

# **Beijing Platform for Action + 15**

## **Review and Appraisal**

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***HOW ARE WE DOING?***

***NEW ZEALAND***

***WOMEN TOGETHER***

**Aotearoa New Zealand Non-Governmental  
Organisations Non-Maori Report  
January 2010**



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## Acknowledgements

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Information from the New Zealand Government's Sixth Report to the CEDAW Committee (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) of April 2006 and from NGO reports presented to the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the CEDAW Committee in New York in August 2007 is acknowledged. The New Zealand Government's response to the United Nations Questionnaire to Governments 2009 also provided information on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action since 2004.

We are indebted to the Human Rights Commission for a generous grant of \$700 towards the cost of publishing this report. PWW(NZ) has contributed costs for gathering data from its fund for projects to monitor, review and report on the status of women. Regular fund-raising events are held to maintain the PWW(NZ) project fund.

The report was prepared by members of the Board of Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) and may be accessed from the website [www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz](http://www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz)

Printed copies of this report are available from the PWW(NZ) Office, 70 Khyber Pass Road, Grafton, Auckland; fax (09) 307 0701 or PO Box 99-464, Newmarket, Auckland 1149 or by e-mail [info@pacificwomenswatch.org.nz](mailto:info@pacificwomenswatch.org.nz)

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### **Disclaimer**

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

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

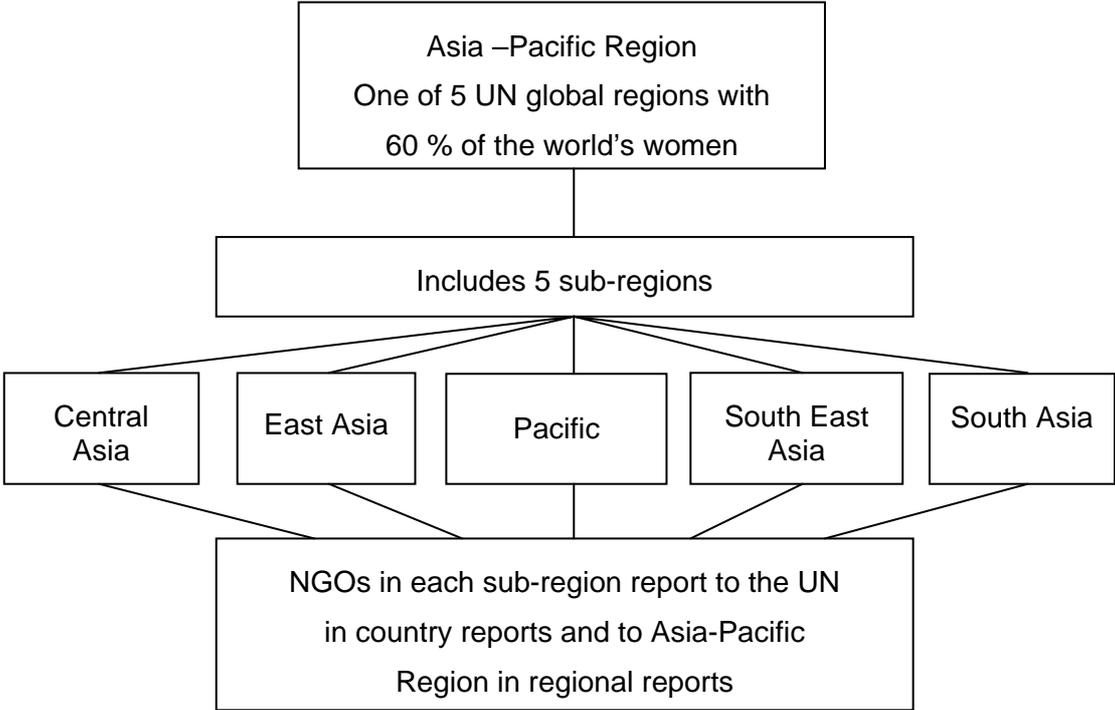
## PWW(NZ)

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) was established ten 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 per cent 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 below). 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 recognise views and expectations of Tangata Whenua

### MAKING THE LINKS



## **Some background:**

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 *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 their proposed *New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights*. A focus group of 26 NGO women from a variety of organisations, a number of whom were holding national and international positions, contributed views that were greatly valued by the facilitators.

Against this background it is appropriate that in both 2004 and 2009 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 and Beijing + 15 reviews and appraisals. As we have direct links to the Asia-Pacific Women's Watch, host of regional NGO Forums in Thailand, 30 June - 3 July 2004 and in the Philippines, 20-24 October 2009 reporting from New Zealand women on their status has been part of the comprehensive regional reports from those important regional meetings.

In 2006, PWW(NZ) took an alternative report to the CEDAW Committee to add new data on the status of New Zealand women, focusing on outstanding issues and challenges with respect to Articles 1 – 7 and 10 – 13 with particular reference to the increasingly diverse ethnic make-up of New Zealand women. A number of concluding comments from the CEDAW Committee to the NZ Government arose directly from the PWW(NZ) Alternative report and consequent discussions on New Zealand's 6<sup>th</sup> periodic report between PWW(NZ) representatives and CEDAW Committee members in New York.

New issues are emerging and discriminations continue to impede New Zealand women's full and equal enjoyment of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms (BPfA, para 213). Sadly there is no shortage of challenges especially to attainment of gender justice for women on the margins of society and those struggling against intolerance of 'being different' in any way.

Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) supports NZ Human Rights Commission's Diversity Action Programme which promotes the equal enjoyment by everyone of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity or national origin.

PWW(NZ) is a Registered Charity CC40721 and shares an office with the Bridgebuilders Trust in Auckland.

Further information, including Constitution and Conference Reports, is accessible from [www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz](http://www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz)

## Section 1

### Introduction

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Fifteen years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action at the United Nations Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing in September 2005 implementation by governments around the world is far from complete. For some women progress has been significant but for many women it has been almost negligible.

Since the review of 2005, ten years after Beijing, women worldwide have struggled with two newly emerging issues – the acceleration of climate change and the global economic recession. For many women their day-to-day condition has worsened both in terms of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000.

Results from the collection of data by Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) during the snapshot of time in late April to the end of June 2009 showed some impact for New Zealand women from these two newly emerging challenges. The time frame for collection was, however, just on the cusp of the most significant impact which occurred onwards from mid-2009 till the time of publication of this report early in 2010. The data and comments from women reflect the growing fragility of the labour market, especially for females, and the increasing inability to save for retirement due to rising prices, work place redundancies and substantial losses of money through the failure of finance companies. All of these issues became more pressing in the later part of 2009. The Questionnaire *How Are We Doing?* includes two additional questions to assess the effect on women of climate change and the global recession.

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 2008 the Agreed Conclusions from the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women as an input into the preparations for the Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha at the end of November 2008 set the context in paragraph 1 in relation to the Beijing Platform for Action.

It stated as follows:

*The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Platform and Platform for Action, which emphasized the need for political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women and that funding had to be identified and mobilized from all sources and across all sectors to achieve the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the outcome of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, which called upon Governments to incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all policies and budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and establish adequate budgetary allocations to support gender equality and development programmes that enhance women's empowerment.*

and in paragraph 2 the Commission pledged to take further action to ensure 'full and accelerated implementation'.

At the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action scheduled to be taken at the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2009 it will be of utmost urgency to remind governments of their reaffirmation of commitment at the five and ten year reviews and to demand greater will to ensure women realise their potential to make their greatest contribution, as equal partners with men, in the future security and protection of the world.

The 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission will be preceded by a two-day NGO Global Forum for Women: Beijing + 15 *Through Her Eyes – Renewing Commitment to Equality, Peace and Development*. There a gathering of the world's women will take the opportunity to make their final preparations to ensure a strong voice at the review and issue a "Call to Action".

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) was celebrated on 18 December 2009. CEDAW is the formal treaty against which the Beijing Platform for Action measures its advocacy for women's human rights. Together they constitute the blueprint for the attainment of full human rights and fundamental freedoms for women and girls.

## **Shape of the review and appraisal**

The CSW 54<sup>th</sup> session will make the 15-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly emphasizing the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. The review will also focus on how the implementation of the Platform for Action contributes to the full achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Information gathering for this report on the current status of New Zealand women almost

fifteen years after the Beijing Conference focused on outstanding issues 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 non-government and government submitted in 2006 by New Zealand under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); government response to the United Nations Questionnaire to Governments; and information collected through workshops nationwide from grass roots women held from late April 2009 to the end of June 2009.

## **Linking the New Zealand country report to the review and appraisal**

Information from this New Zealand Non-Governmental Women's Non-Maori data gathering in April-June 2009 was shared at the Asia-Pacific Women's Watch coordinated Asia-Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing + 15 held at Miriam College, Quezon City in the Philippines on 22-24 October 2009, *Weaving Wisdom, Confronting Crises, Forging the Future*. The Forum Declaration was then conveyed to the UN ESCAP High Level Intergovernmental Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Regional and Global Outcomes.

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 the regional NGO forum in 2009 was 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 2010 and other international fora. The comprehensive statement from the Forum acknowledging the contributions of organizations within the women's movement to advance women's rights, welcoming Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 in regard to women's roles in peace-making and addressing gender based violence, and recognizing 'the enormous and complex challenges still facing women and girls in the Asia and Pacific Region' will serve as the basis for advocacy at the 54th session of the CSW.

Information from New Zealand was also reported at the International Council of Women's General Assembly (ICW) in Johannesburg, South Africa, held 14-20 October 2009, during a global Beijing + 15 review from its affiliated members. The voice of New Zealand women will therefore be heard in recommendations to the CSW 54th session from the International Council of Women.

## Executive Summary

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In preparation for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action to be taken at the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2010 New Zealand Non-Maori NGOs drew information from many sources including:

1. The New Zealand response to the United Nations Questionnaire to Governments on implementation of the Platform for Action. Key themes from the UN Questionnaire were taken as the basis for discussion at NGO grass roots women's workshops held nationwide in a snapshot of time mid-April to late June 2009. The themes were:
  - Gains – what gains have there been for New Zealand women since 2004
  - 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. Results from the same NGO Questionnaire *How Are We Doing?* designed for a small sample in 1999 for the Beijing + 5 review at the UN General Assembly 37<sup>th</sup> special session on women in 2000 and for the Beijing + 10 review five years ago. Comparisons of results for the three five-year intervals were able to be made in assessing changes in the lives of ordinary New Zealand women.
3. Responses to a pilot questionnaire *Access to Health Issues – Especially for Women and Children* taken at the same time as the sample for *New Zealand Together - How Are We Doing?*
4. Concluding comments and recommendations from the CEDAW committee following its examination of the New Zealand Government's Sixth Report in August 2007. Questions raised by the three NGOs who presented reports were well heard by the Committee.
5. Issues pertaining to women in May 2009 in New Zealand's first report for the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
6. Report of Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)'s Conference on 21 November 2009 *Young Women of Tomorrow – Changes and Challenges*.

