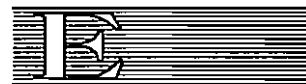




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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
African Centre for Gender and Development**

**Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Seventh
African Regional Conference on Women on follow-up
to the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing + 10)**

**23 February - 5 March 2004
New York, USA**

**Mission Report on the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee
on the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women
New York, 23 February - 5 March 2004**

**By
Josephine Ouedraogo
Hannah Tiagha**

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Seventh African Regional Conference on Women
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Introduction

Within the framework of the organization of the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women to evaluate the status of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, ECA/ACGD has created a preparatory Committee for the Seventh Regional Conference. The Committee is comprised of the members of the Bureau of the Committee on Women and Development (CWD) and the Subregional Gender Focal Points of the UN agencies in Africa. The purpose of the Preparatory Committee is to assist in the technical and financial organization of the Regional Conference.

ACGD therefore decided to call the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee in New York on 3 March. The choice of date and location was influenced by the annual meetings of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender (IANWG) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). This increased chances of most of the members being in New York without additional costs. It should be clarified also that ACGD is a member of the IANWG.

To organize this meeting and also to attend the IANWG, Mrs Josephine Ouedraogo, the Director of ACGD and Mrs Hannah Tiagha, the Task Manager of the Beijing + 10 process undertook a mission to New York from 23 February to 5 March. This mission report covers activities related to the Preparatory Committee on the Regional Conference.

Mission Objectives

The objective of the mission was to:

- Organize and service the meeting of the Preparatory Committee

The Mission

In view of the fact that most of the members of the Preparatory Committee were also members of the IANWG, Ms Ouedraogo and Ms Tiagha spent much time contacting them to confirm the date, time and place of the meeting. Ms Tiagha also contacted all the concerned African Missions to the UN verifying the attendance of the CWD Bureau members to the CSW meeting and asking the Missions to inform those coming of the venue and time of the Preparatory Committee Meeting. Much time was also spent arranging for interpretation and translation facilities especially since the UN Conference Services in New York was unable to provide us with their own staff. The ACGD staff worked in close collaboration with the staff of the RCONY particularly in the finalization of logistical arrangements including meeting room reservations, reproduction of documents etc.

The meeting of the Preparatory Committee did take place as planned. The full report is hereby attached. After the meeting, upon request of the Preparatory Committee which had clearly understood the importance of the linkage between the Subregional Decade Review meetings and Seventh Regional Conference, two days were spent on follow work to the member States directly and through the UN Country Coordinators re-confirming the organization of the Subregional Review Meetings and the need to support participants financially to attend them.

Conclusion

The key UN agencies in Africa were successfully informed of the Beijing + 10 process at the national, subregional and regional levels and enabled them to decide on how to support the process from a position of knowledge. It also helped them to decide how they themselves would like to participate technically in the review process at different levels. The choice of organizing the meeting of the Preparatory Committee in parallel with the two regular annual meetings was cost effective and an efficient way of maximizing attendance. It also facilitated the possibility of sharing information concerning Beijing + 10 in other regions and gathering up-dated information on the planned review process at the global.

Annexes

1. Report of the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Seventh African Centre for Gender and Development Regional Conference on Women on follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing + 10)
2. List of Participants at the Preparatory Committee

Annex 1

Report of the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women on follow-up to The Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing + 10) New York, 3 March 2004

Context

The first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Seventh African Regional Committee on Women on follow-up to Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing + 10) was held on 3 March 2004 in New York. In order to minimize cost and to increase attendance, it was organized around the annual meeting of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender and the meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women. The membership includes the members of the Bureau of the Committee on Women and Development and representatives of the gender programmes from key UN agencies.

Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were:

- to inform participants about the Beijing + 10 process in Africa
- to discuss the kind of support that the UN agencies will provide to the process
- to discuss the agenda of the Seventh African Regional Meeting on Women (November 2004)
- to discuss the work programme of the Committee

The meeting

As planned the meeting was held in Conference Room 9 of the United Nations building from 10.30 am to 2.00pm. It was chaired by the Director of Women Affairs and Children from Ghana. Present at the meeting were the Secretary of State from the Ministry of Women Affairs from Congo, representatives from the ministries in charge of women affairs and gender from Gabon, Mozambique, representatives from the UN Missions of Egypt and Burundi. The UN agencies represented were UNIFEM, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, UNFPA, UN Secretariat (OSAGI) and IOM.

Under agenda item 1, Ms Wariara Mbugua briefed the meeting on GA Resolution 55/7 that recommended an integrated approach to the review of recommendations of UN conferences by organizing the review process thematically. In this context she explained that there would not be a global conference to review the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action. Instead, the national reports and inputs from the regional conferences on Beijing + 10 would be reviewed by the Committee on the Status of Women in 2005. Some NGOs had reacted to this decision with regrets considering that they felt that global conferences give momentum to national movements and also serve to raise and give visibility to emerging issues. Some NGOs therefore were still advocating for a global review of the BPFA. Ms Mbugua felt, however, that the issues identified at the national and regional levels concerning BPFA should be integrated into the review process of MDGs in order to ensure that they get the attention they deserve by decision makers.

