

Introduction

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)'s overarching, tightly focused aim is to monitor, review and report on the status of New Zealand women. In particular, we are unique in representing women across the diversity of cultures making New Zealand their home but who suffer social or economic disadvantage or any kind of marginalisation, and struggle to have their voices heard. The nationwide workshops and discussions for the Beijing + 20 Review drew comment from many such women.

Under its special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) PWW(NZ) is mandated to make the voices of women in Pacific states heard more loudly at the international level. Our membership includes many from the large communities of Pasifika women and girls living in New Zealand whose concerns are reflected in this report.

Methodology

PWW(NZ) gathered data for its Aotearoa New Zealand Alternative NGO Country Report for the twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action – and the Outcomes from the United Nations General Assembly Special Session in June 2000 - during the same snapshot of time, mid-April to mid-June, as used for its ten and fifteen-year reviews. A sampling of the questionnaire "*How are We Doing*" was also taken. Both the questionnaire and workshop consultation processes were the same as were used for the ten and fifteen-year reviews.

Comparison across the three five year intervals has given a longitudinal measure to chart challenges and opportunities for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of New Zealand women and girls in the post-2015 development agenda. Incorporation of a gender perspective was integral to all analyses.

Findings were also informed by data and recommendations submitted in PWW(NZ)'s Non-Governmental Organisation Alternative Report: ***Status of Women, Comments to the UN CEDAW Monitoring Committee's seventh review on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in July 2012.***

Findings from the Beijing + 20 Review, 2014

While the PWW(NZ) NGO Alternative Report for the seventh CEDAW review recognised some commendable gains in achieving equality for women in New Zealand since the sixth review, the conclusions and recommendations called for further action to eliminate the many outstanding issues of discrimination. Gaps and challenges were identified in presentations and discussions at meetings, seminars and workshops held during the previous four years. Particular concerns of the rich diversity of women in the Auckland region, where a large proportion of the national population of Maori, Pacific, Asian and migrant women and girls live, were central to this NGO CEDAW report. Intersectionality with the Beijing Platform for Action underlies the conclusions. Most were recognized in the Committee's concluding comments to the New Zealand Government following its examination of the seventh report. Articles 1-7, 11-13 and 16 were covered in a targeted approach. Concerns were clear and these are virtually unchanged in 2014. They are: the male/female pay gap differential; unresolved discriminatory workplace issues; the high level of domestic violence; continuing impoverishment of families; and the health and welfare of elderly women, women with disabilities and girls; multiple discriminations against ethnic minority women and girls.

PWW(NZ)'s Non-Governmental Organisation Alternative Report ***Right to be free from discrimination - New Zealand Women and Girls - Comments and recommendations to the UN Human Rights Council Pre-session Working Group for the review of the New Zealand Government's second Universal Periodic Report, January/February 2014*** also brought concerns of relevance to the Beijing twenty-year review. The Report contained specific material from eight NGOs and was endorsed by 20 NGOs within our coalition.

PWW(NZ) brought nine recommendations for the New Zealand Government at its second Universal Periodic Review, 2013 covering the following issues:

- Lack of National Action Plan for Women and the necessity for the establishment of a Parliamentary Select Committee on Human Rights
- Workplace discrimination
- Decent and affordable housing
- Sexual violence
- Forced and underage marriage
- Dowry and trafficking
- Domestic/family violence training and legal aid
- Improvement of sexual and reproductive health
- Improvement of access to health services for LGBTIQ community.

Despite determined and continuous efforts by the New Zealand Government to reduce the gender pay gap differential, to overcome violence against women and to increase the number of women appointed to private-sector boards and to positions of responsibility, progress over the last 5 years been negligible. The pay gap sits at 10 percent with fluctuations up and down. Violence of all kinds, including sexual violence and intimate partner violence both mental and physical, continues unabated. Women's access to private-sector boards remains very elusive. These three stubborn issues continue to deny New Zealand women gender justice.

Disappointingly, the 2014 World Economic Forum's annual report on the gender gap shows New Zealand has dropped in global rankings from seventh in 2013 to 13th this year. New Zealand women are among the most educated in the world, ranked at 'one' for educational attainment in the report, but there is a growing gap between economic opportunities for men and women, including pay.

New Zealand women are also lagging behind in Parliamentary representation with 26 percent of women in the current National Party led Government and 30 percent overall. This is less than the 33 percent of women Members of Parliament in 2008-2011.

The scourge of domestic violence against women and girls continues unabated. Much family violence remains behind closed doors and is under-reported. Restorative justice has been suggested as an innovative approach.

Responses to the questionnaire *How Are We Doing – New Zealand Women Together* from women attending nationwide interactive workshops and from on-line feed-back present a clear picture of the major achievements, challenges and reversals since the fifteen-year review five years ago.

The interactive workshop discussions reported some modest gains:

Greater cultural awareness has resulted from the increasing number of respondents born overseas. In 2014 New Zealand has a very much more diverse population compared to 2009. Gender relationships in the home are improving as men take on more household responsibilities, including childcare. Disabled women reported having gained greater confidence about claiming their rights and there are now more women in management roles. Childcare has improved in availability, although it is still costly and variable in quality.

Many gaps were identified including:

- the pay gap is not closing
- there is still no measure of poverty
- poverty continues to be a key issue with a severe impact on girl children in lower income families. The 'Living Wage' campaign advocates for adequate rates of pay for all work
- there is no recognition of women's nurturing role
- sexual violence and intimate partner violence deny safety to many women and girls

- disabled women and girls suffer barriers in access to education and employment and representation in Parliament

Challenges:

- further casualisation of employment leads to greater insecurity
- poor quality and high cost of child care
- need to increase minimum wage to a “living” wage
- women penalized in employment by time needed to provide childcare
- housing affordability
- review of immigration law to overcome vulnerability of migrant women is overdue
- migrant women subjected to mental as well as physical abuse
- migrant women’s poverty and financial dependence leads to lack of respect

Comparisons drawn from responses to the Questionnaire

‘How Are We Doing? New Zealand Women Together’ taken mid-April – mid-June 2014 compared to results from grass roots women at five-yearly intervals:

- Women reported on having less money to spend than five years ago:
1999 - 61 percent
2004 - 52 percent
2009 - 52 percent
2014 - 49 percent.

A modest improvement, just over half have more to spend.

- Saving for retirement:
1999 - 47 percent unable to save for retirement
2004 - over 60 percent unable to save
2009 - 33 percent unable to save
2014 - 25 percent unable to save.

A pleasing improvement, but could be much better

- Are women safe in NZ society?
2004 - 57 percent said women were not safe
2009 - 41 percent said women were not safe
2014 - 41 percent said women were not safe.

No improvement in 5 years - an unacceptable result.

Results from the 2014 sampling build on and strengthen the longitudinal measure across the three five-yearly review intervals.