As in the reviews for Beijing + 5 and Beijing + 10 concerns for women were clear:

- The pay gap differential for women compared to men continues to be a major concern
- Ongoing workplace difficulties including low pay for the type of work performed; balancing work with family commitments (work-life balance); not feeling valued by management; a poor working environment.
- The high level of domestic violence suffered by women and girls
- Continuing impoverishment of families – 1 in 4 children in poverty
- Health and welfare of elderly women, women with disabilities and girls

To bring a complete picture of “gains, gaps and challenges” this report also gives an overview of information contained in *Beyond Beijing*, UN Fourth World Conference on Women, September 1995; and *Action Plan for New Zealand Women*, Ministry of Women's Affairs, March 2004.

Despite some notable advances there is still much to do to realize fully the concrete action called for at the close of the Beijing Conference by the UN Secretary-General Boutros



There are more gender friendly relationships in the public sector, but more are needed in the private sector. Cultural barriers still exist in the workplace. Waiving of fees on student loans has brought relief to women. Closing the gap between rich and poor has proven insurmountable, especially since the economic downturn. Domestic violence and abuse for women and girls has increased. Refugee and migrant women still have many unresolved issues. Fewer women currently hold top positions.

**CEDAW reporting in 2007** saw some gains. Principal achievements were the release of the *Action Plan for Women* and measures to support women's participation. The establishment of a Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, abolition of interest on the student loans scheme, and establishment of a Commission to advocate for families. Success with appointments to government boards and committees had resulted in women holding 42 per cent of statutory board membership. There had been advances in the areas of women's employment, education and combating violence.

NGOs expressed concern at the slow and inadequate collection of disaggregated data on the lives of women and girls, and the development of measurable indicators and benchmarks. An NGO recommendation was made that the NZ government should not have any programme that used a religious/cultural framework to legitimize violence against Muslim women in the community. High house prices and overcrowding as a stressor leading to violence, a shortage of midwives, education for immigrant sex workers and the high level of illiteracy for school leavers were also concerns. Many of the NGO concerns were included in the CEDAW Committee's Constructive Dialogue with the NZ Government and in the Committee's concluding Comments.

One recommendation was to fully use the Beijing Platform for Action in implementing CEDAW and also provide information in its next report in regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A recent gain is the Ministry of Women's Affairs' development of indicators aimed at showing where there are striking gaps or opportunities to make things better for women. Work is also proceeding on the gender pay gap and women in leadership in the private sector.

**New Zealand Government response to the UN Beijing + 15 Questionnaire to Governments** reported new policy to provide a focus for women to have opportunities to develop and use their skills and talents; to be healthy, empowered, resilient and safe; and to have society recognize caring as integral to economic and social success. Recent legislative achievements were extending the paid parental leave scheme; the Employment Relations Amendment Act requiring breaks for rest, meal and breastfeeding; and The Human Rights (Women in Armed Forces) Amendment Bill, repealing Section 33 of the Human Rights Act 1993, removing the last discrimination against women in the services.

Remaining challenges were ending violence against women, closing the gender pay gap, removing gender stereotyping of jobs, recognizing the increasing ethnic communities in the New Zealand population and promotion of women in leadership.

**NZ Government UN Questionnaire response 2004 and 2009 – what is different?:** New Zealand made no comment on climate change nor the financial crisis. No mention was made in 2009 to a commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. 'Gender budgeting' was not reported on nor policies in various 'sector areas'. Compared to 2004 there is inadequate reporting of progress in implementing the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform.

**Response to NGO workshops April – June 2009:** Data collected included the concerns of women at the edges of society who for reasons of poverty and social isolation are unable to belong to women's groups. All were encouraged to have their voices heard in workshops that were simple and understandable for women at all levels. The 2009 sampling enabled a longitudinal comparison across three five-year time intervals. A successful pilot survey on *Access to Health Information - Especially for Women and Children* provided specific data. Many organizations conducted workshops and discussions.

On gains, gaps and challenges, responses mirrored those concerns raised in NGO reporting to the CEDAW Committee in 2007. They showed that implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action requires greater will to overcome obstacles in poverty, education, health, violence, employment and power and decision-making, the six critical areas of concern chosen for discussion at the workshops.

Analysis of responses to the NGO Questionnaire *How Are We Doing?* showed that the amount of money women had to spend was unchanged. Fewer women were looking for work, more women were happy with their paid employment but for those unhappy, workplace problems were similar to five years previously. A number had no choice but to work as they needed the income. Despite the unacceptably high level of violence and abuse still inflicted on women and children more women felt they were safe. More were happy with their living conditions than in 2004. One third of women still reported being unable to save for retirement.

Addendum:

In January 2010, the Ministry of Women's Affairs reported that one year after entering employment, the average income gap between men and women with a bachelor's qualification or above was about 6 per cent. After five years the average income gap had increased to 17 per cent gap. *The New Zealand Herald*, 20 January 2010

## Section 2

# Conclusions from the Beijing Conference 1995 - Implications for New Zealand's Women

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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 in issues July 1996. These were brought forward through workshops conducted alongside 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 Beijing Platform for Action (see Appendix 2) 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 were 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

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 readers would not be interested" attitude still prevailed in 2004.

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

By 2004, valuable work had been done on these issues notably through initiatives of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, but more was necessary.

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

The prime issues raised in the 1996 NGO report on the most important critical areas of concern 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 the repeal of the Employment Contracts Act were 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 student loan burden on women who had generally lower pay levels 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 + 10: Outcomes and Initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action

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## Introduction

In 1999 priorities for New Zealand women were clear. Five years later there had been some advances in an agenda that met the needs of all women but sadly conclusions from workshops and responses to the NGO questionnaire *How Are We Doing?* in April – June 2004 showed that barriers to women’s progress were still significant. They included:

- Economic advancement impeded by family commitments and unpaid work in the home
- High fees for tertiary education impacted more on women, who were lower paid than men
- Male-dominated 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 (exacerbated in 2009 by the global financial recession)
- The gender pay gap, which remained steady and stubborn with women paid 17 per cent less than men overall
- Unmet needs of diverse cultural and ethnic groups
- Risk to personal safety for women in the home, workplace and community
- NGOs losing members and having fewer resources.

**Recurring themes coming from the nationwide workshops indicated that women were concerned about progress in the following areas:**

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

In 2004 women occupied a number of top positions – Governor General, Chief Justice, Prime Minister, Attorney General – but there were few women at senior executive level. This had a flow-on effect seen in the continuing “feminizing of poverty” due to lower levels of pay, pay equity, greater impact of student loan debt and the inability to save for retirement.

Disturbing inequalities between women were a reality. Some had no “safety nets”. Special measures were needed to close the gaps for women at the lowest socio-economic levels compared to those who were relatively safe in their economic sustainability.

**Prime priorities were:**

- 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
- Overcoming violence in New Zealand society for women and girls, especially domestic violence and sexual abuse

- Greater availability of quality child care
- 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 from the NGO Beijing + 10 review of the status of New Zealand women were:**

- 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
- The Ministry of Women’s Affairs must strive to raise its profile and sharing of information, especially in southern centres
- Special measures to close the gender pay gap should be introduced at all levels
- Government should take measures to value unremunerated work
- There should be greater government support for ethnic and refugee women and their families
- Government should make resources available to ensure continuing public education and awareness-raising of its commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action.

**Conclusion**

**In 2009 – how are women faring?**

Addressing of the prime priorities from 2004 has seen minimal reduction in the gender pay gap and although the Ministry of Women’s Affairs carried out a time use survey, women have seen little tangible result from it. Cultural barriers still exist in the workplace although education programmes by the Equal Opportunities Trust have resulted in more gender and family friendly relationships in the public sector. More needs to be achieved in the private sector.

Closing the gap between rich and poor has proven insurmountable especially since lack of employment opportunities and job losses in 2009 due to the global financial downturn have placed the income of many families at risk. This was despite government provision in the interim for workers made jobless. The provision of twenty hours free child care has helped families but there is still a concern at the lack of high quality care. State school education fees are currently at their highest level yet with payment beyond the means of many families. Reduced family income has a greater impact for women who may experience social isolation and depression when the household budget will provide for only the most basic of needs.

Waiving of fees on student loans has brought relief to women.

Unfortunately the scourge of domestic violence and sexual abuse for women and girls has increased since the Beijing + 10 review in 2004. District Court statistics for Prosecutions and Convictions for Male Assaults Female show the trend upwards as follows:

	Prosecutions	Convictions
2004	5626	2973
2006	6314	3568
2008	7678	4762

Refugee and migrant women still have many unresolved issues relating to employment, health, family violence, and support services as they settle into New Zealand life.

## Status of New Zealand Women - CEDAW Reports

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Outcomes and conclusions from the examination of the New Zealand Government's Sixth Report by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) gave a clear indication of gains, gaps and challenges for women since reporting in 2002. Alongside the Government's Sixth Report *The Status of Women in New Zealand - CEDAW Report 2006* lay reports from three women's NGOs – The National Council of Women's Report (NCWNZ) *Women Experiencing Discrimination*, January 2007; The Maori Women's Welfare League Report (MWWL) *Mana/Status of Maori Women* June 2007; and the Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Report (PWW(NZ)) *Status of New Zealand Women, NGO Non-Maori Report* November 2006 and *Addendum* July 2007.

Following the examination of the NZ Government's Sixth Report and consideration of the NGO Reports, the Committee's concluding comments and recommendations formed the blueprint for ongoing assessment of NZ women's progress. PWW(NZ) coordinated workshops and response to the questionnaire *How Are We Doing?* for the Beijing + 15 anniversary review and appraisal considered gains, gaps and challenges following on from the August 2007 CEDAW examination and recommendations.

The principal achievements celebrated by the NZ Government in 2006 were release of the *Action Plan for Women*, strengthening of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and measures to support women's participation. Positive developments were establishment of a Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families, abolition of interest on the student loans scheme and establishment of a Commission to advocate for families. Success with appointments to government boards and committees had resulted in women holding 42 per cent of statutory board membership.

Members of the Committee congratulated New Zealand on its advances in the areas of women's employment, education and combating violence. They welcomed New Zealand's ratification of the Convention's Optional Protocol and its withdrawal of the remaining reservation to the Convention which prohibited women from serving in combat roles within the military.

These achievements built on those noted in the Fifth Government Report in 2002. Favourable changes recognised by the CEDAW Committee then included introduction of the Human Rights Amendment Act 2000; replacement of the Employment Contracts Act 1991 with the Employment Relations Act 2000; the amendment of the Matrimonial Property Act 1976; and ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW September 2000. All were milestones for women's progress.

Questions by the Committee to the NZ Government in 2007 reflected very well concerns raised in the three NGO reports. A question crucial to the discussion was how would the government ensure the further attainment of their human rights by speeding up and improving its processes to collect disaggregated data on the lives of women and girls, and also to develop measurable indicators and bench marks?

A critical question was raised concerning the inadequacy of the government-led Refugee and Muslim Family Violence Programme which was designed in good faith because it ignored the realities of the violence that women face and reinforced stereotypical cultural and religious practices that keep them oppressed. This led to the NGO recommendation *that the New Zealand Government should not have any programme that uses a religious/cultural framework to legitimize violence against Muslim women in the community.*

Other questions covered measures to speed the delivery of outcomes from legislation and policy; action to prevent further escalation of house prices; affordable and adequate housing for low-income families; effective remedies to overcome crowding as a stressor leading to violence; new policy to make Protection Orders work for women; adequate funding for refuges; special measures to close the gender pay gap; special measures to overcome the severe shortage of midwives; funding to implement a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health strategy; and strategies to improve the number of women in private governance and professional life.

