

Beijing Platform for Action + 10

Review and Appraisal

HOW ARE WE DOING?

NEW ZEALAND

WOMEN TOGETHER

**Aotearoa New Zealand Non-Governmental
Organisations Non-Maori Report
June 2004**



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We acknowledge input of information from the NCWNZ co-coordinated Aotearoa New Zealand Non-Governmental organizations Non-Maori report "Status of Women" comments to the United Nations CEDAW Monitoring Committee on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women. Information from the NCWNZ response to the United Nations Questionnaire on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is also acknowledged.

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Disclaimer

While every attempt has been made in this report to accurately represent the opinion expressed by the women throughout New Zealand who attended the workshops and focus groups it does not claim to cover fully every individual's contribution.

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Foreword

The year 2005 is significant in the slow progress towards the achievement of human rights for all women. It is the 30th anniversary of the United Nations International Women's Year and the beginning of the Decade for Women. It is the 20th anniversary of the End of Decade Conference in Nairobi and it is the Beijing +10 assessment year; 2005 is also the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Even more important is the Extended Meeting of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women for the Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Outcome Document scheduled for March 2005.

The New Zealand government has a proud record of honouring its United Nations commitments and reports as required on their implementation. New Zealand women have an equally proud record of finding out for themselves how women have benefited, or not, from the policies and changes promoted by successive governments. NGO alternative reports have been presented to CEDAW and women throughout New Zealand have been involved in the evolution of these reports.

Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) Inc. is to be congratulated on the responsibility and initiative it has shown in preparing for the March 2005 meeting of the CSW. The 12 workshops it has held throughout New Zealand have provided a valuable insight into women's own views of their current status in NZ society. The report will also be a useful tool in the sub-regional and regional discussions to be held in the Asia-Pacific region in the coming months. It has considerable value in supplementing the Plan of Action for New Zealand Women produced by the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

New Zealand has led the world in many aspects of its policies to improve areas of women's lives and New Zealand women have played an important role in the international NGO sector. For the vast majority of women of the world however, progress is despairingly slow.

The Pacific Women's Watch report is a praiseworthy effort towards the achievement of human rights for all the women of the world.

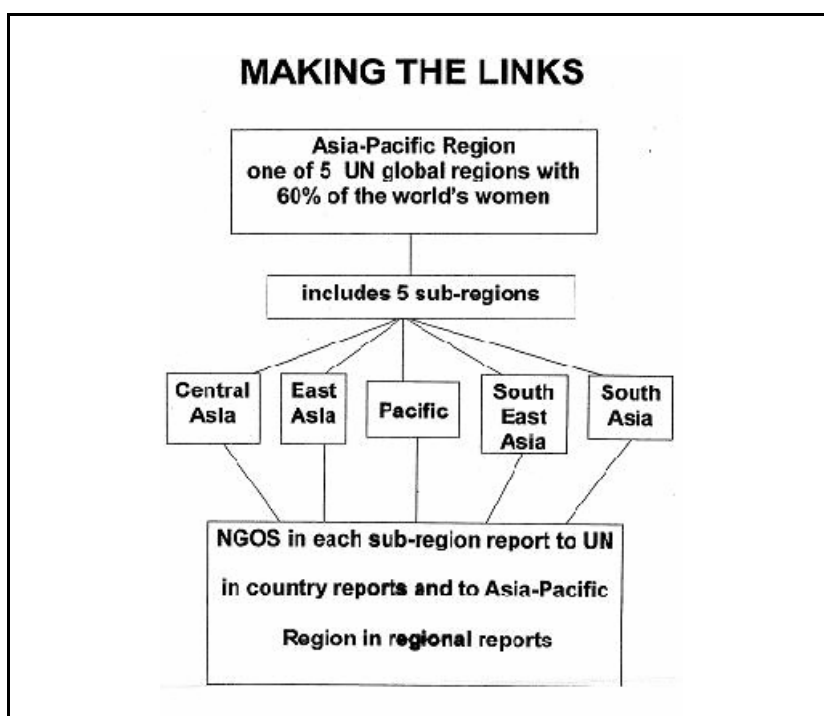
Dame Miriam Dell ONZ, DBE.
Former President, International Council of Women.

Introducing Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Inc. (PWW(NZ))

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) was established five years ago to be a link to the Asia-Pacific Women's Watch. This umbrella Watch monitors, reviews and reports on the status of women in the Asia-Pacific Region, one of the five regions recognised by the United Nations. Over 60% of the world's women live in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The New Zealand organisation, which became incorporated in 2001, is part of a sub-regional network reporting within the wider region. (See diagram "Making the Links"). Pacific Women's Watch has the following objectives:

- To ensure women's voices from the Pacific sub-region and especially New Zealand are heard internationally
- To be a communication link between New Zealand non-governmental women, the sub-region and internationally
- To monitor the Beijing Platform for Action and any subsequent plans of action for the advancement of women
- To share strategies to measure and assess changes in women's status
- To recognize views and expectations of Tangata Whenua



Early in 2003 PWW(NZ) held a meeting in Auckland in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs for women to have a say on the draft of *The Action Plan for New Zealand Women*. In November PWW(NZ) was asked by the Human Rights

Commission to bring together a workshop group to give input on the proposed *Action Plan for Human Rights* in New Zealand. A focus group of 26 NGO women from a variety of organizations a number of whom were holding national and international positions contributed views that were greatly valued by the facilitators.

Against this background it was appropriate that in 2004 PWW(NZ) should take the initiative to hold workshops throughout New Zealand to give women not associated with organizations a chance to have their say for the Beijing +10 review and appraisal. As we have direct links to the Asia-Pacific Women's Watch, most of the NGO Forum in Thailand 30 June – 3July 2004 reporting from New Zealand women on their status can be part of the comprehensive regional report from that important regional meeting.

For this New Zealand NGO Non-Maori report, prepared by PWW(NZ) the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) has contributed material. NCWNZ branches helped set up several of the workshops in centres throughout the country. Other organisations have also contributed material.

PWW(NZ) shares an office with the Bridgebuilders Trust. We thank the Trust for assisting in the preparation of this report.

Section 1

Introduction

It is now nearly a decade since the Platform for Action and Beijing Declaration were adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing in September 2005.

Five years later, in June 2000, the United Nations General Assembly held its twenty-third special session to assess progress that had been made to achieve gender equality, and to identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. As a result, Governments not only recommitted themselves to implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action but also agreed upon further actions and initiatives to advance the women's agenda at the local, national, regional and international levels.

