



The African Centre for Gender...

African Ministers Urge to Include Gender Equality and Women's Access to Resources as Indicators of Socio-Economic Progress

The African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development convened their Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 1 June 2003 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Meeting the challenges of implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), operationalizing mutual accountability; contributing to making the International Monetary Fund work better for Africa; and overcoming the macroeconomic challenges of HIV/AIDS were the main issues discussed by the Conference.

The Conference also stressed its commitment to further promote

the advancement of women in Africa and underscored the need to mainstream gender issues in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). This, it insisted, will provide a sound basis for assessing Africa's commitment and monitoring progress achieved for the implementation of Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action.

Need for Indicators of Gender Equality

Discussing the NEPAD priorities, the Conference underscored the

importance of the African Peer Review Mechanism and welcomed the accession by 15 African countries to the APRM, while urging others to sign up.

The APRM process has already identified a number of key indicators - spanning democracy and political governance; economic governance and management; corporate governance; and socio-economic development, that will be monitored.

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Comores Direct: The Importance of Being Trained

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A training workshop on Monitoring & Evaluation of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (M&E) was held in Moroni (June 2003) and gathered 29 participants from Comores and Djibouti. The workshop ended the M&E regional Training Programme launched by ECA/ACGD in 21 countries to build the capacity of member-States, before embarking on the Beijing + 10 Evaluation Process.



In Moroni, "Gender Net" editor Houda Mejri met with Mr. Ibrahim Brina, Head of the Population & Development Division in the Comores General Planning

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ECA/ACGD Monitoring and Evaluation Programme: African Member States Made it Work

In the run up to the Beijing +10 evaluation due to take place in 2004, ACGD has formulated the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme for implementation of the African Plan of Action (PA), 2000-2004, which the Sixth Regional Conference on Women in 1999 adopted with a view to accelerating follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA).

Historic Overview

As was clearly stated in the Dakar and Beijing PFAs, the most effective strategy for achieving gender equality is mainstreaming the gender dimension in all development policies, plans and programmes, thus addressing the systemic causes of gender inequity. Successful implementation of gender mainstreaming requires therefore an explicit and well-articulated national gender policy framework that provides guidelines on how to institutionalize gender internally and implement, monitor and evaluate gender-responsive development goals.

Given the lack of adequate institutional mechanism to help monitor and evaluate on a regular basis the implementation process of the Beijing PA, particularly the mainstreaming of national gender policy into policies, plans and programmes, ACGD has elaborated a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Programme that includes tools for its implementation at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Goals of the M&E Programme

The Programme targets 21 countries that have just concluded their mandate as members of CWD and are distributed over the five sub-regions of Africa. It focuses



Two participants from Comores presenting their draft Plan of Action.

on monitoring and assessing the extent to which national gender policies have been developed in the participating countries, their adequacy in promoting gender mainstreaming in all sectors and the extent to which these policies are implemented in these sectors.

ACGD Consistent Training Programme

Capacity building and training being a major component of the M&E Programme to familiarize and prepare the Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, ACGD developed and conducted a series of training workshops that spanned the past 18 months and covered 19 out of the 21 countries that were former members of ECA Committee on Women and Development selected from the 5 sub-regions of Africa. These workshops were organized in partnership with collaborating institutions such as ABANTU for Development, l'Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie,

the Pan-African Institute for Development (PAID) – Central Africa, and the Pan-African Institute for Development – West Africa, the Secretariat of Southern African Development Authority, the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs in Botswana, African Training and Research Center in Administration and Development (CAFRAD) and l'Agence internationale de la francophonie.

The overall goals of the M&E Programme are to promote and reinforce the mainstreaming of the gender perspective into national development policies, plans and programmes; and inform adequate corrective action for policy adjustments conducive to accelerating the concretization of gender equality.

Specifically, the M&E Programme seeks to:

- Strengthen the commitment of member States to the implementation of the Beijing PFA;
- Build the capacity of member States to integrate the objectives of the PFA in their national policies and programmes;
- Strengthen the capacity of member States to appraise, evaluate and report on the progress made at the national, regional and global levels; and
- Undertake impact assessment of gender mainstreaming on the status of women in Africa.

These workshops were coordinated by an ACGD team, namely Josephine Ouedraogo, Director, Hannah Tiagha, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Eva Kiwango, Social Affairs Officer, Souad Abdennebi, ECA Regional Advi-

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The First African Gender Development Index A Pioneer Tool in the Making

Seven years after the Beijing World Conference on women, the challenge is to develop an index that measures the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms of Action and that incorporates gender issues such as participation, empowerment, equality and equity.

The AGDI is a composite index made up of two parts that will measure gender equality and the changes in gender relations, as well as the impact of gender policies over time. The AGDI will be made as transparent and verifiable as possible and will be composed of:

- **The Gender Status Index (GSI)**

This is a measure of relative gender equality that captures those issues related to gender equality that can be measured quantitatively. It is made up of three blocks with components, subcomponents and indicators that are readily available or easy to calculate either on an annual basis or at least on a five-year basis. The first block is **“social power”** which looks at indicators on education and health; the second one is **“economic power”** covering indicators on income, time use or employment as a proxy for time use and access to resources; and



ACGD Economic Affairs Officer T. Ruzvidzo welcoming Dr. A.R Migiro, Minister of Community Development, Gender & Children at the launch of the Tanzania AGDI Advisory Panel.

the third set addresses **“political power”** in the public sector defined as ‘executive, legislative and judiciary power’ and power in civil society.

- **The African Women’s Progress Scoreboard (AWPS)**

The AWPS compliments the GSI in that it is a simple tool that will capture the more qualitative elements of women’s empowerment, incorporating for instance issues of women’s rights. It can become a strategic tool to enhance political awareness of women’s advancement and empowerment.

The AWPS will score governments in addressing gender equality, among other things, in terms of ratification of international and regional instruments, policy commitment, allocation of human and financial resources, monitoring and evaluation of international conventions such as CEDAW, Dakar and the Beijing Platforms for Action, ILO conventions on equal remuneration, discrimination, maternity protection at the workplace, declarations on HIV/AIDS and other related infectious diseases.

and the changes in gender relations and the effects of gender policies over time. The AGDI therefore is not measuring impact but processes and progress.