Questions specifically targeting migrant and refugee women included action to reduce discrimination and disparity in wider society; provisions to ensure the right to fundamental freedoms; adequate funding for immigrant women's refuges; monitoring progress of representation in political and public life; action to create greater awareness and accessibility of services such as mammogram and cervical smear to safeguard women's health; and education for immigrant sex workers so that they can access health services, especially those related to sexually transmitted diseases.

The high level of illiteracy for school leavers was also a question that NGOs wished to have put to the NZ Government by the Committee.

**Arising from the Committee's Constructive Dialogue with the NZ Government principal areas of concern and recommendations were:**

- The need to strengthen the concept of discrimination against women in domestic legislation as opposed to discrimination based on sex – several Experts pointed out that the country's Bill of Rights Act contained provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth and sexual orientation, whereas the Convention focused on "discrimination against women".
- The need for special measures to overcome women's under-representation in decision-making
- Relevance of the Convention in national policy-making - lack of specific mention of CEDAW in the *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* and why the Plan did not include temporary special measures
- A specific gender equality act to supplement the Human Rights Act and whether gender issues were fully mainstreamed into the Human Rights Commission's *New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights*
- Role of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in implementing strategies to help disadvantaged women
- Who monitors New Zealand's compliance with the Convention?

**Other unresolved issues highlighted in the Committee's Concluding Comments were:**

- Full integration and mainstreaming of gender perspectives and women's human rights into all of the Human Rights Commission's action plans and activities
- Strengthening of linkages between the *New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights* and the *Action Plan for New Zealand Women*
- Gender impact statements to be required for all policy papers submitted to Cabinet and Cabinet Committees
- Objectives and provisions of the Convention to be fully used as a normative basis in the development and updating of action plans for women

- Lack of legal mechanisms to address discrimination against women in the area of employment in accordance with article 2 (e)
- Provision of effective remedies to women whose rights have been violated in regard to equal pay and equal opportunity in employment
- Insufficient statistical data disaggregated by sex
- Development and use of measures such as benchmarks, targets, recruitment and support programmes and incentives
- Monitoring of progress through measurable indicators
- Consistent implementation and enforcement of the Programme of *Action on Violence within Families* and need to revise the Domestic Violence Act of 1995
- Recommendation to undertake proactive measures to protect women victims of violence in immigrant communities and co-operation with NGOs providing services to them
- Provision of comprehensive information and data on trafficking in women and girls, especially in respect to immigrant women and girls
- Need for efforts to narrow/close the wage gap between women and men
- Adequate funding for schools
- Eligibility of paid parental leave for seasonal and temporary workers
- Equal access to health services for women of different ethnicities and rural women

**Recommendation to fully use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in implementing CEDAW which reinforce its provisions and to include information on it in the next periodic report – and also in regard to the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals).**

**Outcome:** The Concluding Comments included most of the concerns raised by NGOs. This outcome recognized the value of NGOs efforts to carry out research on the status of New Zealand women and reinforced their pivotal role in the monitoring, reviewing and reporting of future progress.

A number of the Committee's concerns in 2007 reflected the need for further work on questions raised in 2002, notably to reduce the likelihood of discrimination for particular groups of women and girls (Maori and Pacific, refugee and migrant women, and women with disabilities); under-representation of women in appointments to public office; state school education costs to parents; gender-related employment and workplace issues; health issues for women on low incomes, sexual and reproductive health issues, and impact of family violence.

As we prepare for the 15th Beijing anniversary review and appraisal, work has begun on the Seventh Government and NGO CEDAW report. Gains and gaps arising from the 2010 Beijing + 15 conclusions will inform the 2010 CEDAW reporting, the two working in tandem.

A recent gain is the development by the Ministry of Women's Affairs of indicators aimed at showing where there are striking gaps or opportunities to make things better for women. The possibilities for progress for women arising from the indicators marks a significant step forward. A challenge is to accelerate change in the high level of violence experienced by women and girls.

A further positive development is the Minister of Women's Affairs commitment made in 2009 to work on improving women in leadership in the private sector. The Ministry of Women's Affairs Women on Boards document targets why women on company boards are good for business. A Ministry partnership with Business New Zealand and the Institute of Directors promises good progress.

While the Ministry of Women's Affairs five-year *Action Plan for New Zealand Women* is now at an end priorities through consultation in centres throughout the country and action using the indicators developed by the Ministry are improving women in leadership, reduction of the gender pay gap and focusing on the specific needs of from ethnic minorities who are victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Regrettably the intensive education programme carried out by the Ministry of Women's Affairs for the staff of all ministries to demonstrate the processes and importance of gender impact statements for all papers submitted to Cabinet and Cabinet Committees has met with little success. Frequent turnover of staff has been the main difficulty. The decision has therefore been made to discontinue the programme. NGOs see this as a major step backwards in assuring women and girls of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The PWW(NZ) Alternative Report for the Sixth CEDAW review highlighted the issue of poverty in childhood which impacts across the lifespan, setting off a developmental trajectory which is cumulative. It affects every health outcome, educational outcome and social participation. Due to the effects of the recent global financial recession this cross-cutting intergenerational trajectory has not been able to be halted.

The New Zealand response to the United Nations Questionnaire to Governments for Beijing + 15 provides a further insight into gains since Beijing + 10 and continuing gaps and challenges as does the New Zealand Government's first Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Report to the UN Human Rights Council presented in May 2009 (see Appendix 5). A number of New Zealand NGOs, including Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) participated at public consultations to give input to the report.

### Section 3

## Beijing +15 - UN Questionnaire to Governments, 2009

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The UN expects all its members to complete this Questionnaire. The Questionnaire's structure is similar to that answered in 2004, but with two additional questions on emerging issues. The responses provide essential material needed for the preparation of the five UN regional reviews and appraisals in the context of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) in 2010. Asia Pacific is one of these regions and Governments in this region were asked to respond by 31 March 2009 and most had done so. Guiding questions are listed to elicit core information and sources are suggested eg national CEDAW and Millennium Development Goal Reports.

Reporting States are not required to cover all issues to same depth but should focus on those which are most relevant in their national contexts. The information sought is both qualitative and quantitative to identify achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of areas where actions and initiatives are most urgent to advance fuller implementation of BPfA. Additional topics and areas of concern not included in the thirteen issues suggested can also be raised in the responses.

In this section of Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) report the New Zealand Government's response to the UN Questionnaire is summarised, followed by responses from NGOs. In May and June 2009, grass roots women from North Auckland to Invercargill discussed gains made and gaps still yawning for New Zealand women in the last five years with respect to critical areas of concern in the BPfA that continue to be of prime importance in 2009. They also shared their high levels of disquiet re new or escalating problems they are facing as a result of the global food, energy, economic/financial and climate change crises... as well as the rising levels of violence across our society and widening gaps between the rich and poor.

### **New Zealand Government's Response to UN Questionnaire, October 2009:**

***Part One: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment- this covers last 5 years, within which time there was a change of Government, November 2008.***

The new NZ Government's policy to "grow the economy to deliver greater prosperity, security and opportunity for all New Zealanders" is inclusive of women. Their goal for women is: Women having real choices and using their strengths to maximise social and economic success.

There are three priorities that provide a focus for developing outcomes;

- women have the opportunity to develop and use their skills and talents
- women are healthy, empowered, resilient and safe
- society recognises caring as integral to economic and social success

***The main Legislative and Policy-making Achievements over the past 5 years are:***

2009 The paid parental leave scheme, while introduced in 2001 was extended in 2009.

2008 The Employment Relations Amendment Act requiring breaks for rest, meal, breastfeeding.

2007 The Human Rights (Women in Armed Forces) Amendment Bill, repealing Section 33 of the Human Rights Act 1993, removes last discrimination against women in the Services.

2007 Introduction of the Carers' Strategy valuing the contribution of unpaid and underpaid carers.

2007 The Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act.

2005 The establishment of the Taskforce on Violence within families.

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

Examples of progress in the BPfA's 12 Critical Areas of Concern:

A: Women and poverty -

- Paid parental leave increase
- Increase in the minimum wage
- Young parent childcare payment
- SuperGold Card for Seniors - those 65 years and over get free public transport;
- Working for Families package
- KiwiSaver

B: Education and training -

- Achievements in education
- Youth Opportunities package
- Interest free student loans for tertiary study

C: Women and health -

- Breastfeeding
- Cervical Screening campaign extended
- BreastScreen Aotearoa expansion of free screening
- HIV antenatal screening introduced

D: Violence against women –

- Enhancing victims' rights – under review
- Trafficking
- Taskforce for Action on Violence within families
- Campaign for Action on Family Violence
- Taskforce for action on Sexual Violence

E: Women and armed conflict –

- Women in the armed forces can enter combat, front-line duties

F: Women and the economy –

- Gender Pay Gap
- Labour market Indicators eg percentage of women in workforce, women's unemployment levels
- Flexible working legislation
- Funding of policy to provide 20 hours of early childhood education – enabling women to work outside home
- The 'Carers' Strategy' – the responsibilities of unpaid caregivers

G: Women in power and decision-making –

Encouragement of women in political and public life – support for women's participation in Central Government  
Increase in the participation of women in Local Government

H: Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women -  
none noted

I: Human rights of women -

*New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights* [Human Rights Commission]  
Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner position, within Human Rights Commission

J: Women and the media -  
none noted

K: Women and the environment -  
none noted

L: The girl-child:

Availability of HPV vaccine to girls aged 12-18 years  
Increase in the minimum wage (school-leaving age is 16 years)

***Remaining gaps being completed***

- The pay gap has been about 12 per cent for the past decade. Ministry of Women's Affairs is working to closing this gap.
- Women's unemployment rate has risen to 6.3 per cent compared with a rise of men's to 5.7 per cent. A review of the Employment Relations Act with respect to flexible working arrangements is due to be completed in 2010.
- A review of victims' rights and access to support services was started in 2009. As part of this review, Government is considering a number of procedural and substantive changes to the 'protection order' regime for victims of gender violence.
- Taskforce on Sexual Violence reported to Government in 2009 with key actions and recommendations for preventing and responding to adult sexual violence.

***Part Three: National mechanism, structures and measures countries have put into place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.***

New Zealand has a whole-of-government approach, however it also has the stand-alone Ministry of Women's Affairs that provides policy advice to the Minister of Women's Affairs.

***Monitoring mechanisms exist relating to:***

- Economic sustainability
- Work-life balance
- Well being
- Health, education
- Labour force participation
- Leadership
- The well being and quality of life for all New Zealanders.

#### **Part Four: Remaining challenges for NZ to address**

Generally the outcomes for women have improved and women are doing well in some areas:

- **Health** - where women's life expectancy continues to increase.
- **Education** - the number of young women graduating at tertiary level has increased significantly over the past decade.
- **Labour Force participation** - Women's participation reached a record high of 63 per cent in the December 2008 quarter.

But for some groups of women there are still some poorer outcomes and discrimination too: e.g. Maori women have poorer outcomes in many key areas even after adjusting for socio-economic status.

e.g. Migrant and refugee women often face cultural and language barriers in addition to those faced by NZ women.

