

October 1998

**Questionnaire to Governments
on Implementation
of the Beijing Platform for Action**

New Zealand Response

The material posted here was provided to the Division for the Advancement of Women by the Government in response to the Secretary-General's Questionnaire on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. It has been made available in electronic format from the form received. In cases where it was not possible to reproduce charts and tables supplied, these can be obtained by contacting the Division for the Advancement of Women directly.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Part One

Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and women's advancement

- 1. Give a brief analytical overview (3 to 6 pages) of trends in your country in implementing the Platform for Action. This overview or broad picture should, for example, describe the country's policy with regard to achieving the goal of equality between women and men and should be linked to your national action plan or other plans or strategies. Your response could, for example, address questions such as:**

What have been the major achievements and/or breakthroughs in concrete terms in implementing the national action plan and/or policies and programmes for gender equality and advancement of women? ¹

Is the situation of women and girls in sectors not covered by the national action plan better or worse than in 1995? Why?

Are the goals of gender equality and advancement of women being pursued as a priority in relation to other public policy goals? Please explain.

What were the country's priorities in terms of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action? Explain.

Identify areas where mainstreaming a gender perspective has been most/least successful. In which sectors is a gender approach being applied? Please illustrate with examples of legislation, policies, best practice and lessons learned.

Has attention to gender equality and advancement of women changed since 1995 — in Government policies, in public perception, in the media, in academic institutions? Please explain concretely the nature of the change.

How has the global situation, for example, structural adjustment, the global financial crisis and/or globalisation of markets affected women and girls in your country?

¹ If no national action plan has been presented, please refer to other relevant documents.

2. Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, New Zealand

New Zealand government representatives played an active role in the formulation of the *Platform for Action* which was adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, September 1995. At the conference, the Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon Jenny Shipley, announced that she planned "to use the actions outlined in the Platform as the basis for

- the Ministry of Women's Affairs has developed a project to profile Maori women in decision-making in the areas of business and community involvement
- funding secured for improved statistical information about women's lives, including an extension to the *Household Labour Force Survey*, a survey on childcare, and a longitudinal survey of income dynamics
- publication of *Maori Women in Focus* — a statistical profile of Maori women looking at health, work, education and family formation.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development of all policies and programmes has been a significant area of work following the Beijing conference.

The Ministry's medium term focus is to work with central agencies to improve the quality of policy advice provided to government, by developing a means of ensuring that other government agencies are accountable for implementing gender analysis in all aspects of their work. The Ministry is enhancing the gender analysis framework to reflect the diversity of women's lives.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has also developed a Pacific Analysis Framework, with associated Pacific consultation guidelines. Like the Ministry of Women's Affairs' gender analysis framework, the Pacific Analysis Framework is a tool for integrating the perspectives and priorities of a specific population group into the generic policy development process.

Significant progress has also been made on a number of the other strategic objectives of the Beijing *Platform for Action*, notably:

- the Domestic Violence Act 1995 and the

Part Two

Financial and institutional measures

2. **Discuss how equality and women's advancement are addressed in the national budget. This could include an indication of the percentage of the overall budget that is allocated for women-specific policies/programmes and any increases/decreases since 1995. What percentage of this allocation comes from international or bilateral donors? Describe efforts to monitor budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and advancement of women.**

New Zealand does not disaggregate budget data on the basis of sex. However, recent budget initiatives targeted towards women include:

- a Women Leaders Network (WLN) meeting as part of APEC 1999, which include an associated seminar on Indigenous Women in Exporting Business
- tax credits for new parents including the Parental Tax Credit
- free budget advice for families
- a new 24 hour *Healthline*
- new funding for *Plunketline*
- the Business Information programme (BIZ programme) which specifically targets women, Maori and Pacific peoples
- extension of childcare subsidy to low income parents with children 5 to 13 years
- \$3.15 million over three years for establishment funding of out of school child care services in low income communities
- doubling the Government's contribution rate to the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (EEO Trust) from \$1 to \$2 for each \$1 of employers' contribution
- continuation of \$500,000 per annum funding for the Maori Women's Development Incorporation
- an extra \$6.7 million for the Health Sponsorship Council to help people stop smoking — the biggest single cause of premature death and disease in women
- tax cuts to increase disposable income
- \$101 million over the next three years for children and families in need.