- **The AGDI Process and Progress**

ACGD, with the assistance of two consultants, put together the AGDI with all its supporting components and indicators. To make the process as participa-

For the first time in Africa, the ECA is developing through its African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD) an African Gender Development Index (AGDI) to measure the progress being made 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. This is in recognition of the constraints of existing indicators for measuring gender inequality and lack of an index that is specific to Africa.

The scoring is done on a three-point scale: 0 (zero) indicates a zero performance; 1 (one) indicates a poor – fair performance; and 2 (two) indicates a good – to excellent performance.

The AGDI will only measure gender equality,

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African Ministers Discuss Challenges

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And in a move to mainstream the gender perspective, the Conference urged the APRM to also include indicators of gender equality and women's access to resources as important additional indicators of socio-economic progress.

Mutual Accountability, Ownership and Transformed Partnerships

A poor state of economic and social conditions still prevails in Africa:

- The rate of economic growth is slowing from 4.3% in 2001 to 3.2% in 2002;
- The number of people living with HIV/AIDS reached a staggering 29.4 millions;
- The number of people living in absolute poverty is at 380 millions;
- Armed conflicts in several countries are still depressing growth rates and inhibiting human development.

Reversing these trends will require, as stressed by the Conference, a new and energized relationship between Africa and its partners based on trust and a shared responsibility for development effectiveness and commitments on all sides. The Ministers underscored the importance of African ownership of the continent's development strategies as the underpinning for the transformed relationships that are needed with Africa's development partners. This will involve developing home-grown policies and programmes for poverty reduction, improving Africa's governance systems and resolving conflicts on the continent.

Rethinking Aid

With regard to aid, the African Ministers welcomed moves taken by more and more partners to set

specific timeframes for meeting the UN aid target of 0.7 per cent of GDP, and step up their Official Development Assistance (ODA) efforts. The Conference noted that despite these commitments, the level of ODA flows to Africa remains of major concern and needs to be further increased. It therefore recommended that the record of partners' efforts towards meeting the UN target and other commitments should feature as important components in joint reviews of development effectiveness. The Conference also recommended that Africa's development partners scale up efforts to support nationally owned capacity building efforts; and that African countries give priority to the recruitment and retention of African experts from the Diaspora and to on-the-job training of civil servants.

With reference to the international community's efforts to reduce Africa's debt burden, the Conference welcomed the proposed International Finance Facility (IFF) as "the first of its kind designed to mobilize additional resources for the poorest countries to meet the MDG's". It also endorsed the ECA Executive Secretary's proposal to convene an International Conference on African Debt in early 2004.

Reconciling Country Ownership and Conditionality

The Conference acknowledged the work undertaken at the IMF to evaluate its policies in low-income countries in order to help them deliver high levels of growth with stability and poverty reduction. Yet, it stressed that the challenge is to reconcile the need for increased country ownership of adjustment and reform programmes with the need for conditions on IMF loans.

To reconcile country ownership and conditionality, the Conference recommended that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) assists

African countries in developing a menu of policy options, imposes fewer structural conditions, and provides for outcomes-based conditions where appropriate.

How to Mitigate the Macroeconomic Effects of HIV/AIDS?

- The HIV/AIDS epidemic poses a threat of unequalled magnitude to the lives of Africans and to the prospects for good governance and economic development.
- The epidemic will cut approximately one per cent from GDP growth rates, thereby significantly diminishing the prospects of realizing the economic expansion necessary to reduce poverty.

The Conference welcomed the United Nations Secretary General's initiative to establish the Commission for HIV/AIDS and Governance in Africa (CHGA), and recognized the leadership role of its Chair, the Executive Secretary of the ECA. The Conference stressed that the CHGA shall build upon the existing initiatives in combating HIV/AIDS, and considered its mandate as especially relevant to the challenges faced by Ministries of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

While recognizing the importance of the various steps taken so far to confront the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the Ministers underscored the crucial leadership role that respective ministries must play in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its effects.

The Conference urged the Bretton Woods Institutions to consider revising the eligibility criteria and to find ways of ensuring that African countries are able to expand their expenditure on health and social welfare without violating conditionality that imposes limits on public spending. ■

Gender-Aware Model to Evaluate Impact of Policies on Poverty Reduction

ECA Pledges to Rethink Development

Ignoring the gender dimensions of macroeconomic policies and women's unpaid work in the care economy in macroeconomic framework has proved to be costly to African countries and to have hindered their progress in reaching economic targets, including poverty reduction, growth and employment.

Hence adequate tools need to be developed to help decision makers identify policy gaps, and take corrective actions to engender their economic policies with a view to empowering women economically and politically.

To help in identifying and quantifying the costs, impacts and interactions between gender concerns and macroeconomic policies, ECA has begun to develop through its African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD) a new range of tools, including a **Gender-aware Macro-economic Model** to evaluate impact of policies on poverty reduction.

To this effect, ACGD convened in Addis Ababa an Ad-hoc Expert Group meeting (May 2003) to discuss the tools to be developed for mainstreaming gender into poverty reduction strategies (PRS), using national accounts and national budget as an entry point.

High-Level Attendance

The high caliber of the experts who attended the meeting reflected the credibility ECA is enjoying at the regional and international levels. Indeed, the event attracted 15 high-level experts comprising modelers and statisticians from renowned policy research institutions and universities in Africa, Asia,

Europe and the USA. Experts in charge of national accounts, micro and macro-economic statistics of the Ministries of Finance and Economic Development represented ECA member States Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Uganda, South Africa and Zambia. The meeting was also attended by three of ECA partners, namely the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) -- New York, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) -- Bangkok, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) -- Geneva.

The Tough Five

In her opening remarks, Mrs. Josephine Ouedraogo, ACGD Director, stressed that poverty reduction strategies (PRS) are significant in the development thinking of to African development policies because they offer an important entry point for engendering the development process, and they enhance African ownership of these approaches as they are suited to Africa's unique economies.

But she cautioned that engendering these strategies and developing specific tools that capture well the underlying economies can not be achieved unless Africa addresses the following challenges:

- (i) How to reduce poverty in Africa where over 70% of the poor are women;
- (ii) How to address gender inequality that persists in access to and control of productive, human, and social capital assets;
- (iii) How to effectively include women's work in national policies;



Consultant Anushree Sinha

- (iv) How to get the commitment of the Ministers of Finance as key decision makers to addressing gender issues;
- (v) How to overcome gender-related barriers that perpetuate women's exclusion from other productive activities.