#### **Main Challenges for women to fully implement the Beijing Declaration**

- **Ending violence against Women** - new initiatives in 2009 include the Domestic Violence Safety Bill (enhancing safety) and the review into legal aid.
- **Gender pay gap** - In 2009 Government allocated an extra \$2 million to the Ministry of Women's Affairs to research and advise on the pay gap and other employment issues.
- **Leadership** - In 2009, the Prime Minister launched the Women on Boards initiative to urge business to do more to better utilise the business talents of women; women continue to be under represented at senior levels of responsibility in the public service.

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Unexpectedly missing from the Government's list, were the following examples of progress Police policies/practices increasingly supportive of women experiencing violence

- Trafficking Plan of Action formulated by Department of Labour after community consultation, awareness raised of occurrence of trafficking in persons in NZ
- The Human Rights Commission's *NZ Action Plan for Human Rights* - due for review, 2010
- Civil Union Act - better recognition of rights of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women
- EEO strengthening of Family Friendly workplaces

Ministry of Women's Affairs *Annual Reports 2006 to 2009* and their accompanying *Statements of Intent* indicate areas and issues of concern re status of women in New Zealand.

*Indicators for Change: Tracking progress of New Zealand women (October 2008)* pub: Ministry of Women's Affairs gives a 'snapshot' on how women had been doing against the *Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004-2009)* with its three goals of:

- **economic sustainability**, to improve women's economic independence and ability to contribute to the NZ economy" encompassed a decent income and financial literacy;
- **work-life balance**, to help women achieve a greater balance between paid work and life outside work" with their preferred balance including access to support and services to allow them to meet their responsibilities to others.
- **well-being**, to improve health and social outcomes for women" including reduction of the incidence and impact of violence on women and meeting their social and cultural needs..

*Indicators for Change* uses high-level monitoring indicators to provide an overall picture of how New Zealand women have been doing in a range of areas including:

- health
- education
- labour force participation
- leadership.

*Indicators for a Profile of New Zealand Women, 2008*, opens with an overview of ethnicity, disability, age and life expectancy, fertility, marital status and employment

**Economic Sustainability indicators** include: educational attainment, participation in tertiary education, joblessness, mean hourly earnings, weekly incomes

**Work-life Balance indicators** are: total work time and access to early childhood education.

**Wellbeing indicators** are: health expectancy, self-reported health status, access to health services, workplace injuries, criminal victimisation and reporting, concern about crime, representation of women in leadership and governance positions;

It is noted that more indicators may be added as pertinent, robust data, disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity becomes available.

While MWA Annual Reports list the previous year's priorities, Statements of Intent look ahead for 3 years, identifying where gaps in gender equality continue, where opportunities for positive outcomes for women are greatest and where monitoring should focus.

**2006:**

Work continued on how to reduce the gender pay gap, extend women's choices in employment and reduce violence against women; on monitoring of pay and employment equity, progressing paid parental leave, early childhood education and assistance and on the development of a Disability Strategy that meets women's needs.....

**2007:**

Further work on removing gender stereotyping of jobs and improve economic opportunities, especially for low-income women. Undervaluing of unpaid work continued, as did problems in balancing caring roles with paid employment, and access to services for women-specific physical and mental health concerns.

**2008:**

Attention was paid to acknowledging the substantially increasing proportions of Asian, Māori and Pacific people in the population and how to remedy disparities between the diverse communities of women within New Zealand including those marginalised by disability and ageism was explored. Particular concerns included the plight of all victims of sexual violence and the marginalisation of young women both as victims of violence and as teenage mothers.

**2009:**

As well as changes due to global and local economic crises which impacted negatively on all, but particularly on women, New Zealand underwent a change of Government in November 2008. Consequently, national priorities for women were revised and the relevant ministries and departments directed accordingly. Most important for the next three years are: increasing the numbers of women in leadership across the economy and as members of state sector boards and reducing the incidence; impacts and tolerance of sexual violence.

## 2004 and 2009 –what is different?

Five years apart, and with a change of government in November 2008, New Zealand's responses to the UN Questionnaire to Governments (UNQ) illustrate progress made based on the Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004). Inevitably there are some changes of focus between the Action Plan's three priority areas of economic sustainability, work-life balance and well-being and the present government's three priority areas for women which are that:

- women have the opportunity to develop and use their skill and talents;
- women are healthy, empowered, resilient and safe;
- society recognises caring as integral to economic and social success

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

Differences are immediately noted on close comparison of the two reports which were compiled following identical 'guiding questions' from UN with the exception of two extra questions posed in 2009 seeking feedback on the impacts on the promotion of gender equality of a) climate change and food and energy crises and b) the financial crisis. There is no comment on either of these matters from New Zealand. There is also no mention in 2009 Questionnaire response of NZ's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs – Appendix 4) whereas MDG targets were systematically addressed in 2004.

'Gender budgeting' was recognised briefly in 2004. In 2009, while several budget allocations have been detailed, there is no general statement re gender-responsive budgeting (by now a well-known tool) nor any reporting of efforts to analyse, track and / or increase budget allocations for work that relates directly to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. While gender analysis and gender implication statements (GIS) are required for all papers going to the Cabinet's Social Development Committee (as in 2004) this methodology appears to have been taken no further.

The brief discussion in 2004 arising from the UNQ query re the effects of 'globalisation', for instance - how changes in trading patterns or use of ICT by women and girls can alter the empowerment of women and girls - has not been followed up in 2009's responses.

In reply to another 'guiding question', 2004's response outlined the '*sector areas*' in which specific policies, strategies and / or action plans for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment have been developed 2000 – 2005, however this listing is omitted from the 2009 response; there is no information on the status of rural women within NZ yet they do have specific issues such as 'access to services' and these were explored well in 2004.

*"What efforts have been made to actively engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, including, for example, in eliminating violence against women and combating HIV/AIDS?"* is asked... *"What successes? What constraints?"* These were unanswered yet the government funded Families Commission and the men's NGO, National Network of Stopping Violence Services have been increasingly active here and escalating numbers of men and boys have become an integral part of the White Ribbon (End Violence Against Women) campaign over the last 5 years... Such coalitions of like-minded members of civil society can be highly effective in mobilising awareness and changing attitudes and behaviour.

### **Part Two: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in 23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the General Assembly.**

Part Two of the UN Questionnaire is all about the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action (see Appendix 2) and substantial feedback is expected. While there was

comprehensive documentation for all 12 topics in 2004, in 2009 no entries were made for J: *Women and the Media* and K: *Women and the Environment*. It is also worrying that the outcomes for a number of ongoing issues highlighted in 2004's very comprehensive response concerning: '*Obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges*' have not been recorded in 2009 eg strategies to reduce problems associated with drinking alcohol. Nor is there a 2009 update or comparison of women's and men's mental health and prevalence rates for diagnosing psychological disorders- both of which were signalled in NZ Response 2004.

Successful policies, legislative changes, programmes and projects are actions noted for the other Critical Areas of Concern but only with Government examples, whereas private sector and civil society actors' successes are sought too.

In New Zealand there is an extensive and active NGO community of whom 20 (approx) are part of the International Women's Caucus hosted by MWA, but hundreds of women's groups are not as they are nationally or locally focused. In the NZ response, reference is made to a few of the hundreds of female civil society organisations operating all around New Zealand viz. the Carers' Alliance of 43 NGOs supporting unpaid carers and the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, PACIFICA, the Māori Women's Welfare League, and the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) which has recently run a very successful campaign against the sexualisation of children. Sharing of outstanding initiatives is encouraged. Sadly neither 2004 nor 2009 responses noted any of the many highly productive programmes such as "Books in Prisons", YWCA's 'Future Leaders'.

**Part Three: National mechanism, structures and measures countries have put in place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.**

Part Three of the UN Questionnaire is exclusively about BPfA's Critical Area of Concern H: *Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women*. A different approach was evident - information on MWA's publications: the "Action Plan for NZ Women" 2004 and "Indicators for Change" 2008 and "Social Report" (Ministry of Social Development) almost seamlessly follow on from the Ministry's 2004 input which was more detailed and substantial and included a clear overview in its table of *Actions and Lead agents*.

**Part Four: Remaining Challenges and Actions to address them'.**

In 2004, the main challenges and actions for NZ to undertake were based firmly on MWA's Action Plan for New Zealand Women (2004-2009) and were:

- Improving women's participation in employment, earnings and quality of employment
- Improving women's economic well-being
- Improving the success rate of women in enterprise
- Increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making in the economic sector
- Giving visibility to the role of unpaid work in the economy
- Extending access to paid parental leave
- Improving access to affordable quality childcare
- Improving women's access to services
- Reducing the incidence and impact of violence on women
- Improving women's health sectors
- Increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making in the health and social <sup>^</sup>

In 2009, after noting that women are generally doing well in areas of health, education and labour force participation, it is acknowledged that while differences remain, outcomes are worse for those with low socio-economic status, for refugees and migrants and that all policy work must take account of significant, imminent changes in NZ's ethnic composition and the rising proportions of Asian, Maori and Pacific people. The final discussion is on actions to address key challenges: women in leadership, ending violence against women, the pay gap.

# Response from NGO workshops April – June 2009

## How Are We Doing? — New Zealand Women Together

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### Response from grass roots women through workshops, 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 had been well heard.

It is easy to seek opinion from women who are members of all types of organizations. We needed to know what women outside of groups, who did not have the time, energy or money to pay a joining fee, were thinking about their situations in 2009 compared to 1999 and 2004. Meeting them in their own environments was again 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 who make up a large proportion of women. Their views are important in any assessment of *How Are We Doing?* as women go forward into the second decade of the new millennium and in a multi-cultural society. Data was therefore collected on the basis of women outside the "comfort zone" of NGO women's groups as well as within them 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 Declaration and Platform for Action. Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) in 2009 again took up the challenge to coordinate and facilitate a grass roots response on the reality of women's lives recognizing the Platform for Action's Paragraph 45 - Strategic Actions and Objectives which emphasizes that the Beijing Platform for Action is intended to "improve the situation of all women without exception".

In assessing the advancement of women the workshop also aimed to find out in April/June 2009 — 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. Not many participants had knowledge of the Platform for Action or of CEDAW, nor had they read the New Zealand Government NGO reports prepared for the Beijing Reviews in 2000 and 2005. The government's Sixth Report 2006 to the CEDAW Committee and the NGO Non-Maori and Maori women's CEDAW 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 that there was no need to have knowledge of any document prior to the workshop. Knowledge would be acquired through workshop discussion.

With the third sampling using the same NGO questionnaire in the same snap shot of time we have been able to create a measure for assessing changes in the status of women.

**We now have samples taken at three five-yearly periods forming the basis of a longitudinal survey.**

## Scope of the workshop

The workshop had three parts.

Women first made a written response with help from facilitators to 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 create a measure to assess results in 2009 against those in 1999 and 2004.

Questions covered very broadly issues of prime importance to New Zealand women through examining the 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 beforehand.

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

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. We did, however, in 2009, also design a questionnaire specifically for response through a pilot sampling by girls and young women aged 12 to 23 years.

Time was made available for reporting key points from all discussion groups. A summary of earlier conclusions was then presented. This was done through overhead transparencies showing concerns of New Zealand women in 1995, those from Beijing +5, and Beijing + 10 and emerging issues confirmed by consultations for the NGO Non-Maori Report on CEDAW 2006 and obstacles for women worldwide which came 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 responses from family, friends and neighbours in different age groups. Organisations also distributed the questionnaire to members.

