in Harmony Programme and the Gender Equality Institute. The division's other unit focuses specifically on policy issues and is engaged in research and analytical work.

Notable successes for the NWM are the development of a draft National Gender

Policy; the launching of the Gender Equality Institute which addresses many of the short- and medium-term needs of women in society; and the establishment of community-based support centres for victims of domestic violence which are located in their own local communities.

The NWM works especially closely with the Attorney-General as legal reform underpins gender equality efforts. Close relations are also maintained with the Ministries of Health, Education, National Security and Finance.

Partnerships

The Network of Non-governmental Organisations, Midwives Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Federation of Women's Institutes and the Rape Crisis Centre are among some of the NWM's key partners. Together they have implemented several programmes. International Women's Day activities, the hosting of the Young Women of the Year Award, use of shelters and halfway houses, resource personnel for training programmes, and the hosting of international and regional conferences are among some of the areas for continued collaboration.

Concerns for the Future

Women's health is increasingly becoming a major concern in the region, especially in Trinidad and Tobago. HIV/AIDS is showing a higher rate of infection among females as against males in the 15–24 age group, with the possibility of increasing rapidly. At the time of reporting, an action plan has been developed by the Government with other agencies.

How women are portrayed in the media is also of concern. The media is a powerful institution that is reinforcing many stereotypes and biases, especially those concerning women. Efforts to sensitise the media in this regard have begun, but has been difficult because many of the media companies are owned and are heavily staffed by individuals who wish to maintain patriarchal structures and portray women either as submissive in their private lives or as sex objects.

The promotion of equality must not be confused with the simple objective of balancing the statistics: it is a question of promoting long-lasting changes in parental roles, family structures, institutional practices, the organisation of work and time, their personal development and independence, but also concerns men and the whole of society, in which it can encourage progress and be a token of democracy and pluralism.

– From definition of gender mainstreaming, *Europa*, portal site of European Union

Regional Profile

Europe: Framework for Equality

The Commonwealth's three European member countries are Cyprus, Malta and the United Kingdom (UK). All are members of the European Union (Cyprus and Malta since 1 May 2004). In general, their social and economic indicators are better than for many other Commonwealth countries.

Priorities and Action

Figures for 2001 show Gross National Income per capita for Cyprus at US\$12,320, for Malta at US\$9,210 and for the UK at \$25,120. There is no, or very little, absolute poverty, and literacy rates are high, along with school enrolment.

Cyprus, Malta and the UK have recorded a high investment level of public expenditure on education – respectively, 5.4%, 4.9% and 4.5% of GDP in 1998 – 2000. The percentage of public expenditure on education for pre-primary and primary level in the UK was 33.2%, for secondary level 46.7% and for tertiary level 20.1%. For Cyprus, the expenditures were 34.7%, 50.6% and 14.8% respectively. For Malta they were 28.9%, 42.8% and 8.2% respectively.

Life expectancy is over 70 years with women generally living longer than men; the infant mortality rate is no higher than 6 per 1,000 live births.

All three countries have been ranked in the high human development section of UNDP's Human Development Index: Cyprus at number 30, Malta at 31 and the UK at 12. All three are island states. The UK is the largest at 243,305 sq km, with Cyprus at 9,250 sq km and Malta at only 316 sq km. They contrast, moreover, in population size – the UK has over 58 million people and the other two have less than a million each – as well as in the size of their economies (in 2001 the UK was the fourth largest economy in the world).

The status of women and their position in economic life has improved significantly in the past few years. All three countries in the region recognise that women make a crucial contribution to the economy in their roles as both workers and carers. With the increasing

number of women entering the workforce, they are fully committed to equal opportunities in the labour market, encouraging family-friendly employment policies, and to improving childcare and other facilities to encourage those parents who wish to work to do so.

Malta alone has concerns in this area. Its National Development Plan for Economic and Social Cohesion (Malta 2003–2006) suggests that critical measures are necessary if it is to attain the employment target rates in the European Employment Strategy of 71% for men and 60% for women by 2010. At present, its percentage of females participating in the economy is a little over 30%.

In all three countries, flexible forms of employment, such as part-time and temporary work, have yet to be developed fully.

Women in Public Life

Some advances have been made in female representation in political and decision-making levels. A campaign in Cyprus to encourage more women candidates has doubled the number of women MPs from 5.4% in 1999 to 10.7%. The UK has maintained 18% of women in the House of Commons (Lower House of Parliament) since 2001. With changes in the make-up of the House of Lords (Upper House), female representation has reached 16% there. The UK has passed legislation encouraging political parties to put forward more female candidates for election.

Malta, however, records a slight decline in the number of women in Parliament from 9.2% in 1999 to 7.7%.

All three countries are making efforts to attract and appoint more females to leadership positions in the public sector.

Violence Against Women

Eradicating violence against women in all its forms (including domestic and sexual violence) and bringing offenders to justice

is a priority for the Commonwealth's European members. Domestic violence accounts for 23% of all violent crime in the UK. In all three countries, a combination of new legislation, projects encouraging reporting and handling victims, training, especially of the police, and provision of safe houses are among the various initiatives introduced.

Regional Platforms for Equality

As with all other countries in the EU, Cyprus, Malta and the UK are working towards the implementation of the EU Policy Framework for Gender Equality 2001–2005. The framework seeks to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between women and men, as set out in Article 3(2) of the Treaty of Rome (1957) which set up the original European Economic Commission, the EU's 'ancestor'. It has also become an important element in Europe's external relations and the development of policies of co-operation.

The framework's strategic objectives are in the following areas:

- Promotion of gender equality in economic life;
- Promotion of equality in participation and representation;
- Promotion of equal access to and full enjoyment of social rights;
- Promotion of gender equality in civil life; and
- Promotion of the change of gender roles and stereotypes.

In 1996, the gender mainstreaming approach was introduced to take into account women's concerns, needs and aspirations and ensure they were regarded with the same importance as men's concerns in the design and implementation of policies. While the European Commission reports that considerable progress has been made regarding the situation of women in its member states, gender equality in day-to-day life is still being undermined by the fact that women and men do not enjoy equal rights in practice. It notes: 'Persistent under-representation of and violence against women, *inter alia*, show that there are still structural gender inequalities.'

The EU has undertaken a review of the following key aspects of policy at Community level over the past few years:

- The legislative *acquis* in the area of equal opportunities and the relevant case-law of the European Court of Justice;
- The Community commitment and follow-up to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action;
- The implementation of past Community programmes on equal opportunities for women and men and, in particular, of the medium-term Community action programme (1996–2000), which reinforced the gender mainstreaming strategy;
- The Structural Funds¹ contribution to gender equality over the last 10 years through specific actions, in particular the NOW initiative², and the new regulations (2000–2006), as well as the valuable contribution of the European Employment Strategy since 1997;
- The initiatives in the field of external relations, development co-operation policies as well as the promotion and protection of the human rights of women;
- The new directives provided by the European Parliament and the Council; and
- The strengthened provisions of the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty on equality between women and men (Article 2, Article 3, Article 13 and Article 141 of the Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaties establishing the European Communities.

The UK, together with Canada and New Zealand, also belong to the 30-member Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), whose members share a commitment to democratic government and the market economy.

The OECD has a global reach through its work that ranges from economic and social issues to macroeconomics, trade, education, development and science and innovation. Dialogue, consensus, peer review and pressure are at the very heart of OECD especially in a globalised economy. Sharing the benefits of growth is also crucial as shown in activities such as sustainable development, gender

equality and aid.

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is the principal body through which the OECD deals with issues related to co-operation with developing countries. The mandate of the DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) covers three principal areas:

- It contributes to improving the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation. The knowledge, insights and experience of both women and men are required if development is to be effective, sustainable and truly people-centred. Hence, progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment is vital for improving economic, social and political conditions in developing countries;
- It provides strategic support to the policies of the DAC: it acts as a catalyst and provides professional expertise to ensure that gender equality perspectives are mainstreamed in DAC work, reinforces this priority in members' programmes, and supports partner countries' development efforts;
- It meets the needs of members of the DAC and GENDERNET by providing a unique opportunity to exchange innovative and catalytic thinking on strategies and practices for integrating gender perspectives and women's empowerment to support partners' own efforts in all spheres of development co-operation.

DAC's work in the area of gender equality is carried out primarily through GENDERNET, formerly known as the Working Party on Gender Equality.

GENDERNET brings together gender experts from bilateral and multilateral development agencies as well as civil society, to define common approaches, share good practice, innovative ideas and state-of-the-art research on gender-related topics.

GENDERNET provides strategic support to DAC members to take gender equality into account in development policies and practices. It contributes a gender equality perspective to work conducted by other DAC subsidiary bodies, for example on conflict, peace-building and reconstruction; governance; poverty

reduction; statistics; evaluation and environment; as well as to other relevant OECD bodies.

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Gender Section is a member of GENDERNET.

The Way Forward

In Europe, individual efforts by Commonwealth countries to advance gender equality have resulted in many gains, notably in the areas of education, health, employment and childcare, research and policy setting, and socio-political leadership. However, with the regional agreements in place now, especially the EU Policy Framework on Gender Equality, standards will become mandatory across the region. These agreements will facilitate collaboration, flows of resources and capacities, monitoring and evaluation on the attainment of targets, whether they be global, regional, national or the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Members of GENDERNET are instrumental in mainstreaming gender equality throughout their own agencies. The Network also organises thematic workshops involving OECD partner countries, the United Nations system, research institutes and civil society organisations. It participates in advocacy events bringing together experts from both OECD and partner countries.

Within the Commonwealth, the European members can play a leading role to spearhead gender equality initiatives as well as provide developing member countries with existing resources, both technical and financial, to advance their gender mainstreaming goals.

Commonwealth, EU and OECD members can play a crucial role in raising gender issues in global arenas on sensitive issues such as global trade, investment and development processes where the gender equality perspective is still considerably weak or marginalised. Such collaborative actions have direct and indirect impacts on the lives of ordinary women and men in Commonwealth developing countries and their economies.



Negotiations at the World Trade Organisation and Financing for Development (Monterrey) conferences, the programmes for Heavily-Indebted Poor Countries and of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and reviews of the MDGs and the Beijing Platform for Action make it clear that global partnerships at all levels are critical.

National governments and policymakers, practitioners, and development agencies alike, are challenged in the implementation of gender mainstreaming as gender issues are cross-cutting, complex and long-term. Commonwealth members, both from developed and developing regions, by gaining a better understanding and appreciation of the global issues can also arrive at common win-win solutions that do not lead to the unsustainable loss of resources, livelihoods and human dignity by any one party.

Country Reports

On the following pages are summaries of reports submitted by the Commonwealth's European member countries on the progress of women and gender equality.

End Note

1 The Structural Funds are the EU's main instruments for supporting social and economic restructuring across the EU. They account for over a third of the EU budget.

2 The Employment NOW Initiative of the EU aims to bring women into the labour market, reduce unemployment among women and improve the position of women already in the workforce.

Cyprus

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	701	734	757
Female population (% of total)	50.2	50.1	50.1
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	38	38	39
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	2.5	3.7	4.2
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	90	6.5	4.6
Male	2.3	1.7	1.3
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	87	81	95
Male	87	71	95
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	80	93	89
Male	79	90	87
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	13	20	25
Male	12	13	19
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	79	80	80
Male	74	75	76
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	10	9	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Cyprus has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Violence Against Women
2. Women and the Economy
3. Women in Power and Decision-making
4. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
5. Education and Training of Women

Followed by: 6. Women and Health; 7. Women and Armed Conflict; 8. Human Rights of Women; 9. The Girl-child; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women in the Environment; 12. Women in Poverty.

A Decade of Action

Cyprus is an island country divided following the invasion and continued illegal occupation of the north by Turkish troops in 1974. On 1 May 2004, Cyprus became a member of the European Union. The country acceded to CEDAW in 1985 and to its Optional Protocol in 2002. The National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR) is a system of four bodies under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order.

Cyprus is ranked at 30 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Violence Against Women

Emphasis has been placed on the development of an appropriate legal framework in efforts to eradicate violence against women. Domestic violence was addressed specifically in The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law (1994), subsequently amended in 2000. Among other things, the law clarifies that rape can be committed within marriage, sets up a fund to meet the immediate needs of victims, and also provides for the establishment of shelters. It has special provisions protecting children who have been victims or are in danger of abuse.

An Advisory Committee on Family Violence has also been established to monitor family violence, and related services and structures set up to handle it.

Members are drawn from the public and private sector. The committee has produced a manual for inter-departmental procedures on how professionals in social welfare services, the police, the health and education services, the Law Office and relevant NGOs can work together.

Confidence in the investigation and judicial system is believed to be behind the increase in reports of family violence each year. The Attorney-General has decided to establish an electronic data bank at the Law Office for Family Violence Reporting so that processing will be facilitated.

The police undergo specific training so they can assist women, children and other victims of violence. They also operate a Central Bureau for handling issues concerning prevention and combating of family violence and of child abuse. A 24-hour help line for victims is operated at Police Headquarters.

Cyprus has passed legislation to combat trafficking of people and signed a number of bilateral agreements on co-operation with neighbouring countries. The Commissioner of Administration (Ombudsman) has recently investigated the status of the entrance and employment of alien women who come to Cyprus to work as 'cabaret artists' and a report submitted to Government.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Despite the large number of women involved in politics, women are under-represented in government. At the time of reporting, there is only one woman among 11 Cabinet ministers. After parliamentary elections, 10.7% of those elected were women. After local elections in 2001, 19% of those elected as municipal councillors and members of other local areas governing bodies were women.

Women are present at all levels of the professional staff in the civil service – reaching 37% for the entire Civil Service, with the percentage at the senior officers' levels increasing from 5% in 1995 to 28.1% in 2003.

The Government, political parties and women's organisations have declared



their support for improving the gender balance in public life in order to meet the goal of a minimum of 30% female representation before 2005. The NMWR and NGOs have launched campaigns to encourage women to come forward as candidates for election, and to persuade voters at large of the importance of women's participation in public life.

Recent research, however, indicates that both female and male voters seem not to fully trust women representatives in politics, confirming that society is still conservative.

Women and Poverty, and the Economy

Conditions of extreme poverty and poor living standards are very scarce. Poverty is therefore only identified in terms of what is locally perceived to be an acceptable standard of living. Among the most vulnerable groups in this respect are single mothers and retired older women. The Government is very sensitive to the needs of single parents, the majority of whom are women.

In order to safeguard human dignity while promoting social inclusion and long-term independence from public

funds, appropriate legislation has been passed and employment incentives together with support services offered.

The Single Parent Organisation, which is an NGO, has been established to identify special problems facing these women, provide support and act as a pressure group to improve their status. Improvements have been made to the social pension and the tax system reformed to specially benefit families with children. An allowance is also paid to all mothers residing in Cyprus who have at least four children and have ceased to be eligible for child benefit when all their children have exceeded the age limit. It is not payable to mothers on social or any other pension.

Women have benefited from the increase in employment opportunities over the past decade, accounting for almost 44% of total employment in 2002. The continued increase in the educational level of both females and males has resulted in a rising share of employment in higher skilled professions, such as managers, professionals and technicians. In 1992, employment in these occupations accounted for 23.9% of female employment; in 2002, this had risen to 28.4%.

Gender Mainstreaming

The concept of gender mainstreaming was incorporated for the first time in the five-year National Development Plan (1999–2003) under a special chapter on Women and Development. It is seen as important for gender issues to be integrated into critical sectors of Government, as well as the private sector and civil society.

Based on a three-year plan on gender mainstreaming developed by an EU expert, the NMWR, in collaboration with the British Council in Nicosia, has organised training on gender mainstreaming for the Gender Focal Points of ministries as well as awareness sessions on gender mainstreaming for high-ranking officials.

National Women's Machinery

A Permanent Central Agency for Women's Rights was established in 1988. It was renamed the National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR) by the Council of Ministers in 1994. The NMWR is a system of four bodies under the leadership of the Minister of Justice and Public Order, with the Permanent Secretary of the ministry as deputy.

The four bodies are:

- The Council for Women's Rights, headed by the Minister of Justice and Public Order, and consisting of representatives of the 13 major women's and trades union organisations;
- The Inter-ministerial Committee, headed by the ministry's Permanent Secretary, consisting of the Competent Officers for Women's Rights appointed in all ministries and the Planning Bureau;
- The National Committee for Women's Rights, which consists of all the members of the Council for Women's Rights, all the Competent Officers for Women's Rights and more than 50 other organisations which promote gender equality;
- The General Secretariat of the NMWR, which is the Government Equality Unit, headed by a Secretary-General who is an officer of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order. The Secretariat provides administrative and scientific support for

the National Machinery and promotes and implements its decisions.

The NMWR is fully funded and staffed by the Government. Its budget covers mainly the cost of its programmes and activities, as well as subsidies to women's organisations, academic institutions and other organisations for undertaking relevant projects. The budget was increased from €44,000 in 1995 to €366,000 in 2003.

The General Secretariat of the NMWR consists of 2 professional officers who are assisted, when required, by external experts. Steps are being taken to further evolve the Government Equality Unit within the frameworks of EU frameworks for gender equality.

In addition to the NMWR, other bodies have been put in place in the public sector to promote gender equality. These include: a Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman, *sic*), National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights, Advisory Committee on Gender Violence, Gender Equality Committee on Employment and Vocational Training, and Investigation and Assessment of Work Committee under the Equal Pay Legislation.

Partnerships

A large number of Cyprus' women's organisations, trades unions and other NGOs are members of the NMWR which supports their projects and activities. These organisations contribute to the improvement of women's position in society in various ways. For example, the Cyprus Federation of Business and Professional Women has observer status on the Board of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Other organisations have been very active in the field of human rights and peace. The first bi-communal women's group of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots is Hands Across the Divide. An International Eco-Peace Village was set up in 1998, with Commonwealth Secretariat support, to work for broader peace in the divided country and elsewhere. It focuses on the training of women and youth in ecological issues, sustainable development, in conflict prevention and peace, as well as in conflict resolution.

Concerns for the Future

Despite some progress, women still lag behind men in taking up decision-making positions. The Government will continue to seek a gender balance in political life as well as in the public sector.

Further efforts are also being planned to combat violence against women through implementation of legislation, and the collaboration and co-ordination of government departments and NGOs in handling these cases.

Women still face an uphill struggle to play a greater role in the economy. They continue to face discrimination, including in obtaining equal pay, despite a number of laws guaranteeing equality. Measures for the effective implementation of such legislation, the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities, and the improvement of vocational training, especially for women, will continue.

Malta

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	353	372	390
Female population (% of total)	50.6	50.5	50.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	25	27	28
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	2.3	2.3	5.4
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	11.1	9	7.3
Male	12.1	10.2	8.7
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	98	99	98
Male	99	100	98
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	79	78	80
Male	80	79	79
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	12	23	28
Male	14	22	22
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	78	79	81
Male	73	75	76
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	11	10	5
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Malta has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women and the Economy
 2. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 3. Women in Power and Decision-making
 4. Women and the Environment
 5. Violence Against Women
- Followed by: 6. Education and Training of Women; and 7. Women and Health.

A Decade of Action

Malta was accepted as a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004. The country acceded to CEDAW in 1991. Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) comprises the Commission for the Advancement of Women, which is an advisory body, and the Department for Women in Society, which is the commission's executive arm. Malta is ranked at 31 in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Gender Mainstreaming

It is Government policy to implement gender mainstreaming as the main strategic tool to achieve *de facto* gender equality. Responsibility and accountability for gender equality has been placed on all senior officials in public service and the NWM conducts training and awareness campaigns.

The NWM and the Management and Personnel Office in the Office of the Prime Minister are working towards a mentoring scheme for senior female public officers, developing the gender focal points structure, and opportunities for study and for women who wish to return to work.

A gender impact assessment project is also under way at the time of reporting. The first phase covered senior social policy, education and health officials. The second phase included a workshop on the theory and practice of execution of gender impact assessments and policy formulation. Recommendations on

embedding the gender mainstreaming approach in policy practice and in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of public services are expected.

Women and the Economy

At about 30%, women's participation in the labour market is among the lowest in European countries. The Government is turning to the implementation of support facilities to increase women's economic productivity.

Such support facilities include child-care centres and family-friendly measures. For example, public service employees (women and men) are entitled to one year's parental leave and a three-year career break. Reduced hours of work have also been introduced in the public service. All women, irrespective of whether they are in the public or private sectors, are entitled to 14 weeks' paid maternity leave.

Although the gender gap in education has narrowed considerably and to date females outnumber males at tertiary level, women tend to be 'crowded' into courses such as education, health and law. One concern, shared with other European countries, is that few women take up science and technology studies.

Gender wage differentials across the board also reflect this occupational 'segregation', and many women are in low-income earning positions or participate in the informal economy. A 2002 survey suggests that women earn on average 80% the wages of men in broadly similar occupational categories.

The Malta 2003–2006 Plan addresses these issues as part of a wider strategy to enhance the country's economic and social development. It does so by providing for financial independence and a career progression for women, using their skills and potential to maximise the country's economic growth and bridge its welfare gap.

Violence Against Women

APPOGG, an agency that falls under the umbrella of the Ministry for Social Policy, offers services to victims through its Domestic Violence Unit. It also works with

offenders in a special programme. APPOGG's shelter, Ghabex, opened in 2000 as an emergency shelter for women and children who were victims of domestic violence. APPOGG runs a 24-hour support line and offers legal and counselling services.

Since 2003, APPOGG has embarked on an annual campaign against domestic violence. In 2003, it highlighted the negative impact on children who witness violence in the home. It chose this topic so as to remind victims that their children were also victims and that they should come forward to report domestic violence.

Government financial support is also given to NGOs to accommodate homeless women and children.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Female political representation is low. Six women were elected to the 65-seat Parliament in the 2002 general election. Two of them were appointed as Minister and Parliamentary Secretary respectively. One woman MP chairs Parliament's Committee on Social Affairs.

In the Public Service, men make up 86.8% of the posts in the top five pay scales, and there are no women at all in the top three scales.

National Women's Machinery

The Commission for the Advancement of Women was established in 1989. It was an advisory body and its executive arm was the Secretariat for the Equal Status of Women, later upgraded as the Department for Women in Society. Together, the Commission and Department make up the NWM. The Department is in the Ministry for Social Policy.

The NWM is expected to be restructured soon in line with provisions set out in the legislation on gender equality (2003), in order to ensure better co-ordination of the government programme for mainstreaming gender issues and provide for statutory obligations envisaged in the new legislation.

Notable successes for the NWM have been the Equality for Men and Women Act (2003), which protects against discrimination in a wide range of areas and against sexual harassment; and legislation on employment and industrial relations which protects women's rights.

The NWM works closely with the Ministry of Education, University of Malta, National Statistics Office and with the Management and Personnel Office in the Office of the Prime Minister in order to implement the Government's commitment to mainstreaming gender in the public service.

Partnerships

Civil society and the NWM collaborate in many areas. The NWM works with the National Council of Women, Gender Issues Committee of the University of Malta, the Women in Business Association, the National Commission of the Family, and the Commission for Persons with Disability, among others.

The NWM is in partnership with Socrates/GRUNDTVIG under EU programmes on political education and learning for gender mainstreaming implementation.

Concerns for the Future

Areas of concern are the high inactivity rate among women of working age (72%). Malta's National Development Plan for Economic and Social Cohesion (Malta 2003–2006) suggests that the Government will have to take swift action if it is to approximate the employment rates in the European Employment Strategy of 71% for men and 60% for women by 2010. This requires 4,000 women entering employment each year compared to 900 women as at present.