To address the questions raised above, ECA is assisting countries to adopt economic policies that are gender sensitive and include objectives and instruments that take into consideration the work of women, including those engaged in market and non-market work.

Making Gender Awareness More Concrete

Therefore, the major thrust of ACGD's Programme on mainstreaming gender in national planning instruments is to improve integration of women's non-market work (NMW) into national accounts and national budgets (NANB).

Introducing the Programme on mainstreaming gender in national planning instruments, Mr. Alfred Latigo, ACGD Senior Economic Affairs Officer, explained that its focus is to integrate women's non-market work (NMW) into national poverty reduction strategies using National Accounts and

National Budget (NANB). Indeed, the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) stressed that NMW was a key area of policy intervention to improve the situation of women in the non-market economy.

By 2005, the Programme is expected to create awareness and motivate policy makers on NMW and establish the extent of including the latter in national accounts and national budget (NANB). The Programme would also improve concepts, tools and methodologies to establish best practices and standards in Africa.

During this meeting, the experts also agreed that the Programme would strengthen the capacity of statisticians and national accountants to engender NANB, as it would support development of gender-aware tools to evaluate impacts of policies.

The meeting considered three tools for analyzing the impact of fiscal policy on women's time use and welfare, economic growth and poverty reduction:

- A country-specific gender-aware macro-economic model intended to guide ECA member States in evaluating the impacts of their policies on women's welfare, economic growth and poverty reduction;
- An outline of the Easy Reference Guide (ERG), which will be used for guiding collection, analysis and integration of sex-disaggregated data into national accounts and national budget;
- Time-use studies and other sources of data that will generate a sex-disaggregated database for constructing the gender-aware model, and gender-aware national accounts. The data will also be used by African governments to assess the impact of national budgets on women's time use and their contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The Easy Reference Guide (ERG)

Because engendering of NANB is a relatively new concept, ECA has decided to develop as a first step a tool, the **Easy Reference Guide (ERG)** that will help national statisticians, policy analysts and national accountants for the collection, analysis and integration of NMW in these instruments. This "Africa-specific" guide would help African governments and decision-makers because it will be responsive to the specific needs and capabilities of the people of the continent.

The meeting commended ECA for its innovative work on developing the ERG and recognized that it was ahead of other UN Regional Commissions in spearheading analytical work in gender, especially, in women's NMW. The proposed ERG could provide a best practice example that could be used for developing a global approach for integrating women's NMW into poverty reduction strategies based on NANB.

The Gender-aware Macro-economic Model for Evaluating Impact of Policies on Women, Growth and Poverty Reduction.

The second tool ECA is bracing to developing is a gender-aware macro-economic model. To this effect, a survey was conducted by ECA consultant Dr. Anushree Sinha, in most African countries (2002), with a view to assessing the availability of data, tools, and capacity to integrate gender perspectives into national accounts and national budgets. In the paper she presented to the meeting on 'Consideration of a Gender-aware Model for Evaluating Fiscal Policies', Dr. Sinha focused on the findings of the survey and stressed that, like formal models, gender-aware models translate into economic reality. She added

that the model can serve several purposes, namely:

- (i) Provide a formal framework for gender-aware evaluation of fiscal policies in African economies;
- (ii) Help demonstrate to policy makers how gender inequalities in national accounts and fiscal policy might have differentiated impacts on women and men in terms of employment, income, leisure time, education, etc.;
- (iii) Help identify new research areas that will be needed to improve engendering of macroeconomic policies.

The Need for Capacity Building and Partnerships

Being a new area in Africa, capacity is generally inadequate to engender national planning instruments using the tools being developed. In his presentation on 'National Capacity and Partnership Needs for Engendering National Planning Instruments', Mr. Latigo stressed the need to develop by 2004 a strong capacity building programme that would be based on training national statisticians, policy analysts, and national accountants on the use of the new tools ACGD is developing.

Major Recommendations

- **The Easy Reference Guide (ERG)**
 1. The title of the Guide should be "Easy Reference Guide on Tools for Mainstreaming Gender in Poverty Reduction Strategies": National Accounts, National Budget and Time Use Studies ;
 2. Policy makers, statisticians, national accountants, gender advocates and think tanks should be included as the stakeholders and users of the ERG
 3. The ERG should have three broad parts: (i) Process of undertaking time- use survey;

(ii) Process of engendering national accounts initially based on satellite accounts; (iii) Process of engendering national budgets;

4. Time-use surveys should be undertaken parallel to other national household surveys to minimize the burden on statisticians;

5. ACGD should aim to at producing a "Best Practices in Africa" manual based on the applications of time-use data in engendering poverty reduction strategies.

• Gender-aware Macroeconomic Model

1. ACGD should develop a Computable General Equilibrium Model (CGEM) that will incorporate micro-data in the analysis of women's NMW. These data could reflect Africa-specific cultural factors that influence household behaviour in the allocation of time;

2. The CGEM should be simple, user-friendly and cost-effective in terms of financial and human resources and time requirements and capable of handling indicators of different policy changes.

3. As gender dimensions are not included in the existing models, ACGD will need to extend the accounting framework of the proposed Model by:

- Treating men and women as separate factors of production;
- Treating NMW and leisure as sectors, in addition to the usual market-economy sectors;
- Adding extra information to the structure of the Model as appropriate, including adopting micro-simulation approach after the pilot phase;

4. ACGD should develop a strong capacity-building programme for constructing and using the model to depend less on external experts, and thus ensure a sustainable national capacity;

5. The model-building pro-



ERG Experts Group, from left to right Dr. M. Gouws, Ms. M. Cszmadia, Dr. A.L. Brathaug, Dr. A. Latigo, Mr. O. Abdulrahman, Mr. R. Azmeti, Prof. J. Charmes and Dr S. McDonald.

gramme should proceed with an initial pilot study that will engender existing tested models. It will then be applied to one

country selected on the basis of the criteria agreed upon at the meeting. ■

Promoting Synergies

In his closing remark, Mr. Amoako, ECA Executive Secretary, stressed the need to strengthen the advocacy role of the Programme and the importance of involving member States in developing the tools.

Commending the roster of experts ACGD was able to mobilize for the meeting, he underlined the importance of involving them closely in ECA's activities to operationalize these two important tools.