To gather new data on women as part of a Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) special project a short questionnaire on the availability and usefulness of information which is easily accessible on women's health was also offered. This too was a pilot sampling.

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) collaborated very closely with many other organizations to facilitate the workshops.

**Workshops were held in:** Auckland's North Shore, Auckland, South Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Opotiki, Rotorua, Palmerston North, North Canterbury, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill. Two workshops held in Central Auckland were with migrant women.

## **Women's comments from the NGO Questionnaire and workshop**

The reality of women's lives and the inequalities between some women compared to others can be heard in their own words.

### **What women said:**

*on having more say than five years ago*

"I used to .... but bureaucracy has made me despair of ever making a difference"

*on women's safety in New Zealand society*

"There is the usual problem with alcohol and youth/young men"

"I wish I could walk in the evening without feeling scared"

"New Zealand is an increasingly violent society and women are still more at risk from domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and intimidation"

*on improving women's lives*

"Image of women still presented in the media is as men's 'toys'"

"We need greater recognition that raising children is worthwhile"

"Tougher penalties for violent crimes against women"

"Recognition, financially, of work that is often done by women, for example care of older people"

*on a particular worry at the moment*

"Lack of time with my children"

"Climate change, over population, depletion of the world's resources"

"Money and security, saving for retirement"

*on more opportunities*

"I am sure there were more opportunities when I was 40 than my girls have now"

"Both my children have Masters Degrees. One of their grandfathers was illiterate"

"Yes but daughters face high costs for tertiary education and housing"

"No, more competition now and less freedom due to safety reasons"

"No, job security is a big issue for young people today. A tertiary qualification does not guarantee employment"

*on the current financial crisis*

"It's not (a crisis), I'm poor anyway"

*on actions to reduce climate change*

"Walk or take public transport more"

"Planted a garden"

"Cutting back on water usage"

*on barriers in accessing Health Services*

"Low availability of female doctors"

"Male-centred health/medical practice"

"Limited access to translators"

"Shyness, embarrassment, ignorance, lack of confidence, social stigma, lack of knowledge"

"Fear of judgment, cultural issues, cost, discomfort, privacy issues, long waiting lists"

"Language barriers, misinformation, religion, discrimination, transport."

## **Gains, Gaps and Challenges**

Workshop discussions covered the six Beijing critical issues of most significance to New Zealand women - poverty, education, health violence, employment and power and decision-making,

### **What do New Zealand “grass roots” women feel we have gained?**

**In relation to poverty**, some felt there had been a little improvement. Women now have greater input into private finances and related discussions and it is now acceptable that women have their own independent income. Within limitations, free child care of 20 hours a week is helpful to many women. The Working for Families package assists well those who are in work. Twelve weeks paid parental leave assists women at all income levels. An increase in the minimum wage from \$9.25 to \$12.50 has made a difference to low income families. A lowering of the minimum individual and employer contribution to Kiwi Saver to 2 per cent will enable low income families to take advantage of the scheme and plan for their future. The extension of the policy on home insulation to all householders, not just home owners, has the potential to assist families in rental accommodation to encourage their landlords to install insulation. The resulting lower power costs will have a direct positive impact on a family’s finances.

**In education** children were setting high goals for achievement. There are more female graduates and there is greater acceptance of females in “male” jobs. Women students outnumber men in law and medicine.

**In health**, there is greater awareness of women’s issues. For the elderly, aged care in their own home has had positive effects on health. Pharmacies now provide detailed information on common illnesses and medications and there is increased use of the internet for information. There are excellent student health providers. There has been improvement in the area of disability

**On the issue of violence** a positive step is that it is now more talked about and the Police are becoming better at dealing with it due to changing their attitude and having special task forces to deal with violence. Women in refuges have priority with Housing New Zealand. Bullying and psychological abuse are now acknowledged as domestic violence. Programmes in schools educate children about the unacceptability of bullying and violence.

**In employment**, many women now have their own businesses. Females are very good “bosses”. There are now more family friendly workplaces and flexible hours.

**In power and decision-making**, more women are on Government Boards and appointed as Judges. Traditional gender roles have moved a little.

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

**In poverty** there are many gaps. Women’s employment opportunities are not matching rising costs with some staying in poor jobs in preference to having no jobs. There is greater awareness of the effect on women of the gender pay gap which has not improved. The minimum wage is still very low and many women work in jobs where the minimum wage is the norm. The high cost of housing, access to housing and the poor condition of rental housing in the public domain are a great hurdle for impoverished families. The Working for Families package does not help women on a benefit.

Poverty impacts on all aspects of girls' lives, especially in health, access to education and social exclusion.

**In education** the inadequacy of government funding for state schools is a major gap with pressure on parents to pay substantial school fees and support ongoing fundraising events to cover the shortfall. A new gap is the recent decision to cut government funding for community education classes. This change concerns and affects many women, especially migrant women, who used them as 'starter' classes to build confidence and prepare for entry/re-entry to the workforce. Removal of teaching food/nutrition as a school subject is a loss as children are not being taught domestic skills in the home with both parents in paid employment. Primary education has become feminized with a lack of male teachers as role models. Literacy and numeracy skills remain poor and a large number of teenagers still leave school without any formal qualifications.

**In health**, after hours services are now available for emergencies but the higher fees are a barrier. For urgent treatment in medical practices people often have to accept a doctor other than their own GP. Raising the upper age limit for free cervical screening is desirable. A Ministry of Health policy for women and children is lacking. Care givers of children and disabled persons are undervalued and lowly paid.

**On the issue of violence** some felt the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act was not good. Need for more training for Police and Judiciary. Another concern is the very low level of conviction for rape and lack of counseling for survivors of violence. Violence against women is still accepted as the norm with ongoing under-reporting by women. Access to justice can be difficult for migrant women. A rise in domestic violence noticeable in the present recession when men have lost jobs and are forced to be at home. More resources needed for "Stopping Violence" programmes for men. Violence on TV and increasing sexualisation of children are concerns.

**In employment** pay equity and the gender pay gap are top concerns. Greater flexibility of working hours still desirable and protection is needed for women no longer covered by unions. Promotion is still often difficult to attain. With the financial recession there is pressure to accept lower pay. For migrant women who have not had 'New Zealand experience' getting a first job is a long, wearying process. Women on poor pay rates often have to work longer hours which reduces family life and time for relaxation.

**In power and decision-making** women are made to feel a 'minority'. Women are not good at supporting other women to reach higher positions. Fewer women in Cabinet positions since last election. The election of District Health Boards at large, disadvantages rural women more than it does urban women.

### **What do New Zealand "grass roots" women see as challenges?**

**In relation to poverty** women are laid off work before men so poverty hits them harder. When there is not enough money for basic necessities some mothers eat very poorly and so get sick far too easily. The challenge is helping women out of poverty and preventing more women from sliding into poverty. Community needs to support political action to improve the situation for families on inadequate incomes.

**In education**, overcoming the feminizing of teaching at pre-school and primary levels, how to rebuild moral values and continuing to develop strategies to overcome school truancy are challenges. There are still few females in top academic positions.

**On health** challenges include making specialist care more affordable and changing the attitudes of some male doctors. Women's limited resources mean they have to prioritise their health spending. It is expensive to take time out of paid employment for health treatment. Making out-of-hours services more affordable would reduce the strain on already busy hospital emergency departments.

**On violence**, money and resources are always a challenge. Reduced funding of legal aid is a barrier to women seeking legal advice. Conflict resolution and better social skills need to be taught to children and young people; reinstatement of self-defence courses for girls wanted.

**On power and decision-making** it was felt that women's viewpoints are still ignored making them a marginalized group. Maintaining the gains, overcoming the "glass ceiling" and appointing more women to top positions are seen as the key challenges. Maintaining vigilance on the media portrayal of women and women's issues is critical. Education to promote a clear understanding of gender and gender mainstreaming will improve women's position.

### **What are the recurrent themes compared to five-years ago?**

**In 2009 these were:** Domestic violence and abuse  
The gender pay gap  
Affordable quality child care  
Low income – 1 in 4 children living in poverty  
Issues specific to migrant and refugee women  
Loss of life skill training

The key concerns of the gender pay gap, child care and life skill training are unchanged from 2004. The status, health and welfare of elderly women, women with disabilities and girls continue to be of considerable concern. In 2009 there is less concern about student debt loan and coordination of government and non-government agencies.

### **Analysis of responses to NGO Questionnaire *How Are We Doing?***

Women attending the workshops were asked to take the questionnaire out for response by family, workplace colleagues and members of the organizations to which they belonged. Many returned the completed questionnaire by post. In 2009 the number of valid questionnaires returned was 390. The age and ethnicity of the respondents corresponded approximately to the profile of the New Zealand population as was the case in 1999 and 2004. In 2004 there were more questionnaires returned, 480 compared to 390 as several of the workshop groups had attracted a large number of participants.

As a trial, in 2009 the Questionnaire was adapted for girls 18 years and under. A number of young women under 25 years completed it at a national youth conference, but as this was a trial, their responses are not included here. The responses confirmed the value of the Questionnaire and also gave an indication of refinements needed.

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

168 reported they had more money to spend than five years ago - approximately 46 per cent  
197 reported they had less – in total approximately 54 per cent of women of responses, 2009

In 2004

235 had reported they had more money to spend than five years ago, 49 per cent of sample  
245 had reported they had less, 51 per cent of sample

In the five years the percentage of women having less money to spend had apparently stayed much the same. Since the sample was completed by the end of June it would be safe to assume that a sample taken later in 2009 might have shown a clear gap as redundancies and job losses increased due to the financial recession.

**Question 2: *Paid employment***

Responses from European women aged under 65 years showed that 77 per cent were in paid employment. For Maori and Pacific Islander respondents the percentage fell to 60 per cent. Few refugee and migrant women were in paid employment reflecting their need to look after families and their lack of technical and English language skills. Fewer women than in 2004 reported that they were looking for work. Women not in paid employment were either full-time mothers or in retirement.

**Question 3: *Conditions of work***

Most women stated they were happy with their work. Reasons included a supportive and friendly workplace, being busy and challenged, meeting people, stable work and provision for professional development. There was generally more satisfaction with conditions of work than in 2004 when 45 per cent of women in paid employment said they were not happy.

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

Difficulties in the workplace included:

- Low rate of pay/low salary
- Night shift work necessary
- Preference for part time/reduced hours
- Need flexible hours/ better work-life balance
- Not feeling valued by management
- The type of work
- Working more than 8 hours per day
- Car parking problems
- Not happy with work environment

**Question 5: *Work contract***

- 76 per cent of women in paid employment said they had an employment contract
- 12 per cent said they did not have a contract
- 12 per cent did not comment

Understanding of the contract

- 84 per cent said 'Yes'
- 16 per cent said 'No'

These results for women and their work contract are very similar to those in 2004.

