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Promoting Gender Equality and Women's
Empowerment in Africa:
Questioning the Achievements and
Confronting the Challenges
Ten Years After Beijing

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACGD	African Centre for Gender and Development
ADB	African Development Bank
ADF	African Development Forum
AGDI	African Gender and Development Index
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APFA	African Platform for of Action
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ATT	Antiretroviral Triple Therapy
ARV	Antiretroviral
AU	African Union
AU PAP	African Union Pan African Parliament
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CHGA	Commission on HIV and Governance in Africa
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSSDCA	Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Commission for Central African States
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
FOWODE	Forum for Women and Development (Uganda)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development

ICPD-PoA	International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IGOs	International Governmental Organizations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PMTCT	Preventing Mother-To-Child Transmission
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PLWHA	People Living With HIV and AIDS
RECs	Regional Economic Commissions
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infections
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TB	Tuberculosis
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Session
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organization
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network

Introduction

This paper is the Economic Commission for Africa's contribution to the debate on progress made, remaining challenges and actions taken to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in the last decade. The discussion starts from the conviction that gender equality and the empowerment of women are both desirable and mandatory for the achievement of sustainable development. It reviews what has been done in the decade to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. The paper acknowledges the progress made, especially in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action but proceeds to interrogate the adequacy of the actions taken for achieving the desirable goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It highlights some good practices as well as gender issues that remain unresolved and areas in which the situation of women has deteriorated. The paper also focuses on the major crosscutting challenges that must be seriously addressed if gender equality is to be achieved. Finally, it outlines some of the concrete measures that have to be taken to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in Africa. These actions were discussed and adopted at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women, in Addis Ababa in October 2004.

This paper also links the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA). Linking reviews of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields was one of the recommendations of the methods of work for the Commission on the Status of Women¹ as derived from the General Assembly Resolution 57/270B of July 2003. The Resolution requested functional commissions to integrate and coordinate implementation and follow-up to outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields. Accordingly, the paper focuses on the implementation and process of delivery on promises and commitments made in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, linking them to some issues raised in the ICPD at 10 review, and highlighting the potential for mainstreaming gender into the MDGs. In this regard, the year 2005 presents a strategic opportunity since the decade review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the ICPD PoA, as well as the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration, are being conducted. These review processes present an opportunity to explore whether there have been synergies in the implementation of outcomes of these major UN Conferences and Summits.

The General Context

Over the past decade international commitments to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment have been reaffirmed in UN conferences and summits, and are contained in strategic documents such as the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA) and the Millennium Declaration. At the Millennium Summit of September 2000, world leaders agreed to take these commitments forward and to set targets for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2005, the Beijing +10 review process coincides with the review of the ICPD PoA after 10 years of implementation and MDG +5. The review processes are about accountability for delivery on existing commitments and agreements on concrete steps forward to ensure that gender equality, equity and women's empowerment are achieved in all areas. They also present an opportunity for measuring the MDGs against the yardsticks developed in the Beijing Platform for Action and suggest measures to mainstream gender into all the MDGs.

The decade following the adoption of the Beijing PFA witnessed many changes on the African continent, including the development of regional declarations and mechanisms on gender and development. Emphasis on democracy and conflict resolution at the regional level has contributed to positive change at the national level. The creation of the African Union (AU), committed by its constitutive act to the principle of gender equality and equity, provides further opportunities for institutionalising gender mainstreaming and increased political participation of African women in regional decision-making. The AU Commission was formed on a 50/50 gender parity basis. The first Speaker of the AU Pan African Parliament (PAP) is a woman and at least one in every five national members of the PAP is a woman. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa was adopted in July 2003. In 2004, African Heads of States adopted a Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, providing normative standards on women's human rights in Africa to be adhered to by governments at the national level. The AU New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) is also expected to enhance women's human rights, particularly through the application of social development indicators included in its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to monitor the performance of States in this respect.

The new impetus for regional integration through Regional Economic Commissions is improving the capacity of Africa to collectively negotiate new international trade agreements, including those conducted under the World Trade Organisation. Should current negotiations on the abolition of agricultural subsidies succeed, it will help ensure fair competition for Africa's agricultural products – the bulk of which are produced by African women.

Efforts to promote gender equality, equity and women's empowerment in Africa gained momentum on several fronts over the past ten years thus setting the stage

for further gains. Fifty-one of the 53 African Member States have now ratified CEDAW, known as the women's international bill of rights, and 17 have signed and 3 ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. Some countries have aligned their national legislation to the provisions of CEDAW. Attempts are underway to engender poverty surveys conducted during the poverty reduction strategies and PRSP processes, which will clearly demonstrate the feminisation of poverty and provide justification for more intensive gender analysis of macroeconomic and socio-economic policies. Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) initiated in some countries, has triggered transparent processes of accountability for gender responsiveness in public expenditures. Initiatives towards GRB and the inclusion of women's informal and unpaid work in national accounts are likely to have tremendous impact on resource allocation in the context of PRSPs and the MDGs. In addition, some countries have managed to reduce gender differentials in education through affirmative action and gender-aware policies aimed at improving the enrolment, retention and quality of education for girls.

However, and in spite of African women's mobilisation, advocacy, and increased representation in governance at regional and national levels, the normative gains are not yet reflected in substantial changes in the lives of ordinary women in Africa. African women, especially those living in rural communities, urban slums and those with disabilities, still face daunting challenges. Women's low access to productive resources including land, water, energy, credit, education, training, health, remunerated employment and communication has contributed to the situation whereby a larger proportion of women live in absolute and relative poverty today than ten years ago. The cumulative effects of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, food insecurity, low economic productivity, low levels of education and increased sexual violence have left African women vulnerable and with considerable challenges. Women bear the brunt of the HIV/AIDS pandemic either as principal providers of care or as the most affected and infected. Even in countries where overall HIV prevalence is low or has been reduced, the number of infected women is still on the rise. Women and girls continue to be seriously affected by gender-specific violations of their human, sexual and reproductive rights. Situations of armed conflict have become increasingly marked by rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and children. Women and girls continue to risk death from maternal mortality with an average of 1 in every 16 pregnancies in Sub-Saharan Africa resulting in death.

Ten years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and PFA, governments have recognised that passing laws and policies alone does not bring about substantial gender equality and equity or respect for women's human rights. The national and sub-regional reports on the ten-year review of Beijing Platform for Action from both governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) identified the need to bridge the gap between commitments and their implementation. The Decade Review of the implementation of the BPFA, therefore, provided an opportunity to renew commitments to gender equality, equity and empowerment of women and to suggest concrete actions that address the gaps between commitments and implementation.

Progress Made and Remaining Challenges in Implementing the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action in Africa

The Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 remains the blueprint for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment globally. The Beijing Plus Five process identified challenges that had impeded effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, such as globalisation, women's lack of access to science and technology, the changed patterns of labour migration, weak partnerships between governments and civil society, HIV/AIDS pandemic, growing drug and substance abuse, natural disasters, and the changing context of gender relations and responsibilities of women and men. The outcomes documents of major international conferences and summits, such as the Copenhagen Social Summit, the ICPD and its five-year review, the Millennium Summit, the Rio plus 10 Review provided additional insights and impetuses in the quest for gender equality and basic rights for all.

In Africa, the international processes were preceded by regional initiatives to make the review processes relevant to the needs and aspirations of the continent. The Decade Review Process started with national level evaluations by all African countries, feeding into the decade reviews by the five sub-regions of Africa, and culminating in the Africa Regional Review at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (October 2004). The review presented an opportunity for stakeholders to meet, confer and challenge each other to be accountable for the commitments and promises made at the Dakar and Beijing Conferences and in subsequent international conferences and summits.

The twelve critical areas of concern identified during the Beijing process continue to form the basis for assessing the levels of gender equality and women's empowerment. In relation to these critical areas of concern, Africa has registered some progress at national, sub-regional, and regional levels, especially in identifying strategies and putting in place processes that prepare the groundwork for achieving gender equality². The majority of African countries reported that they had adopted plans of action for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and also developed gender policies. They reported some successes in areas such as increased school enrolment for girls, wider coverage of health services, awareness-raising campaigns and programmes on women's human rights, increased participation of women in the economy and higher representation of women in governance structures. Some of the strategies developed can be cited as good practices.

However, despite these positive trends, major challenges still remain in all areas. An assessment of the situation of women in Africa shows that most of the strategies developed have not been fully implemented and have not made notable differences in the lives of grassroots women. Africa is still characterised by deteriorating poverty levels, women have limited access to productive resources, they suffer gross violations of their social, cultural and economic rights, they have

inadequate access to social services and are generally marginalised in the economy. Comparisons with other regions of the world indicate that Africa still lags behind in many areas. Globalisation has reinforced the marginalisation of women in Africa, particularly in the areas of sustainable livelihoods, trade, property rights and participation in the global economy.