Unresolved concerns:

- The pay gap differential for women compared to men continues to be a major concern and is largest for Pasifika women. In October 2014, caregiver Kristine Bartlett won her case for higher pay under the Equal Pay Act, 1972, however, tertiary graduates, five years after graduation women are earning up to \$10,000 less a year than men.
- 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; poor working environments.
- The high level of domestic violence suffered by women and girls
- Continuing impoverishment of families – 1 in 4 children live in poverty
- Health and welfare of elderly women, women with disabilities and girls

A Grant Thornton international report *Women in business: from classroom to boardroom* released in March 2004 shows a significant decline in world ranking on senior management and boardroom appointments for New Zealand women. In 2004 New Zealand was ranked fourth - but is currently ranked in 15th place.

Responses from NGO Questionnaire and Workshops, April – June 2014 *How Are We Doing?*



Women's responses through the NGO Questionnaire and workshops

Introduction

Following the UN 4th World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, post-Beijing conferences and nation-wide report-back meetings presented much valuable feed-back material. However, these meetings did not fully contact a large group of women – those at the 'grass roots' whose views are vital for any sound assessments of "How Are We Doing?" 20 years after Beijing, 1995.

It is easy to seek opinions from women who are members of all types of organizations, however, we need to know what women outside such groups, who did not have the time, energy or money to pay a subscription fee are thinking about their situations in 2014 compared to 1999, 2004 and 2009. Meeting them in their own environments was essential.

Therefore opinions and data were sought /collected from women outside the "comfort zone" of NGO women's groups as well as from within NGOs in order 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 as agreed by all member nations of the UN, 1995. In 2014, Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) once more took up the challenge to coordinate and facilitate a grass roots response on the reality of women's lives in Aotearoa New Zealand recognizing the Platform for Action Strategic Actions and Objectives which emphasize that the Beijing Platform for Action is intended to improve the situation of all women without exception. Feedback at five-yearly periods forms the basis of PWW(NZ)'s longitudinal survey. With the 2014 sampling using the same NGO questionnaire within the same interval of time as in 2009 and 2004 we have been able to create a measure for tracking and assessing changes in the status of women.

Data collection

As in 2004 and 2009, the major tool for collection of raw data in 2014 was a questionnaire – see Appendix Four. This questionnaire was widely distributed through women's groups, at workshops, promoted at community events and was available on line. Over 700 women completed the questionnaire – 450 of whom chose the online option.

Workshops were held in Auckland central and North Shore, South Auckland, wider Auckland region, Wellington, Christchurch, Invercargill, Dunedin and included responses from both urban and rural women. The workshops provided an opportunity for women to share views and concerns and discuss issues pertinent to them and their group. Women were asked to consider issues for New Zealand women under three broad themes:

- 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?

Discussions during the workshops covered the six critical issues of the Beijing Platform for Action that are of most significance to New Zealand women. Women were asked to think about the gains made by/for women over the last five years, what gaps still exist and what do they see as the challenges. As well as workshops with rural and urban women, there were 'focus group' workshops with ethnic minority migrant women; disabled women; older women.

Themes based on the strategic objectives of 'Critical Areas of Concern' in the Beijing 'Platform for Action', were examined to identify issues of prime importance to New Zealand women. During this process, women participating in the workshops gained an overview of the Platform even though they may have had little or no prior knowledge of it. Women

attending workshops were also asked to take questionnaires to friends, family and work colleagues and were given the details of the online option.

What women said - a sample of comments from questionnaires and workshops:

On having more say than five years ago

"I'm older, more confident, more in control of my life."

"I have not perceived any change over this period."

"My issues aren't that much different from anyone else's. I am more confident and can express my issues more clearly but no one is listening – at least no one that can make any difference. "

On women's safety in New Zealand society

"I've answered 'yes' and 'no'. Generally, I think women are safe. However, I also think there is still violence that exists, and prejudice and gender injustice that are subtle and at times institutional."

"I think women in New Zealand are relatively safe. Although I feel like violence against women in New Zealand is on the rise. So really I'm not quite sure any more".

"We are relatively safe compared to other places in the world, however there is still abuse - physical and emotional - being regularly perpetrated against women."

On improving women's lives

"Equal pay and work opportunities; increased respect; physical and emotional safety"

"More value placed on the role of parents and caregivers"

"Real equality that values women whether they are in the workplace or stay at home mothers"

"Education, encourage young girls to aim high with education. Support our daughters and granddaughters to be confident and be strong."

Particular worries at the moment

"Money - will I ever be able to afford to buy my own house?"

"Money worries, not enough to pay bills"

"I'm worried how expensive this world is getting- it's so expensive to live now. How are people supposed to cope with rising expenses but less jobs."

On living situation

"I enjoy my suburb and the facilities available"

"I live in a great place. It is where I grew up as a child and it feels safe to me"

"My house is cold and damp and dark and I cannot afford to heat it in the winter"

"If I could afford my own house in a better area I would be happier"

"Renting as I cannot afford to own my own home."

On more opportunities for women and girls

"I think people in general have more opportunities than before, with easy access to information and education. I feel though that they will struggle more to find employment"

"I had great opportunities because my parents were educated and informed. I am doing the same things for my children - but with globalisation my children have worldwide opportunities for travel, education, work etc."

"Children in low income families are in a world that is more expensive than when I was a child. Even camping can be difficult to achieve nowadays."

On action to reduce climate change

"Recycling plastic, glass and cardboard/paper; turning off lights and power in areas of the home not used, etc."

"I try not to create unnecessary waste. I recycle as much as possible. We compost as much as possible on site. I use public transport in preference to the car where possible."

Particular concerns from Christchurch, which suffered severe earthquakes: 4 September, 2010; 20 February 2011 with multiple aftershocks between these and on-going.....

"Waiting - we are waiting for everything"

"Huge impact of earthquakes on physical, financial and emotional well-being"

“Broken house, flooded house, poor health, family disintegration as adolescent children are moving out because they can’t stand Christchurch any more. Ongoing continual tremors - all very upsetting”

“Housing in Christchurch - we have been living in a ‘rental’ for more than 2 years - paying rent as well as mortgage, rates, insurance.”

“Moving on from the earthquakes and re-establishing our lives in a different part of the city”

“Just found out my house - that is about to be rebuilt - now sits inside the ½ metre sea level rise area for Christchurch - that’s very unsettling”.

“I’m sick of earthquakes and a broken city

“Dealing with flooding issues in the area I live in”

“Still trying to get authorities to fix my leaking roof and to re-seal the drive.”

Gains, Gaps and Challenges:

(ref: Beijing Platform for Action, Strategic Objectives and Actions, 1995)

Women and poverty:

While more women are in paid employment most felt there is little improvement and expressed concern around the challenges of child poverty and low minimum wages. Disabled women in particular noted concerns around transport and housing affordability and overall financial insecurity. Visits to the dentist and other medical professionals are very challenging both financially and due to poor communication.