He added that the Programme should share ideas and findings with related Programmes in-house, such as ECA's ongoing Governance project, PRSP Learning Group, and the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI). In the process of developing the tools, he endorsed the idea of linking with knowledge-based institutions in Africa and overseas, as a way of reducing duplication of effort, enhancing sustainability, and promoting cross-fertilization of ideas.

Gender Country Profiles: Knowing Where We Stand Before Moving Forward

Given the need for specific, measurable and quantifiable data to assess and act on the yawning gender gap as stressed in the recommendations of the International Conference on African Women and Economic Development organized by ECA in 1998, ACGD published the same year 53 country brochures on the status of women and men in African countries. These brochures provided gender-disaggregated statistical data on decision-making, education, health, economic activity and human rights with the intention of gauging to appreciate the gender disparities, but also to comprehend highlighting whatever

advances have been made by governments for the advancement of women and the reduction of these disparities.

Aware of the importance of using updated statistics for developing, formulating and implementing gender-responsive economic policies, ACGD has embarked upon producing a new and updated versions of the 53 Country Gender Profiles meant to serve as a monitoring, evaluation and advocacy tool that can be used by policy makers, researchers, and civil society.

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From our own Focal Points

Activities of International Women's Day in Ghana

By: Gertrude Eunice
(ACGD Media Focal Point)

March 8, 2003. Today marks the International Women's Day, a day set aside to reflect on the progress made in advancing the cause of women. It is also an occasion for all women around the world to unite in recognition and in celebration of their achievements.

The theme for this year's celebration is 'Women Human Rights and Peace'. In Ghana, various women's groups, organizations and individuals are celebrating the day with joy and trying to drum the message home of women's rights. Government's role in creating the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs is a clear commitment to the promotion of women's rights. In the education sector, there is a Minister in charge for girl-child education; hundreds of females are also holding top positions in the country today. But one begins to wonder why women still face numerous constraints that militate against their progress and development. Records from the Women and Juvenile Unit of the Ghana Police Service in Accra indicate that just two months into the beginning of this year, **more than five hundred cases of defilement, incest, rape and child trafficking have been reported.** Apart from these cases, other forms of domestic violence such as wife battering, trokosi*, widowhood rights just to mention a few still persist. In the light of all these, the human rights of women continue to be violated thereby denying them the peace of mind to go about their normal duties. The role of women in the society cannot be overemphasized, as such one will suggest that government should take a second look at all laws pertaining to these rights. **The Domestic Violence Bill before Parliament should**

Tradition is passed on from generation to generation; so the youth should be targeted to disabuse their minds of the fact that the role of the girl-child is limited to the kitchen. The Ministry of Education should ensure that the curriculum for schools and colleges does not promote differences between the sexes in terms of capability. Women should have access to good health, care, information and services. Improvement in women's health care will enable them to contribute meaningfully to the socio economic development of the country. The media should play a big role in the development of women.

be embraced by all. Men are conditioned to view themselves as physically, mentally and financially superior to women and it is this wrong notion which determines how they treat women.

Women themselves should also take control of their lives. Leaders of women's groups should ensure that peace and understanding prevails in their groups to really reflect the aims and objectives of the day; and also promote the rights and well-being of women.

Note: *Trokosi, in the Ewe language spoken in the upper Volta region of West Africa means slaves of the gods. It*

is part of a traditional religious system, ju-ju, in which a fetish priest mediates between the gods and the people. One of the beliefs of those who practice ju-ju is that in atonement of a person's sin, his/her family must give a young virgin to the priest as reparation. The girl is generally expected to serve the priest for three to five years. After that time, her family is free to redeem her, but priests usually demand a high price which is often more than the family can afford. While enslaved, these girls are forced to live in inhumane conditions. In Ghana for example, there are an estimated 4,000 Trokosi. ■

Celebrating the International Women's Day in Cameroon

By: Comfort Effiom*
(ACGD Focal Point - Civil Society)

The 18th International Women's Day was celebrated the world over on 8th March 2003. The celebration had a whole week of activities throughout the national territory, which culminated in a march pass on the 8th, presided over by Madam Chantal Biya, wife of the Head of State.

Theme for the celebration this year was "Gender: Partnership between Men and Women and the Millennium Development Goals". These goals include:

- Elimination of poverty and

- hunger;
- Ensuring universal primary education;
- Promoting gender equality and empowering women;
- Reducing infant mortality;
- Improving maternal health;
- The fight against AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensuring environmental sustainability;
- Putting into place a partnership for development.

These week-long activities

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Perspectives

Gender Mainstreaming: Our Experience in Gabon

By: Mrs. Angelique Ngoma

Minister of the Family, Protection of the Child and Women Affairs



Since the 4th World Summit on Women held in Beijing adopted the Platform for Action and its gender mainstreaming goals, Gabon has subscribed to it as an agreed strategy aiming to reduce all disparities and thus build a society that is more just and equitable.

To this effect, many sensitization activities have been undertaken both by the Ministry of Women Affairs and by civil society, thus targeting many actors and stakeholders all involved in the development process.

The Ministry, headed since 1999 by Mrs. Angelique Ngoma, has focused its activities on both male and female decision-makers and managerial staff in public and private sectors, as well as female civil servants and women working in both the private sector and civil society. It also included male and female managerial staff

in public and private sectors. But Gabon has actually started advocating for gender mainstreaming as early as March 1996, when it organized its first workshop on the subject, in conjunction with a seminar held for the adoption of Beijing recommendations.

A second workshop was organized in 1999 for civil society and various non-governmental organizations. In 2000, the Ministry held a third workshop on "Sensitization and Strategy Formulation to Mainstream Gender in Development Programmes". The workshop was intended for senior civil servants and main private and semi public enterprises. Finally, in March 2001 and in celebration of the International Women's Day, a fourth workshop was organized under the aegis of Prime Minister, Head of Government, Mr. Jean François Ntoutoume Emame, to discuss "Mainstreaming Gender in National Priorities".

Civil Society, has also played its part in the advocacy activities aiming to raise awareness and enforce gender mainstreaming. In May 2001, the Network of Gabon Female Ministries and Parliamentarians (REFEMPG) headed by Mrs. Angelique Ngoma organized a sensitization workshop for the country's political leaders.