This section of the paper briefly reviews the achievements and challenges in the implementation of commitments made by African governments and the international community to gender equality and the empowerment of women in each of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. In all these areas, it tries to link the commitments of the Beijing Platform for Action to the ICPD PoA and the MDGs. The paper derives information from a wide range of stakeholders including national decade review reports, inter-governmental organisations, specialised agencies of the United Nations, NGO Decade review consultations, reports of the five sub-regional Decade Review Meetings held throughout Africa, and discussions and conclusions of the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women held in October 2004.

Women and Poverty

The persistent and increasing burden of poverty³ on women is the first critical area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. Alleviation of poverty is also the first goal in the MDGs and an important goal of NEPAD. Poverty is also recognised as a major challenge to the achievement of the ICPD goals.

Progress

In the last decade there has been wide acknowledgement of high prevalence of poverty in Africa and some awareness that gender equality is essential for poverty reduction. In response to the dire situation of poverty in Africa, many countries selected this critical area of concern as a priority. Between 1995 and 2000, of the 48 African countries that had produced National Plans of Action for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, 43 had selected poverty reduction among their national priorities⁴. Poverty reduction programmes are being implemented in many countries of Africa. All the 13 African countries that had produced PRSPs in 2001 reported having mainstreamed gender into their strategies⁵. In the West Africa sub-regional Decade Review meeting, countries that have poverty reduction plans reported having incorporated millennium development goals 1 and 3 relating to poverty alleviation and gender equality into the national poverty reduction strategies.⁶ Reports of gender-sensitive consultations in the development of poverty reduction plans and gender-responsive monitoring by African countries indicate positive trends in gender mainstreaming in PRSPs⁷.

Over the decade, some countries have performed relatively well economically, thus making it possible to achieve the MDGs. One example that was cited in the Global Poverty Report of June 2002 is Uganda.

Box 1: Example of Progress in an Africa country

Better economic and social policies can make a difference for progressing towards the MDGs.

Uganda

- GDP growth average 6% a year in the 1990s
- GDP growth per capita averaged 3.3%
- Proportion of poor came down from 56% in 1992 to 35% in 2000
- Primary school enrolment rose from 2.5 million in 1995 to 6.7 million in 2000
- Proportion of non-salary spending reaching schools more than doubled from 40% to 90%
- Proportion of stunted children came down from 51% in 1992 to 40% in 2000
- Sero-prevalence rates came down from 30% in 1992 to 8.3% in 2000

Source: Achieving MDGs in Africa: Progress, Prospects and Policy implications, Global Poverty Report 2002 African Development Bank in collaboration with World Bank, with contributions from Asia Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund and Inter-American Development Bank. Page 11

Another strategy for promoting gender equality and equity is the analysis of the gender-responsiveness of national budgets. Many countries of Africa are analysing the gender responsiveness of national budgets. These initiatives challenge governments to demonstrate their commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment through equitable distribution of national resources.

Box 2: Gender Budgeting Initiatives in Africa

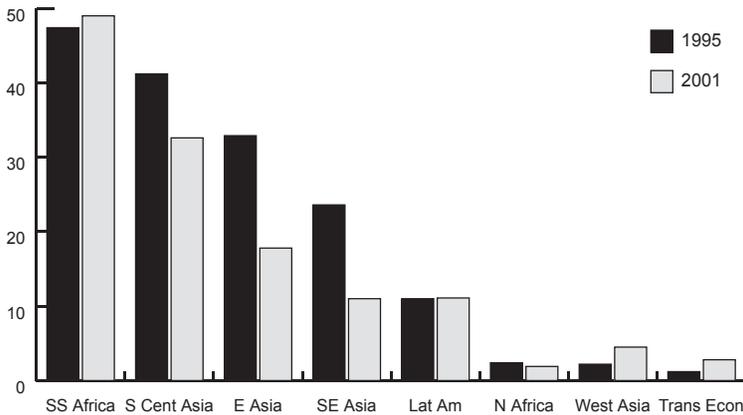
Following the pioneering work in South Africa, at least 14 other countries in sub-Saharan Africa are carrying out gender budgeting initiatives. They include Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Most initiatives reflect movement towards more transparent and participatory forms of governance. In some countries, civil society groups and parliamentarians carry out the initiatives jointly... For example in Uganda, the initiative is a creative partnership between FOWODE and the women's parliamentary caucus, in Tanzania TGNP started the initiative in 1997, and in Zimbabwe the ZWRCN works with the parliamentary committee responsible for public finance. In other countries the initiative has been led by government Ministries (Finance in Mozambique, Women's Affairs in Nigeria and Gender in Rwanda), with support from bilateral and UN agencies.

Source: Budlender 2002, UNIFEM 2002

Challenges

The areas of progress discussed above illustrate that more strides have been made in designing strategies and setting up processes for tackling poverty. However, little progress has yet been reported on the outcomes and results of these strategies in terms of reducing the burden of poverty on women. Despite the actions taken and reported by governments, Africa continues to lag behind in combating the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on its population. When compared to the rest of the world, the levels of poverty in Africa are very high and have been increasing over the last decade. Between 1990 and 2001 the proportion of people living below the poverty line continued to rise, increased by an estimated 82 million persons. Three hundred and forty million people, about half the population of Africa, live on less than US \$1 per day. Only 58 per cent has access to safe drinking water, and the average rate of illiteracy for people over 15 is 41 per cent.⁸ Figure 1 below shows that, while the proportion of persons living in poverty has been declining in some parts of the world, it increased in sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 1: Percentage of Population living on less than 1 US \$ a day⁹



According to a UNDP/UNICEF report on progress on the MDGs, sub-Saharan Africa is unlikely to meet the goal of halving the population of people living in poverty by 2015, and will be the only region in the world where the number of poor people in 2015 will be higher than in 1990.¹⁰ Current estimates are that (at the current rate of economic growth) the goal of halving the proportion of people living in poverty in Africa might not be met even by the year 2050.

Although there has been some acknowledgement that gender equality is essential for eradicating poverty in Africa,¹¹ the number of women living in poverty continues to increase. Women constitute the vast majority (up to 80%) of the poor.¹² Unequal access to and control over productive resources, unequal access to social services such as health and education, skewed distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work, and inadequate support for women's productive activities

and entrepreneurship are some of the major causes of the widespread increase in the number of women living in poverty. The majority of African women live in rural areas, largely confined to subsistence agriculture. They carry the responsibility for the production and preparation of food in their households, caring for children, the elderly, infirm, and the sick, and performing a wide variety of voluntary community services. All these contributions are not recognised or counted in national economic statistics. Poor women head many households and are more likely to take in orphaned children whose numbers have increased exponentially as a result of HIV/AIDS. The lack of recognition of women's work leads to lack of public investment in the areas where women are concentrated, such as the informal sector employment, rural subsistence production, domestic 'reproductive' work or the care economy and voluntary community work. As a result of the inadequate poverty analysis and diagnosis, gender insensitive policy choices further marginalise women and reinforce poverty.

Another major challenge to poverty reduction is the apparent inability of governments to translate gender policies into effective, actionable programmes. Many governments have reported that they incorporated the Beijing objectives and Millennium Development Goals relating to gender equality into national poverty reduction policies and development plans. However, research has revealed that even where gender-related poverty issues have been raised in country policies, gender-sensitive programmes to deal with these issues are rarely identified or implemented, and most measures taken do not address the gender issues and problems identified in the policy diagnosis.

Box 3: Gender in PRSPs

An assessment of 19 PRSPs (13 of them African) conducted by the World Bank Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network in 2001 revealed that:

- None of the countries had considered gender issues in the diagnosis, actions or monitoring in agriculture, safety nets, governance, infrastructure or financial services sectors.
- Gender issues were better integrated into health, nutrition and population issues because of the need to discuss reproductive health issues, especially women's reproductive roles.
- Only one quarter of the PRSPs considered gender issues in relation to HIV and AIDS
- Although there was some discussion of gender issues in the diagnosis of the education sector, only 3 PRSPs included actions to address gender specific constraints identified in the diagnosis.

Source: www.undp.org/gender/resource/Gender_in_PRSPs.pdf

A conclusion that can be reached from analysing the responses of African governments to the burden of poverty is that the right to development has not been prioritised for all (men, women and children). The right to social services such as education, health, clean water and reliable sources of fuel continues to be considered as optional and not obligatory. As a result, women have to negotiate and 'beg' for these basic necessities through advocacy for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as if the right to development is optional. In turn, governments take their time and put other national priorities ahead of the provision of these basic services. Hence the continued persistence and worsening burden of poverty.

Women in the Economy

The area of women's participation in the economies of Africa presents major challenges to poverty alleviation. Gross gender inequalities in income and asset distribution, in the distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work and the lack of recognition of the contributions of the household and care economies to the macro-economy are some of the causes of marginalisation of women. Most of these issues can be addressed within the context of eradicating poverty and hunger.