The special session outcome document reaffirms the importance of the Platform's 12 critical areas of concern: poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment and the girl child. It also identified new challenges that have emerged in a rapidly globalising world, ranging from the uneven benefits of the global economy to the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Addressing the special session United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said

“Five years ago, delegates and non-governmental organisations went to Beijing to right wrongs and promote rights, and to show the world that when women suffer injustice, we all suffer, and that when women are empowered, we are all better off. The conference was a success: the result was the Beijing Platform for Action. Five years later, you have come to New York to review the progress made, and to press for further results...I hope this session will put the world on notice that not only do women belong to this planet, but the future of this planet depends on women.”

His words continue to fuel the efforts of governments and non-governmental organisations, agencies, networks and individuals to improve the status of the world's women at all levels.

In March 2005 the ten-year review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third session of the General assembly will be taken at the 49th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. (CSW)

The 49th session of the Commission will also have a special celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the United Nations International Day on 8 March. The session will recognize too, the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms on Discrimination Against Women.

Shape of the review and appraisal

The CSW will consider two themes:

“Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly”; and
“ Current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls.”

The review and appraisal by the Commission will identify achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of areas where actions and initiatives within the framework of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the special session (Beijing+5) are most urgent to further implementation.

Information gathering for this report on the current status of New Zealand women almost ten years after the Beijing Conference focused on the two CSW themes and the need to identify achievements, gaps and challenges as the basis for making future progress in implementing the Platform for Action.

Methodology

This report on the status of women in Aotearoa New Zealand draws on information from reports both non-government and government prepared in 1995 and 2000, the reports both government and non-government submitted in 2002 by New Zealand under the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); response both non-government and government to the United Nations Questionnaire to Government and information collected through workshops nationwide from grass roots women held from late April 2004 to early June 2004.

Linking the New Zealand country report to the review and appraisal

Information from this New Zealand Non-Governmental Women’s Non-Maori Report will be contributed to reporting at the Pacific sub-regional Beijing +10 Workshop “Women Taking Action Locally and Globally” to be held at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, 17-19 June 2004. It will also be submitted to the Asia-Pacific Women’s Watch coordinated Asia-Pacific NGO Forum at Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand 30 June-3 July 2004 entitled “Celebrating women’s gains – Confronting emerging gender issues”.

The Asia-Pacific NGO Forum is a logical and important follow through by the women’s movement of what, by far, has been an effective civil society engagement with official UN sponsored policy-making processes. The objective of this regional NGO forum will be to set in motion a process for the women NGOs and other civil society groups to prepare, consolidate and advocate their findings and recommendations at the Asia-Pacific level and to conduct follow up at the CSW 2005 and other international fora.

Specific objectives of the NGO forum are:

- To consolidate the outputs of NGO monitoring of Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) implementation, including other UN conventions and conferences as feedback to governments, the UN, international development agencies and the civil society, on the gains achieved and remaining gaps;
- To articulate the position of women in Asia Pacific on recent developments in the economy, geo-politics, technology and the environment as regards to their impact on society, particularly the new gender issues (or new dimensions to old issues) that have emerged as a result;
- To catalogue innovative interventions and successful projects with particular focus on the role of NGOs and civil society, and partnerships with government;
- To establish a mechanism for women's NGOs and other civil society groups to influence the official UN review and appraisal process.

The outputs of the NGO Forum will be:

- “The Purple Book” containing:
 - NGO Evaluation of the impact of the BPFA on women's lives, and an appraisal of remaining major obstacles to achieving target outcomes under each of the 12 critical areas of concern;
 - NGO Analysis of emerging gender issues, or new dimensions to existing concerns, that require concerted action by development actors;
 - NGO Recommendations to governments, inter-governmental bodies, international development agencies and other actors;
 - NGO Plan of Action that they themselves will implement, whether in the area of monitoring, advocacy, networking or actual interventions or services addressing gaps and new/emerging issues.
- Catalogue of Participating NGO Projects in the Gender and Development Marketplace showcasing successful interventions across the 12 critical areas of concern of the BPFA, as well as on CEDAW.

The outputs of this Forum are expected to feed into the UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific) Intergovernmental Meeting from 6-9 September 2004 and CSW 2005.

At this high-level meeting a comprehensive regional paper based on reports emerging from the UNESCAP member countries response to the UN Questionnaire to Governments will be prepared. It is therefore of critical importance that the views and aspirations of a broad cross-section of New Zealand non-governmental women are reflected through this process. Accordingly as many women as possible have been

given the opportunity to contribute through to the document which will be submitted to the UN review and appraisal in March 2005.

The New Zealand NGO Non-Maori Report will also be part of the response to the CSW 49th session from affiliated countries through the International Council of Women.

Executive summary

To prepare for the Beijing + 10 Review which will be taken at the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women meeting in New York in March 2005 New Zealand Non-Maori NGO organizations have drawn information from a variety of sources.

Valuable information came from two sources in particular:

1. NGO response to the United Nations Questionnaire to Governments on implementation of the Platform for Action. Key themes from the UN Questionnaire formed the basis for discussion groups at twelve NGO grass roots women's workshops and these focus groups held mid April to early June in centers throughout the country.

The themes were:

- Gains – what gains have there been for New Zealand women since 1995?
 - Gaps – where are the gaps in legislation, gaps in access to information?
 - Challenges – what would we like to have, to improve our lives as women and girls?
2. The same NGO Questionnaire “How Are We Doing?” designed for a small sample in 1999 in preparation for the Beijing +5 Review at the UN General Assembly 37th special session was again widely circulated in April-early June 2004. Women attending the workshops made a response and then took the “How Are We Doing?” Questionnaire to their organizations and to individuals for further response. A comparison of the results five years apart gave an insight as to whether ordinary New Zealand women's lives had been improved.

From the responses of grass roots women in April-June 2004 it was obvious that:

- Most ordinary New Zealand women had little knowledge of the Beijing Platform for Action or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Many women while able to access suitable paid employment continued to suffer a variety of workplace difficulties including low pay for the type of work performed, lack of opportunity for professional development, “bullying” by those at higher levels, lack of equal employment opportunity policies and difficulty of balancing work with family commitments.
- Saving for retirement was still impossible for many women, especially those aged over 50 years
- Violence was still seen as a major obstacle for women and girls – both domestic violence and safety within the community

- A high proportion of women now had knowledge of and access to computer technology
- Migrants and refugee women and girls, while appreciating a better lifestyle in New Zealand faced considerable difficulties in becoming proficient in the English language. Being accepted as members of New Zealand society and accessing work is still a problem.