The overall goal of the workshop was to sensitize political party leaders on the need for a better representation of women in decision-making within their parties, but also in the run-up for elections, notably the 2001 parliamentary election.

These activities translate the political will of the authorities headed by H.E. President El Hadj Omar Bongo to constantly promote the status of women in Gabon through their contributions into various social and economic sectors.

Achieving this goal is conditioned on strengthening their capacities to help them benefit from better opportunities and increasing their access to resources, thus enabling them to participate more equally with men in decision-making.

We were able to launch this process that needed mobilization of funds thanks to the contribution of our partners in development, namely UN specialized agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). ■

Three Major Objectives Reached by the CWD Bureau Meeting

The Bureau of ECA's Committee on Women and Development (CWD) has convened in Addis Ababa (16-17 September) to follow-up on the implementation of several specific recommendations made by CWD during its last meeting held in Johannesburg in October 2002.

During its Johannesburg meeting, CWD has adopted several comprehensive modalities for the identification of NGOs and resource persons who will serve in the Committee.

As the ECA is responsible - through the African Center for Gender and Development



ACGD Director Josephine Ouedrago with members of the new CWD Bureau.

Members of CWD Bureau

1. Chair	Egypt
2. First Vice-Chair	Burundi
3. Second Vice-Chair	Ghana
4. First Rapporteur	Lesotho
5. Second Rapporteur	Gabon.
6. Ex-Officio	Congo
7. Ex-Officio	South Africa

(ACGD) - for selecting NGOs and resource persons who meet the membership criteria of CWD, it has used these modalities to renew the current list of NGOs and resource persons that serve in the Committee for the period 2003-2004. This list was therefore submitted to the CWD Bureau meeting who examined it on the basis of these criteria and approved it unreservedly.

With regard to the Global Review of Beijing +10 expected to take place in 2005 under the aegis of the United Nations Organization, ECA will contribute through CWD to the preparatory process of the Decade Review aiming to assess the progress made for the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action in Africa.

The Bureau was informed of the overall Africa Decade Review process as agreed upon during the CWD meeting. This process will be implemented in 3-phases:

1. The evaluation at national level to be conducted by each country and summed up in a National Decade Review Report, which will be discussed and endorsed by a multi-sectoral national committee.
2. Sub-regional evaluation meetings will then be organized in each of the 5 sub-regions to review and endorse the national evaluation reports already synthesized into Sub-regional Evaluation Reports. The review will seek a consensus about the major gender-related priority areas in the sub-regions for the next 10 years.
3. The outcome of the sub-regional evaluation meetings will be sent to ECA for synthesis into a Regional Evaluation Report. It will be a key input into the Decade Review of the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, and the formulation of the next policy framework document to guide gender-related work in the continent. A High-Level Inter-governmental Consultative meeting designed to enable African countries to assess progress made will be

held by ECA in November 2004, in collaboration with its partners.

The Meeting noted that although it was complex, this evaluation process is also efficient. In this regard, the CWD Bureau recommended that:

- The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) accept the Report of the 7th African Regional Conference on Women to be held in November 2004 as part of the official technical document to be discussed in its session due in March 2005;
- Particular focus be put in the discussion on the tools developed by ECA and applied in the member States to assess progress made in some of the 12 critical areas of concern, with a view to sharing knowledge and coordinating approaches to measuring and reporting progress;
- CSW endorse the outcome of the 7th African Regional Conference to strengthen the political impetus, and incorporate it as Africa's input in the Global Decade Review.

The third major objective of the CWD Bureau meeting was to examine the ECA/ACGD report on

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sor for Women's Fundamental Rights, and Hilda Tadria, ECA Regional Advisor for Women's Economic Empowerment. Two training workshops held recently (1-15 June 2003) in Angola and Comoros ended this regional training programme, which is so crucial to building the capacity of member States before embarking on the M&E Programme as part of the Beijing +10 evaluation process.

These workshops availed the participants of the opportunity to discuss the criteria defining a sound gender policy and absorb the M&E tools to assess their countries sectoral policies through a gender perspective. They also raised important issues such as developing adequate evaluation mechanisms and ensuring sufficient funds in addition to providing the expertise such an exercise will necessitate.

Thanks to this regional training programme, the participants and the ECA team had the opportunity to define respective roles and responsibilities, and to set a time frame for using the M&E tools in the national and regional reporting process for Beijing +10.

Follow-up Missions

A series of follow-up missions of the M&E Programme ensued and confirmed the value of the capacity building workshops that preceded the implementation process. The latest one took Hannah Tiagha to Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, three countries that have already started putting into practice what they learnt in the training workshops.

While these countries are at different stages in monitoring the process of gender mainstreaming in the different sectors, they are moving systematically towards laying the necessary policy and institutional groundwork.



When endeavour comes to fruition...

Botswana, for example, is using its current Women and Development Policy as the basis for working with six line ministries to develop sectoral gender policies, and to appoint Gender Officers responsible for promoting and monitoring the gender mainstreaming process. This has been achieved in the Ministries of Agriculture, Finance and Development Planning, Health and Labour and Home Affairs. As this process continues in the remaining ministries, a capacity building programme for the Gender Officers is also under way with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Swaziland gave priority to the formulation and approval of a national gender policy to guide the gender mainstreaming process. The newly formulated document is already in the Cabinet of the King awaiting approval. In addition, Gender Officers are being appointed to monitor and promote gender mainstreaming in their respective line ministries on an ongoing basis. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Office has expressed its readiness to work with the Gender Department to train the Gender Officers.

The purpose of the M&E Programme is to show the way for impact assessment whereby the status of women will be analyzed against efforts in mainstreaming gender into development actions. Over time, the status of women should evolve as having steadily narrowed the gender gap in the various development sectors. But the successful implementation of the M&E Programme requires commitment on the part of the decision-makers to adopt equitable development policies and strategies, and to back them up with the requisite means, mechanisms and structures.

Zimbabwe has taken the lead in convincing **all** the government ministries and parastatals to appoint a minimum of five Gender Officers (at least one per department) whose responsibility will be to monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming. More than **300 Gender Officers** appointed recently from all Government departments are currently undergoing gender training by the Department of Gender in groups of 30. After training, each line ministry is expected to draw up sectoral gender policies, along the guidelines contained in the National Gender Policy that was officially approved in 2001.