**Question 6: *Choosing to work***

- Over half of those in paid employment said they chose to work
- 13 per cent said they did not choose to work but had to for financial reasons
- Reasons for working included:
  - Additional money and financial independence
  - Family reasons
  - To fund study
  - A sense of purpose, drive, satisfaction, socialization
  - To support the household budget
  - To pay a mortgage

**Question 7: *Safety***

230 considered women were safe 59 per cent  
160 responded that women were not safe in the home, workplace or on the streets especially after dark 41 per cent

In 2004

43 per cent considered women were safe  
57 per cent responded that women were not safe  
There is a marked difference between 2004 and 2009

That a much higher number in 2009 believed women were safe despite the unacceptably high level of domestic and sexual abuse and community violence may be due to people now talking about the issue, the fuller reporting of incidents and the media campaign that was planned and funded through the Taskforce on Violence within Families.

**Question 8: *Seeking advice – safety, finance***

Almost all respondents had a good knowledge about where to seek advice on their personal safety and financial affairs and gave a range of options available.  
This remained unchanged from reporting in 2004.

**Question 9: *Living conditions – housing***

357 responded that they were happy about where they lived  
26 reported they were not happy and reasons given included high rental, poor structural condition of rental accommodation, house too small for the family, undesirable suburb, distance from family and friends

A far higher proportion were satisfied with their living conditions in 2009 than in 2004 when 393 stated they were happy but 87 had voiced some concerns.

**Question 10: *More say in things affecting their lives***

Women generally reported that they had more say in decisions affecting their lives, both at home and in the community

**Question 11: *Retirement savings***

226 responded that in 2009 they were able to save/ had saved for retirement  
112 were unable to save for retirement

This has reversed the pattern indicated in 2004. It is sad to note that in 2009 the reality is one third of those women surveyed are still unlikely to be adequately resourced for their retirement.

**Question 12: *Improving women's lives***

(1) Of those responding almost 25 per cent stated equal pay, pay parity and better pay for women would improve their lives. The next most desired improvement (12.5 per cent) was greater access to education, and cheaper, fee vocational education. The other two improvements frequently mentioned were less violence in the home and tougher laws for such violence, and better, more affordable child care.

In 2004 concerns relating to pay were also the top priority.

Health care was also a key concern. In 2009 health had a slightly lower priority.

(2) Identifying a particular worry at the moment brought concern from many about financial security, especially security in retirement. Other concerns frequently mentioned were unemployment and job security, health treatment, care of the elderly, the global financial crisis, rising crime and rising drug and alcohol use.

**Question 13: *Computer skills –do you have access to a computer?***

322 women had some computer skills

44 women had no skills

333 had access to a computer

42 had no access to a computer

In 2009 response were received from a number of refugee and migrant women, many of whom had no IT skills, nor access to a computer.

Of those with computer skills a number were attending a course to improve their skills.

**Question 14: *Opportunities for children***

129 believed children/daughters had more opportunities than they had enjoyed but a number felt the variety of choices, higher expectations, the gender wage gap, high cost of buying a house, and the high level of crime and domestic abuse created challenges for young women.

**Question 15: *Effect of the financial crisis***

78 respondents said they were not affected

45 were concerned at the higher cost of living

40 said savings/investments were earning less/less interest

39 said they were more worried but not actually affected

36 were living on a tighter budget and thinking more about budgeting

33 had less disposable income

30 found essentials (food, electricity) more expensive

These concerns were felt across all age groups and ethnicities.

**Question 16: *Actions to reduce climate change***

Many people were taking some action to reduce climate change. The most frequently mentioned were recycling, car pooling, walking, using public transport, saving electricity and changing to energy efficient light bulbs, composting, reducing water use, installing home insulation, reducing use of plastic bags and an increasing awareness of the environment.

5 respondents said they did not believe in climate change.

**Question 17 – *Personal data***

**15 a: Age**

16 respondents were aged under 25 years

81 were aged 25-40 years

64 were aged 40 – 50 years

102 were aged 50-65 years

114 were aged over 65 years

**17 b: Years at secondary school**

2 women had less than 1 year

10 had 2 years

40 had 3 years

105 had 4 years

200 had 5 years

In 2009 a higher percentage had 4 or 5 years at secondary school than in 2004.

### **17 c: Ethnicity**

6 respondents were Maori

272 were European

9 were Pacific Islander

31 were Asian

54 were from other ethnicities

In 2009 fewer Pacific Islander women responded but more Asian women were included in the sample.

### **Conclusion**

As in 2004 Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) was able to connect with a good number of women outside of organizations and groups by going to meet with them rather than expecting them to attend a workshop far away from where they lived. We were able to bring the voices and concerns of a very broad cross-section of women from the many different ethnicities now living in New Zealand for this Beijing + 15 anniversary review.

In 2009 more women had less money to spend although the sample was taken before the worst effects of the global recession were evident. More women were in paid employment than five years ago, a higher number were happy with their conditions of work and, apart from refugee and migrant women, most had some skills in the use of a computer.

The levels of crime and domestic violence are still a concern. Many women felt future opportunities for daughters and young women were not assured compared to those they had enjoyed themselves. More women in 2009 were happy with their home and neighborhood but those obliged to live in rental accommodation faced a number of problems related to high rents, buildings in disrepair and undesirable areas due to distance from essential services and/or a high crime rate.

The global financial recession had made women more conscious about the need for careful budgeting. Most were well aware of climate change and were taking steps to mitigate its effects.

### **Addendum**

The Workshops and response to the NGO Questionnaire were completed by the end of June 2009. Since then there have been a number of policy changes that have had greater effects on women than on men.

The Pay Equity Unit has been abolished. There has been legislation to allow workers to trade for cash one week of the 4 weeks holiday which means that low paid women will feel pressured to give up a week of holiday. State sector wages have been frozen as a result of the recession.

Discretionary money for personal spending is increasingly limited for many women.

Reduced government spending on community education is beginning to disadvantage women who are now obliged to pay high fees for courses which could equip them for future employment.

Subsidies for single mothers to enter tertiary education have also been removed.

# NGO QUESTIONNAIRE 2009 – NEW ZEALAND WOMEN TOGETHER

## *HOW ARE WE DOING?*

### **Pilot Survey**

#### **Access to Health Services – Especially for Women and Children**

#### **Introduction**

The survey on women's access to health services was part of the Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) project to gather new data on women. The special project was set up following a PWW(NZ) workshop facilitated by Dr Judy McGregor in May 2008 *Pushing for Change – Data Analysis and Design*. It was decided to add a short questionnaire to assess women's access to health services and information on health at the same time as we gathered the information for the Beijing + 15 anniversary review and appraisal.

All those who participated at workshops or sent in a response to the NGO questionnaire were invited to complete the pilot survey questionnaire *Access to Health Services – Especially for Women and Children*. Although not everyone did so there were, however, 356 questionnaires returned for health compared to 397 for the main questionnaire, a very satisfactory level of response.

#### **Summary of Responses**

**Question 1:** *Where would you go to find information on women's health and women's health services?*

Most respondents clearly identified the health services available. They listed a wide range of sources for primary health information. They also mentioned hospitals, community providers, media, alternative health providers, friends and family.

116 answered General Practitioner (G.P.)  
151 listed more than one health service including G.P.  
76 mentioned the internet as a source of information

**Question 2:** *Do you think that the information available is adequate?*

Although only 20 per cent answered in the negative, crucial shortcomings were highlighted. These included:

- Not enough information in languages other than English.
- Information should be in plain English.
- Women are not always aware of where to ask for information.
- There is a need for much more information on women's health issues.
- Conflicting information can be confusing.
- A lack of information that addresses cultural issues.
- Concern about lack of access to health information for migrant and ethnic women
- Some women are disadvantaged by lack of literacy and/or education.
- Not enough information on how to contact parenting services easily, especially for those with no family support.

There was very little response to the question of what further information is required.

**Question 3:** *Have you found cost has stopped you from seeing a health care provider?*

Fewer than half who answered this question found cost a barrier but there were some revealing comments.....

Apart from general budget restrictions, unsubsidized or specialist health services were much less affordable e.g. dentist, optometrist.

Mothers wrote that they limit their own visits to a health care provider because children are the priority, also: 'Free doctor's visits for children are a myth.'

**Health Insurance:** those with health insurance did not find cost a barrier to health care, however, some respondents have had to relinquish their health insurance because it became unaffordable.

**Question 4:** *What further/other barriers do you think there are for women when accessing health services and information in the following areas: General Health, Mental Health, Disability, Sexual Health*

**Barriers** - the following were recorded across all four categories:

Finance/cost; lack of funding for resources

Access issues: transport; time off work for appointments; difficulties in accessing services in rural areas

Lack of education/knowledge regarding health issues, services available, not understanding the system

Personal barriers – shame; embarrassment; shyness; fear; denial; lack of confidence; not self reliant, some 'soldier on'

Societal attitudes and pressures: culture; ethnicity; religion; literacy; language; stigma

Family responsibilities, commitments and restraints: lack of childcare and 'having to take children when attending personal health appointments or defer the mother's appointment.

Just finding the time and energy can be difficult.

**Health system barriers:**

Gender issues:

Some male G.P.s are paternalistic, do not listen, do not refer on or are slow to refer on; 'A male centred system'; not enough women health providers (G.P.s or specialists); women over 69 are not eligible for free mammograms.

General dissatisfaction with health providers:

Lack of interest/lack of empathy shown to the consumer; poor communication skills of providers; insufficient time consultation; many health providers are not 'culturally competent'; lack of service; a bureaucratic system;; waiting lists; general shortage of G.P.s; unable to get a timely appointment

Women said:

'Health providers are too busy or lack verbal skills'

'Too often they take refuge in health jargon - this often results in little understanding by the patient.'

**Barriers to accessing mental health services:**

Shame; social stigma; discrimination; fear of being labelled 'mad' were particularly experienced.

Appropriate mental health services, e.g. counselling is not readily available or affordable

The lack of women specialists was stressed.

Mental health itself can be a barrier.

'Not all mental health providers are supportive. Some are judgmental.'

**Women with disabilities** Women are expected to deal with a wide range of access issues.

Access to services and physical access were both listed as the most 'disabling' barrier.

The cost of modifying the home for disabled access is a barrier.

The lack of women specialists is an issue.  
It takes time and energy to access services.  
Some concern was expressed regarding access to services for children with special needs.

Women said:

‘Domiciliary visits by GPs are difficult to obtain.’  
‘Those with physical disabilities are not mentally disabled.’  
‘After having an accident I found WINZ and Workbridge difficult to deal with.’  
‘ACC is a barrier’

### **Barriers to accessing sexual health services**

Stigma, shame, fear of judgment were repeated concerns.  
Again, not enough women GPs and specialists. Women are unwilling to discuss sexual health with a male doctor. There were some references to ‘promiscuity’  
A lack of good school-based sexuality and sexual health education.

Women said: ‘Clinics are only available in cities.’  
‘There are no cultural and spiritual support and relevant services to ethnic women’

**Question 5:** *Have you seen or heard advertisements for health services on TV, radio or in other media?*

Services and products noted most were:

Cervical screening; breast screening; mental health; dangers of smoking; dangers of alcohol and/or drugs; Direct to Consumer Advertising (DTCA) of general and specific products and services; general vaccination - ‘flu; pandemic; anti-violence; Stop Gambling

Note: Gardasil/HPV vaccination advertisements were only mentioned seven times - this is surprising in view of the high profile media campaign.

Others listed were: sexual health; healthy food; general medical services; health clinics; family health; women’s health; Maori health; Pacific health; alternative health; safety; breastfeeding; asthma; services for sight impaired; diabetes; heart problems; exercise; prostate screening.