Progress

In the last decade, some measures have been taken to increase the participation of women in economies of Africa, such as passing legislation to make labour policies compatible with international labour standards, establishing micro-credit schemes, and expanding functional literacy programmes¹³. The participation of women in entrepreneurship has been supported through many initiatives such as the mobilisation of resources for small and medium enterprises, capacity building of participants in management skills and establishment of funding mechanisms that reach the lower levels of society, especially rural women. One such initiative is the Enterprise Development Facility.

Box 4: Enterprise development facility to help women entrepreneurs in Africa

The Enterprise Development Facility (EDF) is a technology-driven initiative aiming to address the constraints faced by African women in informal and formal small businesses, and give them access to information training and business opportunities. The Project was jointly launched in 1998 by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), as a follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the Africa-Asia Forum on the Economic Empowerment of Women, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in July 1997.

Some progress has also been made in the area of women's access to land and property ownership. Countries such as Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have made outstanding achievements by including requirements for spousal consent on matters concerning matrimonial land. Some countries that have had extensive land reform programmes have made policy decisions that give women quotas in land distribution.

Challenges

The main challenges to the achievement of gender equality in economies of Africa include:

- gender insensitivity of macro-economic policies
- lack of opportunities for women to influence these policies,
- the lack of recognition of the contribution to the macro-economy of the informal, household and rural subsistence economies where women are concentrated,
- gender discrimination in employment practices,
- skewed distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work, and
- the highly inequitable distribution of wealth.

The proportion of women in paid employment outside agriculture is lower in Africa than in other region of the world.¹⁴ This is one of the indicators of gender equality in the MDGs.

Box 5: UNECA's Responses to the Challenge of the Invisibility of Women in the Economy

In response to the need to clearly highlighting where women are in the economy as compared to men, the UNECA has developed the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI). This is a tool for use by policy makers, planners, monitoring institutions, NGOs and gender activists to measure the levels of gender equality and women's empowerment in the social, economic and political sectors. The tool can also be used to track Africa's progress with respect to the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing PFAs, the MDGs and other international instruments that address gender equality.

Furthermore, in order to address the challenge of the invisibility of women's contributions to the economy, ECA is developing a gender-aware macro economic model that enables policy makers to incorporate the contributions of the household economy into national statistics, thus making it possible to effectively assess the impact of macro-economic policies on women and men.

Education and training for women

All over the world, education for girls and women is recognised as a strategy for achieving gender equality and empowering women. It is widely accepted that an educated woman is more likely to marry later, to space her pregnancies, to have fewer children, to seek medical care for herself and her children and to adopt good hygiene in her household.¹⁵ The BPFA identified gross inequalities and inadequacies in education and training for women. Two MDGs (Goals 2 and 3) call for the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. The ICPD PoA also puts the fulfilment of women's potential through education and skills training at the centre of population policies and programmes.¹⁶

Progress

In the last decade, governments in Africa prioritised gender parity in access to, especially primary education. In sub-Saharan Africa gross primary school enrolment increased by more than 40%, while enrolment for girls increased even faster than that of boys¹⁷. Some countries, (such as Cape Verde, Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, Togo and Uganda) are very close to achieving universal primary education¹⁸. Other countries have passed legislation against sexual harassment in schools and have incentives such as reduced fees, free transport, meals and uniforms for girls who continue in school. In some countries gender-biased educational materials were removed from the curriculum, dispensation was given to adolescent mothers to continue with their education, and quota systems and affirmative action were implemented to allow more girls into tertiary institutions. Programmes that encourage girls to take up careers in science and technology were also implemented in some countries.

There was a marked decline in the enrolment gap between girls and boys, especially in primary schools. In countries such as Algeria, Botswana, Lesotho, Cape Verde, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal, Swaziland, and Uganda, for example, the net enrolment for girls in primary schools is equal to or greater than that of boys.¹⁹ National, regional and international non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations have been very active in promoting gender parity in primary education, conducting research and providing funding for programmes aimed at enhancing the retention of girls in schools. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is one example of organisations that have supported the education of women and girls.

Challenges

Although the area of education has been hailed as one where progress is most visible, major challenges still exist. Of the estimated 104 million school-age chil-

Box 6: Parity in school enrolment and empowerment

Gender parity in primary school enrolment does not necessarily bring about equal empowerment. Even when young women enter school in equal numbers with young men, they still drop out in larger numbers. They suffer from sexual harassment. They are discouraged from seeking higher education because of unequal job opportunities. Even when they enter employment in equal numbers, they bump against the glass ceiling in unequal promotions and unequal pay.

Source: UNIFEM (2002) Progress of the World's Women, p 12.

dren who are out of school worldwide, three-quarters of them are in sub-Saharan Africa and 57% are girls.²⁰

Major challenges to progress in education and training for women in Africa arise from persistent gender stereotyping, widespread gender discrimination and negative social attitudes toward girls' education. In lower income households, girls are over-burdened with household work compared to their male counterparts and are more likely to drop out of school when families experience economic and/or social hardships. While 61% of illiterate people over the age of 15 in sub-Saharan Africa are female²¹, pressure from multiple reproductive roles for women leaves little time for adult education.

Insufficient attention is paid to the link between employment opportunities and women's motivation to enter tertiary institutions. There are fewer employment opportunities for women, especially in science and technology due to discriminatory employment practices, and thus less motivation for women and girls to pursue careers in these areas.

Inequitable distribution of educational resources also presents a major challenge. Schools in poor neighbourhoods have poor infrastructure, very scanty educational equipment and high teacher/pupil ratios. As noted in the UNIFEM report, if gender parity in enrolment is achieved when only a quarter of children are in school, this will not lead to the empowerment of anyone. In some African countries where high school enrolment figures have been achieved (such as Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) major challenges have been experienced in the quality of education. The pupil/teacher ratios are as high as 70 to 1 and pupils in poor neighbourhoods learn outdoors or in overcrowded classrooms, with very few books and inadequate educational equipment²².

Women and Health

The BPFA raised and analysed critical and important issues relating to women's health. A lot of these issues were carried over from the ICPD where women's reproductive health and rights were given unprecedented prominence. Women's health concerns are also addressed in goals 4 (child mortality), 5 (maternal mortality) and 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) in the MDGs.

Progress

In the last decade, a significant number of African countries prioritised women's health. This resulted in increased attention to the reproductive health of women, encouraging breast feeding, making facilities available for the management of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and raising awareness among men of their responsibilities in family planning. The ICPD at 10 Review noted that 95% of the 43 countries that responded to ECA ICPD at 10 Survey now target men in an effort to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.²³ In many countries, including South Africa, Mauritius, Mozambique, Botswana, Benin, Chad, Ghana, Liberia, Seychelles Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe there are subsidised family planning services incorporated into primary health care, affordable preventive health services especially for rural populations, and training for grassroots health service providers such as village health workers and traditional birth attendants.²⁴

Challenges

The main challenge to women's health arises from inequitable distribution of health care services, particularly in rural areas. In rural Africa (where the majority of the people live), there are insufficient human resources and inadequate health delivery infrastructure. In Southern Africa, for example, difficulties of health service delivery have been greatly exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has increased numbers of persons needing care while reducing the human resources. In the sub-regional Decade Review Meeting, all countries of Southern Africa reported that health standards had deteriorated as a result of the pandemic.

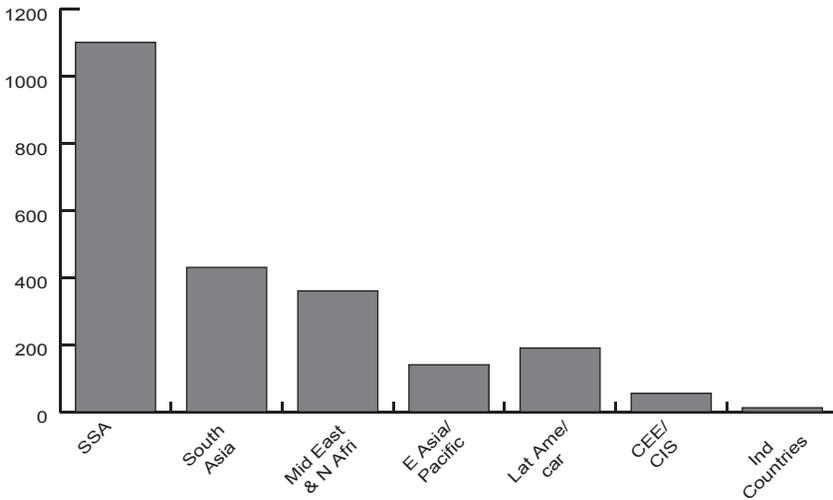
Gender inequality in the health sector in Africa is reflected by high malnutrition among women and girls as well as high rates of fertility, infant mortality and maternal mortality. In countries where there is armed conflict and political instability, health delivery systems have been disrupted and there is less expenditure on social services compared to military spending. The health of women and girls, who are often the main victims of the conflict, is greatly compromised.