The Way Forward

In the long run, the M&E Programme seeks to give all government, intergovernmental, civil and private institutions a mechanism for testing the degree to which their development actions have succeeded in reaching their stakeholders and would-be beneficiaries. The Programme provides a built-in mechanism for self-evaluation with regard to gender policy formulation and policy implementation. It also points to the necessary institutional mechanisms that are crucial to successful gender policy implementation, (i.e., functional coordination and accountability mechanisms that highlight responsibility for concrete action, the gaps and corrective measures). ■

A Pioneer Tool in the Making (AGDI)

Continued from page 3

tory and consultative as possible, the draft AGDI was reviewed and validated by an Advisory Panel made up of experts, resource

The objectives of the trials are:

- To put to test both the GSI and the Scoreboard;
- To collect the data for the Gender Status Index;
- To collect the elements of the Women's Progress Scoreboard;
- To gather case studies that substantiate both the GSI and the Scoreboard;
- To assemble good practices that can be used to show progress in addressing the gender inequality;
- To prompt a process of national collection and documentation of gender-disaggregated data that can be used for monitoring and evaluating programmes in terms of gender.

persons, members of the UN interagency group and representatives from countries participating in the trials.

The AGDI was appraised further during the training of researchers who discussed the practicalities of the tool in the field. Thirteen countries are participating in the trials of the AGDI: Uganda, Tanzania (East Africa); Cameroon, Gabon (Central Africa); Egypt, Tunisia (North Africa), Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana (West Africa); and Mozambique and South Africa (Southern Africa)

Field trials are underway in Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa and Ethiopia. National Advisory Panels have also been launched in these countries. These are made up of representatives of the Ministries responsible for Gender, Finance, Health, Agriculture and Education, the Bureau of Statistics, the representative of the country on the ECA Regional Advisory Panel, a representative of the NGO sector, and two independent gender and development experts. The role of the panel is to assist and guide the research team during the data collection and report writing, and to validate the country report.

Preparatory work has been

undertaken for the trials of the AGDI through the training of research teams and launch of National Advisory Panels for the remaining eight countries. This is expected to be complete by November 2003.

Validation of the AGDI

The reports from the thirteen countries will be consolidated

into one report: The African Women's Report 2002/2003. To ensure that it is scientifically relevant and rigorous, the final AGDI will be presented for review and validation to an Advisory Group made up of members of the UN interagency group and resource

persons. The Advisory Group will also include experts from each of the thirteen pilot countries.

Expected Outcomes

AGDI is expected to be an Africa-specific tool that will help African policy makers and planners determine the extent of gender inequality and assess the impact of their policies to reduce gender gaps and take corrective actions for policy development. AGDI will also help African governments accelerate the implementation of the African and Global Platforms for action to reduce gender inequalities and enforce the advancement of women.

Another major outcome of the AGDI is the 'democratization of statistics' thanks to increased availability of gender-disaggregated data. It will stimulate community participation and involve NGOs in data collection, thus enhancing political awareness of gender concerns. ■

Celebrating the IWD in Cameroon

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began on the 1st march with the launching in Nkongsamba, a town in Littoral Province of Cameroon by the Minister of Women's Affairs Madam Catharine Mbock. This was followed by other activities organised by NGO's, women's associations and different ministries. These activities included round table discussions on the theme of the year, televised debates, exhibitions by women, legal clinics and some cultural activities etc.

The Inter-African Committee for example organised a sensitisation campaign in the Briquettierie neighbourhood of Yaounde on the theme "Female Genital Mutilation and the Spread of the HIV virus". The campaign was attended by over 80 participants, including Imams of mosques, Moslem women's organisations, traditional birth attendants, traditional barbers, and other women.

During the various conferences that were held, women tried to evaluate the progress that has been made so far towards equality with men, the challenges facing women in contemporary society, and how to enhance the status of women. They were happy with the progress made so far, although there is still a lot to be done. Cameroon is on the right path, a lot has already been achieved.

8th March was celebrated with a march pass in all the 10 provinces of the country. Women of all walks of life and age groups dressed up in the official uniform of the day. Over 37,000 women from some 539 women's groups participated. Women in public administration, state-owned enterprises, private companies, NGOs, as well as many from religious, social and cultural asso-

Comores Direct: The Importance of Being Trained

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Department (GPD). She also interviewed 2 participants from Djibouti: Mrs. Halo Abubaker, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, and Ms. Ron Osman Omar, Head of the Quality Control & Normalization Unit, and Gender Focal Point in the Ministry of Commerce/ Industry and Handicrafts.

In the following interviews, the 3 participants assess the progress achieved so far to implement a gender policy in their respective countries. Together, they draw the lessons learnt from the limitations they are faced with, and the help that training and capacity building could bring them to promote gender mainstreaming. They also agreed that in Djibouti, coordination among NGOs is quite advanced and productive, which is not the case in Comores. An exchange of experience in this regard is therefore highly needed.

1- Interview with Said Ibrahime Brina, Comores

❖ As a man working in the Planning field, when did you first hear about the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (M&E)?

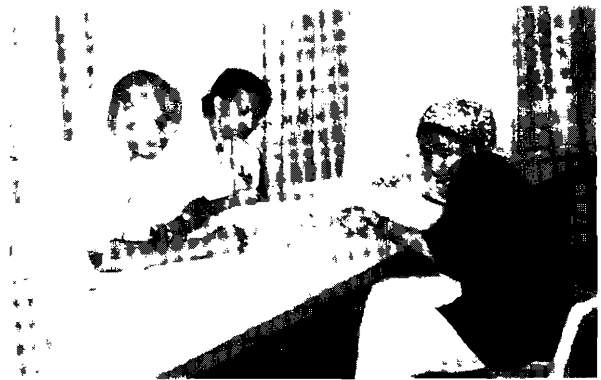
Given my former position as Head of the Survey and Research Unit on Population, I had the opportunity to work with many national non-governmental organizations and that is how I came to know about the M&E Programme.

❖ Planning is one of the six key ministries involved in this M&E Programme. Given your position in the General Planning Department, could you sum up what has been achieved in this regard?

The General Planning Department is actually a new structure, launched only three years ago. Before that, the Population Directorate used to take gender issues in hand and thus developed the Population, Development and Gender Project (PDGP). Within the framework of this Project, we prepared the National Policy Plan for the Advancement of Women that we already consider as a real achievement. Now we are waiting for the National Assembly to set up so as to adopt this programme officially.