Other areas of concern are single parenthood, and lack of legislative protection for women living in domestic violence situations.

United Kingdom

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	57,600	58,300	58,900
Female population (% of total)	51.3	51.2	50.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	42	43	44
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	6.8	6.8	4.8
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	98	99	106
Male	90	97	100
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	81	93	95
Male	77	90	94
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	29	52	64
Male	31	47	54
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	79	79	80
Male	73	74	75
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	8	6	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
 Note: .. Data not available

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of the United Kingdom has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Women in the Economy and Women in Poverty
 2. Violence Against Women
 3. Human Rights of Women
 4. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 5. Women in Power and Decision-making
- Followed by: 6. Women and Health; 7. Women and Armed Conflict and Education and Training of Women; 8. Women in the Media; 9. Women and the Environment; 10. The Girl-child.

A Decade of Action

The economy of the United Kingdom (UK) is among the largest in the world (ranked 4th in 2001). The country ratified CEDAW in 1986 and its Optional Protocol in 2004. The principal mechanism in its national women's machinery is the Women and Equality Unit (WEU) located in the Department for Trade and Industry. The UK is ranked at 9 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is recognised as a key tool to tackle barriers to equal opportunities for women. The WEU has developed two gender mainstreaming tools, Gender Impact Assessments and Diversity, Policy, Services which provide a methodology for policy makers to assess whether their policies will support equality of opportunity and to challenge them to question the assumption that policies and services affect everyone in the same way.

The Government is working to apply Equality Impact Assessments to legislation, policy plans and programmes, budgets, reports and existing policies and services. It recognises that such assessments should be done at an early stage in the decision-making process so that policies can be changed, or even discarded, if necessary.

Government commitment to reduce gender inequalities was announced in 2002 as a Public Service Agreement: 'By 2006, working with all departments, the Government will work to bring about measurable improvements in gender equality across a range of indicators, as part of our objectives on equality and social inclusion.'

These objectives are supported by specific targets and indicators set out in the document *Delivering on Gender Equality* (2003). They cover areas such as child care, equal pay, flexible working, public appointments and domestic violence, and the WEU works with departments to help in the delivery process and also report on progress.

Delivering on Gender Equality also sets out the broader context of work across government departments to make a positive impact on gender equality, including skills, training, education, ill health and transport. The breadth of these initiatives shows that gender mainstreaming has started to become a reality in many departments.

Women and the Economy

The Government recognises that women make a crucial contribution to the economy in their roles as workers and carers. It is committed to equal opportunities in the labour market, encouraging family-friendly employment policies and to improving child care packages to encourage parents to return to work.

The proportion of women in the labour force is increasing – in 1971 women of working age (16–59 years) made up 38% of the labour force, and this increased to 44% in 1996 and 45% in 2002. Women also made up 66% of the number of people who came into the workforce in the year to May 2002.

Measures to improve women's participation have included the Small Business Service, which has led the development of a cross-government strategy for women's enterprise, focusing primarily on women starting and growing their own businesses; the New Deal for Lone Parents, which encourages lone parents to take up paid work; a work/life

Box 50.1: More Women in Public Life

An important part of the UK Government's work to create a more equal society, is to ensure that the diversity of women's experiences, their perspectives and their voices are reflected in public life.

Action is being taken to increase the number of women in political and public life. The 2001 general election returned 118 women as MPs (representing 18% of members). Since changes in its composition in 1999, women now make up 16% of the House of Lords. And in 1999, women represented 24% of the UK members in the European Parliament.

With the aim of increasing the number of women in political life, the Sex Discrimination (Election of Candidates) Act 2002 was introduced. This Act enables political parties in the UK, if they wish, to adopt positive measures to reduce inequality in the numbers of women and men elected as representatives of their parties. The Act is permissive, not prescriptive. It is for political parties to decide what action, if any, they choose to take in selecting their candidates for election. There are no quotas, and therefore no sanctions if no action is taken to redress any gender imbalance.

During its passage through Parliament all main political parties supported the Act and pledged to work with their parties to take advantage of the Act's provisions.

Table 50.1: Women in Political Life, UK

Proportion of women in the national government (June 2003)	31.5%
Proportion of women in the National Parliament (June 2003)	18%
Proportion of women in the regional parliaments (where appropriate)	
Wales (2003)	50%
Scotland (2003)	39.5%
N. Ireland (2002)*	13.8%

* The N. Ireland Assembly was suspended in October 2002

Initiatives have also been taken to increase the numbers of women in public bodies, as well as people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities. There has been a steady increase in the number of appointments held by women from 26% in 1992 to 34% in 2001. In 2001, at least 440 appointments were held by disabled people, and of these 197 were held by women.

All appointments are made on merit and are monitored by the Independent Commissioner for Public Appointments. The aim is to increase women's representation to 45–50% of the public appointments made by the majority of government departments by the end of 2005. Each Central Government department has an individual plan of action, including specific time-based targets for increasing the proportion of appointments held by women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities.

balance of family-friendly policies which includes more flexibility in working hours; reducing the pay gap between males and females; and child care facilities which will encourage women in particular to return to or take up work.

Poverty among women is higher among those who are lone parents and single pensioners. The Government's annual report on poverty, *Opportunity for All*, sets out strategies for tackling this and other forms of poverty. Initiatives include family and child care tax credits, and pension credits; schemes to put lone parents in work; the setting of a higher national minimum wage; and a national child care strategy.

Efforts are also being made to break

the cycle of deprivation from early, with greater spending to get real growth in education; Sure Start programmes to strengthen families and local communities with a range of support services for children living in deprived areas; and the Connexions Service which presents teenagers with information, guidance, personal development opportunities and work-related learning.

In the UK's worldwide commitments, the focus on poverty elimination and, by extension, the elimination of gender discrimination was consolidated into law by a new International Development Act that came into force in 2002. Implementation of this policy is based on a 'twin track' approach that combines

Women are working to break through the glass ceiling in male-dominated sectors such as law, banking and business

specific activities aimed at empowering women with a commitment to place gender equality concerns into the mainstream of development programmes.

The Department for International Development (DfID) spending across all sectors on activities that include the promotion of gender equality and the removal of gender discrimination has increased significantly in recent years. In 2001/02, from a total bilateral commitment of £1,425 million, some £230 million of activities had gender equality as either the main goal or a significant objective.

Human Rights of Women

The Government is working to secure women's rights and put an end to all forms of discrimination against women. The UK also promotes women's enjoyment of human rights and freedoms by negotiating resolutions and other documents in international fora.

The UK considers CEDAW a critical instrument in securing women's rights and submits periodic reports very four years to the UN CEDAW Committee. Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation has also been enacted. This is backed by policy mechanisms such as the WEU's report *Delivering on Gender Equality* (2003), which sets out specific targets and initiatives across government, covering key delivery departments and government priorities for action. It also sets out the broader context of making a positive impact on gender equality.

Women's rights are also promoted at EU level – where the WEU is part of an advisory committee on equal opportunities – and at other international fora where, for example the UK is an elected member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a complex social problem with wide implications, causing poverty, ill health, social exclusion and loss of life. In 2001, a Ministerial Working Group on Domestic Violence was set up to co-ordinate policies across



government, develop effective interventions, raise awareness about domestic violence and dispel the tolerance culture around it.

Increasing safe accommodation choices for women and children is another key priority. In April 2003, a new £153 million programme called Supporting People was introduced to help victims of domestic violence live more independent lives in the community. A consultation paper has also set out proposals for preventing domestic violence from happening in the first place; these range from sentencing and providing anonymity for victims in court, to making breaches of a non-molestation order a criminal offence and putting murder reviews on a statutory footing.

Other initiatives include a new national 24-hour free help line for women and children, a pilot scheme introducing routine antenatal questioning about domestic violence both before and after pregnancy, a review of legislation on sexual offences and penalties, and better police training.

Domestic violence accounts for 23% of all violent crime and roughly one in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime.

National Women's Machinery

The principle mechanism of the UK's NWM is the Women and Equality Unit (WEU) established in 1997. It started out as the Women's Unit in the then Department of Social Security but in 1997 moved to

the Cabinet Office. In 2001, it was expanded and renamed the Women and Equality Unit. In 2002, WEU moved to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

The WEU is one of the UK's main policy mechanisms to secure equal rights between women and men. The DTI's Secretary of State is a Cabinet minister and also Minister for Women and Equality. There is also a Deputy Minister for Women and Equality.

Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales also have programmes and structures which deal with gender equality.

The WEU has achieved a number of advances in recent years in its priority areas. In 2002, for example, its equal pay questionnaire came into effect. This questionnaire is intended to help individuals who believe they may not have received equal pay to request key information from their employers to establish whether this is the case and, if so, the reasons why. Workplace disputes of this nature should thus be easier to resolve as the matters in dispute would have been identified in advance.

The WEU has responsibility within government for policy on women, gender equality, sexual orientation and the co-ordination of policy. It therefore works closely with colleagues across Government, including with the Department for International Development in the field of international progress on gender issues.

Partnerships

Three of the principal non-governmental organisations the WEU works with are:

Box 50.2: The Women's Budget Group

The Women's Budget Group (WBG) is an independent UK organisation that focuses on the relationship between women, men and economics. It brings together feminist economists and gender and social policy experts from academic institutions, NGOs and unions, as well as independent researchers and analysts. The objective is to work towards a vision of a gender equal society in which women's financial independence gives them greater autonomy at work, home, and in civil society.

The WBG works towards this by developing analysis and leading debate on:

- The gender implications of economic policy;
- The social dimensions of economic policy;
- Incorporating a consideration of the unpaid economy into economic policy;
- How economic policy might free women and men from stereotypes;
- Raising awareness and expanding understanding within the UK Ministry of Finance and other policy-makers and opinion formers on the gender implications of economic policy;
- Promoting, encouraging and enabling the use of gender mainstreaming and in particular gender-responsive budget analysis; and
- Contributing to and learning from international experience and progress on the application of gender-responsive budget analysis.

The main product of the WBG's consultative approach to gender mainstreaming in public policy is a gender analysis of the national budget, both in terms of the budget process as well as the content of the actual budget documents.

The basic principle is to ensure that government first recognises that economic policies have differential and unequal impact on women. The next step is to ensure that truly equitable policies are reformed in ways that take into account the limitations that women's socially enforced roles, responsibilities and opportunities present to their full and equal participation in the economic, political and social life of the UK.

Since 1989, the WBG has commented each year on the annual fiscal budgets produced by the UK Government. Its main role until 1997 was to provide constructive criticism from outside government of the likely gender effects of its policies. Since then, its focus has changed to attempting to influence government policy more directly through regular meetings, seminars and workshops with the UK Treasury. The Treasury has already accepted the argument for gender awareness in policy formation.

The WBG website is: www.wbg.org.uk

- Women's National Commission – a government-funded non-departmental public body which represents over 230 organisations and works to present women's views, priorities and concerns to the Government;
- Equal Opportunities Commission – also government-funded and works to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equal opportunities for women and men; and
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland – a non-departmental public body, which works to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and encourage good practice.

The WEU also works with other agencies, NGOs and the voluntary sector. It continues to consult a wide spectrum of NGOs and academic experts, thereby facilitating the greater involvement of the NGO sector in many areas of government policy.

Concerns for the Future

One of the top areas for concentration over the next five years is the work/life balance. This would include tackling the long hours culture and flexible working hours for parents with children under six (since April 2003 parents have had the right to require employers to seriously consider such a request). It is expected that measures such as these could enable

55,000 new mothers to return to work early.

The Government also wants to ensure that affordable, accessible quality child care is available in every neighbourhood.

This would give children a good start in life and ensure that parents, especially women, have increased opportunities to improve their participation and productivity in the workforce. About 1.1 million children have benefited to date from the 1998 National Childcare Strategy.

The pay gap between females and males has steadily decreased from 30% in 1975 to 19% in 2002. The Government wants to reduce that gap further. Already, the statutory national minimum wage, introduced in 1999, has helped reduce the gap because around 70% of the beneficiaries are female.

The Government is working towards creating a society that will not tolerate, excuse, or ignore domestic violence. A new ministerial group has been set up to ensure co-ordinated action across government structures.

Giving British youths the chance to learn about democracy, good governance and government as well as the role of the Commonwealth



The challenge is in the act of balancing or making prominent the concepts of Women in Development and Gender and Development within the framework of sustainable development and good governance. Communications and advocacy to promote the principles, programmes and activities, including progress and challenges faced, within the gender sector will continue to be an important tool.

The Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality 2005–2015

Regional Profile

The Pacific: Progress and Challenges

The 11 Commonwealth member countries in the Pacific region are a study in contrasts. Australia, an entire continent in itself, and New Zealand are both high-income developed countries and economies. Papua New Guinea occupies half of one of the largest islands in the world. The rest are small island developing states with vulnerable economies.

Overall progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and gender equality in the region is uneven. Countries have reported an increase in or equal enrolment of girls in education. There are, however, many other areas that require attention. This challenge is made greater by the special problems of the region's small island developing states, primarily their isolation and small populations scattered across atolls.

As with other island states in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean regions, small states in the Pacific, with their young populations and lower level of human development, are extremely vulnerable. The major threats they face are to their territorial integrity and security; political independence; economic security; environmental sustainability; and social cohesion. Migration and the threat of HIV/AIDS could also damage their social and economic structures.

The Pacific has recorded progress in putting in place constitutional guarantees to safeguard the human rights of citizens, and eliminate discrimination against women. A review of the laws of Commonwealth member states in the Pacific shows that while considerable progress has been made by some governments, others have yet to incorporate CEDAW into domestic law. The need to include men as partners to promote women's rights and eliminate violence against women has been noted by countries.

To date, 9 out of 11 Commonwealth Pacific countries have ratified or acceded to CEDAW (only Nauru and Tonga have yet

to become signatories or accede). Two countries, New Zealand and Solomon Islands, are among the 16 Commonwealth countries who are signatories or have acceded to the CEDAW Optional Protocol. Fiji Islands and New Zealand have lifted their reservations to CEDAW; Australia has reviewed its reservations with the expectation of lifting some of them.

NZAID, New Zealand's international development agency, has collaborated with UNIFEM to support the Pacific three-year programme to promote ratification and implementation of CEDAW in the region.

Priorities and Action

Poverty and Women in the Economy

Recognising that economic growth is important and that trade contributes to social development and better quality of life, member countries in the region and intergovernmental bodies, such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, have called for a transparent, rules-based multilateral trading system that does not seek trade-distorting bilateralism.

Trade liberalisation, especially of agriculture, could be the single most important factor catalysing economic growth in most developing countries, including small island states. Women's enterprises and their lives could be beneficiaries of such liberalisation. Already, trade ministers in the region have committed themselves to implementing gender impact assessments on trade.

The region's small states, however, have difficulty attracting Private Direct Investment to support the growth of private enterprise. Commercial banks generally shy away from lending to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), or impose very high interest rates. Since many women who run SMEs also lack business skills and the confidence to make effective use of domestic

Box 51.1: A Regional Charter: The Nadi Declaration

TWENTY Pacific Island countries and territories attended the landmark 9th Triennial Meeting and Second Pacific Ministers Meeting on Women in Fiji Islands from 19–20 August 2004. They adopted the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality 2005–2015 (RPPA).

The Ministers recalled in the Nadi Declaration that gender equality was one of the fundamental principles of the Noumea Declaration of 1994 and that sustainable development was not possible without the advancement of women. They called for the clear articulation of gender equality in the revised Plan and for Pacific Island Countries and Territories to accelerate their efforts to address gender inequalities and critical emerging concerns.

Achievements of the 20 member PICTs to date included:

- Most members have developed national action plans on women and gender development;
- Twelve island countries have ratified CEDAW and one has reported to the CEDAW Committee.

The Ministers also noted the low representation of women in parliaments in the region.

Ministers agreed on the need to accelerate the implementation of national plans and accession to international conventions and agreements and to address emerging challenges related to poverty, globalisation and trade liberalisation, HIV/AIDS, labour migration, peace and security, tradition and religion, media and information, communications and technology.

The Revised Platform

Ministers adopted the RPPA as a 'living document' to advance their commitment to gender equality and equity. The RPPA has four strategic themes: Mechanisms to Promote the Advancement of Women, Women's Legal and Human Rights, Women's Access to Services, and the Economic Empowerment of Women. The RPPA will guide Pacific action for the 2005–2015 decade with triennial reviews by Ministers.

Ministers called upon governments, regional and international agencies and development partners to take affirmative action for the effective implementation of the RPPA. They also noted the need for adequate resources to advance full implementation of the RPPA. In the Declaration, the Ministers encouraged the Secretariat of the Pacific Community to work with governments, non-governmental and civil society organisations, regional and international agencies and development partners to ensure that where possible priority is given to allocating resources to support the implementation of the RPPA at the community, national and regional levels.

The Ministers also called on governments and administrations in the Pacific to further strengthen their commitment towards increasing resource allocations to the various national women's machineries to assist them in the full and effective implementation of the RPPA.

commercial banks, their enterprises are denied the capital to grow. The domestic commercial banks themselves lack the expertise to assess and assist in the credit needs of SMEs. It is a vicious circle which requires enterprise mentoring, technical assistance and close monitoring for it to be broken.

At the national level, a number of programmes, such as micro-credit initiatives, promote women's economic empowerment. In Vanuatu, these efforts have helped to improve the standard of living for families; Tonga's Strategic Development Plan (2001–2004) aims for 'full employment and high incomes for both men and women in the labour force' and 'good quality primary, secondary and tertiary education, especially vocational and technical, with equal opportunity and access for both men and women.'

The Australian Government funds a number of women's centres to increase women's participation in and contribution to workplace arrangements. It also targets specific groups of women: those moving to, or negotiating, workplace agreements; women working in precarious and/or low-status employment areas such as casual and part-time employment, home-based employment and low-paid work; indigenous women; women in regional, rural and remote areas; and women with family responsibilities.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Although an increasing number of women are entering the public services, in the Commonwealth's Pacific island states, women make up less than 6% of the representatives in parliament. Many have no women representatives at all.

There has been some progress. In the last 10 years, Kiribati, Samoa, and Vanuatu have increased the number of women's representatives. In Papua New Guinea, while the level of women's representation was only 1.8% (i.e., one women parliamentarian) in 1997, this was an improvement after a 10-year period when there were no women parliamentarians. It currently has only one female parliamentarian. Tonga has

had no women ministers, parliamentarians or representatives in local government.

Australia and New Zealand, on the other hand, have achieved considerable progress at all levels of decision-making. By 2003, 26.5% of Australian federal parliamentarians were women. New Zealand has achieved the 30% Commonwealth target of women in parliament.

Women and Peace-building

Supported by governments, the Commonwealth Secretariat and other international agencies, women have made a positive contribution to peace-making in the region. At least six member countries in the region are directly involved in peace-building and conflict resolution activities: Australia, Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The Vanuatu Commissioner of Police invited the country's National Women's Machinery (NWM) to nominate civilian

women to join the Vanuatu contingent to the Bougainville peace process in Papua New Guinea. In Solomon Islands, women are seeking to contribute to the post-conflict reconciliation process.

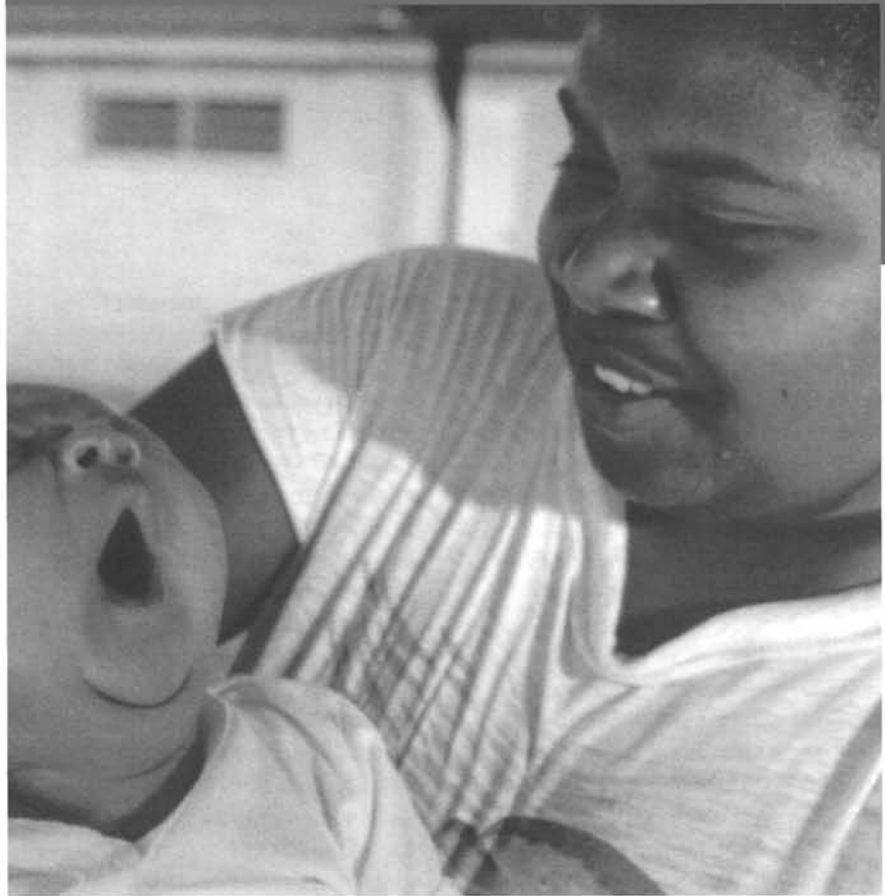
Australia has deployed women in military, police and civilian roles in peacekeeping and monitoring throughout the world. In the region it has deployed female peacekeepers to Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. The Australian aid programme has also supported the Bougainville women's efforts in participation in peace process and conflict resolution

Gender and HIV/AIDS

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat launched the region's first strategy on HIV/AIDS in 1997. That strategy is now being revised to take into account the many changes since then, as well as the initiatives by governments, community groups, NGOs, other regional organisations, and multilateral and bilateral development partners. The strategy identifies gender inequality as a critical issue to the combating of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The 1994–2004 Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women (PPA) lists Pacific women's health as a key area of concern 'to ensure that women's reproductive and other health needs are addressed and adequately resourced', and underlines the need to promote sexual/reproductive health services for all women, prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region, reduce by at least 50% the prevalence of other STIs, and make sex education universally available to girls and boys.

The Director-General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Commission (SPC) has said that the fight against HIV/AIDS can only be won by placing women at the centre of the solution. As elsewhere, to be effective, the regional strategy would have to go beyond health or medical issues and break through the political, cultural, religious and social barriers that continue to dictate how women and young girls decide whether they will have safe sex or not.



Legal Protection of Women and Children

Many countries in the region have laws covering violence against women, especially in the Criminal, Civil or Penal Codes, and in the Women's Charter. Others are in the process of drafting such laws.

Australia has undertaken work on legislative frameworks to review the best features of existing Criminal Codes with regard to their impact on women and children. It aims to develop model laws and procedures for application in cases relating to sexually-abused children and workplace regulations on employment of children. Australia has also recognised that legislation protecting the rights of women can only be effective if the women are given sufficient information and support to exercise their rights under the law. It has funded specialist women's legal centres across the country to provide legal advice for women.

New Zealand appointed a Women's Commissioner in 1998 to serve as an independent advocate for women and reports directly to Parliament.