One of the main challenges to women's health in Africa is the absence of support structures to enable women to enjoy their reproductive rights. An observation of the Africa regional review of the ICPD PoA's 10th anniversary was:

Access to health care is generally low in most SSA States and access to reproductive health services is even lower. There is also a large unmet need for family planning and other reproductive health services, but resources for reproductive health commodities and for putting in place effective logistical systems remain scarce. Monitoring progress or the lack of it towards the achievement of goals and targets is hampered by the lack of appropriate data.²⁵

Maternal mortality has become a major cause for concern in the developing countries. The fifth MDG focuses on this critical area of concern. In 2002, the World Health Organization estimated that over half a million women die each year as result of complications of pregnancy and childbirth worldwide. Almost all of these deaths (99%) occur in developing countries, and 50% of them are in sub-Saharan Africa where in some countries the risk of dying at childbirth is as high as 1 in 6.²⁶ For example, in the United States the risk of dying during childbirth is 1 in 2,500 and in Sweden it has reached an impressive low of 1 in 29,800, but in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria the risk is 1 in 6, while in Angola, Malawi and Niger it is 1 in 7.²⁷

Figure 2: Maternal Mortality Ratios by Regions of the World in 2002



Note: Maternal mortality ratio refers to the number of maternal deaths per 100 000 live births

UNICEF attributes this “unacceptably high” level of maternal deaths to lack of access to basic obstetric care. Many women in Africa deliver their children alone or with untrained attendants. Both the ICPD at 10 and the MDGs identified the proportion of births attended by a professionally trained and skilled attendant as a critical indicator for monitoring the quality of maternal services and progress towards achieving the critical goal of maternal mortality reduction. In 1995, WHO estimated that only 47 per cent of deliveries in sub-Saharan Africa were attended by skilled personnel compared to an average of 77% in Europe and 99% in North America. According to UNFPA, adolescent childbearing significantly contributes to the risk of dying. About 50 per cent of women in Africa have their first pregnancy by the age of 19²⁸. This increases their lifetime risk of maternal death. For every woman who dies, approximately 30 more suffer injuries, infection and disabilities in pregnancy or childbirth²⁹. The cumulative total of those affected has been estimated at 300 million, or about one third of adult women in the developing world.³⁰

There is need to confront the issue of maternal health as a human rights issue. It is linked to all other critical areas of concern of the BPFA such as women's poverty and lack of access and control to resources, poor nutrition and lack of basic human rights.

Violence against women

Progress

The BPFA has placed violence against women on the agenda of many States. Governments acknowledge the responsibility to prevent, investigate, punish and expose acts of violence and provide protection to victims. In most countries of sub-Saharan Africa, gender-based violence (GBV) in both the public and the private sphere is now recognised as a punishable offence. Sensitisation campaigns by civil society groups have lifted the veil of silence especially on domestic violence. Many governments have recognised the impact of gender violence on productivity and development, and have enacted laws to protect women and girls. Service provision to abused women and girls has also increased to include shelters, legal services, counselling and police units with specialised training. Civil society groups continue to play an overwhelmingly important role in providing support services to those affected by gender violence.

Challenges

Violence against women and girls in Africa is on the increase. More violent forms, such as femicide, acid attacks, ritual rapes and murders, gang rapes, abductions, defilement and forced early marriages, military sexual slavery, rape as a weapon of war, trafficking in women and girls and ill-treatment of widows have become more widespread.

In spite of legislation against some cultural practices, women in Africa continue to be vulnerable to harmful traditional practices and customs such as FGM and widow inheritance, which expose them to the risk of HIV and AIDS. Although

Box 7: Examples of the Extent of Violence Against Women in Africa

In the Democratic Republic of Congo 5,000 cases of rape, corresponding to an average of 40 a day, were recorded in the Uvira area by women's associations since October 2002 (UN 2003).

In Rwanda between 250,000 and 500,000 women, or about 20% of women, were raped during the 1994 genocide (International Red Cross report, 2002).

In Sierra Leone 94 per cent of displaced households surveyed had experienced sexual assaults, including rape, torture and sexual slavery (Physicians for Human Rights, 2002).

laws have been passed in some countries to provide a framework for protecting women from gender-based violence, implementation still lags behind policies and rhetoric, and measures taken are far from adequate. In most countries, NGOs and civil society groups provide most support programmes and services to survivors. There is limited capacity to monitor the impact of the measures taken. The attitudes of law enforcement agents in most countries lead to abuse of victims who venture to report incidences of violence against women and girls.

Only a few countries have enacted legislation to deal specifically with domestic violence. Even where such laws exist, enforcement is made difficult by the attitudes of law enforcement agents as well as societal attitudes that reinforce a culture of tolerance and silence. Adverse economic conditions, in many cases, combine to make it difficult for economically vulnerable women to get out of abusive relationships. Sexual abuse of women increases their vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV.

Further challenges to strategies for eradicating gender violence include: cultural attitudes that reinforce the subordination of women and lack of programmes to tackle the root causes of violence against women. There are very few comprehensive programmes to change attitudes of male dominance and mobilise men to join in the struggle for gender equality. Socio-cultural attitudes that encourage silence, especially on domestic violence, inhibit the collection of adequate data on the extent of the problem. As a result, prevention strategies remain fragmented, reactive and have not received adequate resources.

In most countries of Africa, policy makers and top decision-makers remain silent on issues of violence against women. They shy away from discussing the issues or commenting on the wide prevalence of the problem. Advocacy on gender-based violence is mainly left to NGOs and civil society groups.

Trafficking in women and children is one of the most violent and fastest growing areas of organised crime. Women and girls are increasingly being trafficked within and across borders in one of the most corrosive violations of women's human rights. In the process of being trafficked, women are subjected to gender violence, are humiliated, go through psychological and physical trauma, and are highly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Denial of rights to liberty, freedom from violence and torture, the right to health and care, education and employment, to a home and family are the main characteristics of trafficking. It has been described as a modern form of slavery.³¹ Trafficked women and girls end up engaging in enforced prostitution and other forms of commercialised sex, forced marriages and forced labour.

In countries such as Ghana and Nigeria, some actions (preventive measures such as economic empowerment, education for livelihood and resilience, capacity building for safe migration, awareness raising and training, and special procedures to prevent trafficking, victim support measures, including referral systems, and legal measures)³² have been taken to address both the root causes

and outcomes of trafficking in women and girls. However, these measures have been made less effective by the criminal nature of trafficking. The activities are concealed, and both the perpetrators and the victims or survivors would rather keep the activities away from public scrutiny.

Issues relating to gender-based violence are addressed in the ICPD PoA in relation to reproductive health and rights, but are not addressed in the MDGs.

Women in Conflict Situations

Progress

In Africa, there is widespread awareness of the destruction of armed conflict and its negative impact especially on women who suffer abuse, often with impunity. The work of the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda has drawn attention to the human rights abuses associated with violence against women in armed conflict. The recognition (in the Statutes of the International Criminal Court) of rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and enforced sterilisation as war crimes (when committed in situations of armed conflict) and as crimes against humanity (under some defined circumstances) is of historical significance in the struggle against the abuse of women in armed conflict. There is also widespread recognition that women and men are affected by wars and humanitarian emergencies in ways that are different, and these differences need to be taken into account in designing and implementing intervention strategies.

Box 8: Conflict Resolution Initiatives by women

The activities of the Mano River Women's Peace Network in West Africa, conflict resolution initiatives between Ethiopian and Eritrean women, women's peace-building activities in Uganda, Somalia, South Africa, Rwanda and Burundi are notable good practices of women taking up active roles in conflict resolution and peace-making.

In the last decade, there have been many initiatives and good practices in conflict resolution and peace building in Africa. Women have lobbied extensively for space in peace-building initiatives. The creation of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development in 1998 by the OAU and ECA was a welcome initiative that was embraced by African women's groups and other stakeholders working in the area of conflict-resolution and peace building. The Committee's main objective was to mainstream women's voices and concerns in peace negotiations and conflict-resolutions processes.

There is increasing recognition that issues of conflict resolution and peace building need to be tackled from various angles, but in an integrated manner. In this regard, Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs meeting at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2004

agreed that action be taken to raise global awareness of the proliferation of small arms and the thriving arms trade in Africa. They have proposed that a Dialogue for Peace in Africa be organised during the 49th Session of the CSW, whose aim is to bring together women of Africa and those from the developed countries of the North to strategise on a lobby for - among other issues - the restricted sales and ban on dumping firearms into African countries by weapon manufacturing industries, most of which are in developed countries of the north.³³

Challenges

In the last decade, over 5 million Africans are estimated to have lost their lives in wars and armed conflict. Many more are displaced as refugees and internally displaced persons. The nature of conflicts has expanded from inter-State to intra-State and has left many people deeply traumatised, resulting in violent societies, where the main victims are women and children. Crimes against women are often never reported and go unpunished. Wars and conflicts have also left populations more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, have increased the number of widows and orphans, and exacerbated the feminisation of poverty. The targeting of civilians, especially women and children, and recruitment of child soldiers, has adversely impacted on the promotion of gender equality. In addition, landmines and the illicit proliferation of small arms as well as a thriving arms trade are a huge menace, a threat to human security and have killed and maimed thousands. Excessive military spending has led to the allocation of funds away from socio-economic development that is necessary for gender equality.

