



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE OUTCOME OF THE TWENTY – THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)

**PREPARATION FOR
15TH ANNIVERSARY (BEIJING + 15) OF THE ADOPTION OF
THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR
ACTION, 2010.**

**Prepared by the
Federal Ministry of Women Affairs
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PART ONE:

Overview of Achievements and Challenges in Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

- a. Yes, the Federal Government of Nigeria adopted a National Policy on **Gender Equality** in 2007 to replace the old 2000 National Policy on Women. The policy, though adopted at the national covers all levels of governance.
 - As a follow-up a Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan was developed and adopted in late 2008 to support policy implementation at all levels of governance.
 - to ensure all actors are held accountable for its implementation, dissemination and partnership building workshops were held nationwide with a view to create awareness on the existence of the Policy and how various stakeholders fit into the implementation plan. In addition, the annual meeting of the National Council of Women Affairs, which involves the participation of all Ministries of Women Affairs from all 36 States and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, all Sectoral Gender Desk Officers and NGOs provides occasion to review reports and re-strategise for the way forward.
 - The mechanisms proposed for monitoring of the policy implementation include:
 - i. The Federal Executive Council;
 - ii. The National Women Machinery/ National Council of Women Affairs and its organs at the sub-national level;
 - iii. The appointment of Sectoral Gender Focal Points in relevant Ministries and Agencies;
 - iv. Establishment of National Gender Committee (NGC);
 - v. The National Technical Team of Experts (NTTE) for promotion of gender equality;
 - vi. State and Community Level Gender Equality Structures.
 - The establishment of the National Council of Women Affairs, The National Gender Committee (NGC) and the National Technical Team of Experts (NTTE) are some of the coordination mechanism at the highest executive level to ensure that the policy is implemented in all sectors. (The NGC members are drawn from Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Development partners and Civil Society Organizations; While the NTTE members are drawn from sectors reflecting the 12 critical areas of concern only)

b. Impact of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Concluding Comments of the UN CEDAW Committee on the Promotion of Gender Equality?

- The Convention and particularly, the Committee's Concluding comments on Nigeria's 6th Country Periodic Report have led to the development of a National Plan of Action to address the various issues raised. It has also, drawn both public and Government attention to the problems in the sector and challenges being faced by the women.

How is Implementation of the Convention Progressing?

- In implementing the Convention, there has been selective domestication of the provisions of **CEDAW** at different tiers of Government. CEDAW provisions though not yet domesticated have influenced the promulgation of state laws on: Enrolment and retention of girls in schools, and against withdrawal of girls from schools for marriage, prohibition of Harmful Traditional Practices: widowhood, female circumcision, trafficking in persons and other forms of violence against women.

c. The main legislative and policy-making achievements in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment over the past decade include:

- i. The upgrading of the then National Commission for Women to a full-fledged Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, in 1995;
- ii. Institutionalization of women machineries and structures at all levels
- iii. Adoption of the National Gender Policy and its Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan;
- iv. Existence of Laws prohibiting harmful traditional practices in various States;
- v. Adoption of a National Economic Policy, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) with gender perspectives
- vi. Policies on Population, Food and Nutrition, Water, Nutrition and Household Food Security, National Adolescent Health, Women in Agriculture, Women and Girls Education, Reproductive Health, National Poverty Eradication Programme, Transport and Development, Unity, Progress and Self-reliance now in place.

d. Gender perspectives and the concerns of women in the preparation of budgets: very little attention has been paid to the concerns of women in the preparation of **budgets** at all levels of government.

- However, the National Assembly Committees on Women Affairs has been very supportive in this area, thus leading to a marginal increase in the sector's budgetary allocation. At the sub-national levels, many of the women machinery do not have budget to work with nor their needs and concerns adequately taken care of.

- **Effort to increase and track budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women include:**
 - The adoption of a Medium Term Sector Strategic Framework for Ministries, Departments and Agencies;
 - The adoption of five-year indicative budget for the Gender Policy Strategic Framework;
 - Advocacy/Sensitization and Capacity building of key stakeholders on Gender Responsive Budgeting.

- e. The **Millennium Declaration** and the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** forms one of the bases for consideration of policies and programmes development across the sectors.
 - Attention is given to Goal 3 on gender equality particularly in reducing the gender parity in education with the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and Education for All (EFA) programmes at Federal and State levels.
 - There exists some data at the national level to monitor the achievement of the targets under MDG 3.
 - Gender perspectives and the concerns of women are not considered in all other MDGs goals.

- f. Recent major **government policy discussions and/or parliamentary debates** where gender perspectives and the concerns of women have been taken systematically into account as an integral part of the overall debate are:
 - i. Electoral Reform Process;
 - ii. Constitutional Review Process.

- g. Armed Conflict. Not applicable**

- h. **Globalization and the new information and communication technologies** affected the empowerment of women and girls and the promotion of gender equality in various ways such as:
 - Providing a challenge for the society in general and to women in particular in terms of aggravating the existing poverty
 - Opening up unprecedented opportunities for women and girls' participation in the market economy, especially in the informal sector while creating new insecurities for others
 - Nigerian women are in petty trading thus relying on imports facilitated by liberalized policies

- Owing primarily to low literacy rates and lack of training in information technologies, most Nigerian women and girls are not able to take advantage of these changes as much as their male counterpart do.

- i. Specific **sectoral areas policies, strategies and/or action plans for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment developed and implemented include:**
 - National Gender Policy;
 - National Gender Data Bank;
 - Social Development Policy;
 - National Gender Education Policy;
 - National Policy on Education;
 - Nigeria Labour Congress Gender Policy;
 - The National Population Policy;
 - the Food and Nutrition Policy;
 - the Water and Sanitation Policy;
 - the Policy on Household Food Security;
 - National Adolescent Health Policy;
 - the Women in Agriculture Policy;
 - Reproductive Health Policy;
 - the National Poverty Eradication Programme;
 - Transport Policy.

- The extent to which gender perspectives and the concerns of women are routinely taken into account in legislation and policymaking and programme development in other sectors is very slow due to inadequate national legislation and state institutions poor knowledge and will to affect the necessary changes.

- j. High-level **partnerships have been established** between and among Governments, Civil Society Groups and development partners. To sustain the partnership, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA) grants subventions to women focused NGOs for women programme implementation and monitoring.

- k. Efforts have been made to actively **engage men and boys** in the promotion of gender equality through advocacy, sensitization programmes, conferences and seminars on gender equality.
 - As a result an appreciable success has been achieved though much still needs to be done.
 - The constraints identified in the engagement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality are:
 - i. Their poor attendance and participation in gender or women's programmes
 - ii. The negative effect of culture and tradition, including the socialization process.

- iii. The lack of will to effect reforms in the interest of women's rights lies in the deep-rooted gender bias in both personal attitudes of state officials as well as in the structures and procedures of state institutions, reinforced by many traditional, religious and cultural norms and practices.
- iv. Slow pace in the movement towards a differentiation between the religious view and the traditional view of women.

PART TWO:

Progress in Implementation of the Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Further Initiatives and Actions Identified in the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly.

A. Successful Policies, Legislative change, Programmes and Projects

a). The National Gender Policy since its adoption in May 2007 is being implemented through its Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan at the various sectoral levels in line with the Beijing Platform for Action. In addition, some states have legislated against various forms of violence against women in line with critical area D.

b). **Extent to which specific commitments on the critical areas of concern have been met:** Despite the commitment made in Beijing, in relation to resource allocation, legislative change and programme development, gender mainstreaming is yet to be fully imbibed for it to achieve its desired goal in addition to the women machinery and women focused programmes receiving the least budgetary allocation at all levels of government and in all sectors.

However, various efforts and measures have been undertaken in respect of the twelve critical areas of concerns as follows:

1. Women and Poverty

Strengthening women's economic security is important in achieving Goal 1 of the MDGs, the elimination of extreme poverty and hunger. A central factor in the reproduction of poverty is feminized poverty, the gender-based discrimination that continues to deny women equal access to rights, opportunities and presenting fierce competition over scarce resources, in particular land and the means of livelihood. This has led to an increase in female-headed households struggling to survive, with very little capacity to take advantage of the new economic opportunities. To address this issue, the Government supports efforts to incorporate gender perspectives into

macroeconomic frameworks and to strengthen her citizens' capacity to manage globalisation and economic melt down.