Regional Platforms for Equality

Across the Pacific, successful initiatives have added impetus to advancing gender equality and building capacity in gender

mainstreaming. The Pacific Women's Conference, first held in Tahiti in 1981, led to the establishment of a Pacific Women's Bureau (PWB) the following year. To date, nine such regional conferences have been held. Countries are parties to the PPA, the Vila Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Yanuca Declaration on Healthy Islands and other regional agreements.

The SPC – which is an inter-governmental organisation established in 1947 – assists 22 Pacific island states and territories through technical assistance, training and research. Its work covers a range of sectors including natural resources (e.g., agriculture, fisheries) and socio-economic programmes for women, youth, culture, health and statistics. The PWB is the SPC's regional co-ordinating agency.

The PWB is mandated to promote women's issues and concerns within the region. It is the only regional intergovernmental body recognised by Pacific National Women's Machinery (NWMS) and women's NGOs that deals with women's issues. Since 1994, it has coordinated the PPA, which formed the basis of the region's contribution to and participation in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and in particular the PPA will continue to form the basis for the PWB's work in years to come.

The PWB has been active in a number of areas, including combating violence against women, training in gender-sensitisation, human rights training, women and fisheries training, and communications/media as a tool for advocacy. The PWB is also the official co-ordinating body for ratifying, implementing and reporting on CEDAW among SPC member countries and territories.

The PPA formally recognises the importance of women's participation in national and regional development activities. It identifies as critical areas of concern: health; education and training; economic empowerment; agriculture and fishing; legal and human rights; shared decision-making; environment; culture and the family; mechanisms to promote the advancement of women; violence, peace and justice; poverty; and indigenous peoples' rights. The PPA also calls on governments of the region and civil societies to make available the necessary resources to advance and address these concerns.

Commitments to Gender Equality

As with any regional strategy, the successful implementation of the PPA depends on a coherent and harmonised approach. In June 1998, the Council of Regional Organisations (CROP)¹, formerly the South Pacific Organisation

Co-ordinating Committee, adopted a Regional Gender Strategy. Development partners in the region, including the EU/EC, Canadian International Development Agency, NZAID and AusAID, also played a central role by supporting the region's commitment to gender equality outcomes and results, to ensure that women contribute and benefit from CROP activities.

By April 2003, six CROP organisations had approved gender policies or were in the process of approving such policies by their governing councils. Five CROP agencies have developed gender action plans and have integrated gender considerations into their strategic plans. Nine of the 10 CROP organisations have nominated Gender Focal Points and some agencies have established interdivisional groups to co-ordinate on specific gender policies, programmes or projects.

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, through its Gender Issues Adviser², provides advice to:

- Assist Regional Intergovernmental Organisations and Forum members to strengthen capacity to integrate gender considerations more fully into their programmes;
- Support the institutionalisation and implementation of the Forum Secretariat Gender Policy to ensure gender is integrated into the work of the Secretariat;
- Support and facilitate sectoral policy

Box 51.2: A Barrier Broken

The 1997 national election was a turning point for women in Papua New Guinea. The number of women candidates who contested increased three-fold over the 1992 election. Altogether, 55 women candidates stood for election and achieved a much-improved polling performance compared to the 1992 elections. Although only two women candidates were successful in 1997 – a low figure by international standards – this ended a 10-year period when there were no women representatives in Parliament.

Since 1997, there has been a marked increase in the political consciousness and awareness of women. This has arisen partly from the enactment of the revised 1995 Organic Law on Provincial and Local Governments, which allowed for women to be appointed. Advocacy campaigns and training programmes conducted by women's organisations and other development partners have also encouraged more women to participate at all levels of the political process. One of the recommendations of the Commonwealth Advisory Mission to Papua New Guinea in 2002 was to promote political awareness among women to enable them to participate more fully in political and public life.

Box 51.3: Mainstreaming in Fiji Islands

Gender mainstreaming underpins the implementation of the Women's Action Plan in Fiji Islands. In the education sector, a large increase of girls in secondary education was recorded between 1970 and 1999.

More recently, the Government reconstituted the Ministry for Women to sit alongside the departments of social welfare and poverty alleviation. This structural re-organisation recognises the thread that links gender equality, social welfare and poverty. The Fiji Poverty Study (1998) reveals that 25% of households live below the poverty line. Single-headed households make up 20% of the poor, and 1 in 7 of the poor are female-headed households.

co-ordination to ensure more holistic and gender sensitive policy strategies. There is evidence of some progress. A number of working groups' policies and action plans have integrated gender equality in policy principles and strategies. A regional consultative gender network is co-ordinated by the Forum Secretariat, in collaboration with SPC, UNIFEM and UNDP. A Gender Reporting Strategy was developed in 2001 to establish a quantifiable monitoring system to measure progress, though more work is required to establish human resource development data and baseline studies. Work has been undertaken by an expert funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat to complete the first comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis on the status of women within the Pacific region, making use of gender indicators developed by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Other regional activities included training workshops on: Gender and Development Planning, Gender-sensitive Indicators, Gender and Energy, and Gender and Trade. Studies have been completed in Fiji Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu on developing a gender and social framework for community-based tourism projects.

The South Pacific Geo-science Commission has integrated gender into its work programme and strategic plan. A Fisheries Forum Association report on the

gender and social impact of the tuna industry was completed. Consultations are on-going regarding the development of sexual harassment policies; two agencies have formal procedures or codes of conduct in place.

Partnerships

The first Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation – APEC Ministerial Meeting on Women was held in the Philippines in 1998. It set in motion the work on gender integration in APEC. The second meeting in Mexico in 2002 made further progress when senior officials from APEC countries endorsed the establishment of the Gender Focal Point Network. This network comprises volunteer Gender Focal Points in each committee, sub-committee and working group of APEC.

In the Pacific, as in the Asia, Africa and Caribbean regions, the need for better and sex-disaggregated statistics is recognised. Such statistics are critical for the engendering of national development programmes and poverty initiatives, especially for women who form the majority of the poorest. Countries and agencies, led by the SPC, are collaborating with the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNDP to review progress for the region and develop feasible indicators based on the UNESCAP and Commonwealth Secretariat gender mainstreaming tools. The aim is to put into place sustainable statistical systems and minimise distortions of priorities and outputs, and improve data collection and analysis within the framework of national statistical strategies.

Knowledge, Resources and Capacity Building

There is a need to develop a core of gender trainers in training institutes and strengthen the capacity of Gender Focal Points to give advice and technical assistance in gender analysis and planning in their respective departments or sectors. More effort is being put into integrating gender in the programmes of public sector training institutes and universities, notably the University of the South Pacific which is seeking to develop and implement a gender studies



programme. Such a programme would greatly facilitate gender training, research and analysis in the region.

NWMs could also take the lead in developing national gender training plans through a series of multi-sectoral consultations involving training institutes, experts, government departments and NGOs.

As with other regions, there is much scope for supporting better access to information and communications technologies, and for strengthening countries' capacity to do so. Tonga's NWM, for example, indicates that it has difficulty accessing the Internet and that it is expensive to download documents. It thus has limited access to policy briefs on issues such as gender mainstreaming, human rights, political empowerment and participation in conflict resolution and peace processes, and poverty reduction and the informal sector.

Strategic Policies and Resources for Capacity Building

Country experiences show that strategic targeting of financial resources can influence NWMs' ability to implement programmes and gain access to additional funds, resources and specialist assistance. New Zealand, for example, recognises gender mainstreaming as one of the key areas for action, and has developed working models for gender analysis in the areas of health,

accountability measures and statistical indicators to monitor outcomes for women. New Zealand also allocates an average of 40% of its NWM's budget to strategic gender policy development with success; for example, implementation of a 1997 time-use study has contributed to enhanced public policy and programme development.

Gender-responsive budgeting tools help to identify where funds are allocated and to who, and can assist governments to maximise decisions regarding budgetary expenditure and taxation measures. Australia was the first country in the world to introduce gender-responsive budgeting. At the time of reporting, Fiji Islands was planning to also introduce gender-responsive budgeting.

The Way Forward

At the second Pacific Ministers Meeting on Women, held from 19–20 August 2004, in Fiji Islands, Ministers from 20 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) reviewed achievements made, challenges and obstacles they have faced in their efforts to implement the PPA and the Beijing Platform for Action, and the extent to which the advancement of women and gender equality has been attained.

The Pacific Ministers adopted a revised PPA (*see Box 51.1, page 184*) for the next decade, with four strategic themes, across which poverty eradication will be a focus:

- Mechanisms to promote advancement of women;

Box 51.4: Resource for Rights and the Law

The Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) provides training and advocacy in human rights and the law to promote social justice and reduce poverty in the Pacific. The RRRT is a UNDP project now sponsored by the New Zealand Government.

RRRT has encouraged Pacific countries to ratify CEDAW and to prepare consultations for their reports to the CEDAW Committee.

Some of its activities:

- Involvement in the University of the South Pacific's Professional Diploma in Legal Practice has led to legal students spending time looking at the new Fiji Family Law Act and various human rights issues, primarily international conventions, including CEDAW, and their application in regional legislation.
- Workshops on Community Paralegal Training have been held as part of an effort to build a cadre of community human rights advocates. Most of the participants were women. This project was funded by the Australian, New Zealand and UK governments and conducted by RRRT's partner organisation, the Catholic Women's League.
- In the lead up to accession by Kiribati to CEDAW in March 2004, RRRT worked closely with the local Legal Rights Training Officer and national partner organisation Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK) to raise awareness of the history and importance of the convention among women's groups and to lobby among government and parliamentarians for its ratification.

In 2003, RRRT worked alongside AMAK and UNIFEM Pacific in running a national workshop for government and civil society representatives on CEDAW, women's rights, gender discrimination and equality, and law and customary practice in Kiribati. Representatives from the outer islands also attended.

- Women's legal and human rights;
- Women's access to services; and
- Economic empowerment of women.

These themes would retain the vision of the PPA, define more realistic and achievable goals with indicators to measure progress, and introduce a Gender and Development approach complementing the Women in Development approach.

The Ministers acknowledged that achievements have been variable within and between countries and territories in some areas and expressed the hope that more concerted efforts could be made and more resources allocated to advance gender equality. Their concerns are summarised as follows:

Poverty Eradication: Poverty has worsened in some PICTs over the past decade, especially among some disadvantaged groups including single mothers and youth. Poverty is directly linked to many areas, including education, health and migration of labour. It is also inextricably linked to social ills such as lawlessness and crime. There is a need for sex-disaggregated data to clearly show the gender dimension of poverty.

Globalisation and Trade

Liberalisation: While globalisation and the liberalisation of trade provide new opportunities for women entrepreneurs, they could also further marginalise and increase the vulnerability of women especially in the small island economies

of the Pacific. A number of measures, aimed at maximising the benefits of globalisation and trade liberalisation and minimising the risks, need to be put into place.

HIV/AIDS: There is increasing concern about the growing vulnerability of PICTs to HIV/AIDS. This is compounded by the different social roles and expectations of women and men, some of which are deeply embedded in culture, tradition and religion and which put women at greater risk.

Labour Migration: Pacific women migrant workers contribute positively to the socio-economic development of their countries through improved living standards, skills acquisition and remittances. There is a need for national and regional data banks to collect and store statistical information about labour mobility within the region. In addition, more effective and closer regional and international co-operation between law enforcement agencies is needed to prevent and suppress the trafficking in women.

Peace and Security: Women and children suffer most in any situation of conflict. In the region, women have acted as peace-makers in situations of armed conflict but have not gained political recognition in the post-conflict processes, despite their critical role in contributing to peace.

Tradition and Religion: There is an



Women have acted as peacemakers and deserve to be recognised in the post-conflict reconstruction phase

important role for tradition and religion in recognising the equal roles of women and men.

Media, Information,

Communications and Technology: The role of the media in advocating for the advancement of women and gender equality in the region is critical. Media is a powerful tool that can either promote or exclude women's issues from public discourse. There is a need to work with the media towards changing the stereotyped portrayal of women.

Millennium Development Goals:

MDGs need to be made more applicable for the Pacific together with appropriate targets and indicators with which to measure success. MDGs need to be mainstreamed into the national planning processes of PICTs, and baseline reporting developed with assistance from international and regional organisations.

Resources and Financial Arrange-

ments: Development partners and other stakeholders need to commit additional resources to support the implementation of the Revised Pacific Platform for Action at the community, national and regional levels.

End Notes

1 CROP is a council of 10 intergovernmental agencies in the Pacific.

2 As of January 2005, a Gender Issues Adviser has been appointed by the Forum Secretariat and funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Australia

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION			
Total population (000)	17,100	18,100	19,200
Female population (% of total)	50.1	50.2	50.1
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	41	43	44
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	7.1	7.5	5.9
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	99	95	96
Male	99	94	95
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	80	88	91
Male	77	86	88
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	38	75	70
Male	33	71	56
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	80	81	82
Male	33	71	56
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	8	6	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics
 .. Data not available

Priority Concerns

The Government of Australia advances gender equality in all critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. In its combined fourth/fifth periodic report to CEDAW (2003), it outlined three broad priority areas:

- Employment and economic security;
- Women and public life, especially in leadership and decision-making positions
- Women and the law, especially violence against women.

A Decade of Action

Australia has one of the largest economies in the Commonwealth; its prosperity is based on its wealth of natural resources, policies of redistribution and welfare, and stable democratic society. The country ratified CEDAW in 1983. Its National Women's Machinery is the Office of the Status of Women (OSW) which is located in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Australia is the Commonwealth's highest ranked member country at 3 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Gender Mainstreaming

The Government strategy aims to integrate women's issues into mainstream policy-making and practice across all government agencies. OSW and its equivalents in each state/territory are key focal points for promoting gender mainstreaming and are supported by various other mechanisms throughout government.

In 2001–2003, the Government introduced a range of measures to promote gender mainstreaming. These included the development of a gender mainstreaming kit for government agencies and consultations with heads of government departments and senior officials.

The Regional Women's Advisory Council was established in 2001. The council is a 12-member, all women's body which provides advice on issues

impacting on regional, rural and remote communities. The council's advice is taken into account in the development of policies and programmes.

Mainstreaming gender has advanced gender equality in a broad range of areas.

For the work sector, the 2003 CEDAW periodic report outlines an upward trend in the female participation rate of all women in the labour force (15 years and over) which was at 67.5% in March 2003. Initiatives included government funding of Working Women's Centres which provide advice, information and assistance on various workplace relations issues. Assistance to employees to get a work/life balance, thus attracting more women into employment, has also been introduced since 1996; for example 80% of all federal workplace agreements, covering more than 90% of employees, contain family-friendly or flexible working hours provisions.

In the vocational education and training sector, a 380% increase in New Apprenticeships for women was reported in the CEDAW periodic report between 1995 and 2001. The New Apprenticeships programme provides increasing opportunities for women to participate in training through: expanding training from trade occupations to service occupations with significant concentrations of female workers, allowing flexibility for part-time participation, and incentives to encourage employers to take on women apprentices.

In the industry sector, the Government sponsors initiatives with an emphasis on encouraging women rural leaders to operate successfully within mainstream industry. It funds scholarships for mature age rural women, training and mentoring schemes, and provides bursaries for women to gain management, business and leadership skills. The Government also supports NGOs seeking to support female participation in rural industries.

Human Rights of Women, and Violence Against Women

Australia has a comprehensive range of measures to protect and advance women's rights.

Domestic violence has been identified as an issue of national importance with

the Government working with state/territory governments, business and the community to help prevent violence against women in all its forms. The A\$50 million government initiative, Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) 2001–2005 is managed by OSW to gather knowledge and find better ways of preventing and addressing domestic violence in the community. At time of reporting, it had funded 235 diverse projects at local, regional and national level.

A major element in PADV's current phase is a A\$6 million Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programmes to assist indigenous NGOs to work with local communities and help them develop culturally appropriate projects.

Other PADV initiatives have been the Australian Domestic Violence Clearinghouse which compiles and facilitates public access to research and publications on the subject; two national campaigns, one on raising awareness of domestic violence in indigenous communities, the other providing information to a number of communities with non-English speaking backgrounds; and a programme to raise the awareness of business communities on the impact of domestic violence on the lives of their employees and on workplace productivity.

PADV is currently developing a national mainstream campaign aimed at building resilience and breaking the cycle of violence.

The A\$16.5 million National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault is also managed by OSW. It aims to foster the development of an Australian culture that will not tolerate sexual assault and the initial focus has been on the establishment of a sound evidence base to ensure that the most effective policy and service responses are developed and implemented.

The National Crime Prevention Programme has funded a number of projects focused on the prevention of domestic or family violence, and A\$50 million has been allocated to set up Crimtrac (a national policing information service), to provide the police with leading edge information and investigation tools. Victims of domestic violence can

receive government-funded legal aid under the Family Law Act 1997. The Government funds 11 specialist Women's Legal Services dealing with a variety of domestic issues and disputes.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The number of women elected to the Australian Parliament continues to increase. As of April 2003, women constituted 26.5% of federal parliamentarians. Two Cabinet ministers, 4 ministers and 6 parliamentary secretaries are women. The CEDAW report states that in 2003, women comprised 34% of Commonwealth Board positions and made up 30.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Councillors.

OSW provides an executive search service, AppointWomen, to Ministers, government departments and agencies to promote the representation of women on Australian Government boards and bodies.

The Government also funds various leadership programmes, including the Women's National Leadership Initiative, whose objective is to increase the number of women in leadership roles in government and across the community. This initiative is administered by the OSW with a budget of A\$2.4 million a year (from 2001/02–2004/05).

Table 52.1:
Women's Representation (%)
in Australia, 2003

Federal Parliament	26.54%
Ministers (federal government)	13.33%
Public sector boards and committees	34%

The National Framework for Women in Local Government 2001 promotes strategies to encourage more women to participate in local government decision-making which in 2003 ranged from 24.1% of elected local councillors in Tasmania to 38% in Northern Territory. A study on women in the private sector, conducted by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency in 2002, found that in the top 200 public-listed companies,

women comprised 8.2% of board directors' positions and 8.4% of executive management positions. By 2003, the numbers in these positions had increased to 8.4% and 8.8% respectively.

Women and Poverty

Although job growth and prosperity have generally increased, some people have been left behind. The Government has focused on employment initiatives as a key strategy for helping them to move out of poverty. It also addresses poverty through its welfare reform agenda and direct financial assistance.

Initiatives aimed at preventing poverty and breaking the cycle of welfare dependence include welfare reform, changes to the taxation system and active labour market assistance. These take into account the particular needs of women.

One such initiative is Job Network, a national network of private, community and government organisations set up in 1998 and dedicated to finding jobs for the unemployed, matching seekers with vacancies, training people with job search skills and assisting where there are barriers to employment. The Australians Working Together initiative provides new funding for improving employment service to help job-seekers. Transition to Work assists parents, carers and mature age job seekers returning to the workforce after a break or who have never worked.

Family payments through tax benefits and other supplementary payments, and a childcare programme are also made to eligible families with dependent children.

Women's Budget Statement

The Women's Budget Statement is a ministerial statement produced each year in conjunction with the Government's annual budget. It highlights new and continuing measures designed to promote and assist women. In recent years, it has highlighted the Government's commitment to women through new initiatives, primarily in the areas of employment, education, health and care of the elderly, child support, women's leadership and development, and violence against women.



National Women's Machinery

OSW provides policy advice to the Prime Minister and the Minister assisting the Prime Minister on issues affecting women in Australia and internationally. It also has responsibility for administering major programmes for women, including:

- Partnerships Against Domestic Violence;
- National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault;
- Informed Choices for Australian Women, which seeks to improve access to government information to and about women;
- Women's Development Programme, which involves capacity building and mentoring for NGOs; and
- Women's National Leadership Initiative, which works towards increasing the number of women in leadership roles in government and across the community.

The OSW also supports a range of gender mainstreaming activities and is primarily responsible for Australian participation in international women's activities.

Major achievements for the OSW in 2001–2003, include the establishment and development of two key initiatives that aim to eliminate violence against women: The National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault and the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence.

OSW works collaboratively with key government departments, such as the Attorney-General's Department, and departments for Family and Community Services; Health and Ageing; Employment and Workplace Relations; Education, Science and Training; and Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Some of the work with these departments involves 'whole-of-government' approaches and partnerships, including in the areas of women's leadership, child care, work and family balance, and the elimination of

violence against women, especially in the areas of people trafficking, domestic violence and sexual assault.

Each government department at federal and state/federal level maintains gender focal points in the form of women's desk officers. They undertake gender analysis to further progress the integration of gender issues into mainstream programmes.

Partnerships

OSW works closely with a wide range of individuals, community groups, academics, NGOs and businesses. It has sought input from and developed partnerships with NGOs and businesses on policy issues such as domestic violence. These sectors have often been provided with funding for projects and participated in joint public awareness-raising activities.

The Australian Government, through the OSW, funds four National Women's Secretariats under the Women's Development Programme to represent the diverse view of women from all over Australia and to better inform and debate policy issues affecting women. The Secretariats consult women, including those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and relay information back to the Government. The four Secretariats operate 'consortia' for 49 community women's organisations currently making

up their membership. The Secretariats recently contributed to the development of a government-funded NGO resource kit on capacity building.

The Women's Development Programme also provides funds (A\$500,000 a year) to other women's community groups for specific projects. Recent projects have covered areas such as breast cancer, single mothers, older women, women in science and women in construction.

Concerns for the Future

Australia's combined fourth and fifth periodic report to CEDAW (2003) reports that there have been major advancements in the status of women. It also outlines some areas where progress has been slower and new challenges have emerged. The key areas where the Government will focus its efforts are:

- Family/domestic violence and sexual assault against women and girls;
- Female concentration in certain sectors and occupations, such as in education, training and labour markets such as hospitality, nursing and retail; and
- Female under-representation in high-level decision-making, particularly in political and judicial systems.

Fiji Islands

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	749	764	812
Female population (% of total)	49.2	49.2	49.1
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	24	27	31
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	14.5	11.5	9.2
Male	8.4	6.5	5.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	100	..	99
Male	99	..	100
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	65
Male	..	..	73
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	6	10	..
Male	10	16	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	69	70	71
Male	65	66	67
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	25	21	18
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Fiji Islands has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women in Power and Decision-making
 3. Women and the Economy
 4. Human Rights of women
 5. Violence Against Women
- Followed by: 6. Women and Poverty; 7. Women and Health; 8. Education and Training of Women; 9. Women and Armed Conflict; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. The Girl-child; 12. Women in the Media.

A Decade of Action

Fiji Islands ratified CEDAW in 1995 and its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation. Fiji Islands is ranked at 81 in the Gender-related Development Index on the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

Gender Mainstreaming

The establishment of a NWM (*see National Women's Machinery section, below*) for the promotion and advancement of women was seen as an important first step to ensuring that women's concerns could be addressed in a systematic and comprehensive way.

At the same time, the Government pursued gender mainstreaming in development by introducing a Women's Plan of Action (1999–2008). The plan's seven strategic objectives are to:

- Strengthen the enabling environment for women and gender mainstreaming;
- Develop and strengthen government processes to be gender responsive;
- Enhance sectoral and system-wide commitment to mainstreaming women and gender;
- Engender micro-economic policies, national budgetary policies and procedures;
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Women for policy advocacy and monitoring;
- Promote effective consultation between

Prevailing attitudes tend to limit women's ability to work outside the home

government bodies with key civil society organisations; and

- Integrate gender training in educational and national training institutions.

Five task forces, each comprising government and NGO representatives and other stakeholders, implement and monitor different priority areas.