The under-representation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict resolution, peace-keeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction has led to programmes that are insensitive to gender issues and exacerbate gender inequality. Although women have taken on some mediation roles during situations of conflict, decisions on going to war continue to be made by male leaders, and peace missions are male-dominated while women are either absent or at the periphery of peace-negotiating tables.

Women in Power and Decision-making

In the BPFA, gender equality in governance is seen as both a human rights issue and a democratic imperative. There is no democracy without gender equality. One indicator of gender equality in the MDGs is the proportion of women in parliament. While this is an important indicator, it is only one of many conditions that have to be fulfilled for genuine gender equality in governance to prevail.

Progress

A commitment to good governance has become one of the hallmarks of the last decade. In Africa, there have been some positive trends in this area. Examples in-

clude the consolidation of democracy in South Africa after apartheid, the growing list of countries where democratic elections took place peacefully, and the creation of mechanisms for accountability such as the African Peer Review Mechanism within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Good governance is one of the key pillars of NEPAD and gender equality is one of the main building blocks for democracy. Parallel to the 7th Africa Regional Conference on Women, the ECA hosted the 4th African Development Forum (ADF IV) on the theme of "Governance for a Progressing Africa." Governance was chosen as the theme in recognition of its essential role in transforming Africa's economies.

An aspect of governance where positive trends were observed in Africa in the last decade is the proportion of women in representative decision-making bodies. In some countries of Africa, the proportion of women in parliaments increased drastically, equalling or even surpassing the targets set in the BPF. Among such countries are Rwanda (48.8%), South Africa (32.8%), Mozambique (30%) and Seychelles (29.4%), Namibia (26.4%) and Uganda (24.7%).³⁴ Women have also been elected and appointed into powerful decision-making positions such as vice-Presidents (Gambia and Zimbabwe), Prime Minister (Mozambique), government ministers, Ambassadors, Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Parliaments and National Directors of Public Prosecution. In South Africa, 42.9% of all government ministers are women.³⁵

Box 9: Election Systems and the proportion of women in Parliament

At the beginning of 2005, 14 countries of the world had reached or surpassed 30% in the proportion of women in Parliament. Three of them are in Africa (Rwanda, South Africa, Mozambique). All these countries use either proportional representation election system, or a mixture of systems which includes some proportional representation. In 8 of these, major political parties have set quotas for women candidates, but only in Argentina has a national law been passed requiring all political parties to include a percentage of women on their lists of candidates.

Challenges

Although there has been an increase in the numbers of women legislative bodies, generally women continue to be under-represented in all structures of power and decision-making. They are subjected to cultural attitudes that do not recognise the right of women to lead. While policies that promote gender equality in appointments to decision-making positions are in place in some countries, implementation lags far behind. Even where women are appointed into positions of power, they are often appointed to head ministries that are considered traditionally 'female' such as health, education, social services, gender and human resources, and away from traditionally 'male' areas such as science and technology, justice, defence, finance and foreign trade.

A further question to the participation of women in power and decision-making is whether or not the increase in the number of women in decision-making

positions has led to more gender sensitive development policies and programmes. While it is a matter of social justice that women should take their rightful places in decision-making structures, the challenge is to ensure that both men and women who enter into positions of power and decision-making prioritise the need for gender sensitive policies and programmes, and use their positions to bring about gender equality in development.

Human Rights of Women

Progress

Some progress has been made in promoting the human rights of women in Africa. Steps have been taken in many countries to remove laws that discriminate against women, and to formulate gender sensitive constitutions that create enabling environments for women to claim their human rights. Many countries have made legal provisions for equal rights of spouses in marriage, equal rights for women and men in inheritance, gender sensitive labour laws, and equality of persons before the law. Civil society organisations have contributed to raising women's awareness about their rights. As of May 2004, 51 of the 53 countries of Africa had ratified CEDAW. Advocacy continues for the ratification of the optional protocol to CEDAW that enables groups of women to submit complaints to the CEDAW Committee, and for the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa. By January 2005, 33 countries had signed and five (Comoros, Libya, Lesotho, Namibia and Rwanda) had ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa.

Challenges

In Africa, there is still widespread non-acceptance of the equality of persons. There is gender discrimination in many areas, such as in religious and cultural practices, participation in power and decision-making, access to health and education, employment patterns, and distribution of wealth. Racial, class, religious, ethnic and other forms of discrimination further exacerbate gender disparities. Rights of women in situations of armed conflict are particularly at risk of violation.

Although the goal of universal ratification of CEDAW in Africa is quite close, the main challenges are that several countries expressed reservations that hit at the heart of the Convention, and implementation lags far behind the ratification. Discriminatory legislation and harmful traditional and customary practices still persist. There are huge disparities between enactment and enforcement of gender-sensitive legislation, thus perpetuating inequality between women and men. In many countries, women's access to the justice system is limited by legal illiteracy, lack of resources, cultural restrictions and gender insensitivity and bias of law enforcement agents.

The area of women's human rights continues to present major challenges in Africa. Although laws have been enacted to support gender equality, within most African patriarchal systems women continue to be regarded as subordinate to men. Even in countries where progressive legislation exists, the executive and/or judiciary often sustain rulings that discriminate against women.

Women in the Media

Progress

Networks of women in the media at national, sub-regional and regional levels have exposed the negative impact on women of biased media coverage and negative depiction. Improved access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) has enabled an increasing number of women to contribute and share knowledge through the media. Some countries have national strategies for gender sensitisation and training for media reporters (Mauritius, Tanzania and Uganda) and others have national policies on ICT dedicated to the promotion of women and gender issues (Burkina Faso, Egypt, Mali, Namibia, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda). Women's Media Associations have established radio stations and newspapers that focus on women's issues (Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia).

Challenges

The main challenges that prohibit women from exploiting the positive aspects of the media arise from lack of access and control over resources such as ICTs, illiteracy, and the poorly developed communication infrastructure in African countries. There are only 18 mainline telephones per 1000 people in Africa, compared with 146 for the world as a whole and 567 for high-income countries. Cultural attitudes that accord women subordinate positions in decision-making replicate themselves in the media. Women continue to occupy low positions in the decision-making structures of media institutions. Patriarchal attitudes and sexual harassment of females at work are still major challenges to gender equality in the media. General lack of recognition of basic rights for all human beings leads to an absence in the media of voices of the poor, of religious and cultural minorities and disadvantaged groups, especially women.

Women and the Environment

Progress

There is increased recognition of the link between environmental protection, gender equality, poverty reduction and sustainable development. In some countries,

women are involved in programmes on environmental protection and management, and rural communities are generating much-needed income from environmental projects that utilise indigenous knowledge and practices while meeting the practical needs of women and men. The need to increase the participation of women in decision-making in environmental protection and management is acknowledged and initiatives to improve women's access to technical skills and resources have started in some countries.

Challenges

Gender equality in environmental protection and management is hampered by limited participation of women in decision-making, their limited access to technical skills and resources and gender-insensitive environmental policies. Women, especially in rural communities, are the ones who are consistently in direct interaction with the environment as gatherers of water and fuel wood, and producers of food crops. They, of necessity, need to be the main participants in environmental protection programmes and in planning, implementing and making decisions on programmes for sustainable environmental management. But, although women have indigenous knowledge that can be utilised in environmental management, their subordinate roles in policy-making and project planning limits access to and use of such knowledge.

The Girl Child

Progress

Progress has been made in prioritising girls' education especially at primary level, increasing legal protection for girls, and improving girls' access to health care. In many countries there is increased school enrolment and retention of girls, gender sensitive school environments and enhanced attendance of girls in science classes. Attention is being paid to traditional practices that are harmful to girls, trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation. There is widespread recognition of the rights of children and greater awareness of the need to protect the rights of girls, which are often neglected.

Challenges

Major challenges continue to inhibit girl children from enjoying their rights. At the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (October 2004), some of the major challenges faced by the African girl child that were identified include the following:

- a) Unfavourable and unsafe school environments where enrolment for girls is low, sexual harassment is serious and persistent; there are very few female

teachers and role models and male teachers are unaware of what sexual harassment is; there are no counselling services for victims of harassment; and widespread sexual abuse and rape result in teenage pregnancies and unsafe abortions.