❖ In the absence of a Ministry for Women Affairs, how are gender issues actually addressed?

These are dealt with by the Ministry of Social Affairs, although gender mainstreaming has become a reality in all our programmes... At the level of the General Planning Department for example, the newly developed national policy for the advancement of women, the Family Code as well as various surveys we have undertaken with the National Network on Women



Said Ibrahime Brina preparing his draft Plan of Action with two female colleagues from Djibouti

and Development (namely, a survey on maternal mortality and another one on the rate of school drop outs) all prove the sustainable effort we are making to take into consideration the gender dimension in our activities. The main task of the GPD is to coordinate various National Action Plans developed by different ministries... Gender issues are gaining more and more interest, especially when it comes to implementing poverty reduction strategies and programmes...

❖ Do you often refer to the Beijing Platform for Action? Do you have a copy of this document?

I am afraid we don't at the GPD...but I assume that it is available in the various technical ministries and sectoral departments...As a matter of fact, the Beijing Platform for Action has informed the PDGP, which I referred to earlier...

❖ Things seem to be evolving normally then... Does this mean that that you will have no difficulty preparing the National Evaluation Report according to plan?

No, there are some difficulties. We are actually facing a major problem due to institutional instability, which represents a major handicap when it comes to the coordination and follow up of this plan...

❖ What does this instability affect most, structures or staff?

Both! Besides, turnover of staff often makes it difficult to ensure

Celebrating the IWD in Cameroon

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ciations. For close to three hours, these women marched past the First Lady. The day ended with drinking, dinning and dancing in different locations arranged by the women. It was really a day well celebrated in Cameroon. ■

* Ms. Comfort Effiom is President of the Inter African Committee Against Harmful Practices (IAC-Cameroon)



Interviewee Ron Osman Omar discussing with her male colleagues guidelines for Plan of Action

regular follow-up and evaluation...In Comores, a great fuss was made about Beijing to make the system more dynamic. Half way through, we noticed that these efforts were weakening gradually, even at the regional level!

❖ *What is the solution according to you?*

It is twofold I think: first, intense advocacy activities to convince the authorities to abide by their commitments. Secondly, to provide technical and material means to promote gender issues, in addition to increasing capacity building programmes. Our Programme needs more means and resources, and we need to sensitize our partners in development to this effect.

❖ *Would you be able to prepare the National Evaluation Report and meet the deadlines if such means were made available?*

Yes, I feel rather confident. This training workshop has provided us with the right tools to prepare the Evaluation Report. But data collection will be the major difficulty due to the insularity of our country...

❖ *Who can help you overcome this problem?*

The Government is supposed to be the works foreman and provide us with the adequate means (work facilities, transportation, sensitization activities). Our partners in

development are usually ready to assist when programmes are well defined and focused...We shall need their assistance to prepare the M&E Report in time.

❖ *How useful to you was this training workshop?*

It has allowed me to interact with various participants coming from different backgrounds and to enrich my experience. But most importantly, this workshop has provided me with a practical tool to operationalize the gender approach. The training method adopted by the ECA/ACGD team has helped us absorb and acquire a good command of this tool. Now, we need to apply it at different levels if we are provided with the adequate means.

❖ *Are you interested in gender approach as a demographer, i.e. a technician, or as a man?*

Ensuring gender equity with regards to rights and responsibilities is essential for men and women, so as to complement each other. Being directly involved in population and development concerns helped me work in the field and get first-hand data on gender disparities and their implications... According to recent statistical data, there is a growing feminization of the population in Comores, so discounting women in the development process is unthinkable! You can't achieve development when

you marginalize the majority!

❖ *How do you assess the status of women in Comores today?*

Despite the positive steps achieved so far, persistent social atavisms make it hard for women to progress. Many of our sluggish social traditions, for which men are also responsible, need to be changed.

❖ *What would you reproach men with in your country?*

Polygamy mainly, even though it is allowed... Given the many economic disparities between men and women, polygamy can represent an additional problem that has serious social implications on women, all the more since men do not always take up their parenting responsibilities. A lot still needs to be done to address such issues.

2- Interview with Halo Abubaker (H.A) and Ron Osman Omar (R.O), Djibouti

❖ *After attending this training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation, how would you assess the actual difficulties Djibouti is facing in this regard?*

(R.O): Inadequate human and financial resources are the major difficulties. Although there is currently one gender focal point per Ministry, we think it is not enough and intend to set up a "gender cell" in our Ministry, with one gender focal point from each department. We expect things to improve once the structural adjustment we are undergoing now is over. The second problem is insufficient advocacy and lack of training programmes. This training workshop has made us only too aware that we should speed up this process...

❖ *These are mainly technical difficulties... Are there any problems or shortcomings related to your national gender policy as such?*

(H.A): No, I don't think so; simply because there is a strong political will in Djibouti to move forward with gender issues. Setting priorities and providing necessary funds remain the biggest issues. Even if implementation is not so tangible in some fields such as education or health, one can say gender is mainstreamed with regards to several specific programmes (female school enrolment, decreasing the number of girls out of school, health care, and so on).

(R.O): In terms of policy, I wish to underline that unlike other countries in the region, there is no discrimination against women in Djibouti... Women have the same economic rights as men when it comes to property ownership, access to credit, etc. I don't think we need to change our policy in this regard...

❖ *As you know, the M& E Programme involves six key ministries and national coordinating Non-governmental organisations. How is this coordination actually developing on the ground?*

(H.A): The Directorate for the Advancement of Women used to work alone, but now there is greater cooperation between our different ministries as we set up more inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral committees ... This training workshop will surely strengthen partnership between ministries... We plan to implement an advocacy programme soon and it would be useful if the team that has just been trained could become the core group in charge of such a programme.

❖ *Do you feel ready now to embark on the M& E Programme?*

(R.O): We have just developed and reviewed our Plan of Action with the participants and the ACGD Team. Things are much easier now and we feel well prepared and more confident. Once approved, this Plan of Action will be instrumental in implementing the M&E Programme.