To give a complete picture of “gains, gaps and challenges” this report, gives an overview of other information on New Zealand women’s lives reported since 1995. This includes a summary of conclusions from:

- *Beijing and Beyond: The Report of the New Zealand Delegation to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing September 1995.*
- *Beyond Beijing, UN Fourth World Conference on Women: New Zealand Women Respond, NZ NGO Co-ordinating Committee July 1996*
- *Beijing +5 – Women 2000: Gender Equity, Development and Peace for the 21st Century, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, June 2001* which included an NGO New Zealand Report by Jane Prichard, Asia-Pacific Watch Committee
- Aotearoa New Zealand Non-Governmental Organisations Non-Maori Report “*Status of Women*” – comments to the UN Monitoring Committee on the New Zealand government’s progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women, September 2002
- *The Status of Women in New Zealand 2002: CEDAW Report: Ministry of Women’s Affairs, November 2002*
- *Action Plan for New Zealand Women, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, March 2004*
- New Zealand Governmental Response to the United Nations Questionnaire on the Implementation of the *Beijing Platform for Action*, April 2004
- National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) submission on the UN Questionnaire to Governments 30 April 2004

The actions called for by the UN secretary-General Boutros Boutros – Ghali in his closing statement to the Beijing Conference in September 1995 informed the discussor groups this year for the workshops “ How Are We Doing?” He called for concrete action to:

- Protect and promote the human rights of women and the girl child as an integral part of universal human rights
- Eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women
- Remove the obstacles to women’s full participation in public life and decision-making, at all levels – including the family
- Eliminate all forms of violence against women
- Ensure equal access for girl children and women to education and health services

- Promote economic autonomy for women and ensure their access to productive resources

Nine years after Beijing they were still of prime importance. The issue of equitable sharing of family responsibilities came out of all discussions as a continuing major concern. The 2004 Government *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* launched on 8 March, International Women's Day, targets the same core issues.

Five years after Beijing many challenges remained. These included how to raise the awareness of all women of what still needed to be done. Development of indicators, assessment strategies and benchmarks to gauge problems in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action was not well advanced.

The Association of Presbyterian Women's pilot survey of 250 grass roots women revealed:

- 61 per cent had less money in their pockets than five years ago
- 47 per cent were unable to save for retirement
- Women's impoverishment was increasing
- Many women were working under a collective employment contract they had never seen.

A comparison in 2004 with the 1999 pilot survey reveals:

- 52% has less money to spend compared to 61% in 1995
- Over 60% of women unable to save for retirement compared to 47% in 1999
- Most women were familiar with their employment agreement
- Increasing impoverishment was still a prime concern

These gains, barriers and emerging issues became integral elements in the overall regional report presented to the UN special session as an NGO report. They helped to frame key regional statements on women and the economy, continuing human rights abuses of women, institutional mechanisms to promote equality for women, and political participation and decision-making.

The fifth report on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) documented landmarks since reporting in 1998. These included a paid parental leave scheme, progress on integration of women in the armed forces, gender analysis and a gender implications statement in papers submitted to Cabinet and the implementation of *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*.

Legislative changes included introduction of the Human Rights Amendment Act 2001, replacement of the Employment Contracts Act 1991 with the Employment Relations Act 2000, and the amendment of the Matrimonial Property Act 1976.

Outstanding were discrimination faced by particular groups such as Maori and Pacific women, migrants and disabled women; uncertain impacts of government funding; stereotyping; student loan debt greater for women than men; impact of family violence unabated; low numbers of women in public office; and the gender pay gap.

In 2004 women at grass roots workshops acknowledged the Employment Relations Act 2000 and amendments to the Matrimonial Property Act 1976 had brought some improvement but high housing rentals continued to be a barrier for women and their families, little progress had been made on measuring gender-based poverty and women's access to credit was still difficult. The gap between rich and poor remained persistent – possibly greater.

The workshops and questionnaire responses in 2004 achieved a higher level of input from women at grass roots level. Normally they would not have been able to have a say.

The twelve workshops all included a group of women who did not belong to organisations. The eighteen women who attended two focus group workshops for refugees and migrants contributed much valuable information as did a women's refuge group which sent fifteen responses to the questionnaire. They stated that the opportunity to contribute was very valuable to them. The challenge for future review and appraisal is to ensure there is an opportunity for women outside of networks to have their voices heard.

The vision for New Zealand women within the recently launched Ministry of Women's Affairs *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* requires:

- Equitable access to resources and opportunities
- Opportunity to choose and pursue a life path
- Full and active participation in society
- Adequate resources and support
- Freedom from discrimination
- Valuing women's contribution to society

Much government will and provision of new resourcing will be required to these planned outcomes. Gaining full status for New Zealand women will be through a change in thinking towards women's equal participation, building of more equitable cultural perceptions and a tremendous effort of public education, rather than legislation

Although the *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* has the potential to assist women to "achieve their aspirations" the shift in thinking on women's equal participation will come through women and men and girls and boys working together to bring it about. NGOs will have an important role in holding the New Zealand government account in its policies to ensure the fullest development of women's human rights in the twelve critical areas of the Beijing Platform.

Section 2

Conclusions from the Beijing Conference 1995 – Implications for New Zealand’s Women

In his closing statement to the conference, United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros – Ghali summarised the 4th World Women’s Conference as a call for concrete action to:

- Protect and promote the human rights of women and the girl child as an integral part of universal human rights
- Eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women
- Remove the obstacles to women’s full participation in public life and decision-making, at all levels – including the family
- Eliminate all forms of violence against women
- Ensure equal access for girl children and women to education and health services
- Promote economic autonomy for women and ensure their access to productive resources
- Encourage an equitable sharing of family responsibilities

While the Beijing Conference brought a realisation of what the future might hold for the empowerment of New Zealand women, quite obviously further work was needed to complete the task.

The current review and appraisal for Beijing +10 must recognise the substantial progress achieved for New Zealand women, but it is also important to report on gaps within some of the gains, as well as the priorities yet to see concrete action.

The report of the Non-governmental Organizations Coordinating Committee “Beyond Beijing – UN Fourth World Conference on Women: New Zealand Women Respond” considered July 1996 issues. These were brought forward through workshops conducted along side the tour of the Beijing Display “Women of New Zealand - Working Together.” These consultations brought the conference “home” to New Zealand Women. By looking across all of the twelve critical issues of the Platform for Action (see Appendix 3, pg 44) the report became a key document for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs planning after Beijing.

The report concluded that generally speaking, attitudes prevailing in society, would be more difficult to alter than matters needing a law change.

Structural issues for women included:

- Non-recognition of skills
- Difficulties in accessing finance
- Lack of access to information
- Considerable barriers to women within the court system

These issues are still of concern in 2004.