Nigerian women account for about 70% of the agricultural labour force, contribute up to 80% of the total food production but only about 25% of the micro credit provided by financial and government institutions are accessible to them. Also 25% of women have benefited from loans at low interest rates and waiver of collateral.

In direct response to the above constraints, the national women machinery in collaboration with the Bank of Industry in 2007 undertake a Business and Development Fund for Women (BUDFOW) project to bridge gender gaps in the credit finance sector. While another project: Women's Fund for Economic Empowerment (WOFEE) initiated 2005 in collaboration with Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank provides loan facility to women cooperatives particularly those at the grassroots.

Table 1: ACCESS TO CREDIT FACILITIES BY GENDER AND AGE

	15-29YRS	30-44YRS	45-59YRS	60 +YRS	TOTAL
Access to credit facility					
Female	24.9	38.8	27.4	8.9	100.0
Male	14.5	38.5	30.1	16.9	100.0
Total	19.3	38.6	28.9	13.3	100.0
Credit facility: Bank Loan					
Female	24.4	33.8	33.3	8.5	100.0
Male	8.5	37.6	37.2	16.7	100.0
Total	12.0	36.7	36.4	14.9	100.0
Credit Facility: Micro Credit					
Female	39.8	44.4	12.0	3.8	100.0
Male	14.8	42.6	30.8	11.8	100.0
Total	21.8	43.1	25.6	9.6	100.0
Credit Facility Grants					
Female	42.7	25.8	23.7	7.8	100.0
Male	7.9	53.3	24.9	13.8	100.0
Total	17.6	45.6	24.6	12.1	100.0
Credit Facility: Esusu					
Female	25.1	38.1	27.3	9.5	100.0
Male	16.8	37.0	29.1	17.1	100.0
Total	21.4	37.6	28.1	12.9	100.0
Credit facility: Cooperatives					
Female	18.5	42.1	32.2	7.2	100.0
Male	10.6	40.5	31.8	17.1	100.0
Total	13.4	41.0	31.9	13.7	100.0
Credit Facility: Others					
Female	27.0	47.3	17.6	8.2	100.0
Male	17.9	38.2	25.8	18.1	100.0
Total	20.9	41.2	23.1	14.8	100.0

NBS, 2006 CWIQ Survey, Nigeria p. 221

- **Other initiatives include:**

- a. Advocacy and sensitization workshops and training carried out towards engendering National Budget and Economic Policy

- b. Establishment of micro-finance scheme for grassroots Women Cooperative groups for enterprise development, which have more potential in generating re-investable resources and sustainability
- c. Most banks have designed their banking loan system to accommodate the needs of women entrepreneurs
- d. Provided Women Cooperative groups with locally fabricated equipment for enhanced agricultural productivity
- e. Organized and supported the training of women entrepreneurs in ICT for greater access to markets

2. **Women/Girls Education and Training**

The legal and political environment for promoting improved access to women and girl-child education over the past ten years, have been encouraging and progressive. Laws have been passed at both national and state levels in pursuit of this objective. At the federal level, the Child's Rights Act was passed in 2003.

Section 15 (1) of the Act provides as follows:

'Every child has the right to free, compulsory and universal basic education and it shall be the duty of the Government in Nigeria to provide such education.

(2) Every parent or guardian shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes his –

(a). Primary school education; and

(b). Junior secondary education...'

2.1 Section 15(5) of the same Act guarantees female students the opportunity to complete their education should they become pregnant while still in school. Furthermore, **section 15(6)** of the same law prescribes punishment for parents or guardians who prevent a child from attending and completing his/her education.

Achievements of the UBE Act

2.1.2 Additionally, the government of Nigeria has passed into law, the **Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education and other Related Matters Act, 2004 (UBE Act)** which seeks to address barriers to the enjoyment of the right to education of every Nigerian child in both urban and rural areas. The Act reiterates the right of every Nigerian child to compulsory, free, and universal basic education. In order to ensure the actualization of this right, the law established the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) which is charged with the responsibility of implementing the UBE programme. The UBE, just like the Child's Rights Act

makes it a punishable offence to deny any child access to education either by way of demanding fees or by actually not allowing a child to attend school.