❖ *Will your male colleagues be as enthusiastic as you are?*

(R.O): I think our male colleagues

were not so supportive with regard to including women in development. But they seem to be more receptive and more enthusiastic now that this gender approach is gathering momentum. A lot of advocacy work needs to be done, though, to raise their awareness... Even for me, as a gender focal point, things were not so easy, let alone the male colleagues! I have just discovered this gender concept and captured its real extent and implications...

(H.A): It is up to us now to explain to our colleagues the link and evolution between the two concepts: women's participation to development process and gender mainstreaming in development. As the ultimate goal is to achieve sustainable development, one cannot exclude women who represent half the population. Our male colleagues will easily understand this reality once they are sensitized.

❖ *How do you see the way forward after this training workshop?*

(R.O): This workshop has been very useful indeed, especially for us technicians who are not so close to the Ministry of Social Affairs... We have learned a lot, but I still can't see how this could be implemented in our technical ministries (Planning, Commerce, Industry). It would have been useful to organize more targeted inter-ministerial trainings for people coming from different countries but working in sister institutions. It would have availed participants coming from the same sector with the opportunity to exchange views and experiences on their methods of work, their problems and the way to solve them.

(H.A): This training workshop is a good start in acquainting us with the Monitoring and Evaluation Tool... But sectoral trainings would surely help us apply this tool to each and every sector. We shall look forward to sector-specific training workshops that ECA/ACGD might consider organizing in the near future. ■

Three Major Objectives Reached by the CWD Bureau Meeting

Continued from page 10

progress achieved in developing and field-testing the ECA African Gender and Development Index (AGDI). This first continent-specific Index is meant to serve as a tool to measure the progress and limitations in addressing the gender inequalities that exist in Africa, and focuses mainly on specific sectoral areas, as defined in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action.

The Bureau welcomed this initiative and hoped it would be part of the NEPAD instruments to evaluate women's work and also serve as an advocacy tool for allocation of more resources. ■

Gender Country Profiles: Knowing where we stand before moving forward

Continued from page 7

The new Country Gender Profiles will seek to provide updated sectoral gender-disaggregated data on important socio-economic issues affecting the life of women as covered by the first editions produced in 1998, in addition to two new areas thought to be crucial, namely HIV/AIDS and women's access to credit.

The purpose being to better capture the actual situation of African women with regard to

these critical issues as opposed to men, ACGD has decided to involve member countries in the process of data collection. To this effect, a questionnaire has been developed to help them provide up-to-date and reliable primary data.

Up to now, 30 country profiles have been produced and are ready for press. It is expected that all the 53 profiles would be published and disseminated by during the first quarter of 2004. ■

Flash... Flash... Flash... Flash...

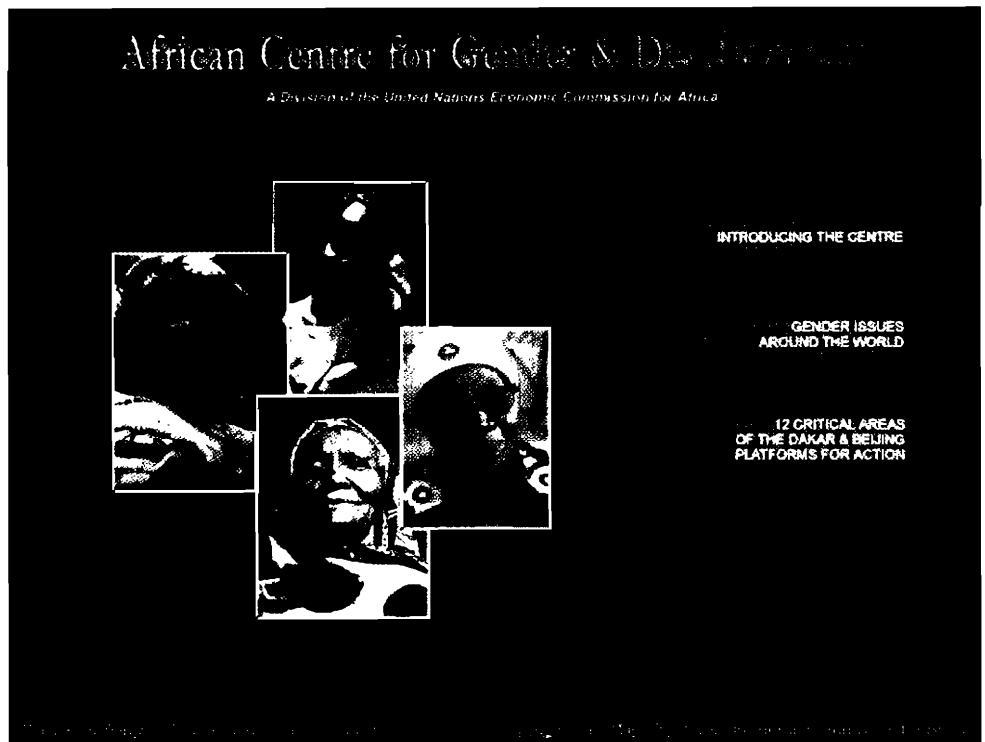
ECA launches its New Bilingual Website on Gender Issues

www.uneca.org/acgd

Anxious to further-strengthen its information outreach and thus give more impact to its activities for the advancement of women through its African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has launched a new bilingual Website (in English and French) on gender issues.

Gender Net invites all its readers to visit this new Website to learn more about ECA/ACGD priorities, and to gain a good grasp of gender issues in general, and the challenges we all face to achieve gender equity in Africa, in particular. The Website will also give a sharpened focus on the 12 areas singled out in the Dakar and Beijing's Platforms for Action as being critical to women's empowerment.

This Website offers to its users a whole range of full text documents, namely



ECA/ACGD policy documents, press releases, evaluation reports, as well as the Center's publications on gender issues and concerns in Africa.

Should they have any requests, comments and suggestions, the users are most welcome to write to ACGD Team at: acgd@uneca.org ■

Among its features, the Website contains a feed back form for the users.

Gender Net is an ECA publication prepared by the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD).

We welcome your contributions and suggestions. Please feel free to write to: The Editor, Gender Net, African Centre for Gender and Development, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), P.O Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel. +251-1-443337 or 251-1-443301, Fax. +251-1-512785 or 251-1-514416.

Alternatively you can use our e-mail address: write to acgd@uneca.org

Editor in Chief: Josephine Ouedraogo, Director, ACGD
Editor: Houda Mejri, Information Officer, ACGD
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