Attitudinal issues cited included:

- Ongoing sexual abuse and sexual harassment
- Importance of the media in reinforcing attitudes, educating society and providing more models for and about women.

In October 2003 a PWW(NZ) discussion forum “Women and the Media” concluded that while women had access to positions of editorship and responsibility they were still not on an equal footing with men in terms of media management or media content. The “Our Leaders would not be interested” attitude still prevails.

Other attitudinal concerns in 1996 were:

- The vital role of parenting required more recognition
- Lack of quality parent education
- Building the concept of family-friendly workplaces

Valuable work in recent years has been done on these issues notably through initiatives of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, but more is necessary.

A continuing concern from 1996, constantly voiced in 2004, is the failure to recognise the economic value of unpaid work. In this regard there has been little progress since Beijing.

Prime issues raised in the 1996 NGO report on the most important critical areas for New Zealand Women were

A. Women and poverty

- Increasing poverty due to the persistent gap between rich and poor
- The poor lack energy to gain political power
- Much poverty for women and their families not acknowledged or recognised
- Adequate income is a basic right, choices are limited, well-being is put at risk and there is little sense of belonging to community
- Specific needs of women as caregivers not taken into account in government policies
- More emphasis needed on life skills and social skills in schools curricula

- Shortage of affordable and adequate housing
- Women's poverty increased by external debt problems restructuring programmes and environmental degradation
- Discriminatory practices against women by financial institutions
- Lack of research and statistics to measure gender-based poverty

Review of the Property Relationship Act 1976 and repeal of the Employment Contracts Act was called for.

B. Education and training of women

Barriers for Women highlighted were:

- Privatization of education through increasing user-pays had eroded rights to education
- Inequalities in parenting skills
- Poverty
- Social attitudes to mothering
- The high cost of tertiary education
- The burden of student loans on women who had generally lower levels of pay than men
- Discrimination for children denied access to early childhood education.
- Inadequate education opportunities for migrant and refugee women
- Impact on performance of students who had after hours paid work
- Lack of quality, affordable childcare and paid maternity leave
- Lack of gender impact studies in educational reform

C. Women and Health

Issues raised included:

- Rejection of health reform policies and user-pays concept
- Need to promote breast feeding
- More funding for health and disability support services
- Improved sex education
- Establishment of the breast cancer screening programme
- Issues for women and girls with disabilities
- Need to promote healthier lifestyles

D. Women and Violence

Violence and its impact on women and the girl child have been a great concern and continue to be so. In 1996 the way in which police dealt with domestic violence was an issue often leading to fear about reporting violence. The need for education at all levels in conflict resolution was a focus. Since Beijing the issue of violence against women has continued to be a major impediment to the empowerment of women.

F. Women and the economy

Acknowledgement and recognition of women's unremunerated work was seen as a priority following Beijing. Family-friendly workplaces, flexible work hours, job sharing and parental leave were called for. Funding to support rural communities was a problem. More retaining programmes for women were requested, with training meeting the needs of particular groups and to be culturally appropriate. The Employment Contracts Act was widely criticised.

G. Women in Power and decision Making

Literacy for women and women's organisations in new communication technology was considered crucial. Adopting lobbying practices to suit the new MMP environment was stressed. It was considered that if women were properly part of the power and decision-making structures "then this would benefit all society and the nation as a whole". That women needed encouragement to undertake decision making at all levels was expressed strongly.

Beijing +5: Future Actions and Initiatives - To implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

By adopting the outcome document, governments promised to pursue and implement a comprehensive set of policies and programmes to assist women's advancement in society. For the first time, the international community agreed on the need to outlaw "honour" killings and forced marriages. Governments also promised to take stronger action to combat marital rape and dowry-related violence, and to address racism and racially motivated violence against women and girls.

While the primary responsibility for implementing these policies falls on Governments, the document stresses the important role of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, the World Trade Organization, other international and regional intergovernmental bodies, parliaments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and trade unions in advancing an agenda that meets the needs of all women.

The special session agreed on further actions for the full implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern and identified a number of areas that pose new challenges.

The lead-up to the special session had been a period of intense activity for many of the 60 per cent of world's women who inhabit the Asia-Pacific Region. They saw the special session on women as a chance to have recognized in the Outcomes Document text some very deep-seated, stubborn and alarming issues. These had not been well heard during the Beijing Conference.

The matters which governments had not wanted to hear about in 1995, had continued to ferment in societies. They were practices where impediments to women's advancement were embedded within culture and religion

New Zealand women, while enjoying a higher level of social and economic development than women in some countries of the region, still faced a variety of discriminations and barriers to their advancement.

Inclusion of New Zealand women's NGOs' priorities

From two rounds of responses by the National Council of Women's affiliated societies and branch members in September 1998 and March 1999, along with results from the Association of Presbyterian Women's pilot survey (of 250 grass roots women carried out in urban, provincial and rural centers from Auckland to Invercargill in June-July 1999), an NGO report was prepared. It was presented at the Asia-Pacific Regional Symposium in Thailand in September 1999. This report also included government action since Beijing.

Reported gains included:

- Funding of \$2.25 million for a diary-based time use survey over a whole year
- New employment programmes directed at women, Maori and Pacific people
- Publication of *The Full Picture, Guidelines for Gender Analysis* (Ministry of Women's Affairs)
- Funding for improved statistical information about women's lives, in particular a survey on child care, and a longitudinal survey of income dynamics.

Other government progress that was noted included:

- The Domestic Violence Act 1995 targeting family violence
- Strategy on sexual and reproductive health- with two oral contraceptives available free of charge
- Implementation of a national breast screening programme
- Making the practice of female genital mutilation illegal in New Zealand
- Tax credits for new parents
- A new 24-hour telephone "Healthline"
- Extra funding for out-of-school child care services in low-income communities
- Free doctor's visits for children under 6 years of age.

In addition a number of firsts for women in decision-making roles were celebrated by NGOS

Barriers for women identified by NGOs included:

- Women's economic advancement continues to be impeded by family commitments and unpaid work in the home
- Poor access to affordable, appropriate childcare and affordable housing
- High fees for tertiary education impacts more on women, who are lower paid than men
- Male-dominant cultures in legislation, law and business – "a fat layer of men"/ "a layer of fat men" rather than "a glass ceiling"
- Employment issues, job insecurity, casualisation of the workforce in female-dominated industries

- The gender pay gap, which is steady and stubborn with women paid 20 per cent less than men overall

NGOs identified the following persistent and emerging issues as detrimental to women:

- The male culture, particularly within the justice system
- Unmet needs of diverse cultural and ethnic groups, which are becoming numerically larger
- Communication problems about how to make the Platform for Action understandable; also barriers about the language and processes used in courts
- Risk to personal safety for women in the home, workplace and community is often in doubt
- NGOs are losing members and have fewer resources

In 1999, The Association of Presbyterian Women's pilot survey of 250 grass roots women revealed:

- 61 per cent had less money in their pockets than five years ago
- 47 per cent were unable to save for retirement
- Women's impoverishment was increasing
- Many women were working under a collective employment contract they had never seen.