Among the achievements of the task force on gender mainstreaming is the gender audit of the agriculture and health ministries; the engendering of the HIV/AIDS policy; gender-sensitising of the Public Service from the administration to Permanent Secretary level; gender training of Ministry of Finance staff; and the development of a gender mainstreaming training manual. At community level, gender mainstreaming has been introduced in fisheries, piggeries and poultry; the *dalo* (taro) and dairy sectors; and in reproductive health, and HIV awareness and education training.

Some constraints have been identified. In its Beijing+5 report, Fiji reported that prevailing attitudes about appropriate social, cultural and economic roles for women and men, together with traditional practices, tend to limit women's ability to work outside the home – and for this reason women and men are often channelled into different levels of the workforce.

Violence Against Women

Strategies to combat violence against women include ensuring gender equality before the law, enabling disadvantaged women to have access to savings, credit and market assistance so they can be more financially dependent; enabling access to power structures and decision-making bodies; and education of the community and law enforcement officials on dealing with such violence.

Fiji Islands have also embarked on a three-year programme on male involvement in the nationwide campaign on the elimination of violence against women. Counselling centres for both the victims and perpetrators of violence have been set up.



Women in Power and Decision-making, and in Armed Conflict

One of the task forces is responsible for the promotion of working towards balanced gender representation at all levels, and the creation of an enabling educational and social environment where the equal rights of females and males are recognised.

Public bodies have been officially requested to increase the number of women in their ranks and the Public Service Commission has directed that gender neutral language be used. The task force has suggested to the Fijian Affairs Review that more women be included in the Tikina and Provincial Councils. It will also monitor implementation of the recommendations on gender equality in the Education Commission Report. In 1999, 27 women – more than ever before – stood for election among 251 candidates in 71 constituencies. In Fiji's municipal elections, 31 women stood and 13 were elected, with a woman being elected deputy mayor in Fiji's second city and two others as deputy mayors in two other towns.

A Women's Peace and Security Subcommittee has been formed and the NWM will play a lead role as co-ordinating agency among government, NGO and civil society representatives.



National Women's Machinery

A section in government to look after the interests of women has existed since 1960. In 1987, the Ministry of Women and Culture was established but was subsequently redesignated as a department. It was upgraded to a ministry again in 1997 and as the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation is Fiji Islands National Women's Machinery (NWM).

Restructuring of the NWM was undertaken in the late 1990s as an AusAID institutional strengthening project which proposed a new structure that includes a policy unit, a research, communications and training unit and strengthening of the field operators at divisional level.

In 1998, focal points were established in 17 ministries and departments. The responsibility of these focal points is to integrate women's concerns in sector plans.

Also in 1998, a Women's Plan of Action (1999–2008) was introduced and an Inter-ministerial Committee established to oversee and co-ordinate this plan. Five Task Forces, comprising government, NGO representatives and other stakeholders, were also set up to implement the plan. The secretariat for these task forces is the NWM.

The Five Task Forces are:

- Mainstreaming of Women and Gender Concerns;

Five task forces implement and monitor progress in the Women's Plan of Action

- Women and the Law;
- Micro-Enterprise Development;
- Shared Decision-making; and
- Violence against Women and Children.

The NWM is working closely with the ministries of agriculture and health which are undergoing gender audits. The Bureau of Statistics is also working on the gender profile with the University of the South Pacific.

Partnerships

Women's networks in Fiji Islands and the Pacific were forged before the 1995 Beijing conference when they met to discuss gender equality in the region and agreed to work towards enhancing and developing women's potential. Fiji's Beijing+5 report described the strong

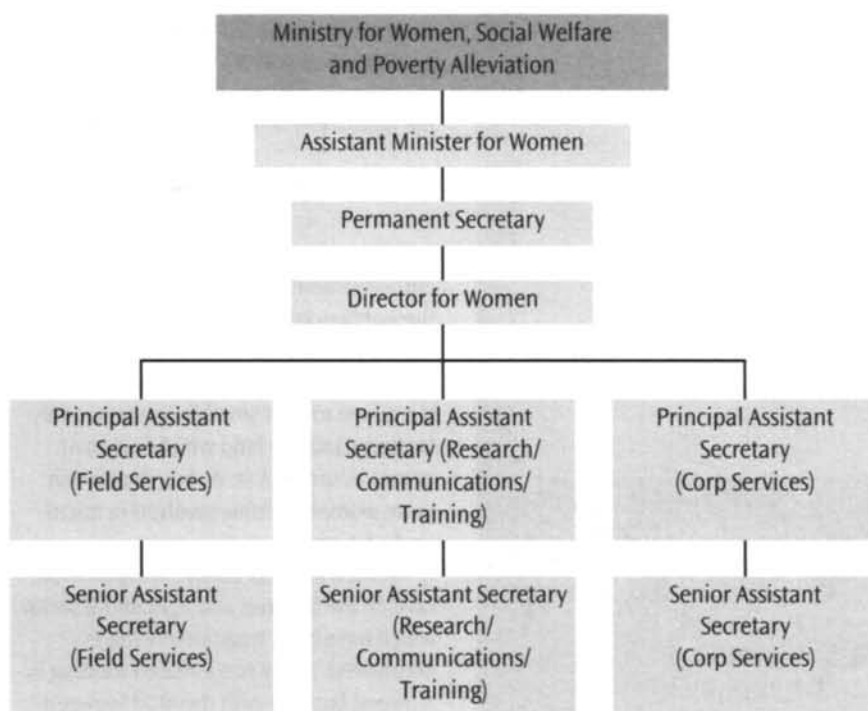
partnerships between the Government and NGOs as one of the indicators of progress of progress.

NGOs work closely with the NWM through the implementation and monitoring work of the task forces. The NWM also gives grants to women's NGOs to assist in taking forward the Beijing commitments and for CEDAW training.

Concerns for the Future

Gender sensitisation of the public service in the importance of gender equality to the development process will be a priority concern as traditional attitudes to women hamper implementation of gender-sensitive policies and programmes.

Chart 53.1: Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji Islands



Kiribati

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	70	79	91
Female population (% of total)	..	..	49.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment (% of females to males)**	50	50.6	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (of females to males)***	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (of females to males)	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	54	59	62
Male	50	55	57
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	65	57	52
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

** EFA Assessment, 2000.

*** Unesco shows female share of secondary enrolment between 1998 and 2002 at 54.4%

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Kiribati places priority on the following:

1. Human Rights of Women
 2. Women in Power and Decision-making
 3. Women and the Economy
 4. Women and Health
 5. Violence Against Women
- Followed by: 6. Education and Training of Women; 7. The Girl-child; 8. Women and Poverty; 9. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Kiribati acceded to CEDAW in March 2004 following months of gender-sensitisation of government departments, politicians and the public as to its importance. The National Women's Machinery is Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK), which is a semi-governmental body which works within the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs.

Women and the Economy

Activities whose objective is the economic empowerment of women are promoted through workshops on business skills, and training in new skills in local crafts and agriculture. At these sessions, women also learn how to start small businesses, apply for loans and use land which is in their names as surety. A study has shown that more women are now involved in micro-credit schemes.

Women are also slowly taking on more tasks in the fisheries and agriculture sector which have been traditionally male-dominated. AMAK has initiated training in seaweed farming with the Atoll Seaweed Company, a buying agency, and over the years, women have been gradually taking over tasks from harvesting to drying.

Violence Against Women

Since 1995, AMAK has been working with the Government to reduce domestic violence. (See Table 54.1) To combat such violence, training in character development, through a Virtues Project,

has been held for family members, CSOs, young people and individual adults. By 2002, workshops had been held on most of the Outer Islands. Teachers, pre-school teachers, mothers and student nurses have been similarly trained.

A video depicting the life of a woman trapped in a violent marriage was also produced in 1998 and widely seen in Kiribati. Talks have been given to government officials, community agencies and church leaders, and the police trained in handling and recording domestic violence incidents.

Proposals have also been made on amending or introducing relevant legislation.

Women in Power and Decision-making

UNIFEM has helped AMAK raise awareness of the need for women in leadership and decision-making roles. Parliamentarians, senior government officials and women themselves have undergone training for this.

As part of efforts to improve the political empowerment of women, training to prepare and provide strategies for women entering politics was held in 1998 and plays portraying the need for women's participation in the social, political, cultural and economic development of Kiribati staged.

Women and Health

The incidence of HIV/AIDS is low in Kiribati but health authorities are aware that the many seafarers who have jobs in international shipping companies are at risk and could bring the disease home. A Canadian-funded video on HIV/AIDS was launched in 1998 and a number of plays on transmission and caring for those with the disease have been staged. A member of AMAK is also part of the National HIV/AIDS Task Force. Other activities have included workshops on women's health, and physical recovery following birth and following strenuous exercise, such as carrying heavy loads. Care is also being taken to reduce salt intake by advocating the use of spices which are available locally.

Chart 54.1: Organisational Structure of Kiribati NWM

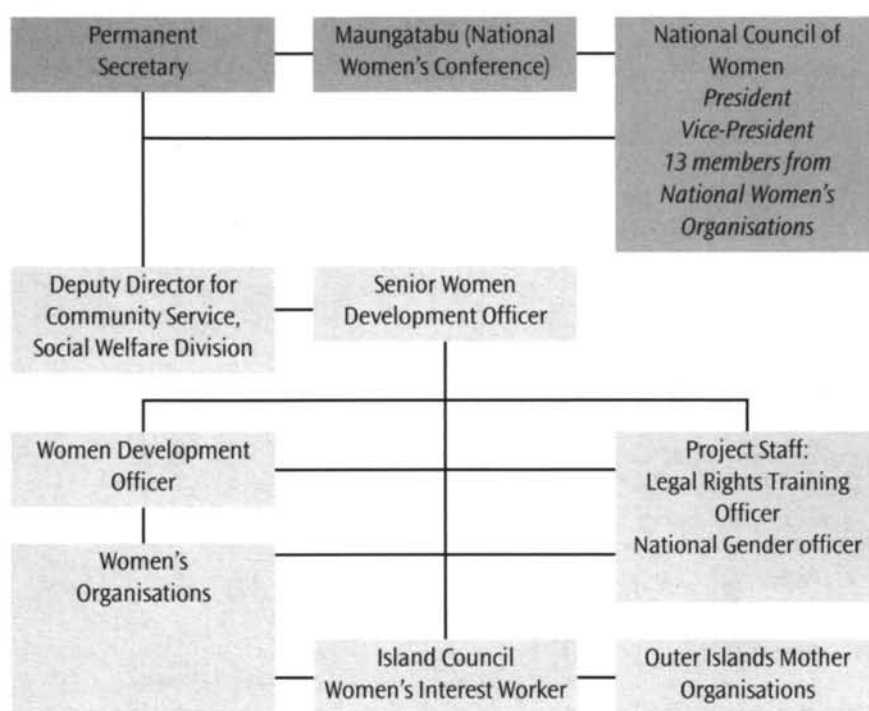


Table 54.1: Domestic Violence Cases, Kiribati (April 1999–November 2000)

Area	Male Victims	Female Victims	Offenders & Age Range	Major Causes
Bikenibeu	32%	68%	Males (95%)	Alcohol
Bonriki	42%	58%	Males (100%)	Alcohol
Betio	..	..	Young people below 20	Alcohol

Source: Kiribati Gender and Development Project
.. Figures not available

Education and Training of Women

Many parents now see the importance of sending girls as well as boys to school and many girls are now doing better than boys in primary school examinations. Scholarships, however, need to be awarded in a gender-balanced way, thus opening up further educational opportunities for young women.

Women and Poverty

The approach to combating women's poverty is multisectoral and cuts across a number of areas, namely economic empowerment, legal literacy, gender advocacy, and fisheries research, as well as the compiling of a database on women's status and radio programmes. There is no real data on women's poverty, however. Cash poverty keeps some people out of the education system and therefore out of paying jobs.

Box 54.1: Constraints on Implementation

The Kiribati NWM, AMAK, has identified a number of constraints to implementation of policies and programmes to advance gender equality:

- Projects and programmes which are not initiated from women in the community may have limited success. If they do not spring from the community, these projects need prior understanding of their scope and what is required to carry them out if they are to be supported. Without this, such projects may have limited benefit;
- The government procedure to release funds or warrants is a lengthy process hampering the ability of activities to be implemented on time;
- The turnover of trained staff affects programme delivery. It is difficult to find qualified replacements and funds to train new recruits are lacking;
- Transportation to the Outer Islands is costly and infrequent;
- Some people consider that CEDAW threatening to the normal, cultural lifestyle of Kiribati;
- Some ingredients for small-scale or home industries are unavailable, for example those for jam and jelly processing. Sterilisation equipment is also costly.

National Women's Machinery

AMAK, the acronym for the umbrella Organisation for Kiribati Women, is the NWM. Since the Beijing Conference in 1995, it has been semi-governmental under the Ministry of Environment and Social Development, and in 2003 was located in the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs. The Kiribati National Council of Women, which is the executive arm of AMAK, is supported by government officers.

AMAK works closely with the police on law enforcement and with the Attorney-General's Office on new or amendments to legislation. Its best achievement at the time of reporting is the outcome of a leadership for women workshop in the Outer Islands which has led to women obtaining a seat on the Island Council. AMAK has also been responsible for the dissemination of information on CEDAW and its submission to Parliament.

At the time of reporting, AMAK is undergoing re-structuring, and has budgetary and infrastructural constraints, including poor communications facilities.

Partnerships

AMAK works closely with CSOs (including Outer Island women's CSOs), the Foundation for the People of South Pacific, as well as religious and non-religious women's groups. It also works on gender issues with the regional Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Women, Asia-Pacific Gender Equity through Science and Technology, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community, and other international organisations and bilateral agencies.

Concerns for the Future

Policies and legislation which are gender-discriminatory will come under scrutiny for review now that Kiribati has acceded to CEDAW.

Women are still categorised as a minority group and have no place or say at decision-making levels. Proposals have been made to the Cabinet for awareness training on women's roles as leaders and in good governance, and for relevant amendments to laws and the Constitution. Through these and other means, AMAK hopes to change the traditionally male-dominated culture.

Nauru

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	..	8	12
Female population (% of total)
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	41	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female
Male
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	82
Male	80
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	56
Male	52
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (of females to males)			
..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)***			
Female	65
Male	57
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
..	25	25	..
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female
Male

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

** Nauru Census 1992

*** 2004 World Population Data, Population Reference Bureau

.. Figures not available.

This report was compiled primarily from information from the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and from UNESCO for the Pacific Commission reports

Priority Concerns

Among the Government of Nauru's priority areas for action on gender equality are:

- Ensuring equal access to education
- Eradicating illiteracy among women
- Improving women's access throughout their life-cycle to affordable quality health care
- Increasing community awareness of the importance of women's human rights and legal rights
- Introducing education programmes on women and the environment.

A Decade of Action

Nauru is a small coral atoll whose central plateau has been devoted to the mining of phosphate which is nearing depletion. The economy has depended on the phosphate industry until recently. Nauru is not a state party to CEDAW. The Women's Affairs Section in the Chief Secretary's Department (Office of the President) is the National Women's Machinery (NWM).

Human Rights of Women

Nauru law assures women the same freedoms and protection as men. The law provides for equal opportunities in education and employment (the national illiteracy level is 5%, though some reports suggest that the standards of literacy and numeracy are not very high) and women can own property and pursue private interests. In practice, however, societal pressures limit the opportunities for women to fully exercise these rights. The Government has appointed a women's development officer to assist with the development of professional opportunities for women.

Violence Against Women

The collection and analysis of statistics, especially sex-disaggregated statistics, is not advanced in Nauru. Although the Government does not keep track of incidents of physical abuse against women, there are some indications that sporadic abuse, often aggravated by alcohol use, occurs. Traditionally, families seek to reconcile domestic problems such

Box 55.1: Within the Reef

Traditionally, in many Pacific islands fishing beyond the reef has been the domain of men while women concentrated on fishing and collecting invertebrates within lagoons and inshore areas. An estimated 70%–80% of this inshore fishing is used for subsistence and studies suggest that women's contribution to this is substantial.

Pacific island states have been keen to encourage the development of offshore fishing activities to generate income and reduce pressure on inshore resources. But because offshore fishing primarily involves men, most initiatives have concentrated on supporting men's activities in the development and management of fisheries in the region.

Until recently, little has been done to document the activities of women, to identify women's potential for development and management opportunities, or to assess problems such as inshore over-harvesting or the impact of development on women's fishing areas.

In recent years, however, studies have been conducted by, among others, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency and University of the South Pacific. They have noted that women are increasingly taking up economic opportunities offered by small businesses involving marine resources, are playing a significant onshore role in the pearl, prawn and seaweed aquaculture industries in the region, and continue to be involved in the processing of their own and their husbands' catches.

In Nauru, the SPC organised a workshop on alternative harvesting and processing techniques in 1998 for women involved in inshore harvesting and seafood marketing. Topics included sustainable harvesting practices, alternative fishing methods, basic gear technology, the processing of non-traditional seafood, filleting, de-boning and smoking as well as recipes. At the end of the workshop, all the participants stated they were confident they could pass on the knowledge they had gained.

One of the successful outcomes of this workshop was the establishment of a small, home-based fish-smoking business, set up by one of the participants, who had gone on to do a fisheries enterprise management course in New Zealand. Her food is bought for parties and functions and she works out of the newly constructed Nauru fish market where she obtains fresh tuna and snapper.

The SPC produces a Women in Fisheries News and Information Bulletin (www.spc.org.nc/coastfish/News/WIF/wif.htm).

as these informally and, if necessary, communally. The judiciary and Government treat major incidents and unresolved family disputes seriously.

National Women's Machinery

The Women's Affairs Section was established as the NWM in 1997. The Chief Secretary to the Government is the official head of the NWM. There are only two members of staff, including a clerical assistant.

The NWM works towards realising all Nauru's priority concerns. It also advises and assists women's organisations and community groups on the formulation of programmes and projects, and co-ordinates them in collaboration with other government departments and the private sector.

Among its other objectives are:

- Compiling a register of all women's groups and organisations in the country;
- Developing and implementing training programmes on gender awareness;
- Developing a policy plan for women in consultation with all stakeholders; and
- Supporting government mainstreaming of gender equality.

Major Activities

Among the NWM's activities are ensuring women's participation in the National Economic Summit; providing training for women in hospitality and public relations; programmes for teenage mothers and problems associated with teenage pregnancy (e.g., interrupted education); a counselling service; integrating gender concerns in all government policies and programmes; and educational programmes in waste and water management, and an anti-littering campaign.

The NWM is also lobbying for a Well Woman Clinic.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with other government departments; with women's, community and youth groups; and with regional and international organisations.

Chart 55.1: Organisational Structure Nauru NWM



Source: UNESCAP 2004

New Zealand

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	3,405	3,601	3,831
Female population (% of total)	50.7	50.8	51.1
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	43	44	45
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	7.2	6.3	5.8
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	99	96	99
Male	100	96	99
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	86	90	93
Male	84	88	91
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	42	66	84
Male	38	53	55
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	78	80	81
Male	72	74	76
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	10	7	6
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0
Male	..	..	0.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of New Zealand has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women and the Economy
 3. Women and Poverty
 4. Women in Power and Decision-making
 5. Violence Against Women
- Followed by: 6. Women and Health; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. Education and Training of Women; 9. The Girl-child; 10. Women in the Media; 11. Women and Armed Conflict; 12. Women and the Environment.

A Decade of Action

New Zealand was an early signatory to CEDAW (1980) which it ratified in 1985. It acceded to CEDAW's Optional Protocol in 2000. The country's National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Ministry of Women's Affairs. New Zealand is ranked at 18 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP's Human Development Report 2004*.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Among the highlights of progress in this priority area is the NWM's work with Statistics New Zealand on a time-use survey. This survey records the amount of time spent by women and men, disaggregated by ethnicity, in different activities including paid work, voluntary work, household work, caring responsibilities and leisure.

The survey report presents the results of the survey within a framework of economic participation in the form of paid and unpaid work; and people's involvement in activities that contribute to social, human and cultural capital. Another report, *Measuring Unpaid Work*, uses survey information to derive dollar values for unpaid household work.

Another highlight is the directive that from January 2002, all papers submitted to the Cabinet Social Development Committee must include gender analysis

and a gender implications statement for both women and men.

Data disaggregated by sex and ethnicity is also assembled in order to enhance the development of policy options for Maori, Pacific and all women.

Women in Poverty, and the Economy

Among the initiatives that will help reduce poverty is the Employment Relations Act (2000) which could help women seeking to redress inequalities in bargaining power. The establishment of an Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner within the Human Rights Commission will deal with pay equity and the NWM is working with other government departments and agencies to develop policy options for pay equity. A task force will also report to the Government on the factors that contribute to the gender pay gap.

Legislation to provide for a more flexible approach to supporting sole parents and widows into paid work, and recognising family responsibilities, has also been introduced. An additional NZ\$22.02 million was provided in the 2002 budget for a new Pathways Payment to assist long-term beneficiaries with children to meet the initial costs of taking on paid work. A paid parental leave scheme (up to 12 weeks) has also been introduced.

The establishment of a Community and Voluntary Sector Office in the Ministry of Social Development is another example of progress in this priority area. Its main functions are to provide advice on cross-government policy issues affecting the community and voluntary sector and enhance the sector's involvement in government decision-making. Links have been forged with community and voluntary networks. Women's unpaid work within the home, and voluntary work outside the home, averages nearly twice that of men in New Zealand.

Women in Power and Decision-making

As a result of the 2002 general election, women hold 34 of the 120 seats in New Zealand's Parliament, or 28%. Eight of 26 Ministers are women, and women hold the four key constitutional positions in the country – Governor-General, Prime Minister, Attorney-General and Chief Justice.

Representation of women in local government has steadily increased from 3.7% in 1962 to 31.5% in 1998, dropping to 28% in 2001.

In the public service, there were 7 women out of 37 Chief Executives as of February 2002 and women filled 33% of the top three levels of management

(2000). For most occupation groups, the average salaries for women were about 10% less than those for men; the gender pay gap for managers, however, was 16%.

The NWM administers the Nominations Service which was established to improve the gender balance on government-appointed boards and committees and ensure their membership reflected the diversity of the community. As at February 2002, the Nominations Service held information on over 1,800 New Zealand women available for appointment. In 2000/01, the service nominated 1,012 women for appointment to 229 boards. Of these, 99 were appointed.

Human Rights of Women, and Violence Against Women

Gender equality is enshrined in legislation and its pursuit woven into the structures of government. The Ministry of Justice has led an inter-departmental group and published various guidelines to promote and support the mainstreaming of human rights considerations in policy development across government. The purpose of this work has been to create ownership and self-sufficiency among departments on human rights issues.

The Ministry of Justice and the Department of Courts are reviewing the Domestic Violence Act 1995 with a view to reducing existing barriers to applying for protection orders. An evaluation suggests that cost, availability of information and language barriers are the main reasons that victims of domestic violence, particularly Maori and Pacific victims, do not apply for protection orders.

A research report published as part of the review of the Act found that Maori women are benefiting from programmes to help them deal with the effects of family violence. These programmes recognise the role of collective community responses to the position of Maori women and the family within the community.

In March 2002, a family violence prevention strategy with 18 action areas was launched. Each action area has targets which are due in varying timeframes through to June 2006.