- b) The disproportionate effects of the HIV and AIDS pandemic on the girl child because of her vulnerability to sexual abuse and risky traditional practices such as FGM.
- c) Child labour and the burden of domestic responsibilities: The girl child is often exploited as domestic labour and many girls orphaned by AIDS are forced to leave school to care for other children.
- d) The absence of effective programmes for girl child soldiers and girls in conflict situations: Girls are mostly excluded from demobilisation programmes. Policies and programmes for rehabilitation do not take into account the effects of sexual abuse on girls during conflict. Girls with disabilities, who are even more vulnerable, are often marginalized, deprived and/or abandoned.
- e) The few programmes for girl child soldiers do not involve them in the design and planning and they do not empower the girl-children to address the problems.
- f) Early pregnancies hinder girls from pursuing educational opportunities. There is insufficient attention paid to the reproductive health needs of adolescent girls, and there is a lack of social and legal protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

HIV/AIDS and its gender implications

There is growing public awareness about HIV and AIDS in Africa, through advocacy by governments, parliaments, public sector, civil society advocacy and other organisations. The threat posed by HIV and AIDS and related diseases such as malaria and TB, is now widely acknowledged at the policy level throughout Africa. Every country has established a National AIDS Commission. Some countries have succeeded in reducing infection rates while a few others have succeeded in keeping infection rates low. Several African countries have approved codes and declarations on non-discrimination against people living with AIDS (PLWA). Increasing attention is being paid to the HIV/AIDS pandemic's link with poverty and sustainable development.

One area where Africa has performed dismally in the last decade is that of combating HIV and AIDS. The impact of HIV and AIDS has rolled back most of the gains made in all aspects of development. The AIDS pandemic has caused untold suffering to large numbers of people, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where it continues to threaten even larger numbers. According to UNAIDS, Africa is home to 70% of adults and 80% of children living with HIV in the world. The continent has buried three-quarters of the more than 20 million people who have

died of AIDS worldwide. Estimates from the agency show that close to 2.3 million people died of HIV-related illnesses in sub-Saharan Africa in 2001.³⁶

Infection rates among women are the fastest growing. UNAIDS working with UNFPA and UNIFEM on the gender effects of HIV and AIDS noted that in recent years, the rate of infection among women has accelerated faster than among men. Data from UNAIDS show that in Sub-Saharan Africa, women account for 57% of people living with HIV, while over 60% of all the young people living with HIV are female³⁷. These agencies have concluded that, if gender inequalities were not as pronounced, if women had greater control over their reproductive and sexual health, if women enjoyed greater access to economic opportunities and resources, and if more men were willing to take responsibility for preventing HIV transmission, the pandemic would not have been as devastating as it currently is.³⁸

While the rates of infection are now decreasing in some African countries such as Uganda (8%), in countries of Southern Africa infection rates are growing. For example, Botswana is said to have the highest level of infection in the world at 35.8%, and other countries of Southern Africa that share borders with Botswana such as Zimbabwe and South Africa are not far behind. The HIV and AIDS pandemic presents a major challenge to the Southern Africa sub-region where 54% of the deaths related to HIV and AIDS are among women and girls, and where girls are infected at a much younger age than boys.³⁹

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has further exacerbated the already precarious situation of women in Africa. The pandemic has affected women in ways that are different from men, such as an increase in infection and increase in the demands made on women as care-givers. Women have less control over their sexuality due to poverty and their position in the traditional marriage institution, and this increases their vulnerability to HIV infection. The decreased health spending by governments and the privatisation of health services in many countries have negatively impacted on women's access to treatment and care.

Because of the unequal power relations between men and women, most women do not have power to negotiate for safer sex, especially within marriage. Older men sexually abuse young girls, infecting them with HIV under the misconception in some countries that sexual intercourse with the young virgins will cleanse them of the infection. Much larger proportions of young girls are infected with HIV than boys of similar age. According to UNAIDS, girls constitute over 64% of those infected in the 15 to 25 years age group, and they are three times more likely to be infected than boys of the same age.⁴⁰

Institutional Mechanisms

Progress

Progress has been made in establishing institutional mechanisms that monitor the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the African Platform for Action. All countries of Africa have set up various types of national machineries for the advancement of women such as ministries, commissions, divisions, departments, councils and forums. These structures have been strengthened in many countries, with gender focal points in all ministries and portfolio committees on gender in legislative bodies. National institutional mechanisms have been supported by gender policies and national plans for implementing the BPFA. The Decade Review reports from the five sub-regions indicate that the absolute majority of countries have gender policies, which are integrated into national development plans. Civil society organisations have also formed themselves into gender networks, coalitions, women's forums and lobby groups to strengthen monitoring of the implementation of the BPFA.

Initiatives taken at sub-regional levels to deal with the challenges of achieving gender equality in Africa are shining examples of inter-governmental efforts to promote gender sensitive development. Several collective decisions and actions taken by sub-regional groupings such as ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, and ECCAS have indicated the desire to move towards gender-balanced development. An example of policies aimed at promoting gender equality in the Southern Africa sub-region is the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development. The sub-region also set up an institutional framework for monitoring the implementation of the Declaration in the region in the form of the SADC Council of Ministers responsible for gender or women's affairs.

ECOWAS, with assistance from UNECA and UNIFEM has also reorganised its regional gender policy, revamping the Gender Directorate and profiling gender perspectives in the current Strategic Plan that was approved at a Stakeholders' Meeting in September 2003.⁴¹ In July 2004 the ministers responsible for gender and women's affairs in the ECOWAS region also met to set up a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the ECOWAS Gender policy.

A number of decisions taken at regional level by the African Union have given impetus to the drive towards gender equality in the region. The emphasis on gender-balanced development and human rights in the Constitutive Act of the Union has created an enabling environment for advocacy for gender equality in the Union's policies and programmes. The decisions by the AU for gender parity among Commissioners and the recent Gender Equality Declaration with a reporting procedure for monitoring its implementation by all States of African Union, are major milestones in promoting gender equality on the continent.

The role of NGOs in the development and lobby for the adoption of gender sensitive policies and programmes is a good example of advocacy by women in Africa. The activities of NGOs in the development and adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa is a good practice. Having originated from advocacy work by the women's movement in Africa, the Protocol, which went through a number of important changes, is a triumph for the countries of Africa which have managed to produce a human rights instrument that is truly African - naming some women's rights that had not been given the same attention in any other international instrument, and giving African women a platform to claim their social, economic and cultural rights. While the challenges of ratification and implementation still have to be tackled, the adoption of the Protocol is an important step in the process.

Programmes of the African Union such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Conference on Security, Stability and Development Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) have also provided an opportunity for advocacy on gender equality in Africa. NEPAD is anchored in the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world. NEPAD's vision is based on full participation of all stakeholders. There is consensus in the document that gender equality is essential for poverty eradication and sustainable development and NEPAD will have to take gender into account for it to achieve its goals.

Box 10: Enhancing Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluating

In response to the recommendations of the African Plan of Action to build the capacity of monitoring mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment at national level, in 2001 the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) developed a monitoring and evaluation programme to assist countries to monitor, evaluate and accelerate the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action in 7 sectors. The main aim is to build capacity of African countries to accurately assess progress in implementation of the BPFA in the targeted sectors. The programme was planned to facilitate the regional preparations for the Decade Review Meetings in 2004 and 2005. Some 18 countries that participated in this programme produced evaluation reports that were more informative, with clearer performance indicators. In follow-up, the ACGD has just completed formulating a tool to evaluate impact of gender mainstreaming on women in those same sectors.

Challenges

Lack of capacity to monitor and evaluate implementation of the plans from the BPFA and national gender policies continues to be a major challenge to the national mechanisms for the advancement of women in Africa. Most national institutional mechanisms lack capacity to monitor and evaluate the performance in all sectors of the economy, they are poorly resourced (with insufficient members of staff and budgets), lack the political power to oversee the perform-

ance all other ministries, departments and parastatals, and are hindered by the lack of political will to promote gender equality in all spheres. There is lack of coordination among gender focal points in different ministries. The tasks of gender focal persons are often not clearly specified and not included as key performance areas. The persons sometimes lack the necessary gender analysis skills and are not in posts that are senior enough to enable them to supervise the outputs of the ministries or departments. There is also the critical problem of lack of national coordination mechanisms of the gender programme as well as accountability mechanisms for those charged with ensuring gender mainstreaming in all development sectors.

The issue of accountability for implementation of the Platforms for Action is a major challenge. The lack of effective measures for accountability makes governments and national machineries for gender mainstreaming complacent in implementing the promises and commitments of Beijing and other international and regional instruments. Another challenge is to strengthen the capacity of the women's movement and other structures that can demand accountability at national, regional and international levels.

Other Gender Issues in the Africa Context.

Questioning Commitments to Gender Equality

In reviewing the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in Africa, there is a need to question the commitment of governments to the goal of mainstreaming gender into all development policies, plans and programmes. Results from the trials of the AGDI in 12 countries of Africa revealed that, despite having implementation plans and gender policies, no country had scored highly for making resources available for the implementation of the BPFA. Similar trends have been noted in relation to laws intended to protect women from gender violence and policies and plans put in place to eradicate cultural practices that are discriminatory to women. In general, resources for implementing measures aimed at achieving gender equality do not come from the main government fiscal sources, but governments have relied mainly on external partners. This has implications for the sustainability of these measures.

There is also a lack of effective accountability measures, monitoring mechanisms and programmes for sensitization on gender equality. There are very few role models and champions of gender equality among male policy makers.