Migrant women who are recent arrivals are often financially dependent and therefore have limited independence and status. However, a woman gaining some financial status and independence can cause problems within the family; “Women are not equal.”

A root cause of impoverishment of families is the inability to afford the high rents now required to get a decent house. Poor quality homes are damp and cold. Several families living together in overcrowded conditions cause chronic childhood illnesses which result in lifelong healthcare costs. A growing number of New Zealand families are living in sub-standard conditions in garages and caravans because no state provided housing is available.

Education and training of women:

More women than men graduate from university but there is not enough support for women to train in non-traditional occupations.

Women post-doctoral graduates report that it is particularly difficult to gain permanent employment, while male colleagues appear to climb the academic ladder with ease. Ministry of Education reported, June 2014, that five years after their graduation women were earning thousands of dollars less than men.

Disabled women see that while there has been some progress in ‘inclusion/mainstreaming’ of disabled students there are considerable gaps in the training of teachers to work with and support these students; funding continues to be restricted. Students with a high level of need receive extra support funding while those with low-level, minor or borderline disabilities do not and are therefore unlikely to achieve their potential.

Migrant women see education as the key to advancement and look to schools to support their girls. Guidance counselling and support is available to girls while they are at school but this is lost when a girl is taken out of school by the family, often for early, forced marriage.

Women and Health:

While there have been improvements in health provision for many, challenges remain especially in the mental health area.

Migrant women’s access to all health services is influenced by their fluency in the English language and is also affected by their access to qualified, independent interpreters. Good interpreting services are available in the public hospital system but are not necessarily

available in the primary health sector and migrant women often have to rely on family members for interpreting when visiting the doctor. Therefore preventive services such as reproductive health checks are often not made use of in such problematic circumstances.

Disabled women noted that there has been some improvement in health services but that a lack of respect from medical staff continues to be an issue; also that older disabled women often suffer double discrimination from medical staff (age and disability).

Violence against women:

Although there is greater awareness of the levels of violence and increasing abhorrence at the levels of violence in the community, women still bear the brunt of this abuse suffering both physical and psychological violence. 'Culture', the sexualisation and objectification of girls and women and society's attitudes to women are challenges that continue to limit women's development to their full potential.

Disabled women face higher levels of all types of violence than any other groups.

There is urgent need for more support for all agencies working to counter violence against women – for example appropriate interpreters and support people within the police and justice systems are essential. Key challenges to society include changing attitudes especially of police personnel, politicians and the media as well as the offenders.

Women and the economy /Employment:

More women are in the paid work force but the gender pay gap remains as do gender divisions of labour. Women in paid work still carry the main responsibility for housework and child care. This is especially so in migrant communities. An example given concerned women working in night-shift jobs whilst also struggling to carry out their family and home responsibilities, thus leaving these women with inadequate time for sleep. This leads to poor health whose source is not recognised.

Being 'in work' brings self-esteem, confidence and everyday interaction with others but for disabled women getting and keeping paid employment is very hard.

"A has worked as a P.A. satisfactorily but, in a new town, the recruitment advisor is reluctant to assist."

"D eventually found a job for one day per week on a minimum wage".

Women are calling for an adequate 'living wage' and for pay equality.

All discussion groups noted a need for improvements to current statutory paid parental leave entitlements and for affordable childcare.

Women in power and decision making:

Disabled women are becoming more assertive and proactive around their human rights and are challenging situations that discriminate against them.

Many ethnic minority women and girls have little or no 'say' in their core human rights e.g. right to education both secondary and post-secondary.

There is on-going concern at the continuing low numbers of women in parliament and on public and private sector boards.

Recurrent themes which in 2014 were largely unchanged from 2004 and 2009 include:

- Gender pay gap, the principle of equal pay for work of equal value
- Low income and the need for an adequate living wage
- Child poverty and all its ramifications
- Pervasive occurrence of domestic violence and abuse
- The health and welfare of elderly women, women and girls with disabilities and migrant women continue to be of concern.

Gender Pay Gap

In 1972 New Zealand enacted the Equal Pay Act; however a gender pay gap persists.

The median hourly wage gap in 2014 is 9.9 percent but varies widely e.g. in the public sector it ranges from 38.8 percent in Ministry of Defence to 14.8 percent in Department of Labour.

The gender pay gap is most significant for those in the lower paid jobs and in work most often done by women. This work is likely to be in the caring sector and is often casual and part-time which impacts on families and childcare in particular.

Welfare support for families

Changes to the welfare support system for parents have had the effect of more women joining the work force. The government has 'trumpeted' that more women have moved off benefits and into work but the work accessed is often low-level and poorly-paid. Employment statistics may appear positive but there is considerable concern regarding contracted hours and pay rates. Nearly four in ten prime-aged women who work less than full-time are low paid. These women are employed as personal care-givers, cleaners and caretakers (an over-representation of Maori and Pacific Islanders) and retail saleswomen (New Zealand European).

Analysis of responses to Questionnaire "How Are We Doing?"

(see: Appendix Four)

Questionnaires were completed on-line or at workshops, in workplaces, at community events, during NGO meetings and by post. Respondents came from a good, wide age range - of 700+ women who participated, 52 were young women under 25 years; 138 were senior citizens over 65 years.

Question 1. Money to spend:

51 percent reported they have more money to spend than 5 years ago; 49 percent reported they had less disposable cash and that the cost of goods has risen.

Question 2. Paid employment:

73 percent of women were in paid employment; women not employed include retirees, people working in voluntary sector roles and students.

Question 3. Conditions of work:

82 percent of women said they were happy in their work. The reasons are primarily supportive and friendly colleagues, being able to make a difference for people and contribute to the community. A challenging and stimulating workplace was of greater importance than salary for some. 14 percent of women said they were not happy at work (and 4 percent were both happy and unhappy).

Question 4. For those unhappy with their paid employment:

Reasons given: Stress, workload and long hours; being under-paid for qualifications and ability not recognized; poor management and unsettling work place "politics".

Question 5. Work contract:

94 percent of working women have an employment contract; others do not.

Question 6. Choosing to work:

Most women surveyed chose to work. However even when they indicate they enjoy their work and feel they are contributing to the wider community there is an overriding need to support family finances, pay bills and mortgages.

Quotes: *"I need to earn a living and I like working"*

"To support my family and to contribute to my community and society."

Question 7. Safety:

58 percent said that women are safe but it was often a qualified "Yes" with additional comments that women need to be mindful of where they are and their surroundings; however 42 percent believed that women are not safe.

Many acknowledged that while they may feel safe there are high levels of violence in the community - domestic and sexual violence as well as workplace violence and inequalities.

Question 8. Seeking Advice – safety and financial:

Most women had a good knowledge of where to seek advice, listing a wide range of options.

Question 9. Living conditions:

80 percent of respondents reported being happy with their living conditions; they enjoy their local neighbourhood and feel safe; but 20 percent were unhappy with their living situation; the main concerns being cold, damp buildings or “in a bad area” and paying high rent. Many noted they would like to own their own home but that it is financially very difficult.

Question 10. More say in things affecting their lives:

In general women feel they are more confident and assertive in matters-affecting their lives.

Question 11. Retirement savings:

75 percent said they are able to save or have saved for retirement. Several mentioned the assistance with this through ‘KiwiSaver’ (a voluntary, work-based savings initiative) however many cited saving for retirement as a “worry”.

Question 12. Improving women’s lives:

The main issues continue to be financial security, equal pay, living wage and generally improving pay; women’s empowerment, safety and domestic violence are important issues. The importance of paid parental/maternity leave and recognition of the nurturing roles featured highly. Other concerns were around employment opportunities, lack of money and government policies that reduce the provision of social services.

Question 13. Computer Skills:

2 percent of women said they did not know how to use a computer; only twenty women did not have access to a computer although two of these indicated they did so at their local library.

Question 14. Opportunities for children:

Responses to this question were mixed. While respondents felt there were more opportunities in terms of technology, education and choices these were moderated by the uncertainties surrounding future employment and financial security.

Question 15. Reducing climate change:

Most people are attempting to take some action to reduce climate change. The most common response was the use of recycling and trying to reduce waste. Reducing car usage and using public transport or cycling, growing vegetables and taking measures to reduce power consumption were also mentioned

Supplementary Documentation:

A: Women’s Election Agenda Aotearoa 2014

Preceding New Zealand’s General Election, September 2014, a *Women’s Election Agenda: “100 steps on the road to equality for the women of Aotearoa”* was compiled by a local group of women human rights advocates. Many of the issues highlighted in the Agenda are reflected in responses to the PWW(NZ) review.

This document called for all political parties in Aotearoa New Zealand to commit to de facto equality for women by 2020. More than 120 years after women won the right to vote, we are far from achieving equality. Women make up 51.3 percent of the population, yet have the lowest incomes in the country and are grossly under-represented in all leadership positions in places ranging from Parliament to workplaces, unions, schools and businesses. In 2014, women in Aotearoa New Zealand still do not have sovereignty over our own bodies, as is clearly illustrated by this country’s shocking sexual assault and domestic violence statistics.

Research released on 14 March 2011 demonstrated that Aotearoa New Zealand was the best country in the Commonwealth in which to be born a girl. The Royal Commonwealth Society and Plan UK study *Because You’re a Girl: Growing up in the Commonwealth* showed that, on

the basis of eight indicators, there was greater level of gender equality here than in any other nation in the 54-member Commonwealth. This country received an 'A' in five out of the eight indicators and was reportedly the "star performer" in terms of pay equality!

This is a sobering thought and a clear indication of the poor position of women both in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. The report recorded that women here earn only 72 percent of what men earn yet this country achieved top billing in terms of pay equality.

We live in a macho, male-dominated society in which male pursuits and achievements are glorified publicly and by the media, while those of women are often close to invisible. Government funding is readily provided for the America's Cup (yachting) and the Rugby World Cup, yet Women's Refuges never have adequate funding to provide adequate shelter and other services to victims of family violence. New Zealand in global terms is a comparatively wealthy country and could afford to implement policies to end discrimination against women and to treat women and children fairly – it is a matter of political will.

In 2014, it is time to put women and children at the forefront.

Five key issues from Women's Election Agenda:

1. Violence against women

There is a call for increased resourcing of: police, support for women and children to leave violent situations, education programmes for both girls and boys including identifying intimate partner violence and permanent and adequate funding of women's refuges. There have been numerous reports on legislation addressing gender violence but the recommendations made have yet to be implemented into law; there is also a need to reinstate the availability of legal aid for women in violent situations.

2. Workforce and employment

The Election Agenda identified pay equity in permanent work as important – women in the PWW(NZ) survey also raised pay equity as important to them. In the employment area paid parental leave is an issue needing to be addressed by government.

3. Immigrant and refugee women

Two important issues for this group are adequate funding to support agencies working with immigrants and refugees and adequate funding to support learning English and courses to assist with settling in New Zealand. An outstanding issue is that the Marriage Act 1955 legislation needs revision to protect girls from under-age and forced marriage.

4. Women with disabilities

The government needs to take action to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Legislation is needed to protect women with disabilities and the establishment of a Disability Issues Commission is recommended. Funding and advocacy services need to be strengthened.

5. Leadership and women in parliament

Ensure the Ministry of Women is adequately funded to enhance visibility and ensure that all government agencies consult it during policy development and are required to implement its recommendations.

B: Statement prepared for 59th Session of Commission on the Status of Women

Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) in the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

INTRODUCTION

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand), in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2010, works for gender justice and equality for women and girls across all ethnicities. The organisation plays a major role in monitoring the implementation of the

Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action, outcomes of the General Assembly and other United Nations programmes for action, with a mandate to make the voices of Pacific Island women heard more loudly at the international level.

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) has coordinated and written the Aotearoa New Zealand non-governmental organisations' country reports for the ten and fifteen-year reviews of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The concerns of indigenous women, Pasifika women, disabled and refugee women were sought through national workshops, discussion groups and a questionnaire to assess how women were faring in their everyday lives. Recent research for the twenty-year review has enabled Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) to establish a longitudinal measure charting challenges and opportunities for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of New Zealand women and girls in the post-2015 development agenda through the integration of a gender perspective.

PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION SINCE 1995

Women in Aotearoa New Zealand celebrate the gaining of suffrage in 1893, a world first for any country, as a milestone for their human rights and empowerment. Fundamental challenges however, *still* persist in their everyday lives 120 years later. Equal pay with men, reducing the very high level of domestic violence and access to leadership roles are three ongoing critical issues with which all concerned are still grappling. Implementing the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing in 1995 has been the catalyst for both government and civil society to push for full gender equality and empowerment for New Zealand women and girls. Despite the will to succeed progress has been negligible.

In all of our reporting for the ten and fifteen-year reviews of progress on the Platform for Action five issues have stood out. When Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) reported to the Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2008 and 2012 and to the Human Rights Council for New Zealand's Second Universal Periodic Review in 2014 the same issues were highlighted. These issues were: the male/female pay gap differential; unresolved discriminatory workplace issues; high levels of domestic violence; the continuing impoverishment of families; the health and welfare of elderly women, women with disabilities and ethnic women and girls.

In 2014 data gathered for the Beijing + 20 review in nationwide workshops, discussion groups and a sampling of Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)'s questionnaire "How are We Doing?" has revealed clearly that these same core concerns remain unresolved. Much will and effort has failed to effect real progress. This lack of progress can only be overcome through a robust post-2015 programme for gender equality and empowerment for New Zealand women and girls.

POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The post-2015 development agenda must aim to build strategies which will result in effective progress. This demands a different approach. Time bound targets and measurable outcomes with ongoing monitoring and analysis of the results will be basic to success. Pushing for full gender equality and women's empowerment through constant monitoring and reporting of progress on the targets and outcomes will take us forward.

Post-2015 more effective implementation demands that the New Zealand Government takes up for action all of the observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2012 and the outcomes of New Zealand's Second Universal Periodic Review, 2014. A key point raised and recognised in both reviews is Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand)'s call for a new five-year National Plan of Action for New Zealand Women and Girls. There has been no action plan since the earlier five-year plan ended in 2009. The Committee drew the New Zealand Government's attention to the inadequacy of targets and benchmarks to advance women's rights. An action plan, in providing a framework and targets in a timed agenda for progress,

and which serves to coordinate intersectionality across all those involved in delivering the outcomes, will remedy this inadequacy. Alignment is essential with *New Zealand National Plan of Action for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights*. Without such frameworks timed outcomes cannot be guaranteed.

The Committee raised other concerns. These included inadequate action to disseminate and promote the Convention to Parliamentarians, Government Ministries, the Judiciary, Police, the community and civil society organisations. In 2013 Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) produced an information leaflet for widest distribution designed to be understandable for people of all ages and ethnicities. We are confident that the leaflet will continue to be a valuable tool for the post-2015 empowerment of women. In the post-2015 development agenda a key element will be education for action. All organisations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council have a prime role to play here.

The Committee also noted with concern the closure of the Pay and Employment Equity Unit in the Department of Labour as well as Ministry of Women's Affairs lack of consistent policy for bridging the persistent wage gaps between women and men. Post-2015 firm and consistent strategies for women's economic empowerment must be put into place to tackle the wage gap. We call for increased resources for the Ministry of Women's Affairs to ensure the full and effective development of a work programme to close the gender pay gap. Sharing of best practice in closing the gender pay gap, an issue of concern almost without exception in all Economic and Social Council member states, must be an agreed outcome from the 59th session of Commission on the Status of Women.

The Committee urged the New Zealand Government to establish a Human Rights Select Committee in Parliament "to strengthen Parliamentary oversight". Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand), in its leading role since it established the National Coalition of Non - Governmental Organisations to be a 'ginger group' for further progress to implement the Convention, took a submission early in 2014 to the Business Committee of Parliament requesting the establishment of a Human Rights Select Committee. We continue to pursue this vigorously. Defining new strategies to make progress on gender equality and women's empowerment will also be the way forward in the global context post-2015.

To date the government has shown little will to take action on the Committee's recommendation to revise the legal minimum age of marriage to 18 years without any exceptions for parental consent. Our November 2009 petition to Parliament on the subject of forced and underage/early marriage became stalled as other work took priority. We urge the government to make forced and underage/early marriage a priority for targeted legislation. Dowry and trafficking which have such devastating effects for women and girls worldwide thrive on outdated legislation.

The Committee also recommended the collection of appropriate data to close gaps in information on domestic violence, intimate partner violence and sexual violence, as well as requesting data on the wide range of gaps on disabled women, migrant women, violence against Maori women.

Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) brought nine recommendations in its submission to the Human Rights Council pre-session Working Group in January 2014 for the review of the New Zealand Government's second Universal Periodic Review. Specific concerns were decent housing for families and improved health services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, intersex and queer communities.

Post-2015 we call for action on government proposed initiatives for disabled women, more support and information for migrants, services which are culturally appropriate for all ethnicities and more training for the Police in handling of violence against ethnic minority women.

The concerns for New Zealand women and girls are mirrored in many other states. We therefore urge the outcome statement from the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in proposals for the Post-2015 agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment to target: the will by all actors to succeed in full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action; unfulfilled aspects of the Millennium Development Goals; eradication of poverty; equal pay with men; zero tolerance of domestic violence; decent housing for all women and girls; full health and welfare for elderly women, disabled and ethnic minority women and girls. In the twenty-first century these demands are non-negotiable.

Helen Clark, United Nations Development Programme Administrator has said "No country will reach its full potential if its female citizens do not enjoy full equality. While there has, undoubtedly, been progress for many women and girls, it has been uneven and too slow."

Looking back – LOOKING FORWARD

The Post-2015 Agenda for New Zealand Women:

Many of the Strategic Objectives and Actions to implement the 12 Critical Areas of Concern in the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action for full human rights and fundamental freedoms have underpinned progress for women and girls worldwide. Much still remains to be achieved. The challenge post-2015 is how to make significant progress on barriers to the realization of full gender equality for New Zealand women and girls. Efforts to date by all concerned in their welfare have had minimal result. This lack of progress can only be overcome through a robust post-2015 programme for gender equality and empowerment.

It is pertinent to reflect on the actions called for by all Governments in the Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) Beijing Declaration which came out of the caucus group discussions at the Beijing Conference, 1995.

These include:

- 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*
- 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*
- 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 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.*

These statements, and paragraphs on the issues of equal political empowerment, displaced women and refugees, positive media images for women and girls, education for all and the prevention of human rights violations against women gave high hopes for gender equality and full empowerment. We have to ask how much progress has been made since 1995 when they were written. How are women really doing in their everyday lives? The issues identified by the NGO Caucus in Beijing, 1995 are still highly relevant to the post-2015 development agenda which must aim to build strategies for effective progress. However this demands a different approach; time bound targets and measurable outcomes with ongoing monitoring and analysis of the results will be basic to success. Pushing for full gender equality and women's empowerment through constant monitoring and reporting of progress on the targets and outcomes will take us forward.

Post-2015, more effective implementation demands that the New Zealand Government takes up for action all of the observations and recommendations in July 2012 of the Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the outcomes of the Second Universal Periodic Review in 2014. A key point raised and recognised in both reviews was the call by Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) for a new five-year National Plan of Action for New Zealand Women and Girls. Since the earlier Plan ended in 2009 there has been no action plan. Positive progress can only be achieved through the time-bound targets and measurable indicators that an action plan provides.

The Committee also raised other concerns. These included inadequate action to disseminate and promote the Convention to Parliamentarians, Government Ministries, the Judiciary, Police, the community and civil society organisations. In 2013 Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) produced an information leaflet on the Convention for the widest distribution designed to be understandable for people of all ages and ethnicities. We are confident that the leaflet will continue to be a valuable tool for the post-2015 empowerment of women. In the post-2015 development agenda a key element will be education for action. All organisations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council have a prime role to play in education for action.

The Post-2015 agenda must target the will by all actors to succeed in full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, unfulfilled aspects of the Millennium Development Goals; eradication of poverty; decent housing for all women and girls; zero tolerance of domestic violence; equal pay with men; and full health and welfare for elderly women, disabled and ethnic minority women and girls. In the twenty-first century these demands are non-negotiable.

On 3 September 2014 in a lecture to students at Auckland University, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon said: *New Zealand is a pioneer on gender equality as the first country in the world where women received the right to vote. I admire this far-sighted vision.*

We must reawaken the pioneering spirit of the suffragists to take forward a far-sighted vision for the attainment of full gender equality for New Zealand women and girls post-2015 and play our part in supporting the advancement of women and girls globally while New Zealand holds a seat in the United Nations Security Council.

Appendix ONE:

UPR – New Zealand’s Universal Periodic Review by the UN Human Rights Council, Geneva, February 2014

PWW(NZ)’s NGO Alternative report to UNHRC presented nine very well received recommendations for the New Zealand Government concerning:

1. National Action Plan for Women (lack of) and establishment of a new Parliamentary Select Committee on Human Rights
2. Urgent launch of robust initiatives to counter stubborn gendered imbalances and injustices in New Zealand workplaces and workforce
3. Positive plan needed for decent and affordable housing for all in need with priority for women escaping violence
4. Urgency for expert, frontline, 24-hour, early, wrap-around intervention services for sexual violence (SV) victims/survivors including specialist Maori and Pacific services for SV prevention and intervention- for vulnerable children and young people; develop and sustain cross-party partnerships to ensure relevant government agencies work in collaboration with sexual violence community service providers to develop/improve service systems and practices - Government agencies mandated to collaborate accordingly....
5. Urgency to prevent forced and under-age marriage by following the CEDAW Committee, 2012 recommendation and raise the age of marriage to 18 years; require religious celebrants of all faiths to be registered in New Zealand in order to conduct marriages legally recognised by law; promote widespread awareness and intervention measures for the issue of forced underage marriage and increase collaboration between government agencies and specialised organisations within civil society, including funding half-way homes for such abused young women and subsequent rehabilitation programmes. See Appendix 2
6. Need for legislation concerning ‘dowry issues’ to enter the scope of New Zealand law with additional criteria and lines of inquiry tailored to detect exchange of dowry for those wishing to utilise the cultural marriage visa; also need for a clear definition of trafficking to include the rights of ‘trafficked’ women as defined under UN conventions.
7. Necessity of awareness and training in cultural oppression and gender analysis in the context of domestic / family violence - for police and judiciary (including migrants employed within) so that women do not feel constrained in accessing and trusting the justice system. Adequate legal aid subsidies, particularly for domestic violence victims who require additional assistance when they need to attend the Court urgently, either to press charges or to apply for essential ‘safety orders’.
8. Urgency for strategic and coordinated action to improve sexual and reproductive health by ensuring the availability and accessibility of a full range of contraceptive methods and abortion services, free of discrimination arising from coercive policies; further: suspending sanctions on women who have subsequent children while in receipt of welfare and other coercive legislation/policies intended to influence reproductive decision making.
9. Access to quality and appropriate health services for people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) needs urgent attention, e.g. by taking steps to improve data collection on SOGI in health services and to develop practice standards to improve public health service delivery for LGBTIQ individuals and populations including SOGI diversity training for all New Zealand health care workers.

CEDAW Coalition of NGOs, a 'ginger group' that arose from civil society dismay at apparent absence of political will to address long-standing inequalities faced by women and detailed in PWW(NZ) NGO Alternative CEDAW Report 2011 and its Appendix 2012, presented a succinct UPR alternative Report to UNHRC. This report was supported in person at UN HRC pre-session working group and during its full consideration, January 2014. PWW(NZ) members co-ordinate the CEDAW Coalition of NGOs.

Note:

A substantial number of recommendations were made to New Zealand Government by UNHRC and regardless of whether the government accepted them or not, these recommendations, as with CEDAW's Concluding Observations to the New Zealand Government, 2012 are being followed up conscientiously by civil society. New Zealand will report to CEDAW again in 2016 – this timing means that CEDAW and UPR reporting alternate every 2 years, hence each PWW(NZ) Alternative NGO Report informs the other.

Appendix TWO:

UPR – Alternative report from Shakti Community Council for New Zealand's Universal Periodic Review by UNHRC, Geneva, February 2014

Forced / underage marriage:

Under New Zealand law it is permissible to marry at the age of 16 with parental consent. This qualification has allowed forced underage marriage to occur, disguising parental coercion. Often victims of forced and underage marriage are deprived of their rights to education, employment, choice of partner and reproductive rights. Despite growing recognition of the issue, there continues to be a lack of state action in response. Moreover, such weddings are often conducted by religious celebrants, who are mostly 'non-residents' and are not required by law to obtain registration prior to practice in New Zealand. This contributes to the clandestine nature of most forced and underage marriages, making them difficult to detect and account for.

Action to date: A Letter of Agreement has been signed by the NZ Police, Child Youth and Family and the Ministries of Social Development, Education and Immigration. It outlines their coordinated response to victims of the practice and is in response to the recommendations made by the CEDAW committee. However, there is not yet any substantial follow-up action from the agreement.

Shakti recommends:

- Raising the age of marriage to 18 years as recommended by the CEDAW Committee 2012;
- Requiring religious celebrants to be registered in New Zealand in order to conduct marriages that are recognised by law;
- Promoting widespread awareness and intervention measures for the issue of forced underage marriage;
- Increasing collaboration between government agencies and specialised organisations within civil society, including funding half-way homes for such abused young women and subsequent rehabilitation programmes

Dowry abuse: A growing number of women of ethnic minority backgrounds are being brought into New Zealand to marry, and are consequently subjected to severe abuse and even death due to their inability to meet exorbitant dowry demands made by their husbands and in-laws. Despite this outdated practice being largely illegal in countries of origin, its practice and subsequent abuse is allowed to happen in New Zealand due to the current legislative system being unable to register and deal with the complex issue.

Shakti recommends:

- 'Dowry' practice and abuse to be brought into the scope of NZ legislation;
- Introduction of additional criteria and lines of inquiry tailored to detect exchange of dowry for those wishing to utilise New Zealand's 'cultural marriage visa'.

Trafficking: Consensus is low on what constitutes 'trafficking' and the nature of trafficking in New Zealand e.g. women have entered New Zealand of their free will, for marriage or employment, only to be trapped in the sex industry, on farms, etc. once here. Our government does not recognise nor acknowledge 'trafficking' in its broadest sense and this has inadvertently deprived 'trafficked' women in the labour market (including the sex industry) from exercising their rights e.g. accessing healthcare, legal and other support services and keeps them vulnerable on account of their immigration status.

Shakti recommends that:

- New Zealand Government adopts a clear definition of 'trafficking' that includes women brought into the country as 'internet-brides', 'mail order brides' and as extended family farm-hands;
- Notes should include the rights of 'trafficked' women as defined under UN conventions;
- Further: That the government initiates necessary awareness and training for police and judiciary (including immigrants employed within) in cultural oppression and gender analysis in the context of domestic / family violence so that women do not feel restrained in accessing and trusting the justice system.

[Shakti Community Council is a member of Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) of long standing and is represented on the Board of Pacific Women's Watch (NZ)]

Appendix THREE:

Disabled Women in New Zealand – Overview 2014

Disabled Women's Forum; Taku Manawa Disability - Building Human Rights Communities, Auckland.

Disability-based discrimination plus gender-based discrimination double the difficulties and stress faced by disabled women. 24% of New Zealanders are disabled, 89% of these are adults; 50% of the adult disability population are women; Maori women experience higher rates of disability than non-Maori. Disabled women, regardless of ethnicity and age encounter discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion in all areas of their lives - this is more severe for Maori than non-Maori. Addressing and redressing all these issues is urgent.

Ref: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>

Violence Against Women: Violence against women is a huge area of critical concern for disabled women. Data enabling statistics on violence against disabled women to be collated is not yet available. Overseas research varies hugely; finding violence against disabled women is 2-12 times greater than violence against non-disabled women. Disabled women suffer all known forms of violence common to non-disabled women, as well as forms of violence particular to disabled women, including disabled men as perpetrators. Factors that may explain the 2-12 times difference include disabled women's diversity of impairments, also which sector of the disability community was researched, for example: intellectually/learning impaired women are targeted for violence over 10 times more than non-disabled women. The disability community believes these figures provide an accurate assessment of the reality of the violence and levels of abuse experienced by disabled women.

Access to domestic violence, sexual violence and related services e.g. safe houses/ refuge, does not exist for ALL disabled women. Collecting statistics from services that disabled women cannot access generates skewed research findings; statistics from VAW services cannot be used to reflect accurately the lived experience of violence against disabled women. New Zealand's Domestic Violence Act does not cover ALL disabled women e.g. disabled women living in residential homes, nursing homes et al are not protected because these 'households'/homes are classified instead as 'non-disabled peoples' workplaces'. It is imperative that New Zealand's Domestic Violence Act should cover ALL disabled people, their domestic households and domestic relationships.

It should be mandatory that:

- ALL disabled women can access any/all of refuge and domestic violence, sexual violence and related services - including police and the judicial system.
- Accessibility by ALL disabled women is pre-requisite for all government and non-government financial support of refuge, domestic violence, sexual violence and related services.
- ALL specialist services that disabled women require to deal with the impacts of violence and abuse are provided fully and promptly.

It took disabled women many years to convince the Family Violence Taskforce to include a disabled woman to represent the disabled community on this Taskforce; unfortunately Taskforce has been halted/shelved, making this vehicle for hearing disabled women's voices ineffective.

Disabled women urge New Zealand government to reinstate funding and high level representation to enable the Family Violence Taskforce to reconvene quarterly and continue the work it was just beginning to address in the late 2000's re stopping violence against disabled women; further that a comprehensive Taskforce Action Plan for Disability is drawn up and implemented.

Of particular concern to disabled women is the current legality of enforced and coerced sterilization and contraception of disabled women and girls. Directly connected with this is hormone treatment to keep a disabled woman's body in a child-like state. Because parents and guardians of adult disabled women must obtain Court permission to sanction this practice, it is more commonly carried out on children i.e. when Court permission is not needed. NZ domestic laws allow this abuse of disabled women and children to continue 'legally', justifying this practice as being in the 'best interest' of the disabled woman/child. However, forced sterilisation inflicts severe pain and suffering, and violates the absolute prohibition of torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.
[Convention Against Torture / CAT]

Recommendations for Action taken unsuccessfully to the NZ Government to date include:

- Repeal/amendment of domestic legislation that enables enforced and coerced sterilisation hence bringing country law and practice into line with NZ's UN commitments, that include CEDAW;
- Sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities;
- Provide funding for disabled women to educate government, parents and medical profession on Social and Rights-based Models of Disability, human rights of disabled persons and relevant UN instruments;
- Enact legislation that replaces 'substitute decision-making' with 'supported decision-making' with appropriate safeguards written in language that clearly makes no distinction between disabled and non-disabled women;
- Recognise publicly that enforced and coerced sterilisation is domestic/sexual violence; implement laws to prevent medical profession, parents, guardians from doing this (inside or outside New Zealand);

- Provide funding to research and report on issues and practice of enforced and coerced sterilisation, contraception and hormone treatments, past and present.

Women and Health: Life expectancy of women with learning impairments is 23 years less than life expectancy of non-disabled women. Significant barriers to good healthcare include the inaccessibility to medical/health information e.g. prescription instructions such as warnings of possible side effects et al. in formats that disabled women can read. Many women's disability is 'living with mental health issues'; complex issues abound.

Respectful communication and the same/equal medical treatment as for non-disabled women, without being patronised, is still lacking for many disabled women; many believe their complaints of health discrimination are not taken seriously. When a disabled woman is accompanied by a support person, communication should be directed to the woman herself not the support person unless that is specifically required. Essential services and primary care health screening initiatives e.g. breast cancer and cervical cancer programmes are taken to communities in vans and buses which are inaccessible for many disabled women.

Re-institutionalisation is a very real fear for many disabled women.

Psychiatric survivors in New Zealand have had legal success in Court actions against lengthy incarcerations, mis-diagnosis and institutional abuses. Australian research found 85 percent of disabled women hospitalised felt unsafe, 67 percent suffered sexual or other forms of harassment and 45 percent were sexually assaulted.

As health funding decreases and cost of individual community living increases; ageing is an added factor and many disabled women live in fear of re-institutionalization.

Immediate action is recommended to remove/remedy all barriers to women with learning impairments, (life expectancy of 59.5 years) living as long as non-disabled women, (life expectancy of 82.4 years) "A life lived 23 years less". Over 10 years ago, the report, "An Ordinary Life" informed government of the need for equal access to health care, but this remains a 'life and death' issue for many disabled women.

Health and Disability Commission would serve the disability sector much better if it is split into two distinct agencies. The current, medical model of disability is based on archaic thinking and practice; it needs to be seen as separate to the social and rights models of disability (i.e. disabled people have impairments; their disability experience comes from socially constructed barriers that impact on their human rights.) "Disability needs to become a separate agency and not linked so closely with health."

Education and Training of Women: Difficulties in the area of education for disabled women begin in childhood education. Issues of lack of support, lack of funding, lack of access to information in accessible formats but also in part due to negative expectations of teaching staff, begin in childhood and continue past the age of 15 years. These issues do not stop once disabled girls become disabled women even though New Zealand has signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), that says [Article 24] that: "States parties shall ensure at all levels an inclusive education system - equal access to secondary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning."

Teacher training: When teachers are trained, they are trained in teaching non-disabled students, not disabled students. 'Special education'/teaching disabled students is an optional module during teacher training, yet the model of mainstreaming in education is government policy. Educational institutions, usually tertiary level that employ disabled people as disability coordinators, to ensure disabled students receive on an individual basis the support they need to study successfully, are positive models of reasonable accommodation. Standardisation of this practice across all learning institutions with adequate funds to do this will enable more disabled women to study and/or train in the work/careers of choice. The training and employment of disabled women as teachers is a simple way to change the existing dynamics of teachers not knowing how to relate to and teach disabled students.

Disabled women's access to life-long learning, vocational training and tertiary education has been impeded by present government restrictions on funding e.g. Training Incentive Allowance. Funding for degree level courses is no longer available. Cut-backs in funding for support of disabled students take no account of the different costs involved in providing resources required for different impairments. e.g. hourly rate for interpreters of New Zealand Sign Language (an official language) is considerably more than note-takers receive.

Education determines careers, economic status and freedom of choice in life decision-making for non-disabled women but does not necessarily translate into employment for the majority of disabled women, see below...

Employment: Major areas of discrimination in the area of employment for disabled women are the lack of employment and employment opportunities and gross pay inequities. Difficulty in gaining employment is widespread, education standards and qualifications do not increase or decrease employment opportunities, employers' attitudes do. Disability Survey NZ results from 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2014 show significant marginalisation of disabled people in employment, education and hence their inadequate standard of living.

Disabled women seek pay equity with non-disabled women e.g. workers in factories, workshops and similar hands-on-work are entitled to the minimum wage, \$14.25 an hour - one sheltered workshop in Auckland has gender pay equity, disabled women and men both earn \$1.25 an hour!

The Minimum Wage Exemption Act 1983 discriminates against disabled workers, both women and men and should be scrapped immediately. Minimum Wage Exemption permits apply only to disabled employees and are misused by unscrupulous employers; further, the independent advocacy service established to support persons on minimum wage exemption permits no longer exists.

Overall, disabled women feel very vulnerable re discrimination when seeking employment and when challenging discrimination related to their employment.

Recommendations outstanding:

- Disabled women to be prioritised when addressing the disparities that exist in educational qualifications, training and employment of disabled and non-disabled people
- Positive discrimination, quotas/targets and employment incentives to be established by New Zealand government to create more employment opportunities for disabled women
- The Independent Advocacy service to be reinstated directly with funding assured for at least as long as it takes the government to repeal the minimum wage exemption permit
- Minimum Wage Exemption Act 1893 to be immediately scrapped/abolished.

"Disabled people have multiple discriminations made against them: they have low personal incomes, are less likely to be in the workforce, are more likely to be occupationally segregated, and if in paid employment are paid at a lower rate than their non-disabled colleagues; in addition home ownership appears to be lower than for non-disabled people. As a further complicating variable, there is a gap between disabled men and disabled women, who are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts. All women with disabilities deserve to be seen as women before being 'tagged' as disabled." Beijing+20 Workshop with disabled women, Auckland, 2014.

Disabled women are one of the most marginalised and impoverished minority groups in New Zealand. Women with disabilities are more likely to: live alone; have a lower annual household income and live in the more deprived housing areas throughout New Zealand.

A study to inform policymakers on what needs to be prioritized to maximise opportunities for disabled communities through to 2020 concluded that when working to meet Government's poverty reduction targets, tackling the poverty of children with disabilities and the children of disabled adults must be a top priority. Priorities identified also included the promotion of

employment opportunities for people with disabilities, tackling health inequalities and education around discrimination and understanding differences and what creates disability.

The report emphasised that government should continue to develop and invest in personalised welfare to work and employment support services for disabled people. The report also highlighted the complexities of government structure and operation of the benefit system.

New Zealand Social Security or 'Benefit' is the sole income for many disabled women; provided by the State, it covers basic, subsistence level living. BUT - the costs of disability are not taken into account except for a disability allowance of approximately \$60 a week. A New Zealand study in 2010, found the extra cost of disability can range from \$200 to \$2,500 plus a week, depending on type/s of impairment/s, for a disabled woman living on her own. Recent changes have made it increasingly difficult for disabled women to access the 'Benefit' e.g. Benefit criteria/requirements are not provided by government in an accessible format for all women with disabilities e.g. sight. Whenever any pre-requisite is not met the NZ Social Security benefit is not paid; with no warning/no explanation, payments are simply cancelled.

Consequently, cities have an increasing numbers of homeless women, many of them young, survivors of domestic and sexual violence and associated mental health issues and with no source of income. Disabled women report that financial literacy and budgeting skills are either not taught or understood and hence dealing with finances is difficult for many. Yet accessing credit cards, (often multiple cards) is easy, leading to life becoming more difficult and poverty more entrenched.

Wish list:

- National action plan for disabled women to be developed in collaboration with disabled women from Maori, Pacific and other disabled women's groups.
- Strong focus on actions to address violence against disabled females as well as the eleven other critical areas addressed in Beijing Platform for Action.
- Inaugural Disability Parliament to be convened by Minister for Disability with disabled women in the majority.
- Political parties and other agencies of power and decision-making implement targets/quotas until proportional representation of disabled women is achieved in Parliament.
- Establishment and funding of a disabled women's NGO is prioritised.

Statements to note:

Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Tariana Turia said in her Annual Report to Parliament, 2013:

"I do have concerns about how well we are listening to our Māori and Pasifika disabled peoples – we have a long way to go in recognising and responding to the issues they face. I want us to do more to support these communities."

Disabled spokeswoman: *"Systemic discrimination against disabled women in NZ is reinforced and perpetuated by non-disabled women."*

Disabled women do not need non-disabled women to represent them or be their voice, nor do they want to have to continue struggling against non-disabled women's attitude of intolerance because of perceptions about our difference, discounting us from being women.

To be 'seen' and 'accepted as women' by non-disabled women is one of our foremost challenges. Once this is achieved, access to women's meetings, planning, services, reports etc, will include the voices of disabled women whose presence is essential alongside non-disabled women as together they exercise their rights for dignity, respect, autonomy and freedom."

Appendix FOUR

NGO Questionnaire 2014 - New Zealand Women Together

“How Are We Doing?”



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

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
 - i. If Yes, then: Do you understand it ?
 - ii. 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. What actions are you taking to reduce the effects of climate change?
16. Personal data:
 - a. Age - Please tick: Under 25___, 25-40___, 40-50___, 50-65___, over 65___.
 - b. Ethnicity (Please circle): Maori / European / Pacific Islander / Asian / Other
 - c. How many years were you at secondary school? **END**

Close-off date for Questionnaire: Friday 30 May 2014

Questionnaire authorised by Pacific Women's Watch (NZ), PO Box 99-464, Newmarket, Auckland,
1149

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