In the discussion that followed, concern was raised that the problems of immigration and the brain drain and their gender immigrations had emerged as issues of concern yet they had not been addressed by the BPFA.

Under Agenda Item 2, Mrs Josephine Ouedraogo briefed the meeting on the major steps of the preparatory process of the decade review of BPFA in Africa. National evaluation reports of performance with regard to the implementation of the BPFA would be prepared according to the Questionnaire prepared by DAW with inputs from the Regional Commissions. At the subregional level, the 12 critical areas of concern, HIV/AIDS and poverty as well as HIV/AIDS and conflict would be the subjects of focus during the subregional review meetings, which would be organized by ECA. She then presented the agenda and explained that the objectives of organizing review meetings were to assist all stakeholders to discuss their performance from a subregional view point and define their priorities and the way forward in the post-Beijing period. Sectoral ministries would be invited to underscore the importance of mainstreaming gender all sectors. Five meetings would be organized along the 5 ECA subregions in April 2004 as follows:

- Southern Africa: 26-29 April
- Central Africa: 19-21 April
- West Africa: 13-15 April
- Northern Africa: 14-16 April
- Eastern Africa: dates to be established

During the subsequent discussion, it was felt that the national reports should include reviews on the status of women migrants, the internally displaced, the brain drain and traffic in women and girls. The problems of tuberculosis and malaria should also be discussed along with those of HIV/AIDS. It was also felt that considering the controversy surrounding the issues of textile production and agricultural substitution in discussions of world trade and the role of African women in both areas, gender and trade should also be a subject of focus. It was also suggested that countries should approach the UN Country Support Teams to support the financing of the review process. In this regard, it was recommended that the Preparatory Committee writes to the resident Coordinators to urge them to support the Beijing + 10 process.

Under Agenda Item 3, the draft Agenda of the Seventh Regional Conference on Women (see Annex) was presented by Mrs. Ouedraogo. The modalities for its organization were also discussed. In addition to the overview session where Africa's performance in the implementation of BPFA would be discussed in plenary by 3 presenters followed by the Synthesis Report from Governments, ADB, AU, UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs and bilateral partners, selected emerging priority issues would also be discussed in parallel group sessions. The Ministers who would be drawn from the various line ministries would endorse the outcome of the Regional Conference, which would subsequently be forwarded to New York as Africa's contribution to the global review of BPFA.

In the discussion that followed, it was suggested that additional parallel sessions should include topics on partnership with men and boys and responsible parenting illustrated with examples of best practice. Others suggested that parallel training sessions could also be organized. The draft agenda was thus endorsed.

Under Agenda Item 4, Mrs Ouedraogo discussed the documents to be prepared according to the agenda items in the draft Agenda of the Seventh African Regional Conference. ECA would be responsible for the preparation, translation and dissemination of the documents. As for the reports from other intergovernmental institutions and UN agencies, they would be prepared by the concerned institutions. ECA however, would produce Guidelines to assist in the preparatory process. A brochure would also be prepared that would summarize all the on-going events during the Conference.

On Agenda Item 5, Mrs. Ouedraogo briefed the meeting on the recommendations of the Bureau meeting in September 2003 concerning the participation of NGOs in the decade review process. She explained that ECA had contacted some NGOs in each country and asked them to encourage all others to get together and produce a shadow NGO report. ECA would also convene a Regional NGO Consultative meeting attended by one NGO per country to deliberate on how they would organize their Beijing + 10 review process at the regional level. At the subregional level, NGOs who wished to present a shadow subregional report would be accommodated. However, individual participation of NGOs in intergovernmental meetings either at the subregional or regional levels would be restricted to members of the CWD.

Regarding Agenda Item 6 on resources needed for the Beijing + 10 review process, Mrs Ouedraogo drew the attention of the participants on the matrix of the total number of activities involved, all of which would require resources. The UNICEF representative communicated that they would ask their offices in all the 24 countries in West and Central Africa subregions to assist financially in the review process. UNICEF would also finance key note speakers in specific themes. They would also coordinate a study on the state of education of the girl child in the subregions and what measures should be taken to bring them at par with the boys. It was also decided that the five members of the CWD Bureau who come from the 5 ECA subregions would write to the Resident Coordinators in the countries of their subregion to urge them to influence the other members of the Country Support Groups to assist in financing the Beijing + 10 review process. In their request, they should emphasize that supporting the Beijing + 10 process falls within the framework of the MDGs.

Under Agenda Item 7 on the Work of the Preparatory Committee, it was agreed that the next meeting would be in September 2004 to review progress of the preparatory process. The specific dates would be announced later.

Under the Agenda Item 8 on any other business, Mrs. Ouedraogo announced that for the first time, the agenda of the AU Summit of 2004 would include an item on a selected gender issue. She recommended that any suggestions for an appropriate topic be sent to AU in Addis Ababa. She also announces that the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economic Planning will be held jointly with that of ADB in Kampala in May 2004. During this period, a day would be set aside to organize a Symposium on a gender issue. Once again, this is the first time that the two conferences have included an issue exclusively on gender. The theme of the Symposium will be *Women, poverty and sustainable development*". There will be a Declaration at the end of the Symposium.