The Women's agenda in Africa over the decade

In the early part of the last decade, the agenda for women's empowerment was seen as a responsibility of women only. While the BPFA put gender issues on the agenda of governments, mainstreaming gender into policies and programmes and the achievement of gender equality were seen as responsibilities of gender machineries. Advocacy for gender equality was seen as the responsibility of women's NGOs and women activists. Other stakeholders such as the private sector did not feel that they had a responsibility to be champions of the gender agenda. However, there have been gradual changes in the way gender equality is viewed as a result of advocacy by the women's movement. In some countries, male networks have been developed to champion the cause for gender equality.

In Africa, the women's movement has experienced ups and downs in the last decade because of various challenges. Patriarchy (a social system based on the beliefs of men's superiority over women and gives men rights over women's bodies, reproductive rights and their labour), has been one of the main challenges to the women's movement. A lot of the women's human rights issues that are raised by the women's movement in Africa are often discredited as being 'un-African' and against 'our' culture. Attempts by the women's movement to be coherent are often hampered by externally driven divisions in the movement that emphasise differences rather than sameness. For example, women activists and NGOs are often divided along political lines, with activism being aligned to political opposition, yet in almost all political parties women do not hold decision-making positions and they are discriminated against in the selection of candidates for high political offices.

Despite all these challenges and obstacles, the women's movement in Africa has made some significant gains. Women have strategised collectively to raise their concerns at the highest levels. The lobby for the adoption of Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, advocacy for the parity policy in the selection of AU Commissioners, and collective action for the inclusion of women in conflict resolution are examples of successful collective actions. The movement, however, tended to be issue-based and ad hoc and its momentum has been weakened by its dependency on donor support.

The challenge is for the women's movement in Africa to review the strategies used, move towards programmes that broaden partnerships, seek alliances with a wider range of stakeholders and address the broader issues of human rights, democracy, accountability and transparency for all.

The Challenges in linking Beijing +10 Review to MDGs, ICPD and Outcomes of other Summits and Conferences

Although governments have agreed to the idea of linking the implementation and follow-up of the promises and commitments made at major United Nations con-

ferences such as the ICPD, BPFA, ICPD, and the Millennium Summit, there have been some practical difficulties in translating the idea into reality. Linking the Beijing + 10 review with the MDGs +5 has been presented as an opportunity for mainstreaming gender into all the MDGs, and facilitating a greater understanding of the connections among all the MDGs and the gender issues that have been left out, such as reproductive rights, gender-based violence and labour rights.

Despite this optimism, governments did not report on the way they built synergies between these major reviews, both of which are related to gender/women issues. In the questionnaire to governments for the Beijing + 10 Review, although governments were asked to report on the achievements of the MDGs as part of the overview of achievements in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, most of them only responded to goals 2 and 3 (within education), goal 5 (maternal mortality within health) and 6 (HIV and AIDS). They did not show how the rest of the MDGs are linked to the critical areas of concern in the BPFA, nor did they emphasise the need to mainstream gender concerns into all the MDGs.

Another substantive challenge is that there is a tendency to place the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits into a hierarchical order. It is apparent that implementation of the BPFA had fewer resources and less bilateral and multi-lateral support than the MDGs.

Although there are clear advantages in linking the review processes, very few people are working on building the linkages. What was quite clear from the sub-regional and regional NGO review reports is that women's NGOs and civil society groups have not built up momentum or mechanisms for the MDG +5 review. They rarely referred to the need to mainstream gender into the MDGs, neither did they try to link the 12 critical areas of concern of the BPFA to all the MDGs. Resource constraints and strategic choices may explain the lack of attention to building the linkages by civil society groups.

An observation of the decade review process in Africa and even at the global level indicates a tendency for marginalisation of the process of implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. The review process in Africa was attended by large numbers of women both at sub-regional and regional meetings. Ministers of Women's/Gender Affairs led most national delegations. Women's NGOs were the main civil society participants. The review process did not get adequate insights from sector ministries on the problems that they confronted in mainstreaming gender into their policies and programmes and implementing the strategic objectives of the BPFA. Women were virtually talking to themselves. There were very few male participants and the few who attended were even commended for doing so. A similar trend is likely to occur at the 49th session of the CSW.

If this marginalisation of gender issues is to be avoided, addressing these issues should not be seen as a responsibility of women alone and should be treated as an integral part of the democracy, human rights and social justice agendas. Only then, will the review of implementation of outcomes of UN Conferences and

Summits begin to take into account the gender issues and concerns that were raised at the Beijing conference as well as those that continue to emerge.

Crosscutting Challenges

The crosscutting challenges to achieving gender equality in Africa are political, cultural/moral, economic and technical. The following are some of the main crosscutting challenges that were discussed at the African Decade Review meetings in Addis Ababa in October 2004:

- a. The need for demonstrated political will and commitment to translate gender declarations and policies into actionable measures for achieving gender equality. This requires the leadership of capable and committed people (women and men) in the highest echelons of power and decision-making
- b. The need for commitment and adherence to democratic principles, thus recognizing the capacity of women and men to take part in decision-making and to contribute equally to sustainable development
- c. The need to bring civil society together – women and men - to keep gender equality on the international agenda, lobbying leaders and policy makers to honour their commitments to gender equality
- d. The need to keep the women's movement alive and mentoring the youth into activism to change gender-biased attitudes and gender stereotypes, so that women, men, boys and girls accept and act on the principle that all people are born 'equal in dignity and rights'.
- e. The need for commitment to Africa's development so that the right to development is not seen as optional. There is need for governments of Africa to prioritise the right to development, making the provision of services such as education, health, shelter, clean water and roads obligatory and top priority on the development agenda.

The Way Forward and Programme of Action

The following actions to accelerate further implementation of the BPFA in Africa in the coming years were discussed and adopted at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2004.

Key Actions for Accelerating the Implementation of the BPFA

Economy

It is imperative that urgent steps be taken to enhance the gender-analytic capacity of macro-economists at all levels and in all institutions to redefine concepts, approaches and methodology that underpin the generation and collection of data. This includes the development of technical capacity and tools for further advancing the inclusion of women's unpaid work into the systems of national accounts. There is a need to mainstream gender analysis into economics and involve gender experts in the formulation of macro-economic policies, so that economic policies support women's activities in the informal sector, the subsistence and the care economies. Gender-aware social security and pension systems should be developed and extended to all people, especially rural women and those in the informal sector. In order to remove gender disparities in the labour market, national employment programmes, opportunities and working conditions for women and men must be developed and implemented in a manner that acknowledges their social and reproductive responsibilities.

Poverty

Measures to mainstream gender concerns into poverty reduction strategies should include gender analysis of macro-economic policies. This would expose differential impacts of poverty on women and men and identify constraints on poverty eradication. Gender equality principles must be incorporated into all budgeting to ensure equitable resource allocation into areas where poverty is concentrated. Processes in the development of poverty reduction plans should be consultative, gender-sensitive and inclusive. Indicators for monitoring the impact of poverty reduction programmes and measures and the MDG target on poverty should be engendered.

Education and Training

To address gender imbalances in education and training, countries should institute and strengthen affirmative action policies and programmes aimed at increasing women's and girls' access and retention. These may include: scholarships at all levels for female students; distance and non-formal education and literacy programmes for women; innovative and aggressive strategies to redress the under-representation of women and girls in the sciences, mathematics and technology-related disciplines and careers, including the promotion of science among children in general and young girls in particular.

Health

In order to reach MDG 6 and ICPD targets on reducing maternal mortality and morbidity, government in collaboration with NGOs and the private sector should provide accessible sexual and reproductive health care services and education for women and girls. Preventive interventions to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, cardio-vascular diseases and cancer that affect women, particularly among women and girls, should be supported. Processes and programmes to achieve the MDG target of reducing maternal and child mortality should also be prioritised.

Governance, power and decision-making

All political/governance bodies must institutionalise policies that guarantee gender equality. The AU 50:50 gender parity principle must be replicated and implemented at all levels of national and regional governance, including through affirmative action and set timelines. Women's access to elected positions (municipal and parliamentary) must be supported to reach these targets. Leadership training programmes for women, especially young women, should be developed and supported to enable them to exercise higher public responsibilities. Considering the value of the independent women's movement representing women's voices in Africa, women's organisations should be encouraged and supported.

Media

Given the importance of communication and the speed with which information and communication technology (ICT) evolves, it is important for the region to adopt and implement gender-aware media policies. There is also need to improve women's access to media and new ICTs, support women's press and communication initiatives and encourage the use of media and new ICTs to promote women's activities, project positive images and fight against stereotypes and discrimination.

Human Rights of Women

A gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach should inform planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of PRSPs, MDGs, national priorities, annual plans and expenditure frameworks. Harmful and/or discriminatory practices that sustain gender inequality and inequity must be eliminated, and social, cultural, traditional and religious norms and values that sustain equality, equity and justice must be promoted. Partnership between women and men in addressing practices which have a negative impact on gender equality should be developed. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

on the Rights of Women should be signed and ratified by all states in Africa, preferably by March 2005. Governments should domesticate and implement all the international and regional instruments on women's rights and gender equality and equity which they have ratified, and ensure their implementation.