These gains, barriers and emerging issues became integral elements in the overall regional report presented to the special session as an NGO report. They helped to frame key regional statements on women and the economy, continuing human rights abuses of women, institutional mechanisms to promote equality for women, and political participation and decision-making

Five years after Beijing many challenges remained. These included how to raise awareness of all women of what still needed to be done was an ongoing challenge. Development of indications, assessment strategies and benchmarks to gauge progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action was not well advanced.

Status of New Zealand Women 2002 – CEDAW Reports

The fifth report on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) documented landmarks since reporting in 1998. These included a paid parental leave scheme, progress on integration of women in the armed forces, gender analysis and a gender implications statement in papers submitted to Cabinet and the implementation of *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*.

Legislative changes included introduction of the Human Rights Amendment Act 2001, replacement of the Employment Contracts Act 1991 with the Employment Relations Act 2000, and the amendment of the Matrimonial Property Act 1976.

These changes were favourably recognized by the CEDAW Committee along with:

- Effects in implementing the Treaty of Waitangi, including the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.
- Development of the Women's Action Plan
- Establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner within the Human Rights Commission
- Recognition of needs of the ageing population
- Ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW September 2000.

Nonetheless, the Committee expressed concern and issued recommendations on a variety of outstanding matters, which continued to have an unfavourable impact on Women's full enjoyment "Of all human rights and fundamental freedoms." (Beijing Declaration clause 22)

Consultation with a broad range of women's organisations coordinated by the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) throughout the reporting period concluded that many gaps still existed for women. Presentation to the committee of NGO reports from both Maori and Non-Maori women substantiated outstanding concerns. These included:

- Likelihood of discrimination was greater for particular groups of women and girls, including Maori and Pacific women, refugee and migrant women and women with disabilities.
- More public education needed on human rights issues to counter backlash against the appointment of women
- Gender impacts of government policy across agencies affecting women remains uncertain
- Women remain under represented in appointments to public office and as community leaders
- Prevalence of stereotyping
- Costs of early childhood education and state school costs to parents
- Impact of student loan debt greater for women than men
- Ongoing gender-related employment and workplace issues

- Health issues including health status of low income women, sexual and reproductive health issues, better nutrition education, impact of family violence.
- Impact for women of closure of rural services

A comprehensive range of suggested questions to the CEDAW committee further elaborated NGO concerns on outstanding issues under the convention. Many of these were reflected in the Committee's concerns and recommendations, which included:

- CEDAW has not been enacted into law to achieve domestic implementation
- The low numbers of women in Parliament, local government, as chief executives in the public service, on Crown company boards; and the lack of target setting to improve women's participation in government ministries
- Women's participation in tertiary education, particularly at post-graduate and teach levels, and the impact of the Student load scheme on women
- The disadvantages faced by women in the paid labour market including eligibility for paid parental leave, the gender pay gap, occupational segregation, the number of women in part-time and temporary employment and the difficulties in balancing work, family and community responsibilities
- The risks of exploitation and violence faced by prostitutes
- The prevalence of gender-based violence and the lack of systemic data collection on violence against women
- Gender discrimination in the workplace, including sexual harassment
- The difficulties women have in accessing legal services due to the fees for civil court proceedings
- Discrimination against women with disabilities, including access to loans, employment and childcare, and economic hardship
- The persistent inequalities faced by Maori and Pacific women and girls in the areas of employment, political participation, decision-making in the public and private sectors, the justice sector, tertiary education, economic independence, health status and access to health services, and domestic violence
- The Human Rights Act 1993 does not explicitly cover non-discrimination on the basis of language and culture
- Discrimination against refugee and migrant women in New Zealand particularly with respect to education, health, employment, violence and residence status.

Section 3

Beijing +10: “How Are We Doing?” – UN Questionnaire to Governments 2004

The Questionnaire will be used in the Beijing +10 review and appraisal process at both regional and global levels. Governments were asked to respond by 30 April 2004. Non-governmental organisations were encouraged to assist their governments in responding and to report as well through NGO regional and global processes.

In this section of the report the New Zealand Government’s response to the UN Questionnaire is considered and also response from NGOs. The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ), an umbrella organisation representing 42 nationally organized societies, asked their branches and societies through its national newsletter to respond to a set of seven questions.

Grass roots women at twelve workshops and three focus groups held throughout the country from mid-April to early June were asked to discuss gains and gaps for New Zealand women since 1995 and challenges across six critical areas of the Beijing Platform of prime importance in 2004.

New Zealand Government Response

Part One: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The Action Plan for New Zealand women launched on International Women’s Day on 8 March 2004 is a whole-of-government approach to improving the circumstances of New Zealand women. A process for overseeing implementation of the plan and monitoring progress towards its objectives has been put in place.

The plan has three key inter-related areas: economic sustainability, work-life balance, and well-being. Strategies to address the Millennium Development Goals (see Appendix 2) are part of the Action Plan.

Main Legislative and Policy-making Achievements

Landmarks achieved for New Zealand women over the past few years include the following:

- Paid parental leave scheme introduced and extended
- Progress in the integration of women into the armed forces
- Requirement of gender analysis and a gender implications statement in paper submitted to the Cabinet’s Social Development Committee
- Implementation of *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*
- Legislative changes: the introduction of the *Human Rights Amendment Act 2001*, the replacement of the *Employment Contracts Act 1991* with the *Employment Relations Act 2000*, the amendment of the *Matrimonial Property Act 1976*, and the *Prostitution Reform Act 2003*.

Consideration is being given to the Pay and Employment Equity Taskforce Report of March 2004 in the areas of the gender pay gap and promotion of equal pay for work of equal value in the public service

Part Two: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing's Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third session of the General Assembly

Examples of progress included:

- The Employment Contracts Act 2000 reduces inequalities in bargaining power and may thus benefit women
- Paid parental leave scheme effective from 1 July 2002 provides eligible women with 12 weeks government funded paid parental leave, extended to 13 weeks in 2004 and 14 weeks in 2005
- Property (Relationships) Act 2001, applies to de facto and same-sex relationships as well as married couples with generally an equal division at the end of a marriage or relationship
- Significant gains for women and girls in the education system
- Sexual and reproductive health strategy and breast and cervical screening
- Increase in subsidised hours of childcare for low income families for 0-5 year olds and Out of School Care and Recreation Subsidy for 5-13 year olds in school holidays
- Prostitution Reform Act 2003 decriminalised prostitution.

Obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges the government's response acknowledged:

- The gender pay gap had a greater impact on women's ability to save for retirement and pay back student loans
- Significant under-representation of women in the modern Apprenticeships Scheme
- Lower labour force participation by women and high proportion of work unpaid than for men
- Paid Parental Scheme still excludes some part-time work, short-term or casual work
- Women under-represented at senior levels in NZ public service and on Crown company boards (35% women in April 2004)
- High cost of quality childcare a barrier to women being able to access paid work
- In 2001, 19% of women said they were victims of sexual crimes
- Women's health issues include third highest rate of teenage births in 28 OECD countries, prevalence of smoking for Maori women, increasing obesity especially for Maori and Pacific Island Women.

Lessons Learned

More gender analysis at an early stage of policy development is needed. The importance of stakeholder involvement and the collection of more robust gender-disaggregated social statistics were ongoing issues. Development of the Action Plan for New Zealand Women to address critical consensus of the Beijing Platform for Action included wide consultation.

Part Three: National Mechanisms

The Action Plan has a whole-of-government approach

Core indicators adapted for monitoring economic sustainability include:

- Median annual income
- Average hourly income
- Proportion of the labour force employed
- Labour force participation rate
- Unemployment rate
- Bachelor degree completion.

Core indications to gauge women's well-being include:

- Life expectancy
- Prevalence of obesity
- Prevalence of smoking
- Ischemic heart disease mortality
- Sexual victimization
- Criminal victimization.

Since January 2002 the government has systematically integrated gender analysis into the policy process by requiring all papers going before its Cabinet Social Development Committee to include gender implications statements, supported by gender analysis.

Part Four: Main Challenges and actions to address them

The immediate challenge in improving the circumstances of New Zealand women is to successfully implement the Action Plan for New Zealand Women across government in three identified priority areas: economic sustainability, work-life balance, and well-being.

NCWNZ Response from members

Part one

The Action Plan for New Zealand Women was pleasing in its whole-of-government approach and inclusion of: Maori women, Pacific Women, rural women, women with disabilities, ethnic, migrant and older women. NCWNZ also welcomed creation of a gender specialist position in the NZAid section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the outcome of 49% of employees in the Ministry now being women

Part two

Although the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were mentioned the Action Plan regrettably contained no direct reference to them. Specific concerns requiring attention under the MDGs were ensuring the incidence of aids in women does not increase; addressing the high rate of teenage pregnancy; slow progress on environmental sustainability; and decline in the ratio of women to men in Parliament following the last election.

Members noted that overview objectives in the key areas to be developed in the Action Plan included issues highlighted by the CEDAW Committee following presentation of the New Zealand Government's Fifth Report 2002.

Members did point out however that in the NGO Non-Maori Report to CEDAW 2002 the following concerns came from the NGOs:

- The status of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) within the NZ government and the community in general
- The lack of a coherent strategy to produce dis-aggregated data, particularly in relation to older people, migrant and refugee women and women with disability
- The outcomes of the Gender Implications Statements presented to the Cabinet Social Equity Committee by the MWA
- Inconsistencies in the Employment Relations Act
- Income gaps between rich and poor appear to be related to ethnicity

Other Issues

Unease was voiced over possible changes in proposed pay equity legislation that could further widen the pay gap. Family assistance to help low-income women out of poverty and re-examination of the Student Loan Scheme were due for attention. Recognition of women's unpaid work, paid parental leave for all expectant mothers and better childcare needed further development. Mental health services, violence against women and increasing obesity all need attention.

Part Three

Fragility of the Ministry of Women's Affairs due to its small size and very small budget was an issue, along with its used to reach a wider cross-section of NGOS.

Part Four

The challenge to improving gender equality and the empowerment of women lies in implementing and monitoring the Action Plan. Doubt was expressed on whether government agencies had allocated personnel and resources to achieve its milestones. Stakeholders should be broadened to include community councils, trade unions, manufacturing; business and forestry interests. Key indicators of progress at target time intervals bring greater confidence in the Plan's ability to deliver the best results for New Zealand women.

Response NGO workshops April-June 2004 –

“How Are We Doing? – New Zealand Women Together”

Response from grass roots women through workshops focus groups and the NGO Questionnaire

Introduction

A report for Beijing +10 on behalf of New Zealand Non-Maori women could only be complete when their concerns, hopes and aspirations were well heard.

It is easy to see opinion from women who are members of organisations of all kinds. We needed to know what women outside of groups, who do not have the time, energy or money to pay a joining fee, were thinking about their situations in 2004. Meeting them in their own environments was essential.

The post-Beijing conference report-back and workshops in 1996, although presenting much valuable material, did not fully connect with ordinary women-those at the grass roots. They make up a large proportion of women. Their views are important in any assessment of ‘How Are We Doing?’ as women go forward in a new millennium and in a multi-cultural society.

Data was collected on the basis of women outside the comfort zone of NGO women’s groups as well as within them because it was essential to present the true picture of women in New Zealand society. The aim was to make an honest assessment of the advancement of women through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Pacific Women’s Watch (NZ) took up the challenge to coordinate and facilitate a grass roots response.

Planning the workshop

The overall aim of the workshops was to make an honest assessment for a wide range of women of the advancement through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The workshops also aimed to find out in April/May 2004 – in a snapshot of time – how they were faring in their daily lives. A prime challenge was making the workshop an understandable and exciting experience for all women taking part. A very small number of participants had knowledge of the Platform for Action or of CEDAW. Neither had they read the New Zealand Government nor NGO reports prepared for the Beijing +5 Review in 2000. The government’s Fifth Report 2002 to the CEDAW Committee and the NGO Non-Maori and Maori women’s reports were likewise unfamiliar to most.

There was a need therefore to devise a workshop that was simple and understandable for women at all levels. Building confidence for every woman present to voice her views was very important. We stressed there was no need to have knowledge of any document prior to the workshop.

Scope of the workshop

The workshop had three parts.

Women first made a written response with help from a simple questionnaire “How Are We Doing?” designed in 1999 for a small sampling for the Beijing +5 Review. By using the identical questionnaire we were able to measure results in 2004 against those in 1999.

Questions covered very broadly issues of prime importance to New Zealand women through strategic objectives of the critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform. Responding to the questionnaire gave women an overview of the Platform without the need to know its detail before hand.