**Question 6:** *Where would you go for an emergency health service for a child?*

Respondents generally had a good knowledge of where to go.

Specific suggestions were:

Hospitals and other health service providers, Accident and Emergency; Starship Children’s Hospital; Dial 111 for ambulance; G.P.; local medical centre; private after hours/24 hours clinics and pharmacies; Plunket Helpline/Healthline; Poisonline.

### **Conclusion**

Many respondents had a good knowledge of health services and how to access them which was an encouraging result. Gaps in health services and barriers of access covered a huge range of problems. Refugee and migrant women have very different issues to the majority of respondents.

The aim must be to advocate for improvements to remove the real and perceived barriers in health services as they impact on women’s human rights.

## Appendix 1



### NGO Questionnaire 2009 - New Zealand Women Together

#### *How Are We Doing?*

1. Do you have more money to spend now than you had five years ago? Yes No
2. Do you have paid work? Yes No

If No, then go to Question 6

3. If you do have paid work...(Yes in Q.2).. then: Are you happy with it ?  
What makes you happy ? and then go to Qs 4, 5....

4. If you are not happy then can you say why that is and how it could be improved?
5. Do you have an employment contract? Yes No

a. If Yes, then: Do you understand it ?

b. If No, go directly to Q 6

6. Do you choose to work? [Prompt – un-employed, looking for work, need to work because...]

7. Do you think that women are safe in NZ society?

Would you like to say more?

8. Where would you go for advice on

a: safety: .....

b: finance: .....

9. Are you happy about where you live? Yes No

Would you like to say more?

10. (i) Do you feel you are having more say now in things affecting your life than 5 years ago?  
Please say what made you answer the way you did:

(ii) Do you belong to any group or organisation? If yes, please list

11. Are / were you able to save for retirement?

12. (i) Can you suggest anything (or one thing) that would improve women's lives in NZ?

(ii) Have you any particular worry at the moment? – if so – what is it??

13. (i) Do you know how to use a computer?

(ii) Do you have access to a computer at business/home?

14. If you have children do you think they have more opportunities than you had? Explain please.

15\*. How is the current financial crisis affecting you? Please explain

16\*. What actions are you taking to reduce the effects of climate change?

17. Personal data:

a. Age - Please tick: Under 25\_\_\_, 25-40\_\_\_, 40-50\_\_\_, 50-65\_\_\_, over 65\_\_\_.

b. Ethnicity ( Please circle ): Maori / European-pakeha / Pacific Islander / Asian / Other

c. How many years were you at secondary school?

d. Name of city or town or rural district where you live

Please complete and return both questionnaire papers –*How Are We Doing?* and *Access to Health Services?* to: Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand), PO Box 99-464, Newmarket, Auckland 1149 asap for collation. If preferred, responses may be e-mailed to: [beverleyturner@nznet.gen.nz](mailto:beverleyturner@nznet.gen.nz)  
Subject: PWWNZ QQQ

Thank you for helping with this – your input is valued.

\* New questions added in light of current world situation – high level concerns that have come to the fore since 2004 and which affect women directly.



**Pilot Survey**  
***Access to Health Services – especially for  
women and children***

1. Where would you go to find information on women's health and health services?

2. Do you think that the information available is adequate?

If NO, what further information do you think is required?

3. Have you ever found cost has stopped you from seeing a health care provider?

If YES, please provide details.

4. What further/other barriers do you think there are for women when accessing health services and information in following areas:

General health

Mental health

Disability

Sexual health

5. Have you seen or heard advertisements for health services on TV, radio **or** in other media?

If YES, please provide details.

6. Where would you go for an emergency health service for a child ?

PWW(NZ) 2009

Once completed, please return this paper with your *How Are We Doing?* questionnaire to your PWW(NZ) contact or post them both to Pacific Women's Watch (NZ), PO Box 99-464, Newmarket, Auckland 1149 asap

If you prefer, responses may be e-mailed to [beverleyturner@nznet.gen.nz](mailto:beverleyturner@nznet.gen.nz) Subject: PWWNZ QQ

## Appendix 2

### Beijing Platform for Action – Critical Areas of Concern

The Global Framework sets the scene as in 1995 and leads into 12 Critical Areas of Concerns each of which is broken down into its Strategic Objectives and Actions.

**A Women and poverty** - Persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women

- A.1: Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty
- A.2: Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources
- A.3: Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions
- A.4: Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty

**B Education and Training of Women** - Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training

- B.1. Ensure equal access to education
- B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women
- B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education
- B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training
- B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms
- B.6. Promote life-long education and training for girls and women

**C Women and health** - Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services

- C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services
- C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health
- C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues
- C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health
- C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health

**D Violence against women**

- D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women
- D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures
- D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking

**E Women and Armed Conflict** - The effects of armed and other types of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation

- E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation
- E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments
- E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations
- E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace
- E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women
- E.6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories

**F Women and the Economy** - Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources

- F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources
- F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade
- F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women
- F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks
- F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination
- F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men

**G Women in power and decision-making** - Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

- G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making
- G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

**H Insufficient mechanisms for the advancement of women** - at all levels

- H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies
- H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects
- H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

**I Human rights of women** - Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women

- I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice
- I.3. Achieve legal literacy

**J Women and the media** - Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media

- J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication
- J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

**K Women and the environment** - Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment

- K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels
- K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development
- K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women

**L The girl-child** - Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child

- L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child
- L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls
- L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl child and increase awareness of her needs and potential
- L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training
- L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition
- L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work
- L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl child
- L.8. Promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life
- L.9. Strengthen the role of the family\* in improving the status of the girl child

\**para 29, Global Framework*; "Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems; various forms of the family exist."

## Appendix 3

# Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) BEIJING DECLARATION

September 15, 1995

Interim Version

A decade after the Nairobi Conference, the Forward Looking Strategies have not been fully implemented by any government. We live in a world marked by growing poverty, inequality, injustice, unemployment, environmentally destructive economic growth, war, sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of discrimination and violence against women. Moreover, the intersection of gender, race and poverty create multiple burdens of discrimination for many women of colour.

We, NGO women of the world, rich in our diversity, have gathered along with governments in the largest global conference ever to address women's issues and the existing barriers to our achieving equality, development and peace. We believe that these goals can be realized by ending the oppression of women and girls, by women's full participation in national and international decision-making, and transforming the social, economic and political structures which underlie and perpetuate poverty, racism, inequality, injustice, unemployment, violence and war.

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, despite the many obligations undertaken by its member states, women's human rights are not yet respected, protected and promoted as inalienable, indivisible and universal.

Resources are being persistently squandered on the military with no gain in peace and common security. The dominant development model and global market economy generate great material wealth for a few, while impoverishing many; create homelessness and environmental racism and degradation; encourage overconsumption and arms proliferation; deplete our natural resources and forests; pollute our air, water and soil; contribute to violations of women's civil, economic, cultural and political rights. The current growth model fails to meet the fundamental material and spiritual needs of the peoples of the world.

Women are major contributors to every economy but much of our labour is unrecognized and undervalued. We do two thirds of the world's work yet earn only 5% of its income, our labour serving as an invisible subsidy to the world's wealth.

The globalization of the world's so-called "market economies" is a root cause of the increasing feminization of poverty everywhere. This violates human rights and dignity, the integrity of our eco-systems and the environment, and poses serious threats to our health. The global economy, governed by international financial institutions, the World Trade Organization and trans-national corporations, impose Structural Adjustment Programs on countries in the South and economic restructuring in countries in the North in the name of fiscal health. The result is increasing poverty, debt and un-employment. The resulting reductions in social programs and services in the areas of health, education and housing harm the very people they purport to assist. The media, controlled by transnational corporations acts as an instrument of social control, denying women's right to free communication.

Supported by the wisdom of our elders, inspired by indigenous peoples, energized by youth, and sustained by our sisterhood, we call for an end to these conditions and refuse to accept them as inevitable for the future of humanity. **WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS.**

### **WE CALL ON ALL GOVERNMENTS:**

1. TO recognize and ensure women's equal rights to a decent standard of living, health, clean water and air, adequate food, clothing, and sanitation, safe and accessible housing, adequate social security and social insurance, education and legal aid as agreed in the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

2. TO take prompt action on the cancellation of multilateral debt; to enforce the accountability of international financial institutions and to ensure that all trade agreements are subject to human rights legislation, environmental and internationally recognised labour standards. Economic rights are human rights.
3. TO end the transboundary movement, dumping and stockpiling of hazardous, toxic and radioactive wastes.
4. TO promote and use science and technology for peaceful purposes and people-centered, sustainable and ecologically sound development.
5. TO encourage, not hinder, the free expression, full participation and full access for women with disabilities in non-governmental and governmental organisations locally, nationally and internationally.
6. TO recognise and implement initiatives taken by poor and grassroots women, including them, as full participants in the planning and distribution of resources.
7. Not to misinterpret or impose religious beliefs or traditional practices on women in ways that deny their inalienable human rights. We also call for an end to all laws and customary practices which deny girls and women their equal rights, and deny their equal access to succession and inheritance.
8. TO amend their intellectual property laws so as to make indigenous women the primary beneficiaries of the commercial use of their knowledge.
9. TO reject militarism in all its forms and create a culture of peace and human rights. They must redirect the 800 billion dollars annual global military spending to peaceful purposes and convert military production to socially useful purposes. Governments must abolish weapons of mass destruction by banning testing, sales and stockpiling of nuclear, chemical, biological, and all other weapons. The production, trade and use of all landmines must be banned. We demand that our governments work together to solve conflicts without using violence, and that they fully include women in peacemaking and conflict resolution initiatives.
10. TO implement their commitments to measure and value women's unwaged work and to include it in the accounting of each nation's GDP.
11. Dominant development models have been based upon the appropriation of resources from the South by the North and the transfer of ideas, technologies and methodologies from the North to the South. We must build upon alternative models that currently exist in both South and North, which are based on equality, mutual respect, true participation and accountability to all women. These models must be economically and socially equitable and environmentally sound. All development projects must take into account their effects on women, including the additional workload imposed on women by unsustainable and inappropriate technology.
12. NGO women of the world call upon all peoples and all governments to radically reconsider and transform concepts, assumptions and structures governing social and economic life, and to take action on our recommendations. This process will require the full and equal participation of women of all races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, classes, languages, girls, young women, older women, indigenous women, grassroots women, rural women, urban women, women with disabilities, immigrant women, migrant women, refugee women, internally and other displaced women, women of different sexual orientation, and all other marginalized women.

#### **WE CALL FOR:**

1. access for women to political structures at all levels, and equal political empowerment at all decision-making levels. Accountable, transparent and participatory national and

international institutions must be created. Women must have free access to diversified and pluralistic information sources and media which are culturally and linguistically appropriate for receiving and communicating information. Governments must support NGOs and ensure their full participation in planning and implementing all programs and policies.

