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**Summary of Activities of the African Centre for
Gender and Development
Activity Report for (ACGD) 2001-2002**

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A. Introduction

During the period under review, the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) undertook a number of activities for the benefit of ECA member States. Other clients included the various regional, sub-regional and national policy makers, planners and researchers, NGOs, IGOs and the public sector. The Centre organized a number of meetings and workshops designed to produce policy reports to enhance policy advocacy. The Centre continued its collaboration with regional and international organizations as well as other UN agencies. In addition to attending meetings, advisory services were provided to member States and national institutions on request.

B. Major Activities Undertaken During the Reporting

The mission of the Centre remains the same: namely to influence a gender perspective in policies developed and adopted by decision-makers at national, sub-regional and regional levels on socio-economic development. Towards this vision, the Centre undertook a number of activities during the reporting period including:

- Monitoring and Evaluation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action;
- African Women's Report which, is focusing on the development of an African Gender and Development Index;
- Engendering national accounts and national budgets;
- Monitoring the status of women through country gender profile for the 53 African countries; and
- Promoting information and communication outreach.

i. Activities related to the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (M&E) on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2002.

The Committee on Women and Development (CWD) endorsed the M&E programme in November 2001: The primary objective is to build the capacity of the member States to implement the Programme. Due to limited resources, 21 countries, which are also the current members of CWD, were selected to participate in the Programme. In conformity with the CWD election modalities, these countries represent the five subregions. Each country was thus invited to nominate Monitoring and Evaluation Officers according to a pre-defined profile, from the ministries of agriculture, commerce and industry, health, planning, finance, women affairs and the national coordinating NGO. Seven senior officers per country were to participate in the Training Workshops on monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the priority areas as stipulated in the African Plan of Action, i.e. formulating national gender policies and integrating them into sectoral policies, plans and programmes. They were also trained to prepare sectoral monitoring reports every 6 months, that would indicate the state of gender mainstreaming in their ministries/institutions and the identify the existing gaps in this regard. The sectoral reports are to be synthesized into national reports.

The implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme is being implemented in partnership with a number of institutions namely the Pan African Institute for Development West Africa, the Pan African Institute for Development Central Africa, ABANTU for Development, SADC Secretariat, and the Ministry for Employment and Labour in Botswana, CAFRAD and La Francophonie.

ii. Activities related to capacity building in gender mainstreaming

Within the broad areas of capacity building for gender mainstreaming, is the production of the African women's report which is the only publication dedicated to gender issues at the continental level: it is a strategic information and communication tool that provides for gender analysis of national, subregional and regional policy frameworks and also follows up and records progress, best practices and new priorities on the status of women in addressing the inequalities that exist between men and women and therefore allow for a more objective way to measure the achievements and limitations of the progress. The objectives of the AWR 2002/2003 are to:

- Introduce and (AGDI) as a measure of gender equality, equity and gaps between men and women;
- Provide a baseline for measuring progress on the impact of the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing platforms for action.
- Report regularly on progress, best practices and new priorities on the status of women in Africa
- Stimulate the development of gender impact indicators.

Activities in implementing this output have included the following:

- Review of gender indices'
- Definition of the theoretical framework of the gender index;
- Definition of the variables of the gender index – working group meeting.

An additional activity in the area of gender mainstreaming was the facilitation of a workshop on mainstreaming gender and human rights into SADC HIV/AIDS strategic framework and programme 2000-2004 focusing on the SADC mining, employment and labour sector.

iii. Activities of the Policy Analysis and Advocacy Programme

The programme addresses a major outstanding issue of how national planning instruments; especially, national accounts and national budget should be used to mitigate the adverse effects of women's unpaid work and their time use in this work. It aims to strengthen the capacity of national accountants (economists and statisticians) in Africa to use concepts, tools and methodologies to systematically integrate gender-disaggregated economic production data in national accounts and national budget. This ensures as much as possible coverage of economic production activities, a vital aspect of good quality national accounts characterized by exhaustive estimates to gross domestic product (GDP). Traditionally, care economy (productive and reproductive work), which has a very significant role in employment creation, income generation, long-term growth and poverty reduction is poorly accounted for or omitted from the national accounts. Therefore, Africa-specific approach is needed to mitigate the adverse impacts of this unpaid work on women's welfare, long-term growth and poverty reduction. This approach is necessary because, unlike other regions, unpaid work significantly underpins the economy. Besides, there is paucity of policy analytical work and measures to effectively ensure that unpaid work is placed in policy agenda. The main activities for this programme include:

- Building an appropriate conceptual framework that provides the basic knowledge to support the strategies for measuring women's unpaid work and time use; and an analytical framework to provide insight into and ways to measure and integrate into national accounts and national budget. In May 2002, ACGD convened an Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting that validated the framework.
- Developing for the first time in Africa a gender-aware macroeconomic model to demonstrate with mathematical precision, how gender inequality in national accounts and budget impact on women's welfare, growth and poverty reduction.

- Building the capacity of national accountants in African countries to measure and translate time spent by different individuals on paid and unpaid work into policy agenda.
- Establishing a quality control and self-monitoring programme to ensure quality outcome by constituting: an Internal Working Group to critically appraise the programme; an Africa-wide National Learning Group to review, refine and validate tools and methodologies developed; and an Advisory Panel to guide the modeling work.

iv. Activities related to cross-cutting research

Within the framework of cross-cutting research (ACGD) is producing country gender profiles (CGD) for all the 53 African countries. The exercise is designed to promote the collection and utilization of gender disaggregated statistics that demonstrate gaps in the status of women. Gender imbalances that exclude women from effective participation into the development process increase productivity, reduce poverty and enhance economic growth. As a tool for policy-makers, CGP will inform policy formulation and implementation of appropriate programmes to reduce gender disparities and enhance the economic empowerment of women for effective participation in the development process. The ultimate goal is to contribute towards overall economic growth, sustainable development, for poverty reduction, and human well-being that is inclusive of all groups of people in society. The major activities have included:

- Extensive study and analysis of library and Internet data on the status of women in Africa;
- Formulation of questionnaire that has been sent to member states to solicit for primary data on a number of key indicators that compare the relative status of women in comparison to men;
- Design of questionnaires to obtain data from member countries on women's access to credit facilities and;
- Analysis and production of profiles for the twenty five English speaking countries and five Portuguese-speaking African countries.

v. Activities related to Information/Communication

In order to strengthen its networking capacities and information outreach, the Centre's information and communication programme undertook a number of activities in the implementation period 2001-2002 work programme. The major thrust of ACGD's communication strategy is to trigger a two-way information flow about gender issues and ECA's response to them, sensitize national stakeholders, and bring about change in national policies so as to become more gender sensitive. Within this framework, the Centre has embarked on a plan to make the national policies more gender-sensitive. To accomplish this, a senior communications consultant was employed to develop a strategy and an implementation plan. In addition, a network of relevant organizations being developed to serve as public focal points within member states. Activities undertaken in this regard consisted of:

- Compiling comprehensive lists of national universities, research institutions, media organizations and umbrella NGO's in the member countries;
- Building strategic alliances with partners in all member countries through an operational network of focal points.
- Compilation and collation of information material for the publication of the first two issues of the ACGD Gender Net.
- ACGD Website: the programme reviewed the website, updated its content and completed the translation of its various sections. It also compiled a list of potential clients – it is expected that the website will be operational around the beginning of October 2002.

- ACGD database: a more inclusive database was designed and expanded. It covers ACGD gender focal points, gender experts, women organizations and networks, partners, etc. The database is now complete and made accessible to the staff members as planned.
- The Team assisted in the compilation of target readers lists for the dissemination of its non-recurrent publications: ** “Compendium of Best Practices on Gender Mainstreaming”.
- The Team coordinated with the Publication/Reproduction Unit the format design and lay out of these two publications, currently in press.

C. Activities related to Technical Support and Advisory Services to Member States

i. Regional advisory services for economic empowerment of women

Supporting member states to achieve gender equality, through gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women, has continued to be a major objective of ACGD’s work programme. Towards this mandate, the regional advisory services during the reporting period have been provided to member states have been gender mainstreaming focusing on gender policy and programme development as well as capacity building for gender analysis. Technical advisory services for economic empowerment of women have also been provided to women’s nongovernmental organizations at national, regional and international levels. Some of the key areas in which technical advisory services were provided are, inter alia:

- Capacity building for gender mainstreaming: the regional advisor is the key gender trainer for the South African government gender mainstreaming capacity building programme. Three training activities have already been implemented in the last twelve months.
- Working with the southern African SRDC, the Regional advisor is providing technical advisory services to the government of Namibia for preparation of a gender mainstreaming strategy.
- Working with the West African SRDC, the Regional advisor has provided technical advisory services to ECOWAS for background work in the preparation of an institutional gender policy.
- Women in the informal economy: Globalising and Organizing (WIEGO): this is an international organization that works to support and advance women in the informal economy.
- Forum for women in democracy (FOWODE): a national level organization which works to increase the level of women in decision making, and
- African women’s development fund: a Regional organization that seeks to develop the capacity of women’s nongovernmental organizations, through fund raising and grant making.

ACGD has also focused on enhancing capacity, through training, of member states to monitor progress in the areas that have been identified as of critical concern by the Platforms of Action. With regard to this, the Regional advisor participated in a team of ACGD resource persons, which carried out training for the selected countries from three English-speaking subregions.

ii. Activities of the Regional Advisor for the Promotion of Women’s Rights (2001)

The Regional advisor for the promotion of women’s rights provided advisory services and technical assistance to governments and relevant NGOs, to promote the legal status of women young girls in compliance with international human rights instruments and by the adoption of regional framework like the additional Protocol to the African charter of human and peoples rights related to women’s rights. The activities undertaken consisted mainly of advisory services, advocacy, capacity building, networking and preparation of reports. Ten requests for advisory services and technical assistance were received during the year, out of which seven were implemented. These include:

- One expert group meeting on women's rights education in Africa: western Africa subregional outlook and best practices was organized in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in December 2001.
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- An expert group meeting on "women's rights education in Africa: western Africa subregional outlook" and best practices was organized with the collaboration of the SRDC coordination unit and IPD/AOS. Participants attended the workshop from 10 francophone and Anglophone countries of West Africa and representatives of UN agencies, December 2001.
- Participated in the regional workshop on Land in Africa, held in Kampala, Uganda
- Meeting on human and people rights held in Johannesburg south Africa
- Training workshop on monitoring and evaluation officers in June 2002 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- Advisory services to association malienne pour a la scolarisation et a l'Education des filles (AMASEF/FAWE)

D. Activities related to inter Agency cooperation

Within the framework of inter-agency cooperation, the Director of the ACGD attended the UN inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (AINWGE) held in New York Headquarters. AINWGE held a workshop on "Training and Capacity Building for Gender mainstreaming:" The Centre was also represented in the 46th Commission on the Status of Women that took place in the UN Headquarters in March 2002. The Commission considered two thematic issues related to women and disaster response and environmental management and women and poverty eradication. The report of that meeting has been circulated to the CWD meeting.