The issue of starting a regional women's bank was raised, as some participants wondered why the idea that had been broached since the 1990s has never been operationalized. It was explained that the AU (OAU at the time) had rejected the idea because of its regulations that were against any specialized banks. Women did not follow-

up the rejection, however, to come up with other ideas. In Ghana where the idea had been supported by the government never materialized either because the minimum amount required to open such a bank kept going higher and higher.

Summary of the outcome of the meeting

The following were the conclusions of the Preparatory Committee meeting:

1. The issues that emerge during the decade review process of Beijing + 10 should be integrated into the MDG review process so as to give them visibility and to ensure that they are not lost or diluted in content and importance
2. Additional issues that should be addressed in parallel sessions during the Regional Conference should include:
 - ✓ The status of women migrants, internally displaced, women and girls in traffic and the brain drain of women
 - ✓ Tuberculosis and malaria as killers in addition to HIV/AIDS
 - ✓ Gender and trade
 - ✓ Partnership with men and boys in raising families
 - ✓ Training sessions supported by examples of good practices
3. NGOs who wanted to present their reports in the subregional meetings as a shadow report would be accommodated.
4. CWD Bureau members from the 5 ECA subregions would write to the Resident Coordinators to urge them and through them the other UN agencies to support the Decade review process financially.
5. The next Preparatory Committee Meeting would be held in September 2004 to review progress made in the preparatory process

Annex 2

First meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women on follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action 3 March 2004, New York

List of Participants

No.	Name	Function and Institution	Address
1.	Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye	Deputy Director General International Organization for Migration	Office of the Permanent observer to the UN. 122 E 42 nd st., Suite 1610 New York 10168
2.	Aworet – Oberdeno Regina. Ep. Anbourouet	Directeur Général de la promotion de la femme Ministère de la famille, de la protection de l'enfance et de la promotion de la femme	B.P. 3953 or B.P. 6693 Libreville, Gabon
3.	Essono nee Essoueb ainee Felicite	Conseiller Technique, charge question du Genre (Ministère de la famille, de la protection de l'enfance et de la promotion de la femme)	BP 3953 Libreville, Gabon
4.	Dr. Teguest Guerma	Senior Adviser on Africa WHO	Guerma@un.org
5.	Rose Rwabuhihi	Program specialist UNIFEM-Africa Section	Rose.rwabuhihi@undp.org
6.	Amr Roshoy	Mission of Egypt to the U.N.	304 E 44 th St. NY. NY, 10017
7.	Christine Muhigana	Regional Planning Officer UNICEF Regional Office West and Central Africa	cmuligana@unicef.org
8.	Leontina dus Muchanges	National Director of Women Affairs	Leontina<amiceto@tvcqlr.co.mz (Mozambique)
9.	Leckomba Loumeto (Jeanne Française)	Secrétaire d'Etat chargée de la promotion de la femme et de l'intégration de la femme au développement (Ministre)	B.P. 13.053 Email : jfleckomba@yahoo.fr Brazzaville, Congo
10.	Ndiaye Ndioro	Directeur général adjoint – organisation internationale pour les migration	7 Route de Uoulloy geuowe 19. Suiise ndiaye@iom.int
11.	Seomidor Nkingiye	1 ^{er} Conseiller, Mission Permanent du Burundi / UN	336 East 45th 12th Fl NY 10017 lnkingiye@Artmail.com
12.	Viola Morga	Senior Gender Advisor UNDP/RBA	DC-2446, 1 UN Plaza, NY 10017
13.	Adrienne Crvz (ILO Geneva) for Grace Hemmings	Senior Gender Specialist ILO Office	ILO, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire hemmings@ilo.org

		Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire	
14.	Essono nee EssoueB Amei Felicite	Conseiller Technique charge du Genre	BP 3953 Libreville, Gabon
15.	Wariara Mbugua	Principle Officer, Office of the special adviser on Gender issues and the advancement of Women (OSAGI) UN Secretariat	New York
16.	Mariam Tackie (Mrs.)	Ag. Exec. Secretary, NCWD, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs Accra, Ghana Tel: 228064 / 688181	P.O.Box M186 Accra, Ghana
17.	Dr. Ken Attafuah	Executive Secretary National Reconciliation Commission, Ghana	Old Parliament Hse, High St., Accra, Ghana Email: kenatta@nrcghana.org kenattafuah@hotmail.com kenattafuah@ghana.com
18.	Joana Opare (Mrs.)	National Programme Co-ordinator UN System Gender Programme, Ghana	UNDP, P.O.Box 1423 Accra, Ghana



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
COMMISSION ECONOMIQUE POUR L'AFRIQUE

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM — MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

To: Mr. Robert Okello, Director
A: Office of Policy and Programme Coordination

Date: 18 May 2004
Ref.: ACGD/0234

From: Wambui Karanja, OIC
De: African Centre for Gender and Development

Subject: Mission Report on the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee on the
Objet: Seventh African Regional Conference on Women

Please find attached Ms. Josephine Ouedraogo and Ms. Hannah Tiagha's report on a mission to New York, USA from 23 February to 5 March 2004.