The other two parts of the workshop mirrored questions in the UN Questionnaire to Governments in a much simplified format. Women worked in discussion groups of five to eight.

The first group response covered the three broad themes of the 2005 review and appraisal:

- Gains – what gains have there been for New Zealand women since 1995?
- Gaps – where are there gaps in legislation, gaps in access to information?
- Challenges – what would we like to have to improve our lives as women and girls?

The second group response asked women to choose an area of particular interest from six of the twelve Beijing areas of concern. Poverty, education, health, violence and women, women and the economy (including employment and workplace issues) and women and decision-making were chosen as being the most critical. Special concerns of the girl child and of girls and boys were considered within these areas.

Time was made available for reporting key points from all discussion groups. This was done through the use of overhead transparencies which were used to show concerns of New Zealand women in 1995, those from Beijing +5, emerging issues confirmed by consultations for the NGO Non-Maori Report on CEDAW 2002 and obstacles for women worldwide coming out of the UN General Assembly special session on women in June 2000.

Women attending were asked to take copies of the NGO Questionnaire for response from family, friends and neighbours in different age groups. Organisations also distributed the questionnaire.

Workshop locations and approximate numbers attending were:

Whangarei 24
North Shore 32

Auckland/South Auckland 20
Hamilton 32

Tauranga 16
Rotorua 16

Palmerston North 14
Wellington 26

And focus groups
Kaitia 27
Pan Africa Centre 9
Shakti Migrant Centre 9

Nelson 35
Christchurch 8
Dunedin 50
Invercargill 16

What do New Zealand “Grass Roots” Women feel we have gained?

In relation to poverty, the big thing is we are now talking about it. Action groups such as Poverty Action Group Dunedin are now being set up, often in coordination with other community groups, government agencies, churches and local governments. Those faced with poverty are now being given top-ups to help with rents.

In education greater numbers of women are achieving tertiary qualifications and entering training in diverse areas. They are entering vocations previously dominated by men, and have more options available for childcare. Maori children are better catered for than previously.

In Health, gains include screening programmes, increased availability of information and money spent on elderly and disabled to enable them to live at home.

On the issue of violence, improvements include the Domestic Violence Act, which includes emotional and verbal and physical abuse in its definition, improved police responses, and easier access to protection orders. In addition Accident Compensation Corporation is more sensitive to these issues, which receive more media attention; *Te Rito*.

In employment, women are getting more jobs and higher salaries. Unemployment has dropped and there are more women in managerial and in armed services positions. Generally women are better educated with prospects of permanent employment improved. So too, has the availability of contract work and paid parental leave. Women now have better knowledge of health and OSH principles and more women are starting businesses.

As far as power and decision-making is concerned, New Zealand can boast women are in positions of power in churches, parliament and non-traditional roles. They have better access to education, are achieving greater education levels, get paid parental leave, and access to more family friendly workplaces. Many have independent transport and choices about having children. They are not discriminated against in law, and have broadened non-traditional roles. Also recognised as being gains are the existence of international declarations (e.g. CEDAW, Optional Protocol), and the Property Relations Act.

What do New Zealand “Grass Roots” women consider are the gaps?

In poverty, the gaps were seen to be many. There are increasing gaps between high and low incomes and rentals are higher. Self-sufficiency skills have become lost demonstrating a need for the reintroduction of basic living skills in schools. Sadly there is a culture of poverty where intergenerational poverty is a reality and debt is accepted as normal. There are no role models for change to eliminate violence physically, intellectually, emotionally, or in communication skills.

In education, women teachers in primary and secondary co-education schools are still disadvantaged in promotion prospects. Student loans create a greater burden for women to pay off because they earn less, with the result that women are discouraged from attaining higher qualifications. The rural sector continues to have less adequate educational opportunities and less support for women to take them up; more educational help for teenage mothers.

On health, the following inadequacies were identified within health systems: maternity services systems failure, inadequate support for mothers (Plunket), insufficient support for children with specific health needs at school, funding for physiotherapy for the elderly, and last but certainly not least, mental health systems. Pharmaceutical products testing was also seen as inadequately catering for women's needs, need to pay for mammograms if over 65, maternity leave for self-employed and rural women.

On the issue of violence, violence on television and videos had a lot to answer for. Overt racial violence has increased, war is still presented in a romantic setting, and there is still a lack of education about what constitutes violence (e.g. sexual harassment). As a result adults and children are desensitised, resulting in lower reporting rates.

In employment, problems were considered to exist for women with transport, childcare, work/life balance, age/skills, and mature women obtaining work. There is a lack of well-resourced support for the disabled, rural women getting paid parental leave and contract work for women. Pay equity was often mentioned. A social entrepreneurs scheme for unemployed was valuable.

In power and decision-making, consistent themes were pay equity (including repayment of student loans), affordable childcare, and job-sharing for better life balance. There are fewer women on boards (approximately 5%), a lack of women in middle management and conflict resolution processes, and access to political literacy for women is limited.

What do New Zealand “Grass Roots” women see as challenges?

In poverty, challenges include eliminating the need for food banks, reducing gaming opportunities, such as LOTTO from supermarkets, and teaching basic budgeting and money management skills. Limiting credit to avoid debt was also a challenge. High rentals and high house prices. Women's unpaid work not recorded economically, care giving not recognised; make “free education” free.

In education challenges included: persuading the Government to provide the equivalent of the unemployment benefit to students in training, bringing about attitudinal change in boards of trustees to be more trusting of women in authority, and changing the culture of competition in teaching, instead encouraging mentoring amongst women educationalists. Many objectives such as gender balance in positions of responsibility in school mission statements, discouraging traditional subject choices for boys and girls, truancy and ensuring quality of tertiary providers needed to be prioritized to avoid them being lost.

On health, challenges were seen to be: lack of community support systems for children, which at present were contracted out, the need for checks and balances in the systems, and improved access to information, especially for elderly women. There is a need for improved provision of resourcing, for example, funding from the National Government Funding Service for Equipment for the Elderly and Disabled has run out already. Other issues significantly impacting on women are: mothers dealing with work/life balance issues due to being forced back into the work force too early, and the need for more affordable childcare, education on STDS, lack of specialist staff for cancer treatment, the need for better care for older women, the increase in smoking, growing hospital lists, health in rural areas, and the retention of young doctors.

On the issue of violence, challenges are: providing a definition of reasonable and unreasonable force, amending the Crimes Act to provide more coverage of actual rather than fabricated violence, increasing elder abuse and the coordination of agencies for children. There is also the need to give more positive encouragement and training to police to assist their effectiveness.