Chart 56.1: Organisational Structure of New Zealand NWM 1995/96

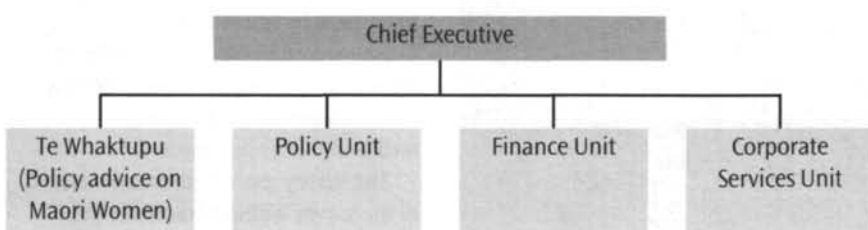
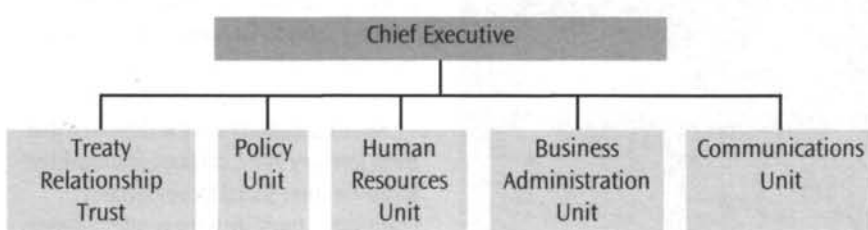


Chart 56.2: Organisational Structure of New Zealand NWM 2004



National Women's Machinery

The NWM is headed by a Minister and also has an operational Chief Executive. Unlike many other government agencies and departments, the NWM operates almost solely as a policy advice agency. Other than its Nominations Service, it is not involved in the provision of services or programmes.

In 1995/96, the NWM had a budget of NZ\$3.386 million and a staff of 36 (see chart 56.1). In 2002/03, the MWA had a budget of NZ\$3.700 million and a staff of 25, dropping from 31 in 2000 (see chart 56.2).

Gender mainstreaming activities are not identified separately from the rest of the ministry's policy advice mandate.

The ministry's key achievements include policy and legislative changes, the gathering and reporting of statistical information about the paid and unpaid work of women and men, and mainstreaming gender analysis through the requirement that certain papers to Cabinet Committee must include a gender impacts statement.

The ministry is monitoring the effectiveness of gender implications statements. Preliminary results suggest that quality of gender analysis in social policy papers before going before Cabinet has been variable. Poorer efforts mainly result where there has been no gender analysis at the problem-definition stage of policy development.

The NWM works closely with a range of other government departments and agencies, depending on the project. Inter-agency working parties devoted to policy development produce better and more robust policy proposals than if individual agencies work alone.



Partnerships

The NWM maintains a Women's Directory which listed, in 2001, 85 national women's organisations, 26 Maori women's organisations, and hundreds of regional women's groups. A number of government departments and agencies regularly consult NGOs to ensure that their views are incorporated into the advice provided to Ministers. Organisations such as the National Council of Women make regular submissions to parliamentary select committees that are considering legislation.

The NWM regularly engages with women's organisations on general issues and also on policy issues where NGOs have specialist knowledge. In 1999, the ministry established a consultative group of prominent Maori women, Te Korowai Wahine, to underpin its policy advice to improve outcomes for Maori women. NGO representatives also meet regularly with women.

Concerns for the Future

The Ministry of Women's Affairs launched a Women's Plan of Action in March 2004. The plan is a whole-of-government programme to improve women's lives in the workplace, home, community and as members of society.

The three priority areas are:

- Economic stability;
- Work/life balance; and
- Well-being.

The plan was prepared in partnership with the National Council of Women, the Maori Women's Welfare League, and PACIFICA, and through consultation with New Zealand women. Its implementation will be co-ordinated by the Ministry over the next three years.

Plans are also being made to accelerate pay equity between women and men, using the Social Statistics Programme to identify gender gaps, and under the Action Plan for Human Rights, enhance a wide range of human rights, including women's rights.

Papua New Guinea

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	3,915	4,302	5,130
Female population (% of total)	47.3	47.6	48.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	41	42	42
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	51.8	47.5	43.2
Male	35.6	32.4	29.4
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	74
Male	..	..	82
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	20
Male	..	..	25
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	1	2	1
Male	4	4	3
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	56	58	58
Male	54	56	56
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)			
	79	79	79
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	0.2
Male	..	..	0.1

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

The Government of Papua New Guinea has identified the following as priority areas for national action on gender equality:

- Institutional strengthening and upgrading of the National Women's Machinery
- Economic empowerment of women
- Shared decision-making and good governance
- Integration of gender issues in government planning of policies and programmes.

A Decade of Action

Papua New Guinea acceded to CEDAW in 1995. The country's National Women's Machinery (NWM) is made up of two organisations, the Gender and Development Division in the Department of Social Welfare (the government focal point) and the National Council of Women (the CSO focal point). The country is ranked at 106 in the Gender-related Development Index in the *UNDP Human Development Report 2004*.

National Platform for Action

A National Platform for Action, developed in 1995, forms the basis of current planning and programming for women. Its 10 critical areas of concern (*see Box 57.1, page 207*) were reassessed after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the four national priority areas for action were identified.

The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action of Gender and Development is incorporated into the National Women's Policy.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Both the government and CSO focal points for women have been identified as institutions that need to be strengthened if they are to be more effective in carrying out their role of advancing the progress of gender equality. A 1998 submission to upgrade the Women and Development Division to either an Office of the Status of Women or a National Commission for Gender and Development has yet to be acted on because of national economic

problems and a government policy to reduce the size of the public service.

The Inter-Agency Women's Advisory Committee has now been renamed the Inter-Agency Advisory Committee on Gender and Development. This committee is multi-sectoral in nature and responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of the National Women's Policy and the National Platform for Action across the spectrum of government. Steps are being taken to create a higher level committee to oversee the implementation of CEDAW.

The Act which set up the National Council of Women is currently being reviewed and a five-year strategic plan drawn up for it.

Women and the Economy

Women dominate the informal economic sector. Since 1995, the Government has expanded the women's micro-credit facility from 8 provinces to all 89 districts. This facility was established to assist disadvantaged women in rural and urban areas to set up small income-generating projects. It operates along the same lines as the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh¹, lending seed money to women's associations which in turn then give loans to individual women. The government focal point co-ordinates this project.

Little has been done to integrate gender issues into macroeconomic policies at national level. The planned establishment of a Gender Management System (*see Gender Mainstreaming, below*), however, would enable the Government to accelerate work on gender-responsive budgeting and analysis.

In February 2003, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and Commonwealth Secretariat organised a Gender and Trade meeting which brought together for the first time officials from the gender focal points and those from trade. It helped the NWM strengthen gender network ties with the trade and industry sector.

Women in Power and Decision-making

There are very few women in politics and public office. Twenty-eight years after



independence, there is only one woman in Parliament at the time of reporting and in all parliamentary elections, only five women have ever been elected.

The major reason for this low profile is that women have traditionally been excluded from decision-making processes. Other reasons include lack of resources to finance political campaigns and lack of support from political parties.

Since 1995, the Government has introduced two pieces of legislation which have impacted positively on women taking up politics. The first law appointed seats for women at provincial and local government levels. At present, approximately 290 women are in appointed seats. The second was a 1999 law on Integrity of Political Parties, which provided incentives for parties to endorse women candidates. Section 62 of this law states that a party which endorses and funds women candidates who receive more than 10% of the vote shall be entitled to receive a 75% refund on expenses spent by the party on that candidate. In the 2002 national elections there was an increase in the number of people endorsing women candidates.

The NWM believes that maximum benefit could be gained from this legislation if political parties become more gender-aware.

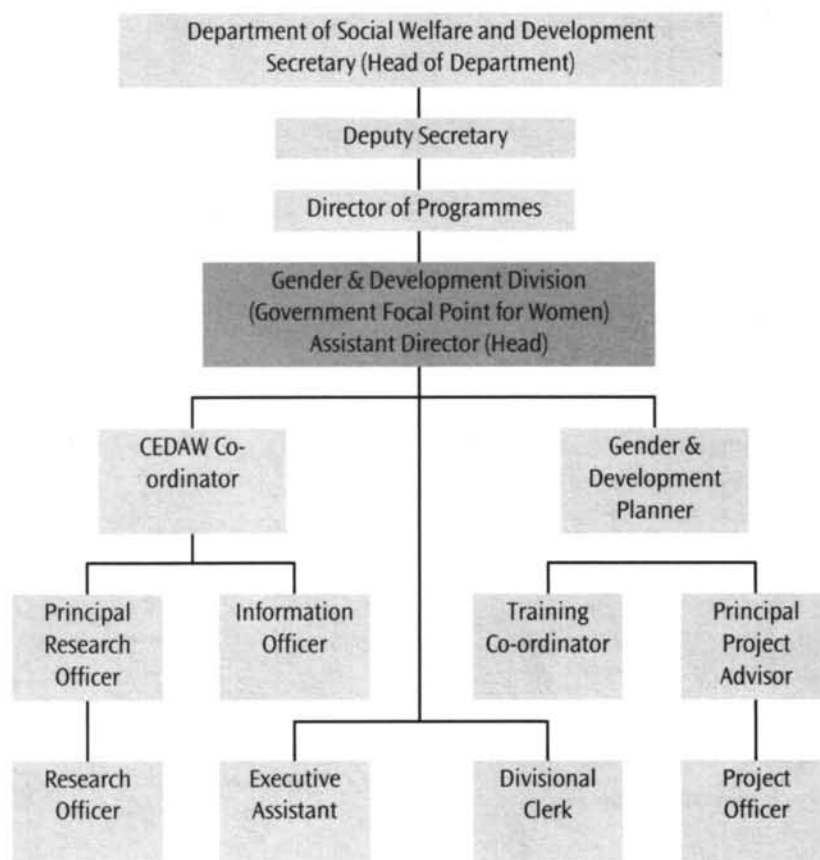
Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming was officially introduced into Papua New Guinea in 1990 through the UNIFEM-initiated Pacific Mainstreaming Project. At about the same time, Papua New Guinea was completing the development of its National Women's Policy. The gender mainstreaming project assisted in operationalising this policy.

The project paved the way for the establishment of a Gender and Development Unit in the Department of National Planning which co-ordinated gender mainstreaming across government. Unfortunately, this unit has now been downgraded to only a desk.

The 1995 Fourth World Women's Conference was a catalyst to government efforts to mainstream women's issues and concerns in the entire government system. During national preparations for the conference, government agencies became aware of gender issues and concerns and were more responsive in their planning and programming. Gender desks and/or appointed gender action and contact officers have been established in the Departments of Agriculture, Health, Education, Environment, National Planning and Monitoring, Trade and Industry, Police and the Defence Force.

Chart 57.1: Organisational Structure of Government Focal Point for Women, Papua New Guinea



Although there has been some progress since gender mainstreaming was introduced, the NWM believes that other issues need to be addressed before gender mainstreaming can be said to be assisting in accelerating national development.

The Government is addressing some of these issues by putting in place a Gender Management System (GMS) which would enable it to plan, implement, assess and monitor gender planning and programming. The GMS would also enable an assessment, for the first time, of the progress made since gender mainstreaming was introduced in 1990. The Gender and Development Division will seek technical assistance to establish the GMS.

Violence Against Women

Abuse of women's human rights and violence against women are addressed through the Ombudsmen Commission (*sic*) or the legal system. The majority of women, however, do not access the legal services because the system is complex and expensive. There is no Human Rights Commission. The Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee co-ordinates intervention programmes by the different stakeholders (government, CSOs, churches, community-based organisations, private sector, and international and other development partners).

Women and Health

HIV/AIDS was first detected in Papua New Guinea in 1987 with 6 reported HIV and 2 confirmed AIDS cases. Since then, the number of cases has grown exponentially.

About 71% of the cases have been diagnosed in the National Capital District of Port Moresby, 12% in Western Highlands Province and 5% in Eastern Highlands and Morobe Province. The ages of patients have not been recorded in 42% of cases. Of the remaining group, the most common age at diagnosis in males was in the 20–34 year group (32%). Of the women, 43% were aged between 20–34 years.

There were more males than females reported in all age groups except the 15–29 year group where there are more

Table 57.1: HIV/AIDS Infections in Papua New Guinea, Year of Diagnosis and Sex

Year of Diagnosis	Male	Female	Not Stated	Total
1987	2	4	0	6
1990	24	12	0	36
1995	69	57	1	127
2000	580	450	32	1,062
1 Jan 2002–31 Mar 2002	204	220	25	449

females than males. A report by the National AIDS Council says the higher incidence among young women could be due to routine testing of women who attend the antenatal clinic at Port Moresby General Hospital.

The National AIDS Council was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1997 to facilitate the formulation of a national multi-sectoral strategy for HIV/AIDS. The National HIV/AIDS Medium-Term Plan is based on the principle that the disease is a development issue, not just a health problem.

Child birth complications are now recognised as a major health problem for women. Maternal mortality, and the perinatal health of women and their infants have been studied. Health education workshops for women, with an emphasis on reproductive health, have been conducted and there are concerns

over nutrition and sexually transmitted infections. With the rest of the population, women are also susceptible to pneumonia, malaria, enteric diseases, filariasis, and other diseases.

National Women's Machinery

Two organisations make up the National Women's Machinery (NWM). The Gender and Development Division, one of six divisions in the Department (equivalent of Ministry) of Social Welfare and Development, is the government focal point for women; it is headed by an Assistant Director. The National Council of Women is the CSO focal point for women. The National Council of Women was established by an Act of Parliament and receives an annual grant of K120,000 (about £25,210).

Box 57.1: National Platform for Action, Papua New Guinea

The 10 critical areas in Papua New Guinea's 1995 National Platform for Action:

1. Health;
2. Education, Training and Literacy;
3. Mechanisms and Shared Decision-making;
4. Economic Empowerment, Employment Opportunities and Conditions;
5. Legal and Human Rights (Violence, Peace and National Unity);
6. Culture and Family (Young Women and Girls, Special Groups of Women);
7. Transport, Shelter, Water and Communications;
8. Agriculture and Fisheries (Resources and Foreign Investment Affecting Women);
9. Environment and Development;
10. Sustainable Development and Poverty.

These were reassessed after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and four key issues identified for urgent government attention:

- Institutional Strengthening and Upgrading of the National Women's Machinery;
- Economic Empowerment of Women;
- Shared Decision-making and Good Governance;
- Integration of Gender Issues in Government Planning of Policies and Programmes.

The National Platform for Action, drawn up in preparation for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, has not been implemented as effectively as originally hoped. Successive governments have not been consistent in allocating resources to support women's development programmes.

There are three reasons for this:

- Low priority among development issues, especially after Papua New Guinea accepted the IMF/World-sponsored Structural Adjustment Programme in 1995. In the resultant reduction of fiscal expenditures, the social sector was severely affected, especially the women's/gender programmes and projects. Since then, the trend in development is to focus on macroeconomic policies and emphasise economic growth;
- General lack of consciousness and awareness of gender issues among decision-makers and heads of organisations; and
- Traditional attitudes towards women in political circles, the bureaucracy and society as a whole.

Partnerships

The bifurcated nature of the NWM structure ensures that the government focal point works closely with civil society on gender issues. When the National Platform for Action was developed in 1995, it was with input from CSOs, provincial governments, and international and other development partners.

The NWM also benefits from contact with the Pacific Islands Forum, though the

government focal point has not been part of the Forum's assistance programme for gender equality and other development issues.

Concerns for the Future

The Papua New Guinea NWM's primary concern for the near future is the implementation of CEDAW. Plans are under way to institute a legislative and policy framework review which will involve the assessment of all government policies and plans to determine the level of women's participation in all spheres of life.

The government focal point plans to implement CEDAW as the overall policy to govern planning and programming on women's issues in the country. Constraints will be access to technical and financial resources.

Samoa

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	165	165	170
Female population (% of total)	47.6	47.5	49.4
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	2.6	2.1	1.7
Male	1.5	1.3	1.1
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	97	92
Male	..	97	92
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	62
Male	..	..	70
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	5	4	6
Male	5	5	7
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	68	71	72
Male	65	66	66
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	33	24	21
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Samoa has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Education and Training of Women
 2. Women and Health
 3. Violence Against Women
 4. Women and the Economy
 5. Women and Poverty
- Followed by: 6. Human Rights of Women; 7. Women in Power and Decision-making; 8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 9. Women and the Environment; 10. Women in the Media; 11. The Girl-child.

A Decade of Action

Samoa acceded to CEDAW in 1992. The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is the National Women's Machinery (NWM), which reports that overall there has been progress in the implementation of the Beijing critical concerns through national sectoral policies and programmes.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming has been realised primarily in specific sectors, the policies and programmes of which emanate from the national strategy for the development of Samoa 2000–2004. A Gender Equity Policy is in place.

The NWM is represented on all the committees of major developments projects, and NWM and NGO representatives are also represented on policy formulation committees in the health, agriculture, media, education and other sectors. The NWM, NGOs and CBOs are consulted in the drawing up of the Biennial Statement of Economic Strategy.

Human Rights of Women

Much of CEDAW is already embodied in domestic law and its principles accepted by the majority of Samoans. The Office of Ombudsman (*sic*) also investigates complaints of violations of rights and freedoms. It is, however, not common practice for Samoans to resort to law to

assert their rights and the NWM and NGOs therefore focus on raising women's awareness of their rights.

Legal rights training on gender issues is provided by the Justice Department, the NWM and NGOs, such as Mapusaga o Aiga, in collaboration with the Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team. The development of a national CEDAW Plan of Action began in 2002 and is being finalised by the CEDAW Partnership, which comprises representatives from the government, NGOs and other areas of civil society. A draft National Policy for Women and other relevant draft legislation is awaiting Cabinet approval.

Education and Training of Women

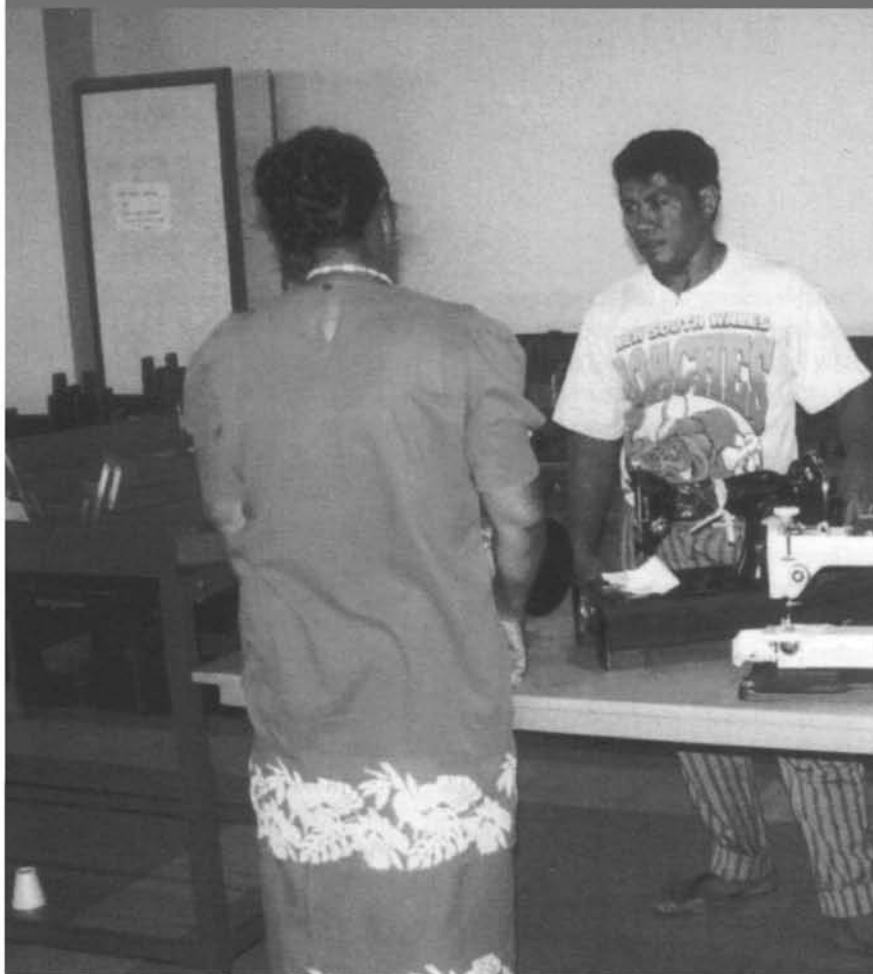
Literacy and early education is almost universal because basic learning is provided free. Primary school attendance is compulsory. In the early 1990s a quota of 50% for females was set for tertiary education scholarships tenable outside Samoa. A number of scholarship awards to the Samoa Polytechnic are offered to attract women into trades hitherto dominated by males.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Traditionally, women have been accorded a high status in society and play important leadership roles in their families and the community. However, some attitudinal barriers exist which hinder the full realisation of women's leadership potential.

Women are under-represented in political and public life. At the time of reporting, Samoan Government figures show women at 6% of MPs, 7% of Ministers (that is, 1 in 13), 23.1% of department heads, 5% of heads of statutory bodies and 40% of deputies and assistant directors. The NWM has compiled a Directory of Women which is used to identify women who may be potential members of boards and used to make recommendations to the Government.

There are women's committees at village level responsible for village sanitation and hygiene, welfare and



education, as well as income-generating activities and, more recently, environmental conservation.

Violence Against Women

Domestic Violence is the primary focus for some NGOs who work with the NWM on public awareness campaigns and education workshops to encourage the public to address this issue. The police refer victims to NGOs for counselling. Domestic violence is also discussed in schools.

Women and Poverty

Samoa does not have a National Poverty Reduction Policy. However, the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2002–2004, aims at the improvement of quality of life for all. Women in the community as well as the NWM were involved in the consultative process for the development of this strategy.

Woman and Health

Samoa has a National AIDS Co-ordinating Committee and a National HIV/AIDS policy in place. The NWM has developed and begun implementing a National Strategic HIV/AIDS Plan for women.

National Women's Machinery

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is the National Women's Machinery (NWM). It was established as the Ministry of Women's Affairs by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to address issues and concerns of women in Samoa. Until then, women's issues had been co-ordinated by a Women's Desk in the Prime Minister's Department.

The Ministry opened office in 1991 with a skeleton staff of 5 employees, including the Administrative Head of the Ministry, 2 professional staff and 2 administrative staff.

By 2003, the Ministry had been re-designated as the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. Staffing had increased to 28, including 24 permanent and 4 temporary staff. Of these 17 are professional staff, including the Secretary of Women's Affairs, who is directly responsible to the Minister.

Starting with a budget of ST\$138,000, by 2003, the Ministry's budget had increased to ST\$1,106,548. In 1997/98, the NWM began the process of establishing gender focal points in each department to ensure female issues and concerns were addressed in policy analysis and programmes.

Notable among the NWM's successes have been the establishment of the CEDAW Partnership and CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) Partnership. Both comprise representatives of government departments, NGOs and civil society who take part in decision-making on policies and action plans for gender and development. The NWM has also established direct links with community-based organisations for training, implementation of projects and consultation.

All ministries are represented on the Partnership, including the Public Service Commission. Each ministry is required to report on progress of activities directly related to and promoting gender development and equality.

Partnerships

Through the CEDAW and CRC Partnerships, the NWM has worked closely with civil society and NGOs. Among the organisations it works with are the National Council of Women, Samoa Organisation for the Development of Women's Committees, Mapusaga o Aiga, Taumafai School for the Physically Disabled, Fiamalamalama School for the Mentally Disabled and Samoa Association of Women Graduates.

Concerns for the Future

In the next five years, Samoa hopes to focus on:

- The impact of globalisation and free trade issues on women, in light of concerns that many countries in the region which have the most open markets and embrace free trade have low social indicators; and
- Access to information technology which can help in the advancement of women as it would open opportunities for distance education and overseas markets for goods produced by women. The Samoa Polytechnic and regional vocational education body have begun distance education courses for women.