Environment

African governments should adopt gender-responsive policies, programmes, strategies and measures on environment. Women should play a prominent role in the design and implementation of policies and programmes on water, energy, sanitation, land and forestry conservation and management, as well as in rural and urban planning. Rural women and their concerns must be integrated into the planning and management of eco-systems, eco-tourism and biodiversity. The achievement of MDG 7 with respect to ensuring environmental sustainability must be engendered.

The girl-child

Specific efforts must be made to protect the girl child against discrimination, ill-health, malnutrition, stereotyping, violence, including genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and exploitation through domestic work and trafficking. Successful strategies for improving girls' access to and retention in education should be scaled-up. The content and culture of schooling should be free from bias, discrimination and violence against girls. These would require curriculum reform, gender training for teachers and others working in education, together with continuous advocacy with parents, traditional and religious leaders, parliamentarians and other stakeholders. Access to professional and technical education for girls should be facilitated and there should be gender-focused programmes for boys and girls. Furthermore, the main financial partners should reflect greater commitment to women and girls.

HIV and AIDS

There is an urgent need for governments to address gender power relations, through legislation, law enforcement, advocacy and sensitisation, in order to protect women and girls from all forms of violence and enable them to negotiate safer sex. In particular, governments must establish, enforce and monitor strict legal frameworks to address the vulnerability of women and girls, and halt exploitation of orphans, especially girls. A fund should be established to ensure women's access to post-exposure prophylaxes, anti-retroviral treatment, parent-to-child transmission prevention treatment (before and after delivery), as well as support for homecare services. Resources should also be invested in making sure that methods of prevention, which are controlled by women, are available and accessible. Governments should monitor the newly emerging types of violence

and human rights abuses within the context of HIV and AIDS. Priority should be given to making available and monitoring care services for orphans, protecting their inheritance rights and providing counselling. Governments must establish gender indicators to monitor HIV and AIDS programme goals and outcomes, to measure progress and enforce accountability in the use of resources.

Partnerships with Men

Accelerating the implementation of the BPFA in the context of the MDGs requires that gender equality should no longer be seen only as a women's agenda. Men's full commitment, accountability and partnership with women are crucial. Government decision-making, institutional and organisational cultures must be transformed to embrace gender equality and women's rights in behaviours, attitudes and norms, through gender sensitisation, capacity building and monitoring at all levels. Innovative rights-based and culture-sensitive programmes must be developed for the participation and active involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Programmes that address families should be developed to integrate the culture of equality and human rights processes in all aspects of the socialisation process, including the sharing of domestic work and childcare.

International Support

The support of the UN system to Africa in the implementation and monitoring of the BPFA and the MDGs is appreciated. Technical and financial support for training, capacity building, research and documentation have been undertaken and should be strengthened in the coming years. The developed countries and international financial and trade institutions are called upon to strengthen the implementation of the commitments they have undertaken in UN conferences and summits, including Beijing and Beijing+5, to support African countries in their efforts to implement the agreed outcomes of these meetings. This should include the provision of official development assistance (ODA) at agreed levels, addressing comprehensively debt problems of African countries, ensuring access of African exports to world markets and the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building, in keeping with the spirit of partnership and mutual accountability.

Institutional Measures For Effective Gender Mainstreaming

An important ingredient for accelerating delivery of the BPFA is strengthening institutionalisation of gender concerns through the provision of adequate resources, technical expertise and sufficient authority to Women's/Gender Ministries and structures responsible for monitoring the implementation of programmes for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. The strategic objectives and actions defined in this section must be executed by all stakehold-

ers, with Women's/Gender Ministries, gender units and gender focal points providing oversight and facilitation of gender responsive delivery of development programmes.

Policy development and review

In Beijing, member states affirmed their political will to promote gender equality by endorsing the Platform for Action. Governments should evaluate on a regular basis the extent to which political will is translated into concrete results, so as to identify and rectify areas where gender policies do not exist, remedy the gaps in existing gender policies and allocate appropriate human and material resources for implementation. They should also utilise gender expertise in designing all policies and programmes.

Responsibility and Accountability

Women/Gender Ministries and other line Ministries should agree upon a division of tasks for gender mainstreaming in their respective areas of responsibility and expertise. The core functions of gender officials need to be institutionalised in all ministries, so as to ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed into all policies, programmes and activities. It is essential that accountability for the achievement of gender equality remains with the highest authority in all ministries. Ministries of Women's Affairs and of Gender and gender focal points in sector ministries, on the other hand, are advocates and facilitators of gender mainstreaming. The capacity of Parliaments and other accountability structures should be strengthened so that they exercise their oversight role to ensure gender mainstreaming in all sectors.

Capacity building

Governments should provide adequate human and financial resources to national structures dealing with gender issues. To ensure that more gender specific data become available, national statistical offices should be supported to strengthen their capacity to collect and disseminate gender disaggregated data. In addition, data users need to be trained in the analysis and utilisation of these data for planning, monitoring and evaluation. National capacity must also be built in the civil service, universities, and think tanks to undertake gender-sensitive research and develop gender-sensitive models for development programmes.

Co-ordination

The lack of effective coordination mechanisms within structures responsible for monitoring gender mainstreaming, and between these structures and all levels of

other institutions, impedes gender mainstreaming. Therefore, institutions must develop effective coordination mechanisms with clear lines of communication, roles, responsibilities, accountability and levels of authority. Coordination frameworks must define specific terms for collaboration and partnership between the public sector, development partners and the private sector (including NGOs), for the effective coordination of gender mainstreaming at all levels.

Advocacy

In the first post-Beijing decade, civil society organisations featured highly in advocacy on gender equality and women's human rights and empowerment. In the coming decade, governments and regional institutions must build on this by strengthening their advocacy, and developing partnership with civil society organisations around education and information campaigns aimed at mainstreaming gender concerns. This advocacy work should be linked to policies and programmes so as to enhance collective responsibility for mainstreaming and accountability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective mechanisms for monitoring implementation of these renewed commitments should be put in place. The processes of engendering the instruments of accountability of the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism, the AU Commissions, the regional economic commissions, as well as national planning, budgeting and implementation should be strengthened to enable them to assess the adequacy of inputs, level of results and remaining challenges to achieving gender equality and equity in all sectors. The MDG annual reporting process should integrate a review of the implementation of the BPFA. Furthermore, the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), currently being piloted, could provide a framework for priority setting, tracking progress and accountability, and upon completion could be adopted for use by member states. The AU should be encouraged to convene a meeting of Ministers for Women's Affairs to agree on monitoring priorities for tracking delivery against the commitments of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adopted in 2004.

Conclusion

In concluding this discussion, there is need to acknowledge the efforts that have gone into the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in Africa. Regional and sub-regional institutions of Africa have led the way in ensuring gender parity in decision-making, and in institutionalising gender equality. Many African governments have acted on their promises by putting in place legal, constitutional and policy measures that enable gender sensitive development programming and

effective monitoring of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. NGOs and civil society groups have been in the forefront of advocacy and service provision in response to the strategic objectives outlined in the BPFA. To a certain extent, bilateral and multilateral development partners made resources available for the implementation of many programmes for women's empowerment on the continent. All these efforts add up to commendable progress and inspire hope for the future.

Nevertheless, because of the many outstanding and unresolved issues, remaining challenges and some discouraging trends, there is still a need to question our direction and strategies. The decade review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in Africa left no doubt that there are many unresolved issues and challenges that still need to be confronted. The empowerment of women and gender equality, commitment to democracy and the right to development continue to be considered as optional and not obligatory. The current development trends in Africa, with widespread poverty, inadequate access to education, health, food, safe drinking water and other basic necessities indicate that it will be the only region that will not achieve most of the MDGs within the time limit set in the Road Map. There are no convincing indications that gender equality, as a component of democratic governance, a human rights imperative and a condition for overall sustainable development will be achieved soon. There is, therefore, a need for Africa to reconsider its strategies and priorities. If Africa does not prioritise the promotion of gender equality and continues with 'business as usual', the continent will continue to struggle with the scourges of poverty, hunger and disease for a long time to come.

Endnotes

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² The National reports and sub-regional Decade Review Reports of all the 5 sub-regions in Africa contain some examples of progress made in implementing the BPFA in Africa.

³ Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to get medical attention. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. World Bank (2004) Poverty Net, Poverty Analysis, <http://web.worldbank.org/>

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²² Ibid, p 11

²³ UNECA August 2004, ICPD 10th Anniversary: Africa Regional Review Report, p 21

²⁴ Ibid, Box 2.3: Best Practices in RH and RR since ICPD5, p 37

²⁵ UNECA, August 2004, ICPD 10th Anniversary: Africa Regional Review Report, p 38

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