3. a **Discuss structures and mechanisms that have been put in place to institutionalise follow-up to, and implementation of, the Platform for Action. Describe whether similar mechanisms have been established for follow-up to other conferences, such as the World Summit for Social Development or the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.**

As noted in the responses to Part One, in 1996 the Government directed the Ministry of Women's Affairs to work with other relevant government departments and to report on progress and policy options to address the six key areas identified from the

- *Greater community support for victims of abuse e.g. more women's refuges, rape crisis centres, victim support groups.*
- *More encouragement for women to study science and technology.*

NCW members noted health-related advances including:

- *free breast screening for women aged 50–64*
- *free flu injections for those over 65*
- *establishment of marae-based health clinics*
- *establishment of the position of Health and Disability Services Commissioner, and a greater awareness and education of rights*
- *establishment of marae-based health clinics to provide more appropriate and accessible services to Maori*
- *Community Services Card to assist people on low incomes*
- *Introduction of anti-smoking drinking and drugs campaigns in schools and communities with particular targeting of young women*

Continuing barriers noted by NCW members included:

- *Women's economic advancement continued to be impeded by family responsibilities and unpaid work in the home*
- *access to affordable, appropriate childcare*
- *the gender pay gap*
- *access to affordable housing*
- *fees for tertiary education*
- *the lack of women in senior decision-making roles*
- *employment issues, including job insecurity, casualisation of the workforce in many female dominated sectors."*

New Zealand FPA (Family Planning Association) noted that it endorsed the Platform's recommendations and concerns in the critical areas including health, human rights and protection of the girl child. However, FPA expressed disappointment that health was not separately identified as one of the six

- *lobbying for matrimonial property law reform*
- *language courses for immigrant women*
- *projects on personal safety in the home, the workplace and in community*
- *raising awareness of the UN Declaration of Human Rights*
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Part Three

Implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action

A. Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices

Prime Minister Rt Hon Jenny Shipley, has said of the survey:

“Unpaid work, including childcare, care for the elderly, household work, and voluntary community work, is crucial to the New Zealand economy but its value is largely ignored. The Time Use Survey will help us better understand how people balance these important social and economic responsibilities.”

The first data sets will be available by the end of 1999.

The Gender Pay Gap

New Zealand women earn approximately 82 percent of the average total hourly earnings of men. Since 1995, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs has:

- further information about women's lives is to be generated by research within the eight priority areas for cross-portfolio, long term applied social science research developed by the Officials Group on Applied Social Science Research, and endorsed by the Government in 1997.

The Platform's Recommendations which are Relevant to Maori Women and Girls

The Platform calls for governments to address areas of concern for indigenous women and girls. The primary areas of focus in New Zealand are in education, health, economic development, participation in decision-making and information about the lives of Maori women and girls.

Recent education, health and welfare and other strategies to improve outcomes for Maori include:

- Education Strategy for Maori
- Maori Medium Teacher Strategy
- A child health Strategy
- Maori Health Provider Development Scheme
- Family Start — a highly targeted home-based support service which sees a family worker providing advice and help to meet family needs, co-ordinating access to services, and working with parents to give them the skills and support to raise their children
- Iwi Social Services
- Teenage Sole Parents
- Sexuality Education resources in schools for Maori
- Maori Statistics Forum – established by Statistics New Zealand to improve the quality and quantity of information collected about iwi/Maori women and men)
- Maori Women in Focus — a statistical profile of Maori women looking at health, work, education and family formation.

Enhancing Women's Role in Decision-Making.

As part of New Zealand's response to the *men'*

participants have been appointed or are being considered for appointment to statutory boards.

In addition, five one-day introduction to directorship seminars have been held in Wellington and regional centres around New Zealand for women who are interested in serving on boards. These seminars have been held in association with local government or community agencies. The seminars introduce women to the basic requirements and duties of directorship and suggest ways of increasing their chances of being considered for positions on statutory or private company boards.

The Ministry is also working with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs on a pilot seminar to provide support and training for consumer representatives on statutory boards and committees.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has also:

- Improved the quality of the curricula vitae held by the its Nominations Service
- Recruited more Maori women to the Nominations Service
- Worked closely with other departments to raise their awareness of the skills and qualities of women available for appointment
- Improved its communication with women on the Nominations service.

Appointment process across government

In November 1998, the Ministry ran a seminar for government officials involved in the appointments process to increase their awareness of the Ministry's Nominations Service. The seminar was held in Wellington and was attended by 100 officials from various government departments. The seminar was a success and resulted in a number of appointments to statutory boards and committees.

The second part of the project profiles eight Maori women, again introducing them to key audiences. On this occasion the Ministry asked iwi (tribal) authorities to nominate significant

B. Obstacles encountered

- 5. What obstacles were encountered and what lessons were learned in implementing policies and other measures in each critical area of concern? (For example, despite new legislation to limit traditional practices harmful to the health of women and girls, these practices continued, showing that an education campaign was also needed to bring change in behaviour, or customary law was adapted to fit modern legislation when it was learned that women were more discriminated by customary laws than men).**

The Ministry of Women's Affairs is the government agency charged with the implementation of the Beijing *Platform for Action*