The Strategy of Development of Samoa 2002–2004 hopes to improve the quality of life for women and men

Vanuatu

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	324	375	447
Female population (% of total)	48.3	48.5	49.9
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	47	47	47
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	41.7	19.9	67.9
Male	19.6	7.7	43.7
Net primary enrolment ratio (of females to males)**	..	..	..
Net secondary enrolment ratio (of females to males)**	..	..	..
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (of females to males)	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	65	68	70
Male	64	66	67
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	29	25	21
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

** 2000–2001 figures in the Human Development Report 2003.

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Solomon Islands places priority on the following:

1. Women in Power and Decision-making
2. Education and Training of Women
3. Women and Armed Conflict
4. Human Rights of Women
5. Women and Health

Followed by: 6. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 7. Women and the Economy; 8. Violence Against Women; 9. Women and Poverty; 10. Women and the Environment; 11. The Girl-child; 12. Women in the Media.

A Decade of Action

Solomon Islands acceded to CEDAW and its Optional Protocol in 2002. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Women in Development Division in the Department of Home Affairs.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Women continue to be under-represented at policy and management levels in the public and private sectors, and in CSOs and religious organisations. The traditional leadership structure is largely dominated by men, and women have no say in decisions; they therefore have less access to opportunities and limited control over resources. Women's decision-making is confined to their role in the home.

In the National Parliament, the one woman Member of Parliament, who was also a Cabinet Minister, lost her seat in the 2001 elections. In the same year, a record 14 women candidates contested the election, though none won. At the provincial level, only three women have won in provincial elections since 1995. At the time of reporting, however, only one woman is a representative at provincial level.

In the Public Service, of 21 Permanent Secretaries, only three are women and only four women work at Under-Secretary level. Public and private sector figures show that of the 2,502 workers who are legislators, senior officials and managers, only 417 are women, of whom almost half are self-employed.

Box 59.1: Women for Peace

The armed inter-communal conflict which began in Solomon Islands in 1998/1999 left 32,000 people displaced, with women and children losing family members, friends, jobs, possessions and money. There is evidence that women suffered sexual abuse and other forms of violence as a result of lawlessness. The conflict led to the closure of schools, disruption of health services and closure of some multinational companies operating near the conflict zone. Workers were made redundant and salaries often paid late.

Solomon Islands women played a significant role as peace-builders in the peace process. A Women for Peace group, consisting of women from all denominations and walks of life, was formed, and its members approached militants' camps to counsel their sons or husbands and also listen to the grievances of the militants.

The women met and approached the Government with their concerns, requesting to be part of the peace process. They organised donations to support displaced families and bartered for food and other necessities to give to women who had been affected by the fighting.

The important role the women played led to the Government inviting women representatives to observe the ceasefire talks and appointing two women as members of the National Peace Council. Women also became involved in a workshop organised by civil society to recommend ways to bring the country back to normal.

NGO women's groups have been instrumental in a number of programmes in the rebuilding, reconstruction and rehabilitation phase of the peace process. One women's group was involved in exchanging military uniforms for civilian clothing with former combatants. Church women's groups provided training in trauma counselling and conflict resolution. The Women's Centre project builds centres in all the provinces to bring rural women closer to services and development programmes thus lifting them out of poverty.

As a way of addressing the issues which emerged out of the conflict, the Government:

- Established the Department of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace which oversees, implements and monitors the rebuilding and reconstruction phase;
- Established a National Peace Council with peace monitors working with the formerly hostile communities. Women have been recruited as peace monitors and such has been their effectiveness that their numbers have risen from 11 to 28;
- Invited the Regional Assistance Mission to help restore peace and security, and law and order, and to revive the economy;
- Recruited more female police officers. The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force now has 66 female police officers, four of whom are at senior level (there remains, however, a marked gender imbalance as this number is only 6.2% of the police force);
- Established a gender and equity policy within the police force. A special unit works with the Family Support Centre and judiciary to deal with gender-based violence issues;
- Proposed development of a Policy on the Elimination of Violence Against Women;
- Developed a Women Peace and Security project funded by UNIFEM. The project covers economic, education and research areas, but also the effects of conflict on women, how women cope, the root causes of conflict and women's role as peace-builders;
- Secured funding for women to undertake training in communities on peace-building activities; and
- Revived the women's information network through the radio station Vois Blong Mere Solomon and, with support from UNIFEM, the NWM organised a workshop for the media on promoting a culture of peace through the media, highlighting women's human rights issues.

Affirmative action for women and other groups has been proposed for the new draft Federal Constitution (which if accepted would make the country a Federal Republic). Among the proposed provisions are:

- A requirement to promote the involvement of women and other groups in the political, social and economic life of the country;
- Plans for new laws securing fair representation of women in Parliament;
- Provisions for an equal number of women to be appointed members in the Congress of States;
- Views of women and youth to be sought when drafting a state constitution;
- Guiding principles in public administration to include equal and adequate opportunities for training and advancement of women and men.

The National Women's Policy calls on the Government to promote women's participation and representation at all policy and decision-making levels. Unfortunately, there is still no National Development and Strategic Plan.

Education and Training of Women

About 69% of women are literate as compared to 83.7% for men; and fewer women are in formal employment (14%) and managerial positions in paid employment (16.6%). Education is the key to raising these figures.

School enrolment among girls is low in comparison with other island states in the Pacific. This is largely due to limited boarding school space for girls. Education is also not compulsory and there is a residual habit of favouring boys over girls for education.

In the 1990s, however, girls' school enrolment increased by an annual average of 5% (compared to less than 4% for boys) and at secondary school, girls' enrolment has increased at an average annual rate of 23% (20% for boys).

The Government hopes to achieve gender equality in education by introducing measures enabling easy access to nine years of basic education, and by identifying and addressing factors

influencing female participation in the formal education system.

Human Rights of Women

The subordinate role that women play means that they have limited control over

resources, even in matrilineal societies where ownership of the land is passed down to the women. They thus have limited access to development opportunities, such as education, health and commerce.

Although there is some documentation

Strengthening links with women CSOs including key national, regional and intergovernmental partners such as the Commonwealth Pacific Youth Centre, to overcome capacity and resource constraints of the National Women Machinery (NWM) in Solomon Islands

on gender-based violence, national statistics have yet to be compiled. Anecdotal evidence points to physical and mental abuse of women by husbands or partners but it is not possible to determine the extent, especially as many women still do not recognise domestic violence as a crime. In some societies, people believe it is the man's right to beat his wife and where a 'bride price' is paid, women are viewed as the property of their husbands. In addition, reporting to the police is not easy and illiterate women are afraid to speak out.

CSOs continue to play a vital role in promoting women's rights. Among its initiatives, the Government, through the NWM, organised a course on community paralegal training aimed at poverty alleviation through a human rights perspective. Human rights programmes have also been aired in the media.

National Women's Machinery

A ministry for women was established in 1997 but was abolished in 2002 and its functions transferred to the Department of Home Affairs. Following a review, the NWM, which is the Women in Development Division, shifted its focus away from training (largely in home management and related areas) to also providing policy advice, planning, information and research.

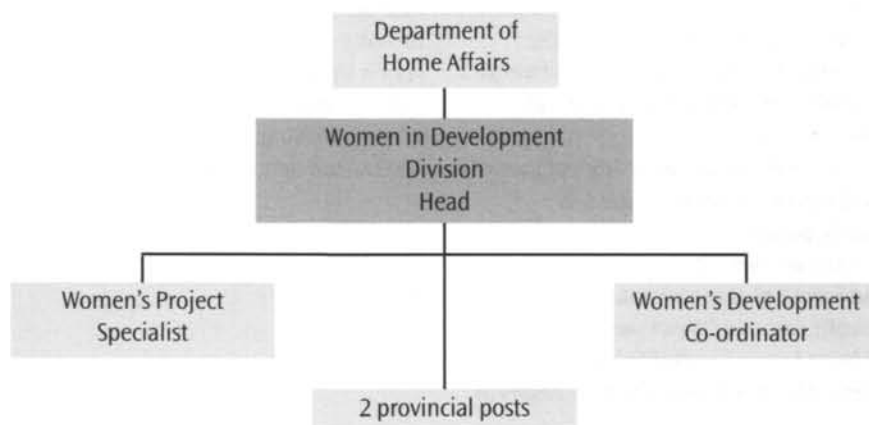
The NWM has been restructured twice since then and reduced from 17 posts in 1997 (of which only nine were filled) to five, including the head of the NWM. At the time of reporting, there were only three officers in post serving the entire country and a freeze on recruitment has been in place since 1999.

Faced with a decrease in staff, the NWM took to strengthening its networks and links with women CSOs to implement its programmes and activities. Building links with rural women (84% of the population live in rural areas), however, have been constrained by the lack of staff in the NWM. At the time of reporting one provincial post was vacant, and the other about to be vacated).

Despite the country's sluggish economic performance, the NWM's



Chart 59.1: Organisational Structure of Solomon Islands NWM



budget allocations have improved from SBD\$310,470 in 1995 to \$698,429 in 2004, a 125% increase. The NWM's allocation for 2004 represents 13.69% of the budget for the Department for Home Affairs and 0.15% of the Government's total recurrent budget. Wages take up 25% of the NWM budget. Before 2004, however, much of the budget allocation was difficult to access.

Development partners had increased assistance in women/gender and development in recent years, but during the 1998/1999 inter-communal violence, donors switched emphasis to funding peace and security, and law and order matters and the Gender and Development Programme closed. Plans for institutional strengthening of the NWM and women CSOs have thus been put on hold.

In 2004, the total amount in development assistance to the NWM to

finance development activities was SBD\$1,128,000. There is no specific allocation for gender mainstreaming activities in the recurrent and development budgets.

Achievements

The NWM's best achievement was in influencing the Government to accede to CEDAW and its Optional Protocol in 2002. Since then, a national committee for implementation has been formed with the NWM as the secretariat. The committee comprises representatives from the government and CSOs.

Another achievement is the revival of the Solomon Islands women's information network, Vois Blong Mere Solomon. This network broadcasts twice weekly on national radio and through a FM radio station which mainly targets the urban audience and young people.

Partnerships

Most of the NWM's work is done in partnership with civil society and its networks rather than with other government departments. The NWM is represented on the advisory and executive committees of the Solomon Islands National Council of Women. It is also represented on the board of Vois Blong Mere Solomon and works closely with the Solomon Islands Christian Association Federation of Women, a focal point for women's church organisations, where it delivers skills and home management training especially to rural women.

Other partnerships with CSOs are made through a coalition between Government and CSOs in committees such as the Solomon Islands National Committee on CEDAW and the Women's Peace and Security Board.

All meetings and workshops organised and run by the NWM involve CSO participation.

The Women's Bureau and Gender Adviser Desk at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) have helped the NWM implement strategies in

a number of priority areas, such as in peace-building. In February 2003, PIFS and Commonwealth Secretariat jointly organised a symposium on global trade and multilateral trade agreements in relation to gender, social and economic issues.

The NWM believes that strengthening the partnership links between the NWMs of the region and the Gender Focal Points of the SPC and PIFS would further assist governments working to improve gender equality.

Concerns for the Future

The National Women's Policy was approved in 1998 prior to the outbreak of the inter-communal violence. Plans to review the policy are in hand to place more emphasis on women in power and decision-making; education and training; and human rights of women.

Tonga

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	99	104	100
Female population (% of total)	..	..	50
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	100
Male	..	..	99
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	77
Male	..	..	67
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	4
Male	..	..	3
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	71	72	73
Male	67	68	69
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	23	20	17
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Tonga Government has identified the following, in order of priority, for national action:

1. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
 2. Women and the Economy
 3. Education and Training of Women
 4. Women in Power and Decision-making
 5. Women and Health
- Followed by: 6. Women and Poverty; 7. Human Rights of Women; 8. Violence Against Women; 9. Women and the Environment; 10. The Girl-child; 11. Women in the Media; 12. Women and Armed Conflict.

A Decade of Action

Tonga's National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Women and Development Centre which is located in the Prime Minister's Office. Since the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing, 1995, the country has been committed to strengthening the family unit. Tonga is not a signatory to CEDAW.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Top among the NWM's priorities is strengthening institutional mechanisms which promote the advancement and protection of women. A multi-sectoral National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development came into operation in 2000 to review and co-ordinate issues affecting gender equity and equality. Membership is drawn from various ministries, government departments and NGOs. The NWM is also represented on the committee.

Policies guiding work on various aspects of gender equality are the National Strategic Development Plan (2001–2004), which advocates full employment for women and men, and enhanced education opportunities for both sexes; and the National Policy on Gender and Development (2001) which envisions gender equity in a Vision 2025 target and advocates free and equal participation by women and men in all sectors.

Women and the Economy

The National Strategic Development Plan (2001–2004) has put gender equity on a list of desired outcomes for Tonga. However, the integration of gender issues in poverty-reducing and income-enhancing structures, such as structural adjustment activities and trade, has not been realised due to a lack of resources and appropriate skills. Plans for implementation of a gender-responsive budget have similarly been delayed.

At the time of reporting, the Central Planning Department was undertaking, in collaboration with the NWM, a study on women in the informal sector. This study will identify women's employment potential.

The Deputy Secretary and Head of the NWM is a member of the national task force on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with responsibility for ensuring that gender considerations are taken into account in the national MDG programme.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Tonga has no female parliamentarians or government ministers. However, 14.8% of ministerial and departmental heads are women. Fewer than 10% of Chief Executive Officers in the private sector are women, and 0.4% in the professional and senior management ranks of the Public Service.

The focus on gender equality in a recent Tonga Participatory Assessment on Hardship study was on the different roles of women and men in decision-making at different levels, and the perceived status of women in the past five years. The study reported that the status of women was seen as having improved due to increased access to skills training, higher education, better organisation and participation in community development activities, and increased community recognition of women in high positions in (which in turn is seen as contributing to women's increasing participation at the national level).



Chart 60.1: Organisational Structure of Tonga NWM

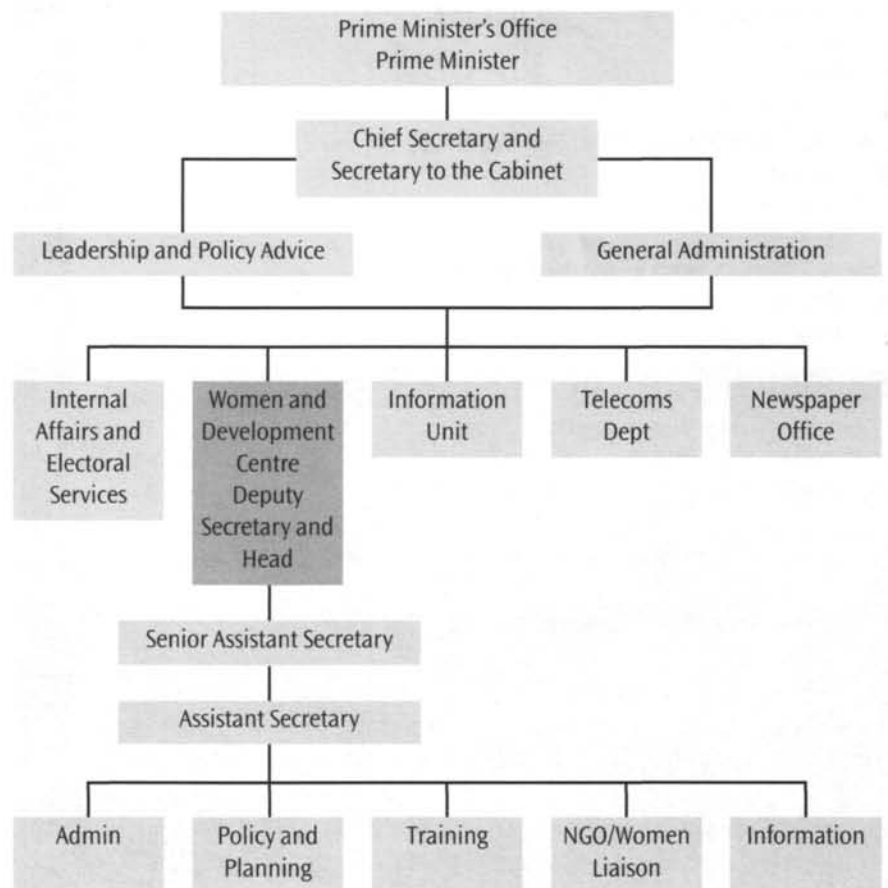


Table 60.1: Budget Allocation for Tonga NWM since 2001

	2001/02	2002/03	2004/05
Percentage of Prime Minister's Office budget of the National Budget	5.95%	3.36%	2.41%
Percentage of WDC budget of that of the Prime Minister's Office budget	2.41%	4.18%	6.92%

National Women's Machinery

The Women and Development Centre is the National Women's Machinery (NWM) and is a section in the Prime Minister's Office. The Prime Minister is therefore also the Minister Responsible for Women's Affairs.

Highlights of the work of the NWM have been progress in gender mainstreaming and in advancing women's human rights. In 2001, the National Policy on Gender and Development was approved by the Government and launched by the Prime Minister at a big event that was broadcast live on TV and radio to reach the Outer Islands and villages.

The NWM works closely with the Central Planning Department (CPD), which is the co-ordinator of the Government's bilateral aid programme and most development projects from donor countries and international agencies. The CPD is also a member of the National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development and its technical committee.

Partnerships

The NWM works with all ministries, government departments, NGOs and the private sector as necessary. Examples of collaborative efforts are outreach programmes on gender awareness and training with rural and Outer Island women with the National Council of Women; CEDAW awareness training with the Catholic Women's League; research in a number of CEDAW areas (e.g., domestic violence) with the Legal Literacy Project; and sharing of information and data on women's reproductive and sexual health with Tonga Family Health.

Concerns for the Future

Tonga will concentrate on the areas of violence against women, women in the economy, and women in power and decision-making as part of its progress towards eventual ratification of CEDAW.

Employment is essential for poverty reduction



Tuvalu

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	..	11	11
Female population (% of total)	..	..	52.5
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)**			
Female	..	..	100
Male	..	..	100
Gross secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)**			
Female	..	..	73
Male	..	..	83
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (of females to males)	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	..	..	69
Male	..	..	65
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)***	43.5	49.8	34.9
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

* World Bank Atlas 1991 (for 1990 figures), 1997 (1995) and 2002 (2000)

** UNESCO statistics for 1997–2000

*** Tuvalu Health Division Annual Report 2002, Ministry of Health

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Tuvalu places priority on the following:

- Education and Training of Women
- Women and Health
- Women and the Economy.

A Decade of Action

Tuvalu, one of the lowest populated nations in the world, acceded to CEDAW in 1999. Its National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Department of Women's Affairs which is located in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development.

Achievements in improving gender equality include:

- The ratification of the agreement on the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and accession to CEDAW in 1999;
- The establishment of the NWM, and development of a Women's Policy and the gender-sensitive Corporate Plan for the NWM;
- National Council of Women alignment with the Regional Rights Resource Team, a UNDP project, to deliver legal literacy and training;
- The establishment of a task force to oversee implementation of CEDAW;
- A gender mainstreaming co-ordination committee which is an advisory board to the NWM;
- The mainstreaming of gender issues and interests in the policies of sectors such as the fishing industry, education and tourism;
- Assistance to grassroots women in the Outer Islands and to the unemployed to obtain financial assistance for basic needs (such as fish tanks), and economic work (such as poultry rearing, access to local food markets, agriculture).

Education and Training of Women

Tuvalu is reasonably gender-balanced in school enrolment through to secondary level, and 45% of all overseas tertiary scholarships since 1991 have gone to women. Female representation in middle and senior posts in the civil service, however, is less than a fourth of that for

The Tuvalu Government hopes to increase vocational training opportunities for women

males, and more needs to be done to involve men in addressing gender issues.

Many women still believe that education for girls is irrelevant as it focuses on preparing students for white collar urban jobs and not for the realities of rural living and working. In addition, adult training is carried out on an ad hoc basis. The majority of courses are not targeted to mainstream women into production and development spheres but to improve and reinforce current reproductive and traditional roles.

The Government plans to review the education system, intensify awareness-raising of the importance of female education, develop programmes to encourage women with limited education to return to learning, and increase vocational training opportunities for women.

Women and Health

The number of tuberculosis cases is increasing and the filariasis bacterium is present in 20% of the population¹. There is also some concern over the potential threat of HIV/AIDS being brought back by Tuvaluan seafarers and overseas workers.

Programmes on Filariasis, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections have been launched. Projects have been initiated on adolescent reproductive health, which is now being taught in the health science curriculum in schools. Programmes on adolescent health issues are also broadcast on radio.

Immunisation programmes, health promotion and nursing services, and environmental, food and nutrition services are also improving though the shortage of skilled workers is constraining greater progress.

Women and the Economy

About 21% of Tuvalu's female population are in paid employment. Most of the others work in the unpaid informal economy and at home. They still lack training in small business management and opportunities to secure funding for projects.

The production and sale of handicrafts continues to be the main income-



Box 61.1: Constraints on Gender Development, Tuvalu

There are a number of constraints on progress in gender equality in Tuvalu.

- Establishing mechanisms for development is a slow process, and thus many policies and programmes of action have yet to be implemented;
- Key health issues are the high incidence of poor maternal health and still-inadequate health service delivery because of the shortage of skilled staff and facilities, especially in the Outer Islands;
- Much of the violence against women is unreported;
- There is no baseline data;
- There are cultural and conditioning constraints in society;
- Communication networks between relevant government agencies and CSOs are inadequate;
- Budgetary constraints restrict the implementation of NWM plans;
- There is a lack of sufficiently skilled staff at the NWM;
- Budgetary constraints hamper plans to expand education;
- Continued high population growth.

generating activity for the majority of women, but it remains organised at household level and its potential there is undeveloped.

Violence Against Women

There is no available data on which to make assumptions on the level of gender-based violence. There is anecdotal evidence of some violence against women but in Tuvalu's cultural context, where

such violence would bring shame on the offender and family, few incidents are reported. Laws against abuse, assault and rape exist, but many reports are withdrawn before they reach the prosecution stage.

Women in Power and Decision-making

Women's involvement in politics remains marginal – only one woman was a

parliamentarian in the last 10 years. In trying to encourage more women to come forward as representatives, the Government introduced the Fale Kaupule Act (1999) which requires the equal participation of women in local government. It is hoped that women will build on their experience at this level and move to higher levels in government.

The reasons for low political participation – and lack of real presence in government decision-making – are complex. They begin with the cultural tradition of women playing a role behind the scenes, and are compounded by lack of economic opportunity and heavy domestic workloads which discourage many women from running for office even in local village development committees.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM began as the voluntary post of Women's Interest Officer (WIO) in 1976 under the then Women's Committee. Funds were scarce. In 1979, the WIO title was changed to Women Development Officers (WDO) who were funded by UNFPA. WDOs were nominally with the Tuvalu National Council of Women but were supervised by the Ministry of Social Services.

After that, the WDO post was shifted to the Local Government Department in the Office of the Prime Minister (1983) and then to a number of other Ministries and departments until, in 1990, it was

established within a Community Affairs Division. In 1999, the Department of Women's Affairs was established.

The NWM's best achievement in recent years has been the media and public campaign to ensure understanding of CEDAW and the concept of gender before accession to the Convention. The NWM also drew up the Corporate Plan of Action.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with CSOs such as the Tuvalu Association of Non-government Organisations, the Tuvalu Family Health Association and Tuvalu National Council of Women. It is also strengthening the National Co-ordinating Committee in order that it may critically analyse major developmental activities and policies for the integration of gender concerns.