Table 2.1: Achievements Recorded under the UBE Programmes			
Location	Classrooms Renovated	Classrooms Constructed	Toilets Constructed
ECCD Centres	237	131	
Primary Schools	1,568	1,426	
Junior Secondary Schools	952	849	952
Source: Federal Ministry of Education Report 2006			

2.1.3 Additionally, Education Reform commenced in 2006 to address issues of internal efficiency and management of the education system. Directives were given to all primary and secondary schools to establish School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) to improve governance, planning and monitoring of school projects and administration. In addition, Child Friendly Schooling framework was adopted by the Government for school operation and management and the Inspection Division of the Federal Ministry of Education was re-awakened to its responsibility as the quality control and watchdog for the entire education system. Operation Reach All Secondary schools (ORASS) was conducted to assess status of schools prior to the 2006 Reform and introduction of measures to streamline the negative outcomes reported from the exercise.

A remarkable achievement was made in 2007 in Girls Education Project (GEP) states as shown in the table below on primary school enrolment:

STATE	YEAR	NO. OF SCHOOLS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	% FEMALE
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Table 2.2 Primary School Enrolment (Gender) Data 2000 to 2006

KATSINA	2000	1,889	421,862	216,581	638,443	33.9
	2001	1,903	430,360	224,920	655,280	33.32
	2002	1,935	419,942	215,308	635,250	33.89
	2003	1,945	607,016	317,281	924,297	34.32
	2004	2,125	588,312	319,600	907,912	35.20
	2005	2,156	630,282	348,162	978,444	35.58
	2006	2,167	723,111	406,507	112,9618	36.75
NIGER	2000	2,100	251,033	137,164	388,694	35.28
	2001	2,101	241,033	135,110	376,143	35.91
	2002	2,087	274,539	156,989	431,528	36.37
	2003	2,575	370,196	216,002	586,198	36.84
	2004	2,805	363,167	207,763	570,936	36.39
	2005	2,805	368,668	218,150	586,198	37.17
	2006	2,809	371,277	236,565	607,842	38.45
BORNO	2000	1,258	307,376	214,379	521,755	41.08
	2001	1,258	307,376	214,379	521,755	41.08
	2002	1,426	340,713	232,214	572,927	40.53
	2003	1,337	341,901	237,795	579,696	41.53
	2004	1,476	439,403	307,394	746,749	41.16
	2005	1,476	466,501	325,301	701,802	46.35
	2006	1,476	472,988	349,723	822,711	48.25
BAUCHI	2000	1,748	476,422	301,419	777,841	38.75
	2001	1,746	581,168	368,406	949,574	38.79
	2002	1,760	399,753	254,416	654,151	38.89
	2003	2,017	903,863	580,921	1,484,783	39.12
	2004	1,908	748,418	485,273	123,691	39.34

	2005	1,908	782,317	511,388	1,293,705	39.52
	2006	1,908	816,169	654,858	1,471,027	40.56
SOKOTO	2000	1,893	432,773	133,891	566,664	23.62
	2001	1,893	437,965	150,216	588,181	25.53
	2002	2,109	517,366	173,760	691,126	25.14
	2003	2,112	684,773	248,709	933,482	26.64
	2004	2,118	437,674	178,406	616,080	28.96
	2005	2,223	447,840	186,189	634,029	29.36
	2006	2,233	464,549	250,884	715,433	30.43
JIGAWA	2000	1,619	314,007	174,023	488,030	36.65
	2001	1,619	296,609	162,659	459,268	35.41
	2002	1,575	277,941	155,728	433,669	35.90
	2003	1,603	312,046	176,125	488,171	36.07
	2004	1,683	348,825	210,876	559,701	37.68
	2005	1,683	359,091	217,121	576,212	37.68
	2006	1,683	393,284	255,369	648,653	38.41

Source: UBEC Statistical Information Basic Education in Nigeria 2003 and

EDB/FME 2006, Basic & Senior Secondary Education Statistics in Nigeria 2004-2006

(Gender) Data 2000 – 2006 statistics above show improvements in enrolment, attendance and retention, reducing the gap well over 10