In employment, challenges were identified as being: superannuation schemes, contract work combination problems, paying off student loans and saving, and rehabilitation of people after accidents. Others were the provision of real income for volunteer work, non-exploitation of workers, building safer buildings and work environments, moving people from benefit dependency into the work force, location of work and the availability of good childcare, balance of home and work, incentive to save for retirement and few women apprentices.

In power and decision-making, challenges are the imbalances of student loans and pay equity, saving for retirement, and when and if to have children. Others are presented by women who have children as older women, as well as the need for promotion and acknowledgment of women (e.g. in honours) to be increased. Access to justice was another matter of concern along with better acceptance in society of advancing role of women. Lack of a united voice in parliament on issues relating specifically to women and women still feeling intimidated remain troublesome.

What are recurrent themes?

- Pay equity
- Child care
- Legislation being actioned
- Gender and age balance
- Life skill training
- Coordination of government and non-government agencies
- Student loan debt
- Meeting needs of elderly, disabled and children

Response to NGO Questionnaire “How Are We Doing?”

Because the workshop had generated much interest and enthusiasm among participants most then took the questionnaire out to their networks.

The number of valid questionnaires returned was 480. Forty-five were from women who did not belong to any group or organisation. Many reported belonging to one group.

Question 1: *Money to spend* (refer to NGO Questionnaire, Appendix 1, pg 36)

235 Reported they had more money to spend than five years ago.

245 reported they had less.

Question 2: *Paid employment*

226 were in paid employment

97 stated they were not in paid employment though 52 of these were seeking work

Women not in paid employment were either full-time mothers or were retired.

Many respondents referred to the work they did in the community on a voluntary basis often expressing the view that this contribution of unpaid work should have an economic value. Hours of work in the household looking after families and pre-school children was also considered a contribution that should be valued.

Question 3: *Conditions of work*

115 stated they were happy with their paid employment

94 stated they were unhappy

Question 4: *For those not happy with their paid employment*

Difficulties in the workplace included:

- Poor pay for the skills women brought to the job
- Inability to access work for which they were professionally qualified
- No increase in pay in the last five years
- Lack of employer/employee communication
- Lack of trust for experienced staff
- Ned of equal employment opportunity (CEO) policies in the workplace
- Hard to attain promotion
- “Bullying” by those in higher positions
- Poor management of performance reviews.

Question 5: *Work contract*

189 reported they had a workplace contract

25 reported they did not understand their contract

Question 6: *Choosing to work*

206 of those in paid employment chose to work, although over 50% said they did not have a choice, as they “needed the money”

Question 7: Safety

89 considered women were safe

117 responded that women were not safe due to violence in the home, workplace and in the streets especially after dark.

Many respondents were unsure – some said they believed women were safe and then qualified their statement with examples of where they might be unsafe.

Question 8: Seeking advice – safety, finance

Nearly all respondents had a good knowledge about where they could seek advice

Question 9: Living conditions

393 women stated that they were happy about where they lived

87 voiced concern about high rentals, the difficulty of rising house prices in being able to buy a home, damp and leaking houses, air pollution and noise levels, being in a high crime rate area.

Question 10

324 said they now had more say in things affecting their life than five years ago

156 said they had no greater say

Many women stated they now felt more confident in speaking out; a number felt greater age and maturity had brought confidence; change in family relationships sometimes meant less say i.e. need to consider the lives of other family members when within a marriage

Question 11: Retirement saving

127 said they were/had saved for retirement

153 were unable to save for retirement; reasons included starting a family, purchase of a home, low wages, assisting children with the costs of tertiary education.

The inability of women aged over 50 years to save for retirement is a cause for concern.

Question 12: Improving women's lives

Overwhelmingly women stated that the gender pay gap was the critical impediment to improving their lives. Equal pay for work of equal value; better health care especially reduction of hospital waiting lists; treatment for cancer; domestic violence a continuing problem; and problems for women and families in closure of rural schools were all cited as barriers to improving their lives. The increasing gap between rich and poor was a concern. Valuing women's unpaid work was the prime concern for many respondents.

Question 13: Computer skills

418 had computer skills

63 were unable to use a computer

Many women over 50 years of age stated they were in the process of acquiring computer skills.

Question 14: Opportunities for children

257 believed their children had more opportunities

47 stated they did not believe children were now more advantaged.

Of the remainder, a number had no children and others were uncertain. Loss of “quiet time”; restriction of children’s activities by safety issues; student loans; high housing costs; and greater pressures to perform had impacts on children.

Question 15: Age

17 respondents were under 25 years

100 were aged 25-40 years

81 were aged 40-50 years

151 were aged 60-65 years

131 were aged over 65 years

The higher number of respondents aged 50-65 years reflected the greater leisure time available for participation in organizations. Women whose children had left home or who had recently retired had time to belong to groups and were able to attend the NGO workshops. Women in retirement (over 65 years) played a leading role in organizations.

Conclusions

The workshops and questionnaire responses in 2004 a higher level of input from women at grass roots level. Normally they would not have been able to have a say. The twelve workshops all included a group of women who did not belong to organisations. The eighteen women who attended two focus group workshops for refugees and migrants contributed much valuable information, as did a women’s refugee group whom sent fifteen responses to the questionnaire. They stated that the opportunity to contribute was very valuable to them. The challenge for future review and appraisal is to ensure there is an opportunity for women outside of networks to have their voices heard.

Priorities and Recommendations

Prime priorities continue to be

- Reduction of the gender pay gap
- Valuing women's unremunerated work
- Overcoming cultural barriers especially in the workplace
- Closing the gap between rich and poor
- More quality childcare
- Overcoming violence in New Zealand society, for women and girls especially domestic violence and sexual abuse
- Appointment of more women to higher positions both government and community
- Making state school education "free"
- Easing the burden of student loan debt, which impacts more on women than men.

Recommendations

- That NGOs must be encouraged to lobby vigorously to ensure the vision of the Ministry of Women's Affairs Action Plan for New Zealand Women can be realized
- That the Ministry of Women's Affairs should strive to raise its profile and sharing of information especially in Southern centers
- That special measures to close the gender pay gap should be introduced at all levels
- That the government should take measures to value unremunerated work
- That there should be more government support for ethnic and refugee women and their families

Appendix 2

Millennium Development Goals

Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day

Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

Target 3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015

Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

Target 5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5. Improve maternal health

Target 6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Target 7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Target 8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target 10. Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Target 11. By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development

Target 12. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system

Target 13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries

Target 14. Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)

Target 15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

Target 16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

Target 17. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Target 18. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Appendix 3

Beijing Platform for Action – Critical areas of concern

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and health
- D. Violence against women
- E. Women and armed conflict
- F. Women and the economy
- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl-child