Funding for various activities comes from regional and international organisations.

Concerns for the Future

The top three areas Tuvalu will concentrate on in the near future are: education and training, women and the economy; and women and health.

End Note

1 Filariasis is caused by a parasitic worm, spread by mosquitoes, and can enter the lymphatic system causing swelling and scarring.

Vanuatu

COUNTRY REPORT (Summary)

Gender Profile 1990 1995 2000

Gender Profile	1990	1995	2000
POPULATION*			
Total population (000)	157	169	197
Female population (% of total)	48.5	48.6	48.7
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION			
Female labour force (% of total)	..	..	..
Female unemployment (% of female labour force)	..	..	..
EDUCATION			
Adult illiteracy rate (% of people aged 15+)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
Net primary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	89
Male	..	..	90
Net secondary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	15	..	29
Male	19	..	24
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (% of age group)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..
HEALTH			
Life expectancy at birth (years)			
Female	66	68	70
Male	63	65	67
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	52	43	35
Prevalence of HIV (% of people aged 15–24)			
Female	..	..	..
Male	..	..	..

Source: World Bank database of Gender Statistics

** 2000–2001 figures in the Human Development Report 2003.

.. Figures not available.

Priority Concerns

Among the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Vanuatu places priority on the following:

1. Violence Against Women, Women in Power and Decision-making, Women in Poverty, Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
2. Education and Training of Women, Women and Health, Human Rights of Women
3. The Girl-child
4. Women and the Economy.

A Decade of Action

Vanuatu acceded to CEDAW in 1995. The National Women's Machinery (NWM) is the Department of Women's Affairs which is located in the Office of the Prime Minister.

Policy Development

The NWM has prioritised a number of areas for policy development since 2001.

A Gender Policy was developed in 2001 and gender-awareness training and workshops to increase capacity building in gender analysis and planning carried out. A gender management team and system were also developed in consultation with the Public Service Women's Network.

A five-fold increase over seven years of reported cases of violence against women has led to a Violence Against Women in Vanuatu Policy in 2002. The NWM has provided training for Chiefs on the Family Protection Order Bill and lobbied extensively for its adoption together with the other amendments on gender equality in legislation.

A draft Women in Government Policy was completed in 2001 as part of the Women in Decision-making overall focus. Only four women have sat in Parliament since independence in 1980. There are no women on 15 government committees and only on 4 out of the 30 committees are women represented at 30% level. In the government sector, only 34% of the jobs are held by women and in 2003, women held only 11% of the senior positions in the Public Service. In the formal sector, women generally earn 80% of what men earn.

The objective of the Women in

Box 62.1: Tackling Poverty and Violence

The Vanuatu Women's Development Scheme (VANWODS) pilot project was started by the NWM in 1996 with financial and technical support from the UNDP/UNOPS Regional Equitable and Sustainable Human Development Project. The project was initiated in response to the Vanuatu National Plan of Action for Women to provide disadvantaged women with access to micro-finance and income-earning opportunities.

VANWODS is considered a successful micro-finance project, having achieved significant milestones in the promotion of micro-enterprises and household savings among the generally economically inactive disadvantaged women within and around the capital, Port Vila.

As of December 2002, VANWODS had a roster of 741 active clients with a total outreach of 810 very poor and disadvantaged women who are provided access to savings and loans facilities. It has recorded a consistent repayment rate of 100% and has been able to progressively cover 25% of its operating costs.

Over the years, the VANWODS project has embraced the vision of becoming a sustainable financial institution owned and managed by its own members and beneficiaries. In 2001, after five years of operation, it reached a size and stage that it became desirable to transform the project into an independent beneficiary-owned organisation registered under the Charitable Associations Act of Vanuatu.

Its mission is to contribute to poverty reduction in Vanuatu through the economic empowerment of disadvantaged women by providing them with access to microfinance services, enterprise training and community organisation support.

Violence Against Women

The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) has offered the following services: *Counselling and Support Service July–September 2002*:

- 498 clients were dealt with – 298 at the Centre, 141 assisted through phone counselling, 6 through mobile counselling and 53 who requested information;
- Counsellors attended 10 *kastom* meetings to represent and speak on behalf of women – 1,047 people were present, including 785 men and 262 women
- 11 Domestic Violence Court Orders were facilitated by VWC of which three clients were assisted through the Court Fees Fund;
- 2 mobile counselling visits were made around Vila, 1 visit to offshore islands and 1 to a village in North Efate;
- 5 women were assisted through Safe House services funded by NZAID.

Community Education and Awareness:

- 378 men and 453 women were reached during community education and awareness talks;
- 5 radio programmes were produced and 3 comments on issues made in local and overseas media;
- 3,200 community education materials were distributed, mostly to Committees Against Violence Against Women (CAVAWs), schools and Government agencies;
- 7 CAVAWs – established in Outer Islands – were financially supported with Vt30,000 each;
- 210 copies of Legal Literacy materials (family law brochures) were distributed.

Legal Advocacy and Lobbying

- VWC has continued to lobby for the Family Protection Order Bill, through the media in the last 3 months;
- VWC has provided awareness on the new Domestic Violence Court Orders through meetings, workshops, talks and the media.

Government Policy (which at the time of reporting was still awaiting government adoption) is to ensure women's equal representation in government by 2006. Already, workshops on voter education for women, and training women candidates have been held. A draft Women in the Public Service Policy was also completed in 2003 (see Box 62.2 page 223).

The development of an Economic Empowerment of Women Policy began in 2002 but has yet to be completed. The purpose of this policy is to raise the standard of living of women and their families to alleviate the effects of poverty.

A draft Women and Health Policy was completed in 2003 and plans made for a Women in Education Policy in 2004. In 2001, approximately half of all schoolchildren in the 4–6 years age group were attending pre-school classes, 50% of them female. In primary schools, females are accessing education almost in proportion to their representation in the general population. The drop-out rate for girls in the higher school levels, is, however, high, and fewer females apply for tertiary scholarships. As far as health matters are concerned, only 15% of women between 18–35 years use contraception, and accessing health care in rural areas (Outer Islands) is difficult and maternal mortality can be high.

National Women's Machinery

The NWM was established in 1983 and originally located in the Ministry of Culture, Religion, Archives and Women's Affairs. At the time, its programmes were based on the traditional roles of women and included courses on sewing, cooking, home economics and building stoves.

In 1997, the NWM was moved to the Office of the Prime Minister and it now develops and co-ordinates policies on women's advancement. Following the 1997 Comprehensive Reform Programme, nine benchmarks for women were identified:

- Visibility and meaningful participation of women in decision-making;
- Valuation of the contribution of women;
- Economic equality and independence;

- Combating violence against women and abolishing discriminatory laws;
- General physical and mental health;
- Reproductive health;
- Customs, religion and culture;
- Education; and
- Environmental management and subsistence production.

In 1998, financial constraints led to the

withdrawal of five of the NWM's six posts of Women Field Officers in the provinces. Its budget has also been frozen at Vt9,766,000 (US\$84,238) since 2001. On the plus side, a gender planner joined the NWM in 2000.

Traditional and public attitudes also slow the NWM's work and to improve its public profile, the NWM works through its

'working in partnership' philosophy. The geography of Vanuatu is a further hindrance, making communication and transport difficult and expensive.

The NWM's best achievements are the development of the Women in Government and Women in the Public Service policies, as well as the 2002 Violence against Women Policy.

The NWM has good working relations with government ministries and agencies.

Partnerships

The NWM works closely with a number of CSOs, including the Vanuatu Women's Development Scheme, on micro-credit schemes, and with Wan Smol Bag and church organisations on training trainers in voter education. The Vanuatu National Council of Women, Vanuatu Women's Centre and Family Health Association have extensive input into the development of all policies.

The NWM has also consulted the Malvatumauri (Council of Chiefs) on the development of policies and the Family Protection Order Bill.

International partnerships also benefit the NWM's work.

Concerns for the Future

Over the next few years, the NWM will concentrate on improvement in a number of areas.

It will work on increasing the representation of women in decision-making levels, especially through the Women in Government Policy and Women in Public Service Policy. Faced with a five-fold increase in domestic violence reports, it will focus on combating violence against women. It will also work towards improving women's economic empowerment, and their education and health. Work on gender mainstreaming will continue.

Box 62.2: Women in the Public Service

A document, Policy Guidelines for Women in the Public Service 2003–2006, drawn up by the Vanuatu NWM, shows that while the Government is committed to gender equity – as evidenced in its Comprehensive Reform Programme, the Nine Benchmarks for Women in Development and the embracing of the Millennium Development Goals – actual progress, especially in the Public Service, has been slow.

There are, for example, fewer women holding senior positions in the Public Service than men; and where women are in such posts, their salary levels are generally lower than men's. The number of women in national statutory bodies and commissions is also low – a study of 30 statutory bodies showed that women made up only 8% of the workforce.

The present strategy of integrating gender analysis at all levels in sector planning requires that senior government officers recognise that women need to be targeted and gender-sensitive programming encouraged. But, according to the document, women also need more support and training in order that they may be promoted to senior posts in government.

The document believes that, as a temporary measure, it may be necessary to introduce legislation setting aside quotas for women in the Public Service, statutory bodies and commissions. Other legislation on equal opportunities and against sexual harassment is also needed.

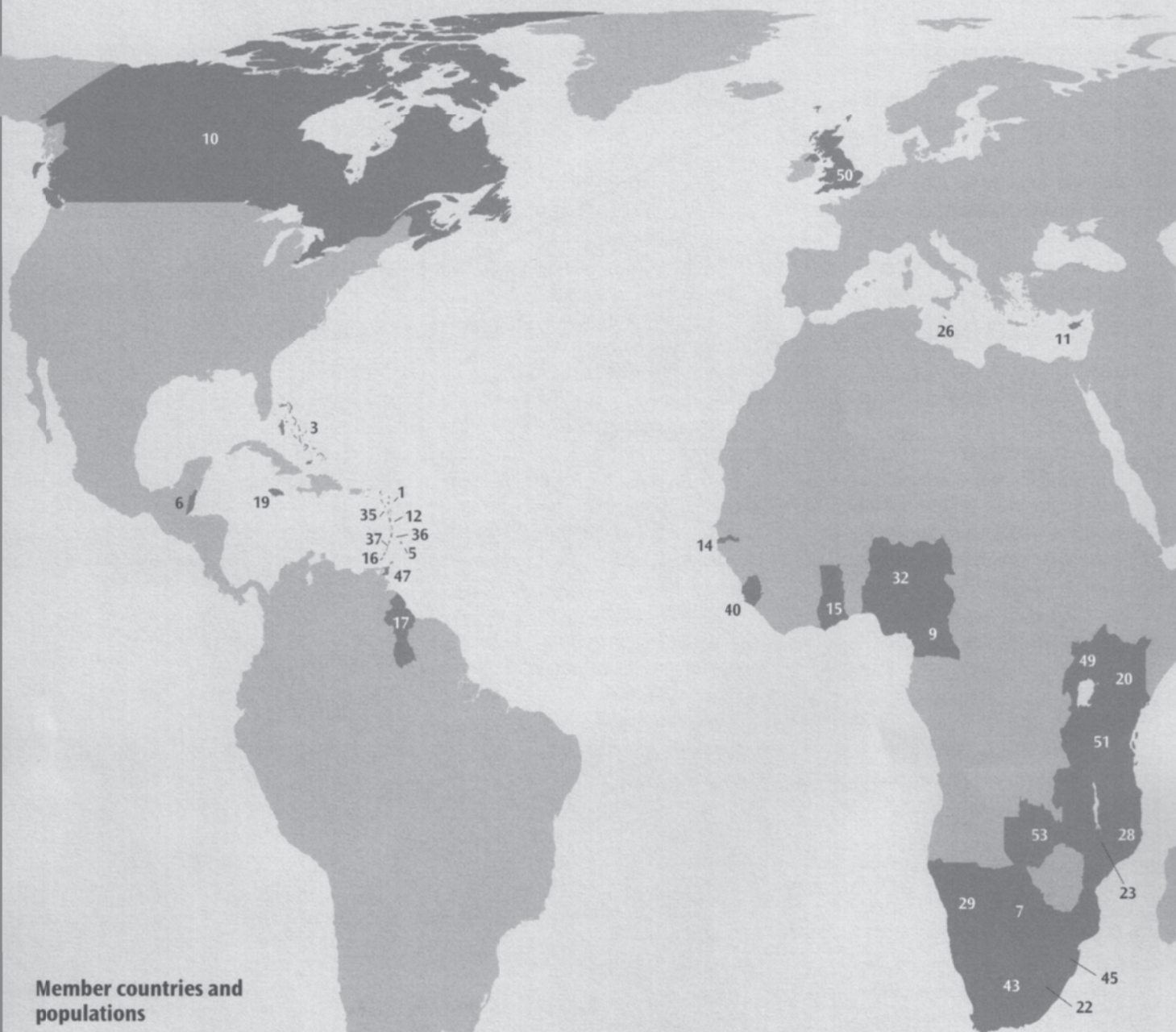
There is, in addition, a pressing need for the collection of better sex-disaggregated data if progress in gender equality is to be monitored.

The main objectives of the document are to:

- Increase to 30% the proportion of women at Director-General and Director levels in the Public Service by 2006;
- Increase to 30% the representation of women in statutory bodies, commissions and tribunals by 2006;
- Attain an equal number of women and men in employment in the Public Service by 2006;
- Improve workplace and employment practice in line with gender-equality and anti-discrimination legislation;
- Encourage women to take employment in non-traditional areas;
- Provide more and better skills training for women;
- Improve career planning for women in the Public Service; and
- Encourage the collection of sex-disaggregated statistics for gender analysis.

ANNEX I

The Commonwealth and its Members



Member countries and populations

1	Antigua and Barbuda	69,000	21	Kiribati	95,000
2	Australia	19,581,000	22	Lesotho	2,087,000
	<i>(external territories: Australian Antarctic Territory, Christmas Island, Cocos [Keeling] Islands, Coral Sea Islands Territory, Heard Island and McDonald Islands, Norfolk Island, Territory of Ashmore and Cartier Islands)</i>		23	Malawi	10,743,000
3	The Bahamas	314,000	24	Malaysia	24,305,000
4	Bangladesh	135,684,000	25	Maldives	287,000
5	Barbados	269,000	26	Malta	397,000
6	Belize	253,000	27	Mauritius	1,212,000
7	Botswana	1,712,000	28	Mozambique	18,438,000
8	Brunei Darussalam	351,000	29	Namibia	1,823,000
9	Cameroon	15,523,000	30	Nauru	11,000
10	Canada	31,414,000	31	New Zealand	3,870,000
				<i>(includes the territories of Tokelau and the Ross Dependency [Antarctic]; self-governing countries in free association with New Zealand: Cook Islands and Niue)</i>	
			32	Nigeria	132,785,000
			11	Cyprus	765,000
			12	Dominica	72,000
			13	Fiji Islands	823,000
			14	The Gambia	1,376,000
			15	Ghana	20,071,000
			16	Grenada	102,000
			17	Guyana	772,000
			18	India	1,048,279,000
			19	Jamaica	2,613,000
			20	Kenya	31,345,000



33 Pakistan	144,902,000		
34 Papua New Guinea	5,373,000		
35 St Kitts and Nevis	46,000		
36 St Lucia	159,000		
37 St Vincent and the Grenadines	117,000		
38 Samoa	176,000	48 Tuvalu	12,000
39 Seychelles	84,000	49 Uganda	23,395,000
40 Sierra Leone	5,235,000	50 United Kingdom	58,858,000
41 Singapore	4,164,000	<i>(overseas territories: Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands, St Helena and St Helena Dependencies [Ascension and Tristan da Cunha], South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands)</i>	
42 Solomon Islands	443,000	51 United Republic of Tanzania	35,181,000
43 South Africa	43,580,000	52 Vanuatu	206,000
44 Sri Lanka	18,968,000	53 Zambia	10,461,000
45 Swaziland	1,088,000		
46 Tonga	101,000		
47 Trinidad and Tobago	1,318,000		

2002 population figures from World Development Indicators database, World Bank, July 2003, except for Nauru and Tuvalu

ANNEX II

The Commonwealth Plan of Action, 1995 (Summary)

The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action (formally known as A Commonwealth Vision for Women Towards the Year 2000: The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development) set out a package of interrelated strategic objectives and measures for the period 1995–2000.

It set out Commonwealth initiatives at two strategic levels:

- (i) Concentrating on strengthening national capacity for effective implementation of the Plan; and
- (ii) Focusing on a limited number of core issues for priority action.

To achieve the above, the combined efforts of Commonwealth member governments and the Commonwealth Secretariat would be harnessed.

The complementary actions of governments and the Secretariat are set out opposite:

Fifteen Critical Issues for Action by Governments

Commonwealth governments agreed to put in place national plans to implement the 1995 Plan of Action. The Commonwealth Secretariat would provide training, advice and technical assistance. Fifteen areas were considered to be the desirable components of the Plan:

1. Establishment and strengthen Gender Management Systems (GMS) and National Women's Machineries;
2. Integration of gender issues in all national policies, plans and programmes;
3. Capacity building for gender planning;
4. Becoming models of good practice as an employer;
5. Promoting equal opportunities and positive and/or affirmative action throughout the country and consult women on priorities;
6. Action against discrimination;
7. Establishment of women's rights as human rights, elimination of violence against women, protection of the girl-child and outlawing of all forms of trafficking in women and girls;

8. Action to encourage and increase women's participation in decision-making;
9. Appraisal of gender policies and gender impact assessment on macroeconomic policies;
10. Action on sustainable development, poverty alleviation and eradication of absolute poverty;
11. Action on women's human resource development, especially in literacy, and training and education, especially in science and technology;
12. Action on women's health;
13. Undertaking an advocacy role in partnership with the media;
14. Support for women's organisations;
15. Usage of gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive language.

Nine Measures for Action by the Commonwealth Secretariat

Under the 1995 Plan, the Commonwealth Secretariat was to adopt nine special measures which would cut across its activities to strengthen its capacity to provide gender-inclusive and women-specific functional and technical assistance to governments, and to become itself an example of good practice:

1. Advocacy of Commonwealth and divisional mandates for gender and development;
2. Training for gender planning;
3. Gender-sensitive strategic planning;
4. Gender targeting;
5. Appointment of gender-sensitive consultants and experts;
6. Usage of gender-inclusive language;
7. Development of sex-disaggregated databases (quantitative and qualitative information);
8. Monitoring and evaluation of gender integration and gender planning;
9. Introduction of gender accounting.

Strategic Objectives of the 1995 Plan of Action

Commonwealth Objectives of Governments

- A. Develop national capacity in gender training, gender planning, gender policy appraisal and impact assessment, gender management and accounting systems. In particular, strengthen National Women's Machineries so that they can formulate and influence policies to address women's concerns as integral components of socio-economic development.
- B. Integrate gender into all government agendas, policies and programmes and create a culture within government which is gender-sensitive and where gender issues become the responsibility of all, not only that of the women's bureaux.
- C. Provide gender-sensitisation and training across the board in government; ensure that regular government training programmes are gender-sensitive and gender balanced.
- D. Link the 1995 Plan of Action to government policies on women and to national development plans and programmes.
- E. Take positive and/or affirmative action to provide equal opportunities in educational institutions and develop Equal Employment Opportunities policies in public services and the private sector.
- F. Increase women's participation in decision-making positions. Adopt special measures to include women in senior posts, committees and government programmes. Nominate women for Secretariat postings, committees, boards, councils and programmes.
- G. Commonwealth governments will take vigorous action to:
 - Promote and defend women's

- rights as human rights and outlaw all violence against women and girls;
- Promote women’s political participation in peace processes and democratic decision-making;
- Implement gender-sensitive macroeconomic policies and strategies, especially on the alleviation of poverty and eradication of absolute poverty;
- Implement the recommendations of the Commonwealth Human Resource Development Initiative which target women and girls as a priority; and promote the gender-balanced management of technology, environment and economic development.

Commonwealth Secretariat-wide Strategic Objectives

- A. Develop Secretariat capacity for gender training, gender planning, gender analysis, gender policy appraisal and impact assessment, and gender accounting. Advise and assist governments to strengthen these processes, and, in particular, National Women’s Machineries and gender management systems.
- B. Integrate gender concerns into all Secretariat policies, programmes and activities, and create a culture whereby gender issues become everyone’s responsibility. Ensure that all support of technical assistance to governments is gender-balanced and inclusive.
- C. Provide gender awareness training to the Secretariat across the board, system-wide and integrated into performance evaluation. Advise and assist governments in strengthening capacity for gender sensitisation and training.
- D. Integrate the 1995 Plan of Action in the Secretariat strategic planning process and assist governments in this area.
- E. Take positive and/or affirmative action to implement the new Secretariat Equal Employment Opportunities policy and assist governments in this area.
- F. Set and implement targets to increase the participation of women at senior staff levels in the Secretariat, in committees and boards, as experts, consultants and nominees for Secretariat posts and programmes, and renew targets annually to further progress.
- G. The Secretariat will advise and assist governments in the following areas, and ensure its own programmes promote:
 - Women’s rights as human rights and women’s participation in democratic decision-making processes, peace and conflict resolution;
 - Gender-sensitive macroeconomic policies and strategies for the alleviation of poverty, and the eradication of absolute poverty;
 - Gender-inclusive human resource development, management of technology, protection of the environment, and support for small island developing states.

ANNEX III

Update to the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action (Summary)

In 1999, Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsed an Update to the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action to provide a strategic framework for 2000–2005. This Update was formally known as Advancing the Commonwealth Agenda into the New Millennium (2000–2005): An Update to the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development.

The Update sought to refine the 1995 Plan by more closely defining Commonwealth priorities for action on the basis of its areas of comparative advantage. It also addressed persisting gender inequality as well as emerging issues and directly targeted capacity strengthening of National Women's Machineries. The Update recognised a more strategic advocacy, brokerage and catalytic role for the Commonwealth Secretariat's Gender Section in support of governments and other divisions in the Secretariat. Overall, it concentrated Commonwealth efforts and resources in an attempt to ensure greater effectiveness and outcomes.

Priority Areas for Action 2000–2005

1. Gender mainstreaming – including national mainstreaming policies and mainstreaming in specific sectors, and strengthening institutional capacity, including that of National Women's Machineries, for mainstreaming; use of gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue in development, including tackling poverty and attaining the Millennium Development Goals, and in combating HIV/AIDS.
2. Political empowerment and participation in conflict resolution and peace processes – in 1996, Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs set a target of having no less than 30% women in decision-making positions in the political, public and private sectors by 2005; in 2000, the ministers set a 30% target for women's participation in peace initiatives by 2005.
3. Women's human rights, including action against gender-based violence – promoting women's human rights and the awareness of these rights; combating gender-based violence.
4. Gender-responsive budgets and macroeconomics – monitoring and analysing the differential impact of macroeconomic policies on men and women, and developing strategies, mechanisms and corrective measures, such as gender-responsive budgets, to address imbalances in key areas; integrating gender analysis in national planning; and monitoring the impact of globalisation trends to ensure women participate and benefit equally.

ANNEX IV

The Beijing Platform for Action 1995: Critical Areas of Concern

The Beijing Platform for Action was issued at the end of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. It called on governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental organisations and the private sector, to take strategic action in the following 12 critical areas of concern:

1. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women

Strategic objectives:

- Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty;
- Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources;
- Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions;
- Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminisation of poverty.

2. Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training

Strategic objectives:

- Ensure equal access to education;
- Eradicate illiteracy among women;
- Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education;
- Develop non-discriminatory education and training;
- Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reform;
- Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

3. Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services

Strategic objectives:

- Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services;

- Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health;
- Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues;
- Promote research and disseminate information on women's health;
- Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

4. Violence against women

Strategic objectives:

- Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women;
- Study the causes of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures;
- Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

5. The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation

Strategic objectives:

- Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation;
- Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments;
- Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations;
- Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace;
- Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women;
- Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

6. Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources

Strategic objectives:

- Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources;
- Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade;
- Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women;
- Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks;
- Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination;
- Promote harmonisation of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

7. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

Strategic objectives:

- Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making;
- Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

8. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

Strategic objectives:

- Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies;
- Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects;
- Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

9. Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women

Strategic objectives:

- Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice;
- Achieve legal literacy.

10. Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media

Strategic objectives:

- Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication;
- Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

11. Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment

Strategic objectives:

- Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels;
- Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development;
- Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

12. Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl-child

Strategic objectives:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child;
- Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls;
- Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential;
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training;
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition;
- Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work;
- Eradicate violence against the girl-child;
- Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life;
- Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child.

ANNEX V

Percentage of Women in Parliaments of the Commonwealth 1995–2004

COUNTRY	NATIONAL PARLIAMENT/ASSEMBLY 1999		NATIONAL PARLIAMENT/ASSEMBLY 2004	
	Number	%	Number	%
	Female/Total		Female/Total	
Antigua & Barbuda	1/17	5.8	2/19	10.5
Australia	57/224	25.5	38/150	25.3
The Bahamas	6/40	15	8/40	20.0
Bangladesh	37/330	11.2	6/300	2.0
Barbados	3/28	10.7	4/30	13.3
Belize	5/34	14.7	1/30	3.3
Botswana	4/46	8.7	8/47	17.0
Brunei Darussalam	..	..	..	..
Cameroon	10/170	5.6	16/180	8.9
Canada	60/301	20	65/308	21.1
Cyprus	3/56	5.4	6/56	10.7
Dominica	..	..	6/32	18.8
Fiji Islands	6/114	5.3	4/70	5.7
The Gambia	1/49	2	7/53	13.2
Ghana	19/200	9.5	19/200	9.5
Grenada	4/15	26.7	5/15	33
Guyana	1/30	3.3	13/65	20.0
India	61/786	7.8	44/541	8.1
Jamaica	8/60	13.33	7/60	11.7
Kenya	9/222	4.1	16/224	7.1
Kiribati	..	..	2/42	4.8
Lesotho	3/80	3.8	14/120	11.7
Malawi	..	..	18/193	9.3
Malaysia	13/192	7.0	20/219	9.1
Maldives	3/50	6	3/50	6.0
Malta	6/65	9.2	6/65	9.2
Mauritius	6/66	9	4/70	5.7
Mozambique	69/250	28	75/250	30.0
Namibia	15/78	19.2	19/72	26.4
Nauru	..	..	0/18	0
New Zealand	36/120	30	34/120	28.3
Nigeria	..	..	22/359	6.1
Pakistan	..	..	74/342	21.6
Papua New Guinea	2/109	1.8	1/109	0.9
St Kitts & Nevis	2/16	13	2/15	13.3
St Lucia	4/27	15	2/18	11.1
St Vincent & The Grenadines	1/21	5	5/22	22.7
Samoa	-	-	3/49	6.1
Seychelles	8/33	23.5	10/34	29.4
Sierra Leone	7/80	8.75	18/124	14.5
Singapore	6/93	6.5	15/94	16.0
Solomon Islands	-	-	0/50	0
South Africa	-	-	131/400	32.8
Sri Lanka	11/225	4.9	11/225	4.9
Swaziland	8/95	8.4	7/65	10.8
Tonga	-	-	0/30	0
Trinidad & Tobago	15/67	22.4	7/36	19.4
Tuvalu	0/12	0	0/15	0
Uganda	51/277	18.4	75/304	24.7
United Kingdom	121/659	18	118/659	17.9
United Republic of Tanzania	45/275	16	63/295	21.4
Vanuatu	0/52	0	2/52	3.8
Zambia	16/138	11.6	19/158	12.0

Source: Country Reports and Inter-Parliamentary Union: Women in Parliament, 2004, www.ipu.org

ANNEX VI

Status of Ratifications of Principal Human Rights Instruments

The international human rights treaties of the United Nations that establish committees of experts (often referred to as 'treaty bodies') to monitor their implementation are the following:

- (1) the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), which is monitored by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- (2) the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), which is monitored by the Human Rights Committee;
- (3) the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR-OP1), which is administered by the Human Rights Committee; and
- (4) the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aimed at the abolition of the death penalty (CCPR-OP2-DP);
- (5) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- (6) the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;
- (7) the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW-OP);
- (8) the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), which is monitored by the Committee against Torture;
- (9) the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of the Child;
- (10) the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC-OP-AC) on the involvement of children in armed conflict;
- (11) the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC-OP-SC) on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; and
- (12) the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (MWC), which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1990 and entered into force on 1 July 2004.

The following chart of States shows which are a party (indicated by the date of adherence: ratification, accession or succession) or signatory (indicated by an 's' and the date of signature) to the United Nations human rights treaties listed above. Self-governing territories that have ratified any of the treaties are also included in the chart. As at 21 August 2002, all 189 Member States of the United Nations and 4 non-Member States were party to one or more of these treaties.

Notes: The dates listed refer to the date of ratification, unless followed by: An 'a' which signifies accession.

'd', which signifies succession, or

's', which signifies signature only.

* indicates that the state party has recognised the competence to receive and process individual communications of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination under article 14 of the CERD or of the committee against Torture under article 22 of CAT.

Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN Division for the Advancement of Women as of 2 November 2003 (17 December 2004 for CEDAW and CEDAW-OP)

Compiled by the Commonwealth Secretariat

STATE	CESCR (1)	CCPR (2)	CCPROP1
Antigua & Barbuda			
Australia	10 Nov 03	13 Nov 80	25 Dec 91 ^a
The Bahamas			
Bangladesh	5 Jan 99 ^a	6 Dec 00 ^a	
Barbados	3 Jan 76 ^a	23 Mar 76	23 Mar 73 ^a
Belize	s:6 Sep 00	10 Sept 96	
Botswana		8 Dec 00	
Brunei Darussalam			
Cameroon	27 Sept 84 ^a	27 Sept 84 ^a	27 Sept 84 ^a
Canada	19 Aug 76 ^a	19 Aug 76 ^a	19 Aug 76 ^a
Cyprus	3 Jan 76	23 Mar 76	15 July 92
Dominica	17 Sept 93 ^a	17 Sept 93 ^a	
Fiji Islands			
The Gambia	29 Mar 79 ^a	22 Jun 79 ^a	9 Sept 88 ^a
Ghana	7 Dec 00	7 Dec 00	7 Dec 00
Grenada	6 Dec 91 ^a	6 Dec 91	
Guyana	15 May 77	15 May 77	10 Aug 93 ^a
India	10 Jul 79 ^a	10 Jul 79 ^a	
Jamaica	3 Oct 76	23 Mar 76	
Kenya	3 Jan 76	23 Mar 76	
Kiribati			
Lesotho	9 Dec 92 ^a	9 Dec 92 ^a	6 Dec 00 ^a
Malawi	22 Mar 94 ^a	22 Mar 94 ^a	11 Sep 96
Malaysia			
Maldives			
Malta	13 Dec 90 ^a	13 Dec 90 ^a	13 Dec 90 ^a
Mauritius	3 Jan 76 ^a	23 Mar 76 ^a	23 Mar 76 ^a
Mozambique		21 Oct 93 ^a	
Namibia	28 Feb 95 ^a	28 Feb 95 ^a	28 Feb 95 ^a
Nauru		s:12 Nov 01	s:12 Nov 01
New Zealand	28 Mar 79	28 Mar 79	26 Aug 89 ^a
Nigeria	29 Oct 93 ^a	29 Oct 93 ^a	
Pakistan			
Papua New Guinea			
St Kitts & Nevis			
St Lucia			
St Vincent & the Grenadines	9 Feb 82 ^a	9 Feb 82 ^a	9 Feb 82 ^a
Samoa			
Seychelles	5 Aug 92 ^a	5 Aug 92 ^a	5 Aug 92 ^a
Sierra Leone	23 Nov 96 ^a	23 Nov 96 ^a	23 Aug 96 ^a
Singapore			
Solomon Islands	17 Mar 82 ^d		
South Africa	s:3 Oct 94	10 Mar 99	28 Nov 02 ^a
Sri Lanka	11 Sep 80 ^a	11 Jun 80 ^a	3 Jan 98 ^a
Swaziland			
Tonga			
Trinidad & Tobago	8 Mar 79 ^a	21 Mar 79 ^a	
Tuvalu			
Uganda	21 Apr 87 ^a	21 Sep 95 ^a	14 Feb 96
United Kingdom	20 Aug 76	20 Aug 76	
United Republic of Tanzania	11 Sep 76 ^a	11 Sep 76 ^a	
Vanuatu			
Zambia	10 Jul 84 ^a	10 Jul 84 ^a	10 Jul 84 ^a

CCPROP2	CERD	CEDAW	CEDAW-OP	CAT	CRC	CRCOPAC	CRCOPSC	MWC
	25 Oct 88 ^d	1 Aug 89 ^a		18 Aug 93 ^a	4 Nov 93			
11 Jul 91 ^a	30 Oct 75 [*]	28 Jul 83		7 Sept 89 [*]	16 Jan 91	s:21 Oct 02	s:18 Dec 01	
	5 Aug 75 ^d	6 Oct 93 ^a			22 May 91			
	11 July 79 ^a	6 Nov 84 ^a	6 Sept 00	4 Nov 98 ^a	2 Sept 90	12 Feb 02	18 Jan 02	s:7 Oct 98
	8 Dec 72 ^a	16 Oct 80			9 Oct 90			
	14 Dec 01	16 May 90	9 Dec 02	26 Jun 87 ^a	2 Sept 90	s:6 Sep 00	s:6 Sep 00	1 Jul 03
	22 Mar 74 ^a	13 Aug 96 ^a		8 Sep 00	13 April 95 ^a	s: 24 Sept 03	24 Oct 03	
					26 Jan 95 ^a			
	24 Jun 71	23 Aug 94 ^a		26 Jun 87 ^a	10 Feb 93	s:5 Oct 01	s:5 Oct 01	
	15 Nov 70	10 Dec 81	18 Oct 02	24 Jul 87 [*]	12 Jan 92	12 Feb 02	s:10 Nov 01	
10 Sep 99 ^a	4 Jan 69 [*]	23 Jul 85 ^a	26 Apr 02	17 Aug 91 [*]	9 Mar 91		s:08 Feb 01	
		15 Sep 80			12 April 91	20 Oct 02	20 Oct 02 ^a	
	11 Jan 73 ^d	28 Aug 95			12 Sept 93			
	28 Jan 79 ^a	16 Apr 93		s:23 Oct 85	7 Sept 90	s:21 Dec 00	s:21 Dec 00	
	4 Jan 69	2 Jan 86	s:24 Feb 00	7 Oct 00	2 Sept 90		s:24 Sept 00	1 Jul 03
	s:17 Dec 81	30 Aug 90			5 Dec 90			
	17 Mar 77	17 Jul 80		18 Jun 88	13 Feb 91			
	4 Jan 69	9 Jul 93		s:14 Oct 97	11 Jan 93 ^a			
	4 Jul 71	19 Oct 84			13 Jul 91	9 Jun 02	s:8 Sep 00	
	13 Oct 01 ^a	9 Mar 84 ^a		23 Mar 97 ^a	2 Sep 90	12 Feb 02	s:8 Sep 00	
		17 Mar 04 ^a			10 Jan 96 ^a			
	4 Dec 71 ^a	22 Aug 95 ^a	24 Sept 04	12 Dec 01 ^a	9 Apr 92	s:6 Sep 00	24 Oct 03	
	11 Jul 96 ^a	12 Mar 87 ^a	s:7 Sep 00	11 Jul 97 ^a	1 Feb 91 ^a	s:7 Sep 00	s:7 Sep 00	
		5 Jul 95			19 Mar 95 ^a			
	24 May 84 ^a	1 Jul 93 ^a			13 Mar 91	s:10 May 02	10 Jun 02	
29 Mar 95 ^a	26 Jun 71 [*]	8 Mar 91 ^a		13 Oct 90 ^a	30 Oct 90	9 Jun 02	s:7 Sep 00	
	29 Jun 72 ^a	9 Jul 84 ^a	s:11 Nov 01	8 Jan 93 ^a	2 Sep 90 ^a	s:11 Nov 01	s:11 Nov 01	
21 Oct 93 ^a	18 May 83 ^a	16 Apr 97 ^a		14 Oct 99 ^a	26 May 94		6 Apr 03 ^a	
28 Feb 95 ^a	11 Dec 82 ^a	23 Nov 92 ^a	26 May 00	28 Dec 94 ^a	30 Oct 90	16 May 02	16 May 02	
	s:12 Nov 01			s:12 Nov 01	26 Aug 94 ^a	s:8 Sep 00	s:8 Sep 00	
11 Jul 91	22 Dec 72	10 Jan 85	7 Sept 00	9 Jan 90 [*]	6 May 93	12 Feb 02	s:7 Sep 00	
	4 Jan 69 ^a	13 Jun 85	22 Nov 04	28 Jun 01	19 Apr 91	s:8 Sep 00	s:8 Sep 00	
	4 Jan 69	12 Mar 96 ^a			12 Dec 90	s:26 Sep 01	s:26 Sep 01	
	26 Feb 82 ^a	12 Jan 95 ^a			31 Mar 93			
		25 Apr 85 ^a			2 Sep 90			
	14 Feb 90 ^d	8 Oct 82 ^a			16 Jul 93			
	9 Dec 81 ^a	4 Aug 81 ^a		31 Aug 01 ^a	25 Nov 93			
		25 Sept 92 ^a			29 Dec 94			
15 Mar 95 ^a	6 Apr 78 ^a	5 May 92 ^a	s:22 Jul 02	4 Jun 92 ^a	7 Oct 90 ^a	s:23 Jan 01	s:23 Jan 01	1 Jul 03 ^a
	4 Jan 69	11 Nov 88	s:8 Sep 00	25 May 01	2 Sep 90	15 Jun 02	18 Jan 02	s:15 Sep 00
		5 Oct 95 ^a			4 Nov 95 ^a	s:7 Sep 00		
	17 Mar 82 ^d	6 May 02 ^a	6 May 02		10 May 95 ^a			
28 Nov 02 ^a	9 Jan 99 [*]	15 Dec 95		9 Jan 99 [*]	16 Jul 95	s:8 Feb 02	30 Jul 03	
	20 Mar 82 ^a	5 Oct 81	15 Oct 02	2 Feb 94 ^a	11 Aug 91	12 Feb 02		1 Jul 03 ^a
	7 May 69 ^a	26 Mar 04			6 Oct 95			
	17 Mar 72 ^a				6 Dec 95 ^a			
	3 Nov 73	12 Jan 90			4 Jan 92			
		6 Oct 99 ^a			22 Oct 95			
	21 Dec 80 ^a	22 Jul 85		26 Jun 87 ^a	16 Sep 90	6 Jun 02 ^a	18 Jan 02 ^a	1 Jul 03 ^a
10 Dec 99	6 Apr 69	7 Apr 86	17 Dec 04 ^a	7 Jan 89	15 Jan 92	24 Jul 03	s:7 Sep 00	
	27 Nov 72 ^a	20 Aug 85			11 Jul 91		24 May 03 ^a	
		8 Sept 95			6 Aug 93			
	5 Mar 72	21 Jun 85		6 Nov 98 ^a	5 Jan 92			

ANNEX VII

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Trinidad and Tobago

Senator The Hon Joan Yuille Williams,
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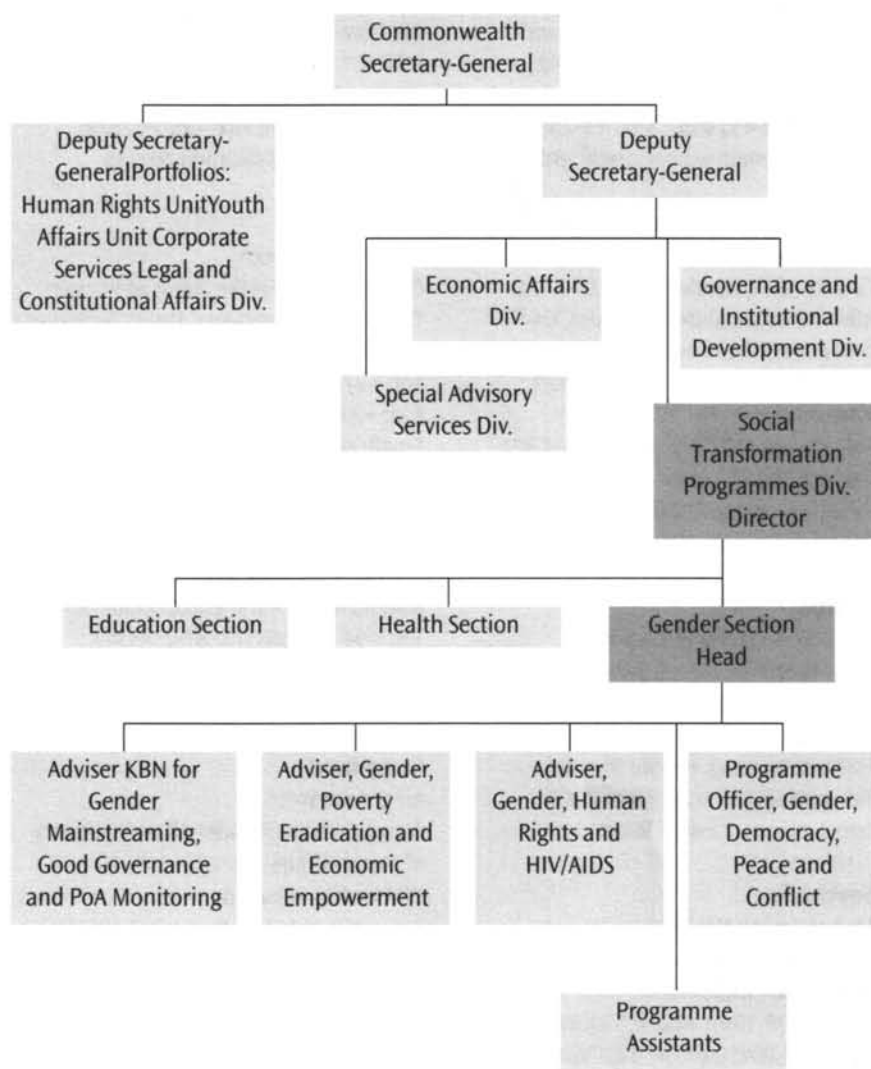
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NEW GENDER MAINSTREAMING SERIES ON DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Chains of Fortune: Linking Women Producers and Workers with Global Markets

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2004, GBP £11.99,
ISBN 0-85092-798-6



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2004, GBP £10.99,
ISBN 0-85092-808-7



Mainstreaming Informal Employment and Gender in Poverty Reduction

Marilyn Carr, Joan Vanek,
Martha Alter Chen
2004, 248 pages, GBP £12.99,
ISBN 0-85092-797-0



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Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen and Linda Etchart
2004, about 256 pages, GBP £12.99,
ISBN 0-85092-754-4

Engendering Budgets: A Practitioners' Guide to Understanding and Implementing Gender-Responsive Budgets

Debbie Budlender and Guy Hewitt
2003, 15 pages, GBP £10.99,
ISBN 0-85092-735-8



Gender Mainstreaming in the Multilateral Trading System: A Handbook for Policy-makers and other Stakeholders

Mariama Williams
2003, 228 pages, GBP £10.99,
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An Integrated Resource for Implementing the Gender Management System
Diana Athill
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ISBN 0-85092-768-4



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2001, 46 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-606-8

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Christine Chinkin and Florence Butegwa
2001, 102 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-653-X

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Elizabeth McGregor et al
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ISBN 0-85092-654-8

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Gender Mainstreaming in the Public Service

1999, 40 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-596-7

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1999, 64 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-590-8

Using Gender-Sensitive Indicators

1999, 64 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-594-0

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Kathleen Barnett and Caren Grown
2004, 86 pages, GBP £9.50,
ISBN 0-85092-788-9

Women and Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Reconstruction Report of the Sierra Leone National Consultation, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 21-24 May 2001

edited by Rawwida Baksh-Sooddeen and Linda Etchart
Published by Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Sierra Leone in collaboration with Commonwealth Secretariat, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The British Council, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
2003, 202 pages, GBP £10.50,
ISBN 0-85092-744-7

Commonwealth Businesswomen: Trade Matters, Best Practices and Success Stories

2002, 192 pages, GBP £10.99,
ISBN 0-85092-689-0

Gender Budgets Make Cents: Understanding Gender-Responsive Budgets

Debbie Budlender, Diane Elston, Guy Hewitt and Tanni Mukhopadhyay
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ISBN 0-85092-676-9

Gender Equality and the Judiciary: Using International Standards to Promote the Human Rights of Women and the Girl Child

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Mary Harris
1999, 122 pages, GBP £8.99,
ISBN 0-85092-580-0

Guidelines for Police Training on Violence Against Women and Child Sexual Abuse

2nd edition
1999, 195 pages, GBP £10.99,
ISBN 0-85092-576-2

How to do Gender-Sensitive Budget Analysis Contemporary Research and Practice

Debbie Budlender & Rhonda Sharp with Kerri Allen. This title is co-published with AusAID and carries their ISBN. It can be ordered from the Commonwealth Secretariat.
1999 82 pages, GBP £8.99, 0-86803-615-3

Women in Politics: Voices from the Commonwealth

1999, 122 pages, GBP £12.99,
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Abbreviations

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation	GRB	Gender-responsive Budget	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations	GVC	Global Value Chain	SADC	Southern African Development Community
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development	HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	SARO	South Asian Regional Office, IDRC
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action (1995)	ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights	SASD	Special Advisory Services Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	ICESCR	International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	SMME	Small-, Medium- and Micro-Enterprises
CBC	Commonwealth Business Council	ICT	Information and Communications Technology	SPC	South Pacific Commission
CBWN	Commonwealth Business Women's Network	IDRC	International Development Research Centre, Canada	STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women	ILO	International Labour Organisation	STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
CFMM	Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting	IMF	International Monetary Fund	STPD	Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation	LDC	Least Developing Country	SWAP	Sector-wide Approaches to Poverty
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	MDG	Millennium Development Goal	UN	United Nations
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	MNA	Member of the National Assembly	UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
COL	Commonwealth of Learning	MP	Member of Parliament	UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation	UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific	NWM	National Women's Machinery	UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	NZAID	New Zealand International Aid and Development Agency	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
CSW	United Nations Committee on the Status of Women	OAS	Organisation of American States	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
EEOP	Equal Employment Opportunities Policy	OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States	WID	Women in Development
EU	European Union	PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories	WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment, Globalising and Organising
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	WTO	World Trade Organisation
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	PoA	Plan of Action		
GAD	Gender and Development	PPA	Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women		
GDI	Gender-related Development Index (<i>see End Note, page 40</i>)	PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper		
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PWB	Pacific Women's Bureau		
GENDERNET	OECD Network on Gender Equality				
GFP	Gender Focal Point				
GMS	Gender Management System				

The year 2005 marks a decade of successful initiatives since Commonwealth governments adopted the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development, which was presented to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

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