2. Recognition, protection, compensation, financial and other assistance and full legal status for the millions of women and children, and the victims of nuclear and other environmental catastrophes, many of them widows or orphans, who have been forced to become immigrants, migrants, refugees, internally and other displaced persons or forced into sexual slavery as a result of war, foreign occupation and political and socio-economic injustices. Every effort should be made to protect civilian populations from the adverse effects of economic sanctions, which impair their economic human rights.
3. Universally accessible, high quality, non-discriminatory health care, which use the great diversity of possibilities available in health systems world-wide rather than the present overdependence on Western medicine that overmedicates and pathologizes women's bodies. We require all governments to sponsor and support woman-controlled research for the prevention and cure of HIV/AIDS, to prohibit any form of discrimination of women with HIV/AIDS, and to ensure women's access to information, care, support and treatment of HIV/AIDS.
4. Development and sustained use of affirmative action by both the private and public sectors of society to ensure the equality of women.
5. All the media to change the present negative, exploitative and sexualized images of women and children to positive ones respecting us in all our dignity and diversity.
6. A reshaping of education for all children, beginning at the primary levels, to sensitize them about human rights, gender issues, and non-violent conflict resolution, stressing the need for world peace.
7. Full implementation of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education and the prevention of human rights violations against women.
8. New and additional financial, technical and other resources to successfully implement the plans and commitments from the Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro, Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing Conferences, and that member states fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

**WE DEMAND AN END TO RAPE, AND TO ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN. WE FURTHER DEMAND AN END TO THE TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS WELL AS SEX TOURISM.**

We seek these transformations in the spirit of service to humanity, partners with youth as agents of change, keeping our children, grandchildren and future generations in our hearts. We are convinced that as women achieve full and equal participation in all the affairs of the planet, peace will be realized, and the well-being of every individual secured.

**WE REAFFIRM THAT WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS.**

Footnote:

This document was the result of 3 days of intensive consultations and participation among the NGOs present in Beijing. They hoped that it reflected the essence of NGO thinking worldwide.

## Appendix 4

### Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

ref: www.undp.org

The Millennium Development Goals are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving lives that world leaders agreed on at the Millennium Summit, September 2000. The MDG goals are ends in themselves, but they are also the means to a productive life, to economic growth, and to further development. A healthier worker is a more productive worker. A better educated worker is a more productive worker. Each goal has one or more targets, each with its own indicators samples of which are listed below. Most targets are for 2015, using 1990 as a benchmark.

#### **1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

*Targets for 2015: Halve the proportions of people living on less than one dollar a day; Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people;*

*Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.*

(Indicator 1.4: Growth rate of GDP per person employed)

#### **2. Achieve universal primary education**

*Target for 2015: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling*

(Indicator 2.3: Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men)

#### **3. Promote gender equality and empower women**

*Targets for 2005 and 2015: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.*

(Indicator:3.3: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament)

#### **4. Reduce child mortality**

*Target for 2015: Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five*

(Indicator 4.3: Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles)

#### **5. Improve maternal health**

*Target for 2015: Reduce by three-quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth.*

(Indicator 5.4: Adolescent birth rate)

#### **6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**

*Targets for 2015: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.*

(Ind. 6.3: Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS)

#### **7. Ensure environmental sustainability**

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

*Target for 2010: Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving a significant reduction in the rate of loss.* (Indicator 7.2: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, total, per capita and per \$1 GDP)

*Target for 2015: Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water* (Ind: 7.8 7.9: Proportion of population using improved drinking water source, improved sanitation)

*Target for 2020: Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers*

#### **8. Develop a global partnership for development**

*Target 8a: Develop further an open rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally*

*Target 8b: Address the special needs of the least developed countries - including tariff and quota free access for the least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction*

*Target 8c: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (SIDS)*

*Target 8d: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term*

Indicators are numerous for Goal 8 and are grouped: -

Official development assistance (ODA): 8.1 – 8.5; Market access: 8.6 – 8.9; Debt sustainability: 8.10 – 8.12

*Target 8e: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries*

Indicator 8.13: Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis

*Target 8f: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications*

Indicators 8.14 – 8.16: Telephone lines, Cellular subscribers and Internet users per 100 population

## **Millennium Development Goals [MDGs]**

Many women's human rights advocates have noted that gender equality, as a cross-cutting concern for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals is not well-reflected in the global targets and indicators of the MDGs in spite of the UN Millennium Declaration (2005) explicitly pledging "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement CEDAW. With gender equality at the core of both CEDAW (1979) and the Beijing Platform for Action recommendations (1995), UNIFEM proposed in 2005 that the MDGs should not be regarded as a new agenda, but as another vehicle for implementation of the CEDAW and Beijing agendas.

Gender justice and the MDGs are inextricably linked. By approaching the implementation of BPfA, CEDAW, and the MDGs as mutually supporting processes, and delving beneath the surface of each MDG, the apparent 'gender-blindness' in the wording of most goals can be confronted and remedied.

Every developing country's national experiences with existing treaties on women's rights can be used in well-integrated plans to achieve the MDG targets of Goals 1-7, while Goal 8 is a specific responsibility of developed countries such as New Zealand who pledged in a 1970 UN General Assembly Resolution; then signed at Monterrey, 2002 to contribute 0.7% of gross national income for overseas development aid (ODA) by 2015. In 2009 the current NZ government reneged on its pre-election commitment to give 0.35% of GNI as ODA by 2010. The UN Questionnaire to Governments, 2009 on the implementation the Beijing Declaration, BPfA and UN GA Special Session 2000 specifically asks about each country's strategies to address the MDGs.

### Notes:

20 November 2007 - Stressing that women's empowerment is key to achieving the agreed development targets, UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro warned that the pledges to slash poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy by 2015, made by world leaders at the United Nations in 2000, are at risk unless countries pay greater attention to empowering women and achieving gender equality.

21 December 2009 - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on world leaders to attend a MDG summit September, 2010 to boost efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which seek to slash a host of social ills, ranging from extreme poverty and hunger to maternal and infant mortality to lack of access to education and health care, all by 2015. "Coming amid mixed progress toward the Goals and new crises that threaten the global effort to halve extreme poverty, the summit will be a crucially important opportunity to redouble our efforts to meet the Goals," he said in a statement referring to the targets adopted at the UN Millennium Summit of 2000.

Quote from 'End Poverty 2015' Campaign:

"Increased investment in women provides support to economic growth and poverty reduction"

## Appendix 5

### Universal Periodic Review 2009

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a comparatively new human rights ‘mechanism’ of the UN Human Rights Council. All member states of the UN must report every four years with respect to their compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all UN covenants and protocols that the state being reviewed has signed and any voluntary pledges or commitments made. A state’s compliance is scrutinised regardless of whether or not it is up-to-date with submitting its reports for all treaties it has ratified.

New Zealand was scheduled to submit its first Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in May 2009. In August 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the NZ Human Rights Commission co-hosted public consultation roundtables in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch to brief civil society organisations about the UPR and how consultation with the public would proceed. All present were invited to raise and have noted their particular human rights concerns and the very full Minutes of these three consultations were circulated to all participants. NGOs had an important role to play and material to contribute in the regional consultations or to MFAT in Wellington and by sending submissions directly to the Human Rights Council. All of these options and opportunities were well used.

At the UN level and as background for a member state’s appraisal by UNHRC, summaries are compiled by the UN from all that country’s reports to UN in last 5 years on core treaties eg CEDAW, UNCROC. The identification and raising of these issues by the UN is a valuable lobbying tool for civil society and NGOs advocating gender justice in their country.

#### **Issues listed with respect to New Zealand for scrutiny by UNHRC in May 2009 included:**

NZHRC’s Action Plan for Human Rights is not yet formally endorsed by NZ Government

For the ‘girl child’, UNCROC Committee noted that all NZ legislation should be harmonised with the Convention, also that there are insufficient youth mental health services nationwide; while CEDAW urged promotion of sex education with special attention to preventing sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy; also the close monitoring of school ‘fees’.

CEDAW Committee noted: CEDAW has not been fully incorporated into domestic law; NZ domestic legislation currently has no explicit and comprehensive definition of discrimination against women that encompasses direct and indirect discrimination against women;

NZ Government has abolished mechanisms for implementing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in the private sector and lacks the authority to implement and enforce equal employment opportunities (EEO) in this sector;

CEDAW concerns also include: gender wage gap, high levels of occupational segregation, concentration of women in low-wage occupations, disadvantaged position of Maori, Pacific and minority women in employment, very low rate of women’s participation in management and decision-making positions in the private sector; barriers faced by mothers of young children and single mothers who wish to be in paid employment. ILO also commented on existing labour market inequalities along ethnic lines, especially Maori and Pacific;

In 2007, CEDAW Committee urged NZ to strengthen parental leave programmes for men and encourage them to share child-rearing responsibilities with women. Re paid parental leave: eligibility should be extended to seasonal and temporary workers; barriers faced by rural, Maori, Pacific and minority women to be assessed and reduced – as speedily as possible.

**Issues pertaining specifically to women in New Zealand that were raised in written NGO submissions direct to UNHRC included:**

1. Ensuring the rights of women prisoners to have an infant up to 2 years accompany her into prison and concern re mother/child separation during pre-trial detention;
2. Ensuring the rights of migrant and refugee women to be free from discrimination, oppression and violence which can occur in the guise of culture, and religion and lead to dowry, forced marriages, under-age marriages and polygamy;
3. Recommendations from a joint submission by several members of the Caucus on International Women's Issues which meets under the auspices of the Ministry of Women's Affairs;
4. New Zealand's full compliance with ILO Maternity Convention 183 and progressive lengthening of paid parental leave to 56 weeks including 4 weeks for partners/spouses;
5. Wider publicity and promotion of the Convention of Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
6. Funding for remedial settlements to close the gender pay gap following pay investigations;
7. Increases in and indexation of the minimum wage to 2/3 of the average wage;
8. Responsible contracting policies to ensure gender equity processes and consideration in Government procurement processes;
9. Strengthening of the employment relations legislation to increase collective bargaining
10. Extension of flexible working arrangements to all workers (currently only for carers);
11. Adequate funding for refuge services to ensure the safety of all women and children who have to flee a violent relationship and to meet the needs of sexual abuse survivors free of charge, including counselling and therapy;
12. Adequate resourcing to ensure that legislation protecting women and children from violence can be fully implemented. This may include training for judges;
14. Establishment of two sex-offender treatment centres to provide treatment upon entry to prison and throughout the term of imprisonment, a structured pre-release programme and post-release assistance;
15. Closing of gaps in recording sex-disaggregated data related to levels of violence against women as well as sex-disaggregated data in all other areas covered by CEDAW.

In February 2009, the UPR Consultation Draft was scrutinised by civil society at meetings in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and a number of amendments were requested as well as the inclusion of human rights issues inadequately addressed in the Draft. They included:

- potential risk of social isolation of NZ's older population, predominantly women
- people trafficking into New Zealand including women for sexual purposes
- opportunities for teenage parents, particularly mothers, to continue and advance education and training currently are not matching the need
- women's human rights are not specifically included in the Human Rights Commission's *New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights*.

In Geneva on 7 May 2009 the Universal Periodic Review from New Zealand was presented to the Human Rights Council and its Working Group reviewed NZ Government's human rights record. A number of issues were raised and UNHRC's specific recommendations included:

- strengthening efforts to combat all sorts of violence against women; identification of a more accurate measure of the extent of domestic violence in New Zealand
- establishment of gender quotas on boards of public limited companies
- adoption of a more comprehensive definition of trafficking
- ratification of the Optional Protocol to UNCROC on the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography.