



Muévete por la igualdad  
**Es de justicia**

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## **The Contemporary Policy Environment for Gender Equality: where next for Spanish Cooperation and Civil Society?**

July 2010

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Acknowledgements:

This report has been written by Lucy Ferguson (consultant) and based on her research and work.

Published by *Múevete por la Igualdad. Es de justicia* Campaign (Integrated by Ayuda en Acción, Entreculturas and InteRed), July 2010.

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This publication is part of a project financed by Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID) but the sole responsibility for the information and contents presented lies with Ayuda en Acción, Entreculturas and Intered.

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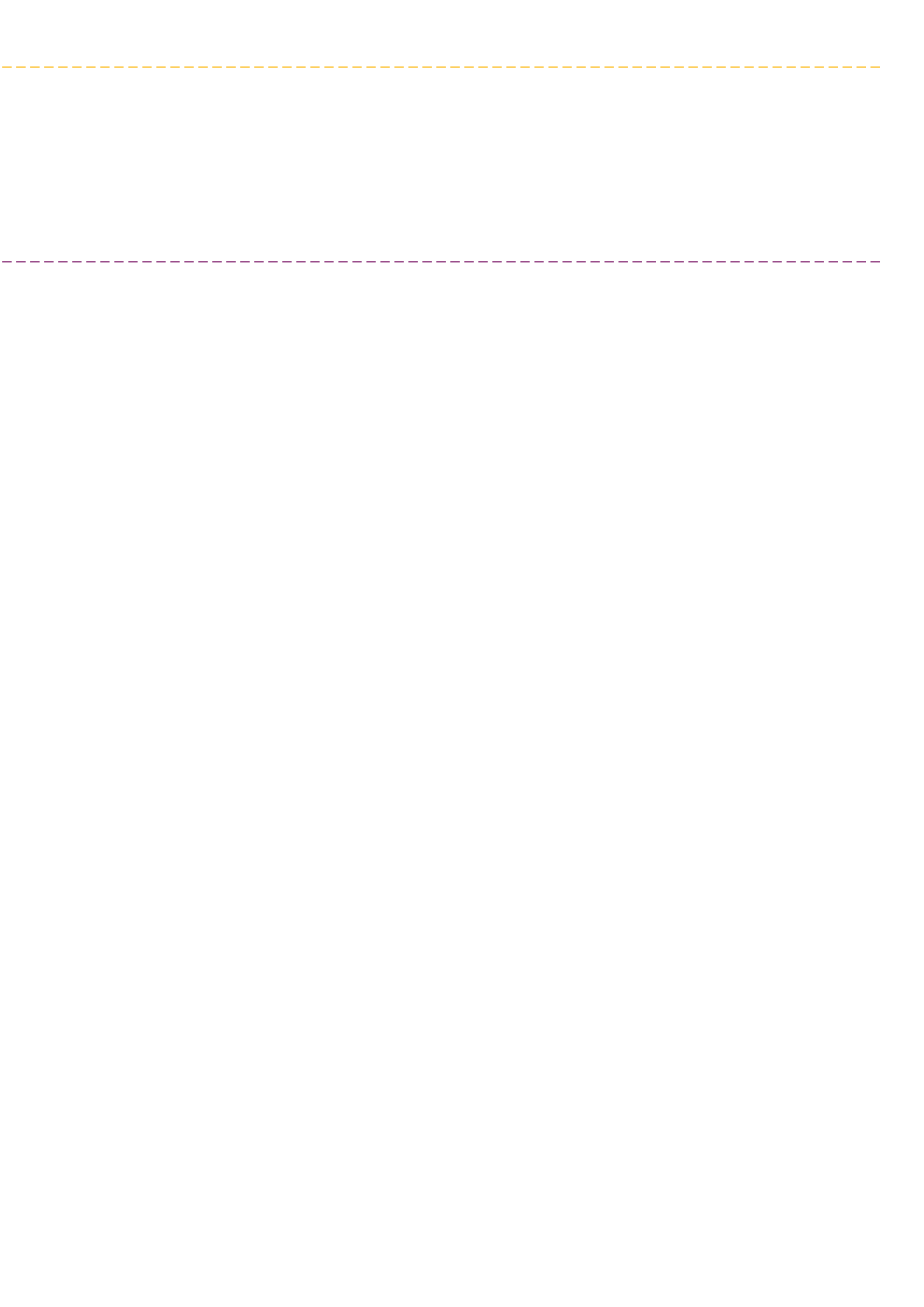
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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional y Desarrollo
AU	African Union
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DGPOLDE	Dirección General de Planificación y Evaluación de Políticas de Desarrollo
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
EU	European Union
GAD	Gender and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PFA	Platform for Action
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
WIDE	Women in Development Europe

# Executive Summary

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This third and final report for *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia* (hereafter *Muévete*) provides an overview of contemporary policy processes and how they relate to the key themes of the Campaign – political participation and the care economy. The report has three overall objectives: to present a critical analysis of contemporary gender and development policy processes; to provide a detailed review of progress made in the areas of political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy; and to generate conclusions and recommendations to promote debate and effective advocacy. A more detailed background paper – ‘Beijing and Beyond: A Critical Analysis of Contemporary Gender Equality Policy’ - has also been prepared. This can be read in combination with this report in order to provide a more substantive review of the debates and processes outlined here.

The report is structured into four chapters. The first provides an overview of the contemporary policy environment for gender equality. It begins with an analysis of the Beijing +15 process and then moves on to discuss contemporary policy processes such as the MDGs and Aid Effectiveness and Financing for Development. The primary aim of Chapter 1 is to establish a critical analytical framework through which to explore the two empirical themes of the report – political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy. It does this by setting out an argument that gender equality policy is increasingly framed in an instrumentalist manner - that is, the framing of gender equality as a means to achieving other development goals, rather than as a social justice issue in its own right - and that this has serious implications for gender equality outcomes.

Chapters 2 and 3 deal in turn with the substantive thematic priorities of the Campaign – political participation and the care economy and co-

responsibility. These chapters aim to do two key things: provide a global overview of policies surrounding gender equality and political participation; and develop a critical analysis of the ways in which such debates and policies are framed. Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the conceptual dimensions of political participation, highlighting the ways in which non-formal and alternative forms of political participation have been marginalised in contemporary policy processes. It then offers a global overview of progress in this area, highlighting some examples of best practice – in particular from African countries – and offering a set of recommendations for upcoming policy negotiations.

The care economy and co-responsibility are addressed in Chapter 3. The conceptual overview argues that although many initiatives worldwide have concentrated on the care economy – such as cash transfers and childcare provision – the concept of co-responsibility by women, men and states remains under-developed. This chapter develops a critical analysis of the ways in which policy approaches to co-responsibility and the care economy have become more conservative and privatised over the last fifteen years, along with a growing marginalisation of this issue from policy debates. Some examples of policies and projects around the care economy highlighted in the Beijing +15 review process are offered. However, these tend to be based on a framework of conciliation rather than co-responsibility. The chapter concludes with a set of recommendations for upcoming policy reviews.

The final chapter presents a summary of the three main findings of the report:

- *African countries have made more progress in the area of political participation than Latin American and Caribbean countries.*

- *Latin American and Caribbean countries have achieved much more than African countries in terms of terms of co-responsibility and the care economy. However, the kinds of initiatives carried out fit more into a conciliation than a co-responsibility paradigm.*
- *In spite of feminist analysis and activism leading up to Beijing +15, gender equality and women's empowerment continue to be presented as instrumental goals for achieving other political and development objectives, rather than as important goals in their own right.*

These analytical conclusions are then applied to a set of concrete recommendations for how to proceed in order to develop an effective advocacy agenda around political participation and the care economy. The recommendations are developed in two stages. The first provides recommendations by policy process – United Nations, MDGs and Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness. These are then broken down more specifically by groups of actors – Spanish Cooperation, civil society and other actors (academics, trade unions and the private sector). The report concludes with some final remarks encouraging rigorous analytical debate combined with focussed political pressure in order to regain a focus on gender equality as a social justice and human rights issue in upcoming policy negotiations, and not merely as a means of achieving other development goals.

# Introduction

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2010 is an important year for gender equality in international development. It represents fifteen years since the historic Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing which produced the founding documents for gender and development policy worldwide – the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The fifteen-year review of the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action took place at the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. The significance of this event extends far beyond the United Nations and has profound implications for gender equality policy in several key areas – in particular the ten year review of the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010 and the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. The Spanish government played a critical role in the Beijing +15 process as holders of the EU Presidency for the first half of the year. As such, 2010 offers a vital opportunity for critical reflection on the achievements and remaining challenges for attaining worldwide gender equality.

The *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia* Campaign was launched in December 2006 and is made up of Ayuda en Acción, InteRed and Entreculturas, with co-financing by the Spanish International Cooperation and Development Agency. The first phases of the Campaign comprised of gender training for key actors, in particular volunteers involved in the Campaign. The campaign has undertaken an awareness raising process targeting the key actors identified by the campaign: educators of the formal and non-formal sector and university public. This sensitization process has been developed through internal education plans and through the publication of training materials. In the last phase of the campaign, these key actors were also involved in the mobilization activities around the campaign's political agenda.

At the same time, a network with Southern women's organisations was developed in order to identify the key thematic priorities for the Campaign – political participation and the care economy and co-responsibility, leading to the Bolivia Consensus. This was followed by a process of awareness-raising and dissemination of materials among key actors. At the same time the Campaign worked to generate increasing networks and solidarity between women's organisations, as well as participating in high level international events such as the 54<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2010. Until the date of the publication of this report, the campaign has been supported by more than 11.000 people and institutions, among them, development NGO's, political institutions, women's organizations, universities and other educational organizations. During the last year, special focus has been undertaken to strengthen the links between women's associations in the north and in the south. The product of this has been three different international meetings to support the work and joint effort of these women's networks. On the other hand, it is also important to mention the work of the campaign regarding one of its main objectives: the awareness raising and common work with media professionals. In this sense, a document has been elaborated and distributed among key media actors to advocate and provide specific guidelines to integrate gender mainstreaming in the media dialogue.

The final phase of the project generated three substantive reports – of which this is the third – and disseminating the key messages widely through channels such as the Campaign website, events and the Las Igualias blog. The aim of this report is to provide a critical analysis of the contemporary policy environment for gender equality. Focussing on the key Campaign themes, the report offers an overview of the progress made worldwide since



Beijing in 1995. It argues that gender equality as a social justice issue has been sidelined in recent policy processes such as Beijing +15, the Millennium Development Goals, Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness. The report combines critical analysis with concrete recommendations in order to contribute to the effective advocacy work of the *Muévete* Campaign.

# Chapter 1.

## Analysing the Contemporary Policy Environment for Gender Equality

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the contemporary policy environment for gender equality. It begins by setting out the original commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, followed by an overview of subsequent review processes, focussing on Beijing +15 in 2010. It then moves on to discuss contemporary policy processes such as the MDGs and Financing for Development. The aim here is to establish a critical analytical framework through which to explore the two empirical themes of the report – political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy – which are developed more substantively in Chapters 2 and 3. The chapter concludes by arguing that gender equality policy is increasingly framed in an instrumentalist manner, a theme which is developed throughout the report.

### THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION

The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 soon became a reference point for gender equality policy worldwide. The ensuing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) identified twelve areas of critical concern, each with a further sub-set of strategic objectives (see Annex 1 for a full list). Since 1995, two substantive reviews of progress towards the achievement of the PFA have taken place, one in 2000 (Beijing +5) and the other in 2005 (Beijing +10).

In the UN's 2000 report (+5), the focus was much more on the care economy than political participation, a trend which seems to have reversed in more recent policy discourses, as will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. In general the Beijing +5 process was regarded as a consensual document by activists and civil society which allowed for all actors to move forwards. However, in some ways it was also seen as a lost opportunity due to the postponement of some themes such as violence against women, definitions of diversity, sexual and reproductive rights and discrimination by sexual orientation.

The Beijing +10 process involved a similar review of progress and remaining challenges.

It led to the approval of ten new resolutions. Two-thirds of this was in the social sectors, especially education and basic health, including population and reproductive health (traditionally 'women's issues').<sup>1</sup> Much of the conference was dedicated to the discussion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), then five years on. Women's organisations criticised the restrictive interpretation of gender equality within MDG 3 and lack of coherence in integrating gender perspective into other goals, another theme which will be developed in this report.<sup>2</sup>

The 54<sup>th</sup> session of the CSW (Beijing +15) took place in New York from 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Alongside the official UN process involving member countries, there were two other events – the 'Parallel' event with official NGO meetings and discussions, and the 'Alternative' forum - which incorporated a more open space for debate and collaboration, yet had no formal access to the official UN events. In terms of official outcomes, the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW produced a Declaration and approved a further seven UN resolutions: on maternal mortality, economic empowerment (discussed in Chapter 4), HIV and AIDS, female genital mutilation, Palestinian women, hostages and the new UN Gender Entity.

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2007) 'Gender Equality and Aid Delivery: What has changed in development cooperation agencies since 1999?', OECD: Paris.

<sup>2</sup> *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia*. 'Análisis de género en la ayuda oficial al desarrollo', *Muévete Report*, October 2008; *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia*. 'El papel de la Cooperación Española en el cumplimiento de las metas de la Plataforma de Beijing', Report, June 2009.

The review process required every signatory country to the Beijing PFA to carry out a review of the extent to which it had fulfilled its commitments to gender equality. This was conducted on a regional basis by the UN's regional Economic and Social Commissions. Annex 2 provides a full list of which countries participated from each region. Unfortunately, not all countries completed the review, with only 44% of ESCAP countries returning the questionnaire. Moreover, a scan of the completed questionnaires demonstrates that many countries completed the process with minimum resources, time and expertise. This low return rate in some regions and low quality of responses in many countries suggests a lack of serious political will from many governments to gender equality commitments. Annex 3 provides an overview of the reports from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa.

In general the reaction from the civil society organisations participating in the process was one of disappointment and frustration. The overall reaction of civil society organisations to the process and outcomes of Beijing +15 is summed up in the Civil Society Statement signed by a large number of groups and released on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010. The statement makes some very clear criticisms. First, it asserts that:

**'Fifteen years later, the BPfA would seem to be considered by governments as technical instrument, and its substance has been depoliticised and diluted. The key implementation strategy of gender mainstreaming has lost its critical perspective and transformative purpose in terms of power relations and inequalities.'**

The Statement not only questions the framework

within which issues were discussed, but also the format and nature of the event. It argues that the spaces for civil society to influence the decision-making process have been greatly reduced. Three particular examples of this are cited. First, the Declaration was agreed ahead of time and without consultation from civil society. Second, the absence of information on the opportunities for civil society to influence the conduct and outcome of CSW meetings and Declaration. Third, poor logistics and facilities that have prevented women from participating effectively. Overall, the Statement presents the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW as 'a backward step' for gender equality.<sup>3</sup>

The delegates representing the *Muévete* campaign also had a number of criticisms of the closed and anti-participatory nature of the process.<sup>4</sup> This is important as it reflects a broader issue of the exclusion of women and civil society from official decision-making spaces. Beyond the logistical problems experienced in New York, it is also necessary to tackle the more structural problems behind the growing processes of exclusion from international political spaces. A large number of issues were debated by women's organisations in the Parallel and Alternative fora. Key themes to highlight were multiple crises and the need to change the development; violence against women; and women and armed conflict. In terms of the themes of the Campaign, the care economy was scarcely discussed in either the Parallel or the Alternative fora. When it was mentioned, it was in relation to health issues such as maternal mortality, rather than from an economic rights perspective. Two possible reasons can be given for this: first, that the absence of this issue in the official agenda was reflected in NGO debates; and second, that there was low participation of women's groups from Latin America, who have been working most intensively on this theme.

<sup>3</sup> Civil Society Statement concerning Beijing +15 process Review at Commission on the Status of Women, New York, 4 March 2010, available at [http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/Beijing15Statement\\_Final.pdf?id=1126](http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/Beijing15Statement_Final.pdf?id=1126)

<sup>4</sup> In an interview conducted by the author, Encina Villanueva from InteRed pointed out the technical and logistical deficiencies of the organising, leading to NGO delegates queuing for many hours to gain accreditation for the Alternative (NGO) event, only to learn that a further accreditation was required in order to attend events in the Parallel (NGO/government) event. Although the Alternative programme was intended to offer opportunities for interaction and building alliances between women's groups, issues of overcrowded venues and the lack of translation facilities limited the ability of this to be a genuine space for building feminist alternatives.

PHOTO: ENCINA VILLANUEVA / INTERED



As well as active participation in the Alternative forum, the *Muévete* campaign produced a blog detailing their experiences in New York. They also held a seminar on 9<sup>th</sup> March in the Parallel (NGO/government) programme on 'Preparing for the 2011 Aid Effectiveness High Level Forum'. The event had two key objectives in terms of political dialogue. First, to propose tools for establishing political dialogue on women's rights and gender equality, given that political dialogue is one of the key pillars governments' commitments to the Accra Agenda for Action and the Paris Declaration. Second, to ensure that civil society is included as a key actor in this political dialogue. This, it was argued, must involve the protection of policy space for Southern governments and civil society to allow flexibility to choose development strategies, without conditionalities, consistent with

women's human rights and other human rights agreements. Panel participants included the Executive Director of UNIFEM Inés Alberdi and Sonia Montañó, the Director of the newly formed ECLAC Gender Observatory. There was also a question and answer session in which women from various communities posed questions by video link to promote political dialogue with those unable to attend the CSW.

## **THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The MDGs have received a large amount of criticism from feminist activists and academics. These criticisms can be summarised by two key points:

1. The concepts and indicators used in MDG 3 – promote gender equality and empower women – are narrow and limiting (focussing on health, education and parliamentary representation) and do not encapsulate the dynamics of power relations and inequality. MDG 5 on maternal mortality focuses on health aspects rather than presenting a broader agenda relating to sexual and reproductive rights.

2. Although rhetorical support exists for gender mainstreaming across all eight Goals, in reality the gender dimensions of the other Goals have been largely invisible in policy dialogues. For example, although MDG1 deals with the eradication of poverty, there is no mention of women in the text, in spite of the well documented feminisation of poverty.<sup>5</sup>

As the previous Campaign report put it, the *quantitative* nature of the MDGs depends explicitly on the qualitative nature of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the PFA.<sup>6</sup> A recent European Commission Communication on the MDGs highlights gender equality as ‘one of the most off-track MDGs’. However, it does not offer clear guidelines on how this should be achieved, and does not highlight in an explicit manner the gender dynamics of all of the Goals.<sup>7</sup> As such, we should continue to pressure governments and donors to promote the inclusion CEDAW and PFA in the revision of the MDGs. These criticisms are developed more substantively in the analysis of the campaign’s empirical themes in Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>5</sup>For a more extensive critique of the MDGs, see Nicola Jones, Rebecca Holmes and Jessica Espey (2010) ‘Progressing gender equality post-2015: harnessing the multiplier effects of existing achievements’, IDS Bulletin 41 (1): 113-122; Lucy Ferguson, ‘Where next for gender in international development?’, *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia*, Article, February 2010.

<sup>6</sup>*Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia*, ‘El papel de la Cooperación Española en el cumplimiento de las metas de la Plataforma de Beijing’, Report, June 2009.

<sup>7</sup>Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions: A twelve-point EU action plan in support of the Millennium Development Goals, Brussels, 21st April 2010, COM(2010)159, [http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/COMM\\_COM\\_2010\\_0159\\_MDG\\_EN.PDF](http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/COMM_COM_2010_0159_MDG_EN.PDF)

<sup>8</sup>Notes, *Muévete Gender and EU Presidency Event*, 21st October 2009.

## FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND AID EFFECTIVENESS

The changes in development policy and funding spurred by the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action have had a mixed impact on gender equality policy in development agencies. The Paris Declaration was highly criticised for its lack of attention to gender equality. Following this, the Accra Agenda acknowledges gender equality as a requirement for achieving lasting poverty reduction. However, only 3 of 32 paragraphs of the document make reference to gender equality and women’s empowerment, suggesting that these issues are far from mainstreamed across the new aid agenda. As Ann Schlyter from Women in Development Europe (WIDE) Sweden and the University of Gothenburg noted at a *Muévete* event in October 2009, the Accra agenda is about making development aid more effective through modern management – there is little space for gender equality in this. Also she warned of a process of negotiating between donors in which ‘the country least interested in gender wins.’<sup>8</sup>

The 2002 Monterrey Consensus - which committed donor countries to allocating 0.7% of GDP to Official Development Assistance - was highly criticised by feminists due to its exclusion of the PFA and CEDAW and the failure to acknowledge the consequences of economic reform on gender equality and the political participation of women. Following on from this, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development of 2008 included an affirmation of commitments gender equality (article 19). However, in general the Doha Declaration was seen as a lost opportunity by civil society as no



PHOTO: CHARO BARROSO



increase in resources was promised in spite of the recommendations of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on Financing for Gender Equality.<sup>9</sup>

A recent report commissioned by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that the majority of donors believed that the new aid modalities presented more challenges than opportunities for the promotion of gender equality. Part of the problem is that as decision making has shifted from donors to partner countries, 'the relative indifference of many partner country governments to gender inequalities has increasingly become a stumbling block to gender mainstreaming and targeted gender equality actions'. However, this perception may also reflect the attitudes of donor as much as partner governments. What is clear is that the new aid

architecture has made the inclusion of gender equality far more dependent on partner country views than in the past. As such, donors need to give stronger incentives to implement gender equality commitments in order to ensure that the new aid architecture does not hamper these efforts.<sup>10</sup> To be clear, the *Muévete* campaign does not support any kind of conditionality for partner countries. Rather, the aim is to search for creative and innovative ways to include donors and civil society in political dialogue between governments such as gender budgeting and gender impact evaluations. Donors also need to create spaces for dialogue and commit to financing women's organisations and civil society participation more broadly. Chapters 2 and 3 of the report deal expand these criticisms and apply them to the themes of political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy.

<sup>9</sup> Commission on the Status of Women, Report on the fifty-second session (25 February – 7 and 13 March 2008), UN, New York.

<sup>10</sup> OECD (2007) 'Gender Equality and Aid Delivery: What has changed in development cooperation agencies since 1999?', OECD: Paris.

## CONCLUSIONS: INSTRUMENTALISM IN CONTEMPORARY GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The key over-arching trend running through all gender and development policy since Beijing in 1995 has been a tendency to use gender equality in an instrumental way – that is, as a way of achieving other development and political goals. This approach to gender equality can be seen across all contemporary dimensions of policy and discourse. The reframing of gender equality policy away from the PFA and towards the MDGs since 2000 has in large part facilitated this paradigm shift. The World Bank, for example, presents gender equality as ‘Smart Economics’, presenting a very limited understanding of empowerment through integration into market employment.<sup>11</sup> The DAC Guidelines on Gender Equality frame the discussion around gender equality being essential for development. For example, the document argues that ‘women reinvest 90% of their income in their families and communities, compared to men who reinvest only 30-40% of that income’.<sup>12</sup>

Many documents and policy statements claim that increased gender equality and women’s empowerment have a ‘multiplier effect’ in that they necessarily lead to more effective development outcomes. This approach is exemplified by Hillary Clinton’s speech to the CSW on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010, where she asserted that:

***‘The evidence is irrefutable. When women are free to develop their talents, all people benefit: women and men, girls and boys. When women are free to vote and run***

***for public office, governments are more effective and responsive to their people. When women are free to earn a living and start small businesses, the data is clear: they become key drivers of economic growth across regions and sectors. When women are given the opportunity of education and access to health care, their families and communities prosper. And when women have equal rights, nations are more stable, peaceful, and secure.’***<sup>13</sup>

This approach is problematic at best, and may well hinder progress towards gender equality as a human rights and social justice issue. Two key issues of concern can be highlighted here:

- First, there is an implicit assumption in these arguments about women being ‘naturally’ altruistic and care-giving which raises a series of problems for addressing issues of stereotyping and redressing gender roles in global society.
- Second, arguments about ‘multiplier effects’ do nothing to counteract women’s overburden through unpaid care and domestic work. Rather, they rely on the same gendered biases that promote economic restructuring without taking into account social reproduction.

The theme of instrumentalism will be developed throughout the report, in particular in relation to how the case for gender equality is made in the three policy processes of the United Nations reviews of Beijing, MDGs and Financing for Development/Aid Effectiveness, and how best to re-frame gender equality as a goal in its own right. We now turn to an analysis of the first substantive theme of the report – political participation.

<sup>11</sup> Lucy Ferguson ‘Interrogating ‘gender’ in development policy and practice: the World Bank, tourism and microenterprise in Honduras’, *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 12(1), 2010: 3-24.

<sup>12</sup> DAC/OECD (2008) ‘DAC Guiding Principles for Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment’.

<sup>13</sup> Remarks at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, New York, 12 March 2010.

## Chapter 2

# Political Participation

The aim of this chapter is not merely to provide a global overview of policies surrounding gender equality and political participation, but rather to develop a critical analysis of the ways in which such debates and policies are framed. This is in order to present a rigorous critique of current policy processes with the aim of contributing relevant recommendations for effective advocacy. The chapter begins with a discussion of the conceptual dimensions of political participation. Next, it provides an extensive review of global progress on this issue using information from the Beijing +15 process, before providing some recommendations for future policy negotiations.

### CONCEPTUALISING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The Beijing PFA makes an explicit link between political participation and the care economy, stating that:

***'Inequality in the public arena can often start with discriminatory attitudes and practices and unequal power relations between women and men within the family (...). The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within households based on unequal power relations also limits women's potential to find the time and develop the skills required for participation in decision-making in wider public forums. A more equal sharing of those responsibilities between women and men not only provides a better quality of life for women and their daughters but also enhances their opportunities to shape and design public policy, practice and expenditure so that their interests may be recognized and addressed. Non-formal networks and patterns of decision-making at the local community level that reflect a dominant male ethos restrict women's ability to participate equally in political, economic and social life.'***<sup>14</sup>

These insights highlight the tensions between

public and private life that limit women's political participation and decision-making in all arenas. As a recent research report on gender and care notes, the few women who do enter political life find the strain of trying to reconcile care demands with their political roles has often led to their resignation from government posts. At the very least, opportunities to participate in formal politics need to offer convenient times and locations and offer childcare services.<sup>15</sup> This radical approach to understanding political participation – as intimately and fundamentally connected to inequality in the household and community - will inform the analytical discussion of this report. However, evidence suggests that this link has been neglected in more recent discussions of women's political participation.

Staying true to the spirit of the PFA, the approach taken by the Campaign and the Bolivia Consensus invokes a broader understanding of political participation beyond formal political spheres to incorporate more informal modes of political engagement and to promote the development of feminist alternatives. Indeed, if we only focus on formal political representation we obscure the realities of women's political activity worldwide, in particular through participation in local and global NGOs and the construction of alternative political projects based on feminist principles. As such, it is important to highlight the extent to which alternative forms of politics were included in the +15 review,

<sup>14</sup> Beijing Declaration and PFA, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> BRIDGE Gender and Care Overview Report, February 2009, Emily Esplen.



PHOTO: PATRICIO CHAVEZ



or whether governments have merely focussed on more formalistic understandings.

In terms of the Beijing PFA, commitments to political participation are outlined as the seventh Critical Issue (G.) – women in power and decision-making. Political participation is quite clearly framed as a justice issue in the introduction to Issue G:

***‘Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Equality in political decision-making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government***

***policy-making is feasible. In this respect, women’s equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. Women’s equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women’s interests to be taken into account.’***

A set of strategic objectives are also outlined, along with clear actions to be taken by governments, donors, civil society and the private sector. Strategic objective G.1. urges all actors to take measures to ensure women’s equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, while G.2. involves a commitment to increase women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership. It is important to highlight that the theme of political participation

also appears in the discussion of the **girl child**, a theme which seems to have disappeared in more recent policy documentation. The introduction to this issue states that:

Girls are less encouraged than boys to participate in and learn about the social, economic and political functioning of society, with the result that they are not offered the same opportunities as boys to take part in decision-making processes.

There is also a strategic objective specifically related to this (L.8) - promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.

## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE +15 PROCESS**

The most comprehensive document for providing an overview of the progress made in implementation of the twelve critical issues of the PFA is the Report of the Secretary General from February 2010.<sup>16</sup> This report offers a detailed synthesis of the regional and country responses to present a picture of achievements and remaining challenges in each of the key themes. There is only space here to present a condensed summary of the report on women in power and decision-making, but the most important and significant trends will be highlighted.

The report begins with an overview of statistics on women's representation in national parliaments:

***'Globally, women held 18.8 per cent of seats in single/lower chambers of parliament as of November 2009, which indicated steady but modest progress, compared to 11.3 per cent in 1995. The 30 per cent target set in the 1990s2 has***

***been met only in 24 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, where women reached or surpassed 30 per cent representation of women in single/lower chambers, compared to only six European countries in 1998. One quarter of all parliamentary chambers have less than 10 per cent women members and nine chambers have no women members at all (mainly in the Pacific Islands and the Arab Gulf States). In terms of senior leadership within parliaments, currently 35 women preside over one of the houses of the 187 existing parliaments.'***

It is noted that the increases in women's parliamentary representation are not evenly distributed across regions. The greatest gains were achieved in the Americas, with 22.6 per cent women in parliament, and in European countries, with 21.5 per cent. In Asia women held 18.6 per cent seats in parliament, in sub-Saharan Africa 17.8 per cent, in the Pacific region 13 per cent, and in the Arab States 9 per cent. Important milestones are also cited. In September 2008 Rwanda became the first country in the world to elect a majority of women to its lower house of parliament (56.3 per cent). Also, the SADC set a regional precedent in 2008 when it raised its target for women's representation in decision-making positions in the public and private sector from 30 to 50 per cent, to be met by 2015.

In terms of national political leadership, as of November 2009, women were heads of State in eight countries (Argentina, Chile, Finland, India, Ireland, Liberia, Lithuania and the Philippines) and heads of Government in six countries (Bangladesh, Croatia, Germany, Iceland, Mozambique and Ukraine). In comparison, in 1995, 12 women were heads of State or Government. In the executive branch of government, women held 16.1 per cent of all ministerial portfolios in 2008. Few countries

<sup>16</sup>Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General, 8 February 2010, E/2010/4-E.CN.6/2010/2.

PHOTO: CONSUELO NAVARRO



met or surpassed the 50 per cent mark for women in ministerial positions in recent years. Twenty-two countries had over 30 per cent women in the cabinet; and the number of countries with no women ministers declined from 19 to 13 between 2005 and 2008.<sup>63</sup> Most ministerial portfolios held by women were related to social affairs, family, children, youth, women's affairs, education and the environment. Nevertheless, there was some progress, with women heading ministries for trade, labour, foreign affairs and justice.

According to the report, the representation of women in local politics is less well-documented and progress is more difficult to measure. Results at the local level do not necessarily mirror those at national level. Data from Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe suggest that in 2008 about 10 per cent of mayors were women, and about 25 per cent of seats in local councils were held by women.

The report identifies three major trends in efforts to implement this critical area at the national level:

- The effective implementation of quotas to strengthen women's access to and participation in decision-making forums.
- Creating an enabling environment for women's participation in decision-making.
- Increased recognition of the linkages between women's role in decision-making and policy outcomes.

The Secretary General's report also outlines a series of gaps and challenges in relation to women in power and decision-making. First, the difficulties involved in effectively implementing quota laws. Second, a lack of commitment from political parties and male leaders, along with discriminatory attitudes

in selection processes. The key conclusion in this critical area of concern is that:

***‘Making institutions gender-sensitive, through improving working methods and institutional cultures, would increase their ability to address gender equality issues in legislative and policy development.’***

It is important to note that non-formal modes of women's political participation and decision-making are not discussed in the report. The focus remains on parliaments, governments and occasionally the private sector. Annex 4 provides a more detailed breakdown of the review process by region.

It is worth highlighting a few examples of successful initiatives in this area. Very few ECLAC countries reported achievements, focussing instead on the remaining challenges for implementation. This is concerning if looked at through the lens of non-formal channels of participation, as women's groups in Latin America have been some of the most effective at challenging formal politics and creating alternatives. This suggests that the review process was so focussed on formal aspects of political participation that governments were unable to present some of the more alternative and progressive aspects of changes in their countries. There were no examples of specific activities which had generated results. However, there are many examples from ECA,<sup>17</sup> some of which are outlined in Box 1 below.

## **CONCLUSIONS: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN FUTURE POLICY NEGOTIATIONS**

The challenges in implementing the PFA's seventh Critical Issue – women in power and decision-making – have been substantial for most countries. In spite

of legal provisions in Latin America and Europe, progress has been extremely slow. In contrast, many African countries have lead the way in this regard, successfully implementing quota laws and committing to 50/50 gender parity in all decision-making bodies. The examples quoted here can be used to promote further initiatives in this area. In particular, the sharing of experiences between ECA, ECE and ECLAC countries would offer a fruitful space in which to continue to develop creative and innovative approaches to women's political participation and decision-making power.

However, it is important to point out that gender parity in itself does not guarantee that gender sensitive policies will be developed. Rather, we should see parity as a necessary but not sufficient condition for achieving gender equality in political participation and decision-making. This comment was raised by the Campaign's partner women's organisations in the South as a key concern in discussions leading up to the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW. A further concern with the +15 review process is the formalistic framing of women's political participation. This is problematic as it makes invisible the multiple ways in which women engage with politics and decision-making at a number of different levels. The failure to take seriously alternative and non-formal political participation in official UN debates is concerning for feminist activists, and should be highlighted as a priority for future campaigns.

### **United Nations**

In terms of future reviews of the implementation of the PFA, it will be important to re-establish the link between political participation and the care economy which is embedded in the original agreement. The Secretary-General's report for the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW makes one reference to the relationship:

<sup>17</sup> Examples taken directly from country reports.

## BOX 1: EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Lesotho:** The government embarked on a national mobilization on 30 percent quota for women at local government which resulted in 58 percent women representation at this level. This achievement tops the list of SADC states.

**Namibia:** Namibian Parliament has established a Parliamentary Gender Caucus that plays an important role in promoting women's human rights through lobbying and advocacy, spearhead and facilitate discussions on National Gender Policy enabling law(s), scrutinise any bill or propose legislation which may affect gender issues and make recommendations accordingly, solicit view and disseminate information on gender issues in various constituencies. Local Authorities show a shining example of gender equality with 45% female councillors and 55% male councillors.

**Nigeria:** The Establishment of Zonal Women Political Empowerment Offices to build the capacity of intending female political office seekers by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs in partnership with the States and CSOs which has contributed in no small measure to the increase in the number of females in elective positions.

**Republic of Rwanda:** The Beijing PFA provided that at least 30% of decision-making positions would be given to women. The Government of Rwanda carried out that principle at all levels, and the rate of women often goes beyond 30%. Political will for gender equality in decision-making positions resulted in an increase of the number of women (Women in Cabinet were 9.5% in 1995 and 37.1% in 2008; in Parliament they were 15.7% in 1995 and 56.25% in 2009; and women senators represent 35%).

**South Africa:** At the local government level, gender parity provisions have been integrated into the regulatory framework and women are increasingly represented in higher decision-making positions. At the last Local Government elections, South Africa recorded an historic 40% representation of women elected into local government seats, largely due to the structure of proportional

representation. Representation of women in Senior Management Position in the Public Service surpassed the minimum 30% target set by Government for 2005, and set a new target for parity by March 2009. However, whilst this has not been reached by the target date, government is on track towards parity in the senior echelons of the Public Service, with the figure of 34.8% as of September 2009.

**Swaziland:** The Government of Swaziland in collaboration with NGOs, Civil Society, Lutsango Lwaka Ngwane (Women's Regiment) and with the support from the United Nation's Family launched a Campaign on "Vote and Vote for a Woman" in order to increase Women's Participation in Politics and Decision Making Positions. Immediately after the launch the project held regional consultative meetings with the Chiefs to introduce the campaign and solicit their advice and support as they were going to conduct community sensitization in their respective areas. Most of the communities we visited were invited by Chiefs to come and sensitise their communities on Vote and Vote for a Woman. The campaign was a success because everybody was talking about women's participation in politics and women's empowerment in general. Each time there was a media programme a lot of people would phone in either for or against women's participation and that showed the wide coverage and sensitization on the campaign. The first one was launched in 2003 in preparation for the 30% target by 2005.

The moment we launched the Vote and Vote for a Woman Campaign, men in Swaziland were threatened and there after reinforced their campaigning strategy. They even threatened that the Gender Coordination Unit is there to destroy culture only to find that we had backing from His Majesty the King who made statement even before elections that women should remember to honour the countries commitments in terms of women's participation in Parliament and even in other structures. Women should stand up for elections and support each other.

Source: Country reports for Beijing +15 review process



PHOTO: ENCINA VILLANUEVA / INTERED



***‘The difficulty of reconciling work and family responsibilities constitutes a significant obstacle for women’s full participation in political and public life. Family-friendly policies and measures must be put in place in all institutions and workplaces, including parliaments, to ensure that men as well as women participate fully in family life and share caregiving responsibilities more equally.’<sup>18</sup>***

<sup>18</sup>Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General, 8 February 2010, E/2010/4-E.CN.6/2010/2.

PHOTO: ENCINA VILLANUEVA / INTERED



However, inequality in the care economy is one of the fundamental explanations for lack of progress in this critical area. As such, as a matter of urgency this critical insight from the PFA needs to be highlighted and re-instated in future reviews.

### **MDGs**

Political participation is already an integral component of the MDGs, with Indicator 3.3 being 'proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments'. Based on the evidence set out in this chapter, very few countries are on track to meet this target. In order to meet this objective, more attention should be paid to examples of best practice in African countries such as Rwanda in order to learn the lessons of how to implement gender parity in parliaments.

However, as argued here, political participation is not

just about formal representation in national parliaments. MDG3 needs to be broadened to incorporate non-formal modes of political activity and participation in order to promote women's power and decision-making at all levels of society.

### **Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness**

As argued in Chapter 1, the restructuring of development finance towards new aid modalities and harmonisation presents threats and opportunities for gender equality. It will be important for feminist and women's groups to think strategically about how most effectively to engage in the new aid environment. One way of doing this is through the promotion of gender-sensitive participatory budgeting, a tool that aims to increase women's political participation in a non-formal way whilst retaining a focus on the impact of development financing on gender equality outcomes.

# Chapter 3.

## Co-Responsibility and the Care Economy

As with the previous chapter, the aim here is to present a critical analysis of debates and policies on co-responsibility and the care economy. We begin with an analytical discussion, then a review of global progress on this issue from the Beijing +15 process, before exploring how these themes play out in other policy processes. The conclusion offers a critical analysis of the ways in which policy approaches to co-responsibility and the care economy have become more conservative and privatised over the last fifteen years and provides some recommendations for future policy negotiations.

### CONCEPTUALISING CO-RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CARE ECONOMY

While political participation is a relatively straightforward analytical concept, ideas about co-responsibility and the care economy are much more subject to debate and controversy. There is a vast amount of empirical and theoretical work being done by feminist academics on the issues of the care economy and social reproduction. There is not space here to cover these debates extensively, but a list of recommended readings and useful resources is provided in Annex 6.

In terms of the Campaign and the Bolivia Consensus, the care economy is defined as:

***‘The space of activities, good and services – both material and social – which are necessary for the reproduction and maintenance of people’s lives: food, healthy, affection, education and a favourable habitat for living.’<sup>19</sup>***

Equally important is the concept of co-responsibility between women, men and states. Two conceptual points should be highlighted here:

- First, it is important to make a clear distinction between co-responsibility and conciliation. The concept of conciliation implies the ability for women and/or men

to fulfil their care commitments to the household and community without the need for questioning power relations. In contrast, co-responsibility sets out a clear vision of challenging gender inequality in order to overturn women’s assumed responsibility for social reproduction. As such, a key theme of this chapter will be to highlight when each term is used in policy discourse and documents in order to take a critical approach to the care economy.

- Second, while the involvement of men in the care economy is important and necessary, what makes the Campaign’s claims for co-responsibility progressive is the inclusion of states in the sharing of responsibility. Although this theme seems to have been lost somewhat since Beijing, it is an explicit and fundamental component of achieving gender equality. The dangers of demonising and instrumentalising poor men in the care economy have been outlined in much recent feminist literature. Moreover, we know that a large proportion of households across the world do not conform to the model of the heterosexual nuclear family. As such, by focussing only on men we miss female-headed and other diverse forms of household and intimate relations. It is imperative that we regain the focus on the responsibility of states for social reproduction if we are to move beyond privatising solutions to the crisis of care.

<sup>19</sup> *Muévete por la igualdad. Es de justicia*. ‘Análisis de género en la ayuda oficial al desarrollo’, *Muévete Report*, October 2008; ‘Análisis de género en la ayuda oficial al desarrollo’, *Muévete Informe*, October 2008.



As shown in Chapter 2, discussion of political participation was somewhat limited in the PFA and yet has been substantively developed over the last fifteen years. In contrast, the care economy has a significant presence in many aspects of the original document and yet has not been substantively developed in subsequent reviews.

The issue first appears in relation to critical issue B on **education and training of women**. Strategic objective B6 - promote life-long education and training for girls and women – calls for states to provide support for child care and other services to enable mothers to continue their schooling.

Next it is mentioned in strategic objective C2 (**women and health**) - strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health. States are urged to:

- Encourage men to share equally in child care and household work and to provide their share of financial support for their families, even if they do not live with them.
- Develop policies that reduce the disproportionate and increasing burden on women who have multiple roles within the family and the community by providing them with adequate support and programmes from health and social services.

The main discussion of the care economy is found in issue F **women and the economy**. Indeed, as argued below, since Beijing the issue appears to have been relegated to this critical area of concern. Strategic objective F6 - promote harmonisation of work and family responsibilities for women and men – sets out a series of actions to be taken, such as:

- Adopt policies to ensure the appropriate protection of labour laws and social security benefits for part-time, temporary, seasonal and homebased workers; promote career development based on work conditions that harmonize work and family responsibilities.
- Examine a range of policies and programmes, including social security legislation and taxation systems, in accordance with national priorities and policies, to determine how to promote gender equality and flexibility in the way people divide their time between and derive benefits from education and training, paid employment, family responsibilities, volunteer activity and other socially useful forms of work, rest and leisure.

It is also important to point out that strategic objective H3 (**institutional mechanisms**) on gender disaggregated data and information contains a concrete set of proposals relating to measuring unpaid work – ‘such as caring for dependants and preparing food’ - in national accounts. Strategic objective J2 suggests that **the media** should ‘promote the equal sharing of family responsibilities through media campaigns that emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family.’

As pointed out in Chapter 2, the final critical issue (L) on the **girl child** is very broad in the PFA. The fact that many girls undertake heavy domestic chores at a very early age is cited as one of the main reasons for the lack of advancement of girls, in particular in terms of education. Strategic objective L2 calls for the promotion of ‘affordable and physically accessible child-care facilities and parental education to encourage those who have responsibilities for the care of their children

and siblings during their school years to return to, or continue with, and complete schooling'. L9 demands that governments 'educate and encourage parents and caregivers to treat girls and boys equally and to ensure shared responsibilities between girls and boys in the family'.

In summary, the care economy and co-responsibility have a substantive presence in the PFA, appearing in six of the twelve critical areas of concern. This reflects the more holistic gender equality paradigm presented in the PFA as compared to the 'magic bullets' approach discussed in Chapter 1. We will now follow up to see if this broad approach to these issues has been maintained in subsequent reviews.

## THE CARE ECONOMY IN THE +15 PROCESS

Before moving on to a review of implementation of the PFA commitments, two key documents are worth highlighting in relation to the Beijing +15 process. First is the report of the 53<sup>rd</sup> CSW in 2009 which includes 'Agreed conclusions on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.'<sup>20</sup> Although the report gives visibility to the issue of co-responsibility, the focus is almost exclusively on the role of men and boys. A key action point, for example, is to:

***'Promote understanding between women and men in order to strengthen women's access to resources and decision-making in policies and programmes to support caregiving, including in the context of HIV/AIDS. Ensure that men and boys, whose role is critical in achieving gender***

***equality, are actively involved in policies and programmes that aim to improve the equal sharing of responsibilities with women and girls, so as to foster changes in attitudes and behaviour patterns in order to promote and protect the human rights of women and the girl child.'***

Very little mention is made on the role of the state in the process of co-responsibility. There is some mention of national governments, which are called upon to:

***'Design, implement and promote family friendly policies and services, including affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependants, parental and other leave schemes and campaigns to sensitize public opinion and other relevant actors on equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities between women and men.'***

The collection of data on unpaid work through tools such as time-use surveys is highlighted. However, the clear message is that this is not in order to remunerate unpaid work, but rather to 'inform policy development that facilitates the sharing of unpaid work between women and men'. As such, the 2009 report presents a predominantly conservative view in which the care economy is seen as something which can be reconciled between men and women, rather than through a re-thinking of the economy.

The Draft Resolution on Women's Economic Empowerment approved at the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010 is also relevant to our discussion here.<sup>21</sup> The care economy is referred to in the Resolution but primarily in relation to how unequal sharing of unpaid work hinders women's

<sup>20</sup> Commission on the Status of Women, Report on the fifty-third session (2-13 March 2009), agreed conclusions on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.

<sup>21</sup> Draft Resolution: women's economic empowerment, 9th March 2010, E/CN.6/2010/L.5

PHOTO: IGNACIO CANO



progress in the labour market – that is, a primarily instrumentalist approach. For example, states are called upon to:

- Adopt and implement effective measures to address the inadequate sharing, by men, of family responsibilities.
- Take and encourage measures, including, where appropriate, the formulation, promotion and implementation of legal and administrative measures to facilitate the reconciliation of work and personal and/or family life (...) and campaigns to sensitise public opinion and other relevant actors on equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities between women and men and emphasize men's equal responsibilities with respect to household work.

The 2010 Resolution demonstrates the extent to which the care economy and co-responsibility have been relegated to the critical area of concern **women and the economy**, in which they are framed in terms of women's access to the market.

The Secretary General's Report to the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW offers the most comprehensive global review of implementation of the PFA.<sup>22</sup> The care economy is mentioned in three critical areas of concern – **women and poverty, women and the economy** and **the girl child**.

In relation to **women and poverty**, the report argues that conditional cash transfers to single mothers 'influenced the relationships between women and men in households leading to men's increased involvement in unpaid work, including caregiving for children.' However, there is little

<sup>22</sup>Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General, 8 February 2010, E/2010/4-E.CN.6/2010/2.

evidence to suggest that this was the case in the majority of circumstances, as documented in the feminist literature (see Annex 6). The discussion demonstrates an overtly instrumentalist approach to the care economy, for example:

***‘Efforts to reduce poverty among women by facilitating their increased participation in paid work included provision of childcare allowances and expansion of facilities for the care of children and older persons.’***

As detailed above, co-responsibility and the care economy were a key aspect of the PFA critical issue G women and the economy. One of the global trends identified in the report is ‘increased attention to the disproportionate burden of unpaid work on women’, with a summary of the kinds of policies that have been put into place in this area:

- Redistributing the burden of unpaid work between women and men requires a range of interventions focused on transforming both individual attitudes and behaviours and institutional arrangements, particularly in the labour market. Across a range of countries, policy responses to address this inequality focused on the redistribution of the burden of unpaid work between women and men, provision of accessible and affordable care services and investments to improve public infrastructure.
- Initiatives to redistribute the burden of unpaid work between women and men included the extension of employment benefits, such as parental leaves. While parental leave provisions primarily target women in most countries, an increasing number of countries have introduced

paternal leave policies that grant fathers leave in connection with childbirth, or made amendments to parental leave legislation to allow fathers employed in the civil service to take leave. Outreach and awareness raising activities, in particular activities that highlight the role of fathers in caregiving for children, have been effective in expanding coverage and usage of parental leaves.

- The provision of accessible and affordable care services, including child and elder care, primary education and health services plays a key role in helping women and men reconcile work and family responsibilities. Family-friendly working arrangements, such as teleworking, and family care leave have been introduced in many countries to redistribute the burden of unpaid work between women and men.
- Other policy interventions included the provision of tax rebates and subsidies for childcare or cash benefits for children, and investment in extension and improvement of childcare facilities.

A number of gaps and challenges are also identified:

- While training programmes have been instrumental in increasing women's access to the labour market, women's effective participation can be constrained by lack of childcare, lack of flexibility in course provision and limited access to finance. Even when women successfully complete training programmes, they may not be able to secure employment owing to lack of childcare, inflexible working arrangements, in part owing to negative attitudes of employers, limited access to information

PHOTO: JERONIMO RIVERO / INTERED



on labour market opportunities, and the persistence of gender stereotypes.

- Workers in the informal economy are often outside the reach of labour legislation and typically lack health, pension and other work-related benefits. Many, for example, are not covered by provisions for maternity leave. Only a few responses addressed protection of women in the informal sector.
- Lack of timely, reliable and comparable sex-disaggregated data on women's paid and unpaid contribution to the economy is a major obstacle to evidence-based gender-sensitive policymaking.

Note that the discussion is predominantly oriented towards work, with no discussion of co-

responsibility as a social justice issue.

There is also some mention of these issues in the review of the implementation of **the girl child** commitments. The report states that gender role stereotyping within the family has been addressed, including through the dissemination of materials that encourage the equal sharing of responsibilities, and the promotion of boys' involvement in family life. There is also an acknowledgement of the barriers girls face to education due to the allocation of domestic work and caregiving activities primarily to girls. Box 2 below provides some examples of good practices, and a more detailed review of the progress made by region can be found in Annex 5.



PHOTO: T. MORALES



## CONCLUSIONS: CO-RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CARE ECONOMY IN FUTURE POLICY NEGOTIATIONS

The PFA highlighted the relevance of co-responsibility and the care economy for six of the twelve critical areas of concern. As shown in this chapter, these fundamental aspects of gender equality have largely been relegated to the area of **women and the economy** and even then are primarily discussed in relation to women's participation in paid work. The issue also occasionally appears in relation to **women and poverty** but rarely in an overtly political sense. It is important for feminists to continue to demonstrate the relevance of the care economy to all aspects of gender equality and to ensure that the issue does not become side-lined into

discussions about poverty and reconciling work and care responsibilities.

### *United Nations*

The PFA presents an holistic approach to co-responsibility and the care economy, as argued throughout this chapter. As such, we need to revitalise the commitments made in the PFA based on the insights that inequality in the care economy has a negative impact on gender equality in all areas. A 'mainstreamed' approach to the care economy needs to be developed in order to make this a priority issue in all future policy processes at the UN and demonstrate the links between the care economy and all other aspects of gender equality policy.

## BOX 2: EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN CO-RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CARE ECONOMY

It is important to highlight that these cases should be seen primarily as examples of social protection or conciliation rather than co-responsibility. Unfortunately, to date we have very few examples of projects which apply a more holistic approach to the care economy. More research is urgently needed in order to explore and support innovative and radical projects which start from a co-responsibility perspective.

**Chile:** Passing of Law 20.255 (2008) which recognises the value of maternity by paying a bonus to each live-born child into a capitalization fund (Law 20360). Expansion of crèche and kindergarden services. Between 1990 and 2007, the public supply of crèches grew by 240.4%.

**Peru:** The JUNTOS programme (2005) is a direct transfer programme targeting the poorest families. Implementation of the programme has led to changes in the dynamic of the relation between men and women. The demands on women made by the programme limit the time that men can devote to other activities and, for the first time, many are taking on household chores.

**Namibia:** Maintenance Act (No. 9 of 2003) – provides that both parents have a legal duty to maintain their children who are unable to support themselves, regardless of whether the children were born inside or outside of a marriage and whether or not parents are subject to any other system of customary law which may not recognise one or both parents' liability to the child. Labour Act (No. 11 of 2007) – provides for maternity leave (with the addition of maternity benefits under the Social Security Act

(Act No. 34 of 1994) and prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy.

**Swaziland:** Establishment of Child and Elderly citizens' grants. The advent of HIV and AIDS has placed the burden of care on women, particularly elderly women who care for the grandchildren of their deceased offspring. The grants allow them to purchase commodities needed to care for the basic needs of the children while attending to their own needs with the elderly grant.

**Zimbabwe:** In Zimbabwe, the main platform for the engagement of men and boys is Padare/Ekudhleni Men's Gender Forum. Padare represents the voice of men and boys on gender equality. It is also a platform for dialogue, engagement and action. Padare challenges patriarchal attitudes, beliefs and practices through mobilisation of men in schools, rural communities and urban areas. Padare also explores the notion of men as care givers, men's and boy's gender related inequalities, HIV and also celebrates diversity.

Source: Country reports for Beijing +15 review process

PHOTO: AMOR HERNANDEZ



### **MDGs**

In their current form the MDGs make no mention of co-responsibility or the care economy. Indeed, the social aspects of reproduction are ignored entirely in favour of issues around biological reproduction, as in MDG 5 on maternal health. Feminists need to think strategically about how to raise the profile of co-responsibility and the care economy in upcoming revisions of the MDGs. This could involve, for example, the inclusion of an indicator in MDG 3 on maternity leave or another easily quantifiable statistic.

However, there is a more substantive problem with the MDGs in that they are unable to question the economic model based on inequality in the care economy. This is a broader issue to be tackled by a coalition of feminist academics and activists working to provide innovative and progressive solutions to the current global crisis of care. Steps should be taken to explore how to make this alliance more effective.



PHOTO: ALEJANDRO MARTÍN



### ***Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness***

As with the MDGs, current policy statements on Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness make little mention of co-responsibility or the care economy. This is a serious concern for feminists as it suggests a further narrowing of the gender equality debate in favour of more technical and instrumental approaches, as argued in Chapter 1. In order to avoid a decline into a purely technocratic framing of gender equality in international development, it is important to re-vitalise debates around the care economy and make these central to upcoming policy negotiations. The concept of the care economy moves beyond questions about conciliation and co-responsibility and presents an opportunity to develop an alternative and transformative economic model. This has implications not only

for gender equality but also for reshaping the contours of North-South power relations.

Any discussion of financing for development must include the care economy in order to provide a more accurate depiction of economic activity. Methodological tools such as time-use surveys must be included in budgeting processes in order to count women's unpaid economic activity more effectively and promote a fairer economy.<sup>23</sup> Processes such as gender-sensitive participatory budgeting need to incorporate the care economy. As such, feminist activists need to develop a strategic action plan for including the care economy in the Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness agendas.

<sup>23</sup> For a more extensive discussion of these debates, see <http://gender-budgets.org/>. Also see BRIDGE (2003) *Gender and Budgets*, BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, [http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/reports\\_gender\\_CEP.html](http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/reports_gender_CEP.html)

# Chapter 4.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This final chapter presents a summary of the main findings on the implementation of the Beijing PFA in terms of the two key campaign themes – political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy. It puts forward a set of concrete recommendations for moving forward. These are organised by policy processes and by actors.

### KEY FINDINGS

Progress in implementing the twelve critical areas of concern has been slow and uneven. Overall, more achievements have been recorded in the area of political participation than co-responsibility and the care economy. However, this observation must be qualified by including regional perspectives. The key conclusions of the report are as follows:

#### **1. ECA countries have made more progress in the area of political participation than ECLAC countries.**

A combination of political will, fully implemented quota systems and regional commitments such as the 50/50 initiative have made many African countries world leaders in women's formal representation in parliaments and other decision-making bodies such as the judiciary and the civil service. These successes have not been matched in Latin America and the Caribbean, where in spite of many countries' legal commitments to quotas women's formal participation in politics remains low. Moreover, programmes to promote alternative forms of participation through non-formal channels have not been addressed in any substantive way.

#### **2. ECLAC countries have achieved much more than ECA countries in terms of terms of co-responsibility and the care economy. However, the kinds of initiatives carried out fit more into a conciliation than a co-responsibility paradigm.**

Although a large number of Latin American and Caribbean countries have implemented policies and programmes targeted at the care economy, these have rarely been developed using gender analysis and based on the principles of gender equality. In general these activities can be group into two types: 'social protection' mechanisms which involve direct payments or benefits to women to support care activities; and state measures to reconcile work and social reproduction through policies such as the provision of childcare and the introduction or extension of maternity and/or paternity leave. This distinction does not only apply to ECLAC countries, but rather represents a global trend. These policies fall far short of the concept of co-responsibility for care between women, men and the state set out in the Bolivia Consensus. Where co-responsibility is mentioned, it is usually in reference to men's contribution to domestic work in order to promote women's participation in the paid labour force. Although there was a strong presence for 'women's economic rights' at the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW, there was very little discussion of co-responsibility as a radical social justice issue.

#### **3. In spite of feminist analysis and activism leading up to Beijing +15, gender equality and women's empowerment continue to be presented as instrumental goals for achieving other political and development objectives, rather than as important goals in their own right.**

PHOTO: FERNANDO LOPEZ DEL PRADO / AYUDA EN ACCIÓN



This is accompanied by a rising tide of conservatism in many regions in the world and is compounded by the fact that civil society organisations were largely excluded from decision-making processes at the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW in New York. It is widely acknowledged that the main reason for the broad and radical nature of the PFA was due to the creativity, energy and persistence of women's organisations. However, as the spaces of engagement are closing it seems that gender equality policies are increasingly framed in terms of their multiplier effects for development. This is concerning for progressive feminist politics, as there is a danger of unwittingly returning to essentialist arguments about women's 'natural' propensity to a certain kind of politics and to be somehow 'innately' care-giving.

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY POLICY PROCESS

### *United Nations*

- Restore the link between political participation and the care economy as a matter of urgency. Revitalise debates around co-responsibility and the care economy as a social justice issue. Include questions on this area in the questionnaire for the Beijing next review process.
- Promote and acknowledge alternative and non-formal modes of political participation. Include questions on this area in the questionnaire for the Beijing next review process.
- Secure resources for accounting for unpaid work, possibly by creating a specialist fund within the new UN Gender Entity. At the same

time, reframe debates on the care economy away from conciliation towards co-responsibility (including men, women, state and enterprises co-responsibility). Reframe debates also including migration and global care chains as part of the equation.

- Promote research into non-market solutions to the crisis of care and explore feminist alternatives to the current economic model.
- Generate stronger mechanisms for holding states to account for their commitments in the PFA, in particular in the areas of political participation and co-responsibility and the care economy.

### **MDGs**

- At the upcoming review of the MDGs in September 2010, make a case for gender to be mainstreamed throughout all the MDGs as a matter of urgency.
- Work towards a re-framing of the MDGs along feminist lines.
- Build on examples of good practice from African countries in order to meet indicator 3.3 on gender parity in national parliaments.
- Explore ways of including the care economy and co-responsibility within MDG3. Acknowledge the link between inequality in the care economy and the prospects of meeting all the other Goals.
- Generate stronger mechanisms for holding states to account for their commitments to gender equality in the MDGs .
- Improve the accountability and monitoring of gender equality through use of the

OECD policy marker in all MDG-related actions (with a view to applying it to at least 80% of EU and Member States' actions), in line with the EC Communication on the MDGs.

### **Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness**

- Secure commitments to gender equality through specific mechanisms along the lines of aid harmonisation, such as making compulsory gender impact evaluations of aid and related external policies (trade, migration etc.) and establishing a global fund for gender equality.
- Ensure that the new aid architecture and harmonisation does not lead to the cutting of funding to women's and feminist groups in the global South.
- Find ways of maximising the opportunities of the aid effectiveness agenda by promoting non-formal modes of participation, especially by women's and feminist groups.
- Make sure that the care economy is included at all levels of the debate – in particular, discussions around participatory and gender-sensitive budgeting should take into account unpaid work in order to make visible women's work in the care economy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS BY GROUPS OF ACTORS**

### **Spanish Cooperation**

- Promote coherence for all external policies to ensure that the impact on gender equality is positive – and follow this up with gender impact evaluations.



PHOTO: IÑIGO PLAZA / AYUDA EN ACCIÓN



- Promote gender-sensitive participatory budgeting in partner countries in order to create a more active and critical citizenship at all levels of public policy.
- Maintain a strong focus on gender equality throughout AECID's operations, taking into account the particular challenges associated with political participation and the care economy.
- Guarantee that funding for women's and feminist groups in the global South will not be cut as part of the harmonisation agenda. In addition, promote democratised spaces within the new aid architecture to allow influence and participation from civil society groups with a feminist agenda for the feminist agenda in both the North and South.
- Ensure that support for women's organisations is maintained in AECID's Gender Action Plan which is currently being revised.
- Support programmes and agreements on care economy and global care chains, for example by promoting and monitoring ILO conventions 156 and 183 on Workers with Family Responsibilities and Maternity Protection.
- Look to sub-Saharan African countries for guidelines on how best to implement quota laws and encourage women's political participation.
- Continue to highlight the tri-partite nature of co-responsibility for the care economy.

- Consider developing a pilot programme that links co-responsibility for the care economy and women's political participation in order to generate evidence and debate around these two themes.
- Continue to present gender equality and women's empowerment as goals in their own right, and encourage partner countries and other OECD donors to do the same, particularly in reference to the revision of the MDGs and the Aid Effectiveness agenda.
- Mainstream gender impact evaluations and gender sensitive budgeting in its ODA, and promote both in all other Spanish external policies.
- Provide funding for training for women's organisations in monitoring budgeting processes and macroeconomic policy.
- Support the creation of spaces for creating and promoting feminist agendas in partner countries, even in those with the most conservative governments.
- Create and develop mechanisms for sharing reflections, experiences and knowledge between women's organisations, academics, practitioners and policy-makers - such as RED GEDEA – and consider these a fundamental component of the Gender and Aid Effectiveness agenda.

### **Civil Society**

- Continue to promote both North-South and South-South dialogue to build a renewed global commitment to gender equality.
- Continue to forge links with migrant women's

groups in Spain in order to promote better understanding of the links between migration, the care economy and the impact of external policies.

- Engage with civil society experiences in sub-Saharan Africa to find out more about the role of civil society in promoting high levels of women's participation in politics and decision-making.
- Engage with civil society experiences in Latin America to explore innovative alternatives that promote progressive social reproduction and transformative social protection.
- Engage in an active process of monitoring budgets and macroeconomic policy.
- Review and engage with contemporary academic debates on social reproduction and the care economy in order to develop more analytically-focussed recommendations for policy-makers and to avoid falling into a discourse of *reconciliation* as opposed to co-responsibility.
- Continue to promote the idea of gender equality as a social justice issue and refrain from framing debates in terms of 'multiplier effects'.
- In response to the lack of Latin American women's organisations at the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW, consider organising an event inviting women from Latin American and Caribbean countries to share their experiences of alternative/innovative co-responsibility projects with civil society actors and feminist academics working in this field.

- Continue to challenge dominant ideas about 'the economy' by engaging with feminist academic research on the care economy and social reproduction in order to contribute to a reframing of policy.

PHOTO: LUIS CARRASCO / AYUDA EN ACCIÓN



### ***Other actors: Academics, Trade Unions and the Private Sector***

- Promote greater integration and knowledge-sharing between academics and activists. Feminist academics should try to make their research accessible and useful to the activist community in order to promote the most effective means of achieving the goals set out in this report.
- Make links with trade unions and the ILO in order to re-establish the care economy as a serious and substantive issue in global labour policy debates.
- Encourage the private sector to engage with debates around the care economy and promote the idea of the co-responsibility by the private sector.

### **FINAL REMARKS**

This report has offered a critical analysis of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA in contemporary development policy at the global, regional and national level. In particular it has focussed on the Campaign's core themes of political participation and the care economy, bringing out examples from African countries and Latin American and Caribbean countries. As well as provide information and generate recommendations, this report aims to serve as a facilitator for opening up spaces of debate around these themes. In particular, it urges continued analytical debate combined with focussed political pressure - in line with the recommendations proposed here - in order to retain a focus on gender equality as a social justice and human rights issue, and not merely as a means of achieving other development goals.

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# Annex 1.

## Themes and Strategic Objectives of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995

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### A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

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

### B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

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

- Strategic objective B.6. Promote life-long education and training for girls and women.

### C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

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

### D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- Strategic objective D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
- Strategic objective D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

- Strategic objective D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

## **E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

- Strategic objective 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.
- Strategic objective E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
- Strategic objective E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
- Strategic objective E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
- Strategic objective E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
- Strategic objective E.6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

## **F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY**

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

## **G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING**

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

## **H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN**

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

## **I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

- Strategic objective 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.
- Strategic objective I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.
- Strategic objective I.3. Achieve legal literacy.

## **J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA**

- Strategic objective J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decisionmaking in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

- Strategic objective J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

## **K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Strategic objective K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.
- Strategic objective K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development.
- Strategic objective 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**

- Strategic objective L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child.
- Strategic objective L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.
- Strategic objective L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.
- Strategic objective L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.

- Strategic objective L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.
- Strategic objective L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work.
- Strategic objective L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl child.
- Strategic objective L.8. Promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.
- Strategic objective L.9. Strengthen the role of the family\* in improving the status of the girl child.



## Annex 2.

### Regional distribution rates of responses to the questionnaire

<b>ECA</b>	<b>ECE</b>	<b>ECLAC</b>
Algeria	Albania	Argentina
Angola	Austria	Barbados
Botswana	Azerbaijan	Belize
Burkina Faso	Belarus	Bolivia
Burundi	Belgium	Brazil
Cameroon	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Chile
Cape Verde	Bulgaria	Colombia
Chad	Canada	Costa Rica
Congo	Croatia	Cuba
Côte d'Ivoire	Cyprus	Dominica
Djibouti	Czech Republic	Dominican Republic
Equatorial Guinea	Denmark	Ecuador
Eritrea	Estonia	El Salvador
Ethiopia	Finland	Guatemala
Gambia	France	Haiti
Guinea	Georgia	Honduras
Lesotho	Germany	Jamaica
Liberia	Greece	Mexico
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Hungary	Panama
Mali	Iceland	Paraguay
Mauritania	Ireland	Peru
Mauritius	Israel	Suriname
Morocco	Italy	Trinidad and Tobago
Mozambique	Kazakhstan	Uruguay
Namibia	Kyrgyzstan	
Nigeria	Latvia	
Rwanda	Lithuania	
Senegal	Luxembourg	
Seychelles	Malta	
South Africa	Republic of Moldova	
Sudan	Monaco	
Swaziland	Montenegro	
Togo	Netherlands	
Tunisia	Norway	
Uganda	Poland	
Zambia	Portugal	
Zimbabwe	Romania	
<b>37/52</b>	<b>51/56</b>	<b>24/33</b>

**ESCAP**

Australia  
Brunei  
China  
Fiji  
Indonesia  
Iran  
Japan  
Nauru  
New Zealand  
Pakistan  
Philippines  
Samoa  
Singapore  
Solomon Islands  
Thailand  
Tonga  
Vietnam

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**17/39**

**ESCWA**

Bahrain  
Egypt  
Jordan  
Kuwait  
Lebanon  
Oman  
Palestine  
Qatar  
Syria  
U. A.E.  
Yemen

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**11/13**

Source: Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General, 8 February 2010, E/2010/4-E.CN.6/2010/2

# Annex 3.

## Overview of Beijing +15 Review by Region

### Europe

The ECE reported that its major priorities for action in the last five years had been:

- Legislation to address gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking.
- Women in the economy, mainly through narrowing the gap between female and male employment rates and adopting specific measures to combat women's poverty.
- The development and strengthening of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment.

They noted progress in most ECE countries in the areas of:

- Women's participation in the labour market.
- Women's political participation at local levels.
- New and/or strengthened legislation on gender-based violence, including domestic violence
- Institutional mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment

In terms of key challenges, most countries reported the following:

- The gap between legislation and implementation
- Decent work for women and measures to counteract labour market segregation
- The gender pay gap

- The situation of migrant women and women belonging to minority groups, who suffer multiple forms of discrimination
- The persistence of gender stereotypes, especially in the media and in education
- The lack of sex-disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data, and the lack of gender-sensitive indicators
- The role of men in advancing gender equality, for example through increased sharing of family responsibilities (this point will be picked up in Chapter 4 on Co-Responsibility and the Care Economy)

### Africa

The ECA's synthesis report offers a detailed examination of progress in each of the twelve PFA issues. Political participation and the care economy will be dealt with extensively in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively. In terms of general achievements, the report points to a number of agreements at the regional and sub-regional level which have contributed to the development of an African gender equality policy framework:

- The African Union's (AU) gender policy designed to strengthen national gender policies and to ensure a harmonized delivery framework in order to accelerate the implementation of gender equality commitments
- The AU Summit of January 2009 declared that the decade commencing in 2010 will be the African Decade on Gender

- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has adopted a protocol on gender equality.

- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has put in place a gender policy to guide its member States in accelerating delivery.

The ECA's Banjul Declaration commits African countries to a number of strategic areas:

- Economic empowerment of women through poverty reduction, employment creation, social protection and use of information and communications technology.
- Peace, security and development.
- Violence against women.<sup>25</sup>

- In fulfilment of the Quito Consensus, the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean was established.

However, it points out that the various areas of the PFA have progressed at different speeds, and some areas have been relatively neglected, such as the relationship between women and the environment and between women and the communications media.

### ***Latin America and the Caribbean***

The ECLAC report highlights a number of key achievements for the region:

- Against a backdrop of persistent social inequality the region attained parity in education.
- Evidence of significant achievements such as the adoption of equal legal frameworks.
- The construction and strengthening of mechanisms for the advancement of women.
- The design of plans and programmes for gender equality especially in the social sector.
- Progress on legislation to sanction domestic violence and guarantee women's human rights.

<sup>25</sup> UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Banjul Declaration on the Strategies for Accelerating the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, E/ECA/ARCW/8/11, 15 December 2009.

## Annex 4.

# Overview of Beijing +15 Review of Political Participation by Region

### Europe

A statement to the CSW by the Minister of Equality of Spain Bibiana Aido on behalf of the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> March highlighted the fact that women are still under-represented in decision-making positions in politics and in the labour market. In particular, she emphasised that women in Europe remain largely underrepresented among decision makers in the economy. For instance they represent only 11% of the members of the boards of the top quoted companies in the EU and 3% of the Directors of these boards.<sup>26</sup> Political participation is not discussed extensively in the ECE's synthesis report. However, it does call for a greater engendering of national policies by engendering national policies through fostering a mix of policies combining mandatory measures, incentives and awareness-building to accelerate the pace towards parity in economic and political decision-making positions.<sup>27</sup>

### Africa

As Angolan activist Helena Zafanias Lowe from the NGO *Embondeira* outlined in a presentation to the COORDINADORA's Beijing +15 event in February 2010, African countries have implemented very progressive and emancipatory gender equality laws. She pointed to the appointment of feminist Gertrude Mongella as the President of the Pan-African Parliament in South Africa and reminded participants that many African countries compete with Nordic countries for participation of women in parliaments.<sup>28</sup>

The regional synthesis report for the ECA includes an extensive discussion of the achievements and challenges of the implementation of the PFA commitments to women in power and decision-making, a summary of which is presented here.<sup>29</sup> A full list of African countries' responses on this issue can be found in Annex 3. A number of specific examples of good practice will also be highlighted in more detail below.

The report begins by noting that many countries are amending their constitutions and laws to promote women's political rights and widen their chances of representation in elected councils. It states that 'in recognition of the social and historical injustices as well as the biases against women'.

some countries have instigated affirmative measures. For example, Ghana has implemented a 40 per cent quota which resulted in an increase of 10 per cent in the number of women at district level. The Governments of Burundi and Burkina Faso have also adopted a 30 per cent minimum quota for government and parliamentary positions. The report argues that the election of the first female President in Africa in 2006 in Liberia has set a precedent and provided a role model for women on the continent. It also notes that Algeria had a female presidential candidate and in Gabon a woman in her capacity as President of the Senate was made interim president of the Republic until the elections.

<sup>26</sup> 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, High Level Plenary, Statement by the Minister of Equality of Spain Ms Bibiana Aido, on behalf of the European Union, New York, 1 March 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Report: Beijing +15 Regional Review Meeting, ECE/AC.28/2009/2 22 December 2009.

<sup>28</sup> Notes, Beijing +15 Coordinadora Event, Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

<sup>29</sup> ECA, Fifteen-Year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing PFA in Africa (BPFA) +15, Synthesis Report, 1995 – 2009, E/ECA/ARCW/8/5, 6 November 2009.



African governments have made dramatic progress in formal representation of women in politics. As the report rather touchingly states:

**‘These may be very few examples, but they will go a long way to make people realize that it is possible for a woman to lead a nation.’**

A number of initiatives have also been undertaken by different countries to encourage and promote women’s representation:

- Morocco - financial grants are provided to political parties in order to encourage women’s representation in its electoral lists.
- Gambia - political parties are being lobbied to nominate more women during the local government elections.
- Tanzania - training is being provided to potential female candidates to provide them with the skills necessary for effective leadership.

In terms of key obstacles, the ECA report states that Africa faces a ‘stiff challenge’ in reaching the 50/50 parity target of the AU’s Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and that ‘creative and innovative measures’ are required in order for the number of women in decision-making positions to increase.<sup>30</sup>

A number of recommendations are presented in order to make greater progress on these commitments:

- Recognise gender equality in political participation as a democratic right and one that is integral to good governance
- Increase the commitment and actions towards the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality (2004) and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007), which call for gender balance and equality in governance processes
- Firm up the commitment to affirmative action (CEDAW, Article 4); the elimination of gender stereotyping in appointment processes, especially as they relate to positions which are traditionally dominated by men at political party, executive, ministerial, judicial and civil society levels; continuous capacity-building programmes for prospective women candidates; and public education and sensitisation against stereotyping of women’s roles in society
- Put greater emphasis on supporting an increase in local-level participation for women, given that the majority of women are located in rural areas.
- Develop and implement capacity-building programmes to support potential female candidates.
- Offer incentives that would encourage countries to implement affirmative action policies.

<sup>30</sup> African Union, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, Addis Ababa, July 2004.

### ***Latin America and the Caribbean***

The regional synthesis report for ECLAC highlights political participation as a particular success for the region in implementing the PFA.<sup>31</sup> A full list of country responses on the implementation of issue G can be found in Annex 4. Emphasis is placed on 'milestones' such as the fact that three of the region's countries (Argentina, Chile and Jamaica) have been governed by women in the last five years, which the report argues contributes to 'symbolic cultural change and empowerment'.

In terms of more general achievements, the report notes that women's political participation in government posts, leadership positions and elected posts has increased in 'several countries'.

However, the report focuses in much more detail on the remaining challenges than the progress made. To summarise these:

- Low application of the sanctions provided for in legislation
- In most of the region's countries, women's participation in government is greater the lower the hierarchical level of the posts in question
- Women's participation in the lower houses of parliament is growing due to quotas but not yet attained 30% share, as indicated in the legislation on quotas in force in several countries (Brazil, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama,

Paraguay, Plurinational State of Bolivia, and Uruguay). However, Cuba is one of the world leaders in terms of women's representation in parliament, which stands at 43.32%

- Commitments on women's participation in the leadership bodies of political parties and unions, included in the quota laws, remain unfulfilled. Moreover, in countries that provide for economic sanctions, these are not being applied

In terms of future objectives, the report highlights the need to increase women's access and participation not only in the three branches of government, but also in political parties, labour unions and social organizations. This is in line with the broader conception of political participation of the Campaign and the Bolivia Consensus.

<sup>31</sup> Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly in Latin American and Caribbean Countries, LC/L. 3175.



# Annex 5.

## Overview of Beijing +15 Review of Co-Responsibility and the Care Economy by Region

### Europe

Speaking in New York, Spanish Minister for Equality Bibiana Aido noted that in the European Union:

**‘Part-time work is still for the most part female, due to the unequal distribution of family and care obligations: in the EU, more than 6 million women between 25 and 49 are unable to work or can only work part-time due to their family responsibilities.’<sup>32</sup>**

She highlighted the reconciliation of work and family life and equal sharing of family responsibilities as an important point for the equal participation of women. However, in the ECE report of progress, there is little mention of the care economy. Where it is discussed it is in relation to work rather than as an issue in its own right.<sup>33</sup>

For example, the report commits ECE countries to improving the situation of women at work through reconciling work with family responsibilities through legal entitlements such as paid leave for both parents, policy measures to encourage men to meet their family responsibilities, available and affordable quality care for children and dependant adults, and affordable training schemes to facilitate reintegration in the labour market. The financial crisis is highlighted as an opportunity to design gender-sensitive stimulus packages and social safety nets that involve affordable, quality childcare, parental-leave reform and efforts to close the gender pay gap.

### Africa

In the ECA overview report, there is very little discussion of the care economy.<sup>34</sup> In the review of the implementation of the critical area of concern

**G women and the economy**, there is one reference to the extension of maternity leave from 45 to 60 days and the introduction of paternity leave in ‘some countries’ – however, only Cape Verde is referred to as an example. The recommended actions to be taken on **women and the economy** include advocating the appreciation and valuing of women’s non-market work by including a gender perspective in national accounts and budgets.

This lack of attention to the co-responsibility and the care economy in the African report is important to flag up.

### Latin America and the Caribbean

In contrast, the issues of co-responsibility and the care economy feature strongly in the ECLAC report in relation to **women and poverty, women and the economy** and the **girl child**.<sup>35</sup> For a full list of individual country responses on this theme see Annex 6.

In terms of **women and poverty**, the regional report details the inclusion of women in various types of poverty reduction programmes. However, as the report rightly points out:

**‘Nonetheless, despite including women, not all programmes are designed with a gender perspective. Countries such as Brazil and Mexico are implementing initiatives aimed at empowering women and encouraging men and women to share care responsibilities and reproductive health decisions. In most of the other programmes, women are designated as the benefit receivers which, in some cases, increases their responsibilities and**

<sup>32</sup> 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, High Level Plenary, Statement by the Minister of Equality of Spain Ms Bibiana Aido, on behalf of the European Union, New York, 1 March 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Report: Beijing +15 Regional Review Meeting, ECE/AC.28/2009/2 22 December 2009.

<sup>34</sup> ECA, Fifteen-Year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing PFA in Africa (BPfA) +15, Synthesis Report, 1995 – 2009, E/ECA/ARCW/8/5, 6 November 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and PFA and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly in Latin American and Caribbean Countries, LC/L. 3175.

**the amount of time they must devote to care tasks such as health checkups and education for the family's children.'**

This is an important distinction to make and has been documented extensively by feminist researchers. We should not assume that poverty reduction programmes directed at women will have automatic benefits for gender equality and women's empowerment. Rather, the emerging evidence suggests that the outcomes are often detrimental for gender equality. For example, Maxine Molyneux's review of the Mexican *Oportunidades* programme shows how participation in the cash transfer scheme restricted women's opportunities to participate in paid work and other activities due to the amount of time committed to providing free labour in the programme's health and social centres.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, such programmes are problematic from a feminist perspective as the targeting of women as the recipients of cash transfers reinforces their assumed responsibility for social reproduction, childcare and the overall well-being of children.

In relation to **women and the economy**, the report makes an important point that the dramatic increase in women's participation in the labour market means that there are relatively fewer women engaged in unpaid domestic work — work that despite going unrecognized and is marginal, has a very important value for society. This point is integral to understanding the importance of social reproductive work to healthy economies and relates to the concept of 'depletion' currently being developed and debated by feminist academics (see Annex 6).

Several examples of progressive policies on the care economy are cited in the ECLAC report. For example, Mexico's 'Child Care Centre and Nursery Programme to Support Working Mothers'

programme and the Plurinational State of Bolivia's proposal for a redistribution of care tasks in families through its public policy on equal opportunities. In terms of data collection, time-use surveys have been conducted in Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay. Brazil and Peru are also working to undertake this type of study.

Reference is also made in the discussion of the challenges relating to the implementation of the girl child commitments. The report states that specialised childcare facilities must be set up for children of both sexes to make it easier for mothers to participate in the labour market and cites that Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have this type of facility.

<sup>36</sup>Molyneux, Maxine (2006) 'Mothers at the Service of the New Poverty Agenda: Progres/Oportunidades, Mexico's Conditional Transfer Programme', *Social Policy and Administration* 40 (4): 425–449.



# Annex 6.

## Recommended Resources for Co-Responsibility and the Care Economy

### Academic Sources

Arat-Koç, Sedef (2006) 'Whose Social Reproduction? Transnational Motherhood and Challenges to Feminist Political Economy', in Kate Bezanson and Meg Luxton eds. *Social Reproduction: Feminist Political Economy Challenges Neo-Liberalism*, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press

Bakker, Isabella and Rachel Silvey (2008) 'Introduction: social reproduction and global transformations – from the everyday to the global', in Isabella Bakker and Rachel Silvey eds. *Beyond States and Markets: the challenges of social reproduction*, London: Routledge

Bakker, Isabella (2003) 'Neoliberal governance and the reprivatization of social reproduction: social provisioning and shifting gender orders' in Isabella Bakker and Stephen Gill (eds.) *Power, Production and Social Reproduction*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

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Bedford, Kate (2007) 'The Imperative of Male Inclusion: how institutional context influences World Bank gender policy', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 9(3): 289-311

Bedford, Kate (2008) 'Governing Intimacy in

the World Bank', in Shirin M. Rai and Georgina Waylen (eds.) *Global Governance: Feminist Perspectives*, Basingstoke: Palgrave

Cameron, Jenny and J.K. Gibson-Graham (2003) 'Feminising the Economy: metaphors, strategies, politics', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 10 (2): 145-157

Elson, Diane (2000) 'Gender at the Macroeconomic Level' in Joanne Cook, Jennifer Roberts and Georgina Waylen (eds.) (2000), *Towards a Gendered Political Economy*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press

Ferguson, Lucy (2010) 'Tourism development and the restructuring of social reproduction in Central America', forthcoming in *Review of International Political Economy* – copy available from author of report on request

Luxton, Meg (2006) 'Feminist Political Economy in Canada and the Politics of Social Reproduction' in Kate Bezanson and Meg Luxton eds. *Social Reproduction: Feminist Political Economy Challenges Neo-Liberalism*, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press

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Power, Marilyn (2004) 'Social Provisioning as a Starting Point for Feminist Economics', *Feminist Economics* 10 (3): 3 – 19

Hoskyns, Catherine and Shirin Rai (2007) 'Recasting the global economy: counting women's unpaid work', *New Political Economy* 12(3): 297-317

Razavi, Shahra (2007) 'The political and social economy of care in a development context: conceptual issues, research questions and policy options', *GAD Programme Paper Number 3*, Geneva: UNRISD

Silvey, Rachel (2008) 'Managing migration: reproducing gendered insecurity at the Indonesian border' in Isabella Bakker and Rachel Silvey eds. *Beyond States and Markets: the challenges of social reproduction*, London: Routledge

Wood, Cynthia A. (2003) 'Economic marginalia: postcolonial readings of unpaid domestic labour and development' in Drucilla A. Barker and Edith Kuiper eds. *Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Economics*, London: Routledge

### Other Sources

BRIDGE Gender and Care Overview Report, Sussex: IDS, February 2009, Emily Esplen, [http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP\\_Care\\_OR.pdf](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP_Care_OR.pdf)

BRIDGE Gender and Care Supporting Resources Collection, February 2009, Emily Esplen, [http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk//bridge/reports/CEP\\_Care\\_SRC.pdf](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk//bridge/reports/CEP_Care_SRC.pdf)

Commonwealth Secretariat (2009) 'Gender and Social Protection', Discussion Paper 3, January 2009, <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/218536/FileName/DiscussionPaper3.pdf>

Pathways of Women's Empowerment, 'Agenda for Change: Women's empowerment needs a people-centred economy', Sussex: IDS, March 2009, <http://www.pathwaysofempowerment.org/>

IDS\_agenda\_for\_change.pdf

V. Milosavljevic (2008) *Las Encuestas de Uso del Tiempo en América Latina (Time-use Surveys in Latin America)*, Division de Asuntos de Género, ECLAC/CEPAL, IX International Meeting on Gender Statistics, 29 September to 1 October 2008, Aguascalientes, Mexico, [www.inegi.gob.mx/inegi/contenidos/.../vivian\\_milosavljevic.ppt](http://www.inegi.gob.mx/inegi/contenidos/.../vivian_milosavljevic.ppt)

A. Rivero Recuenco et al. (2007) *From Conciliation to Coresponsibility: Good Practice and Recommendations*, Observatory 10. (*De la Conciliación a la Corresponsabilidad: Buenas Prácticas y Recomendaciones*. Observatorio 10), Madrid: Instituto de la Mujer, [http://www.siyanda.org/docs/Conciliacion\\_Corresponsabilidad.pdf](http://www.siyanda.org/docs/Conciliacion_Corresponsabilidad.pdf)

### Legal Conventions

ILO C156, Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C156>

ILO C183, Maternity Protection Convention, 2000, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C183>

ILO C177, Home Work Convention, 1996, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C177>

ILO C175, Part-Time Work Convention, 1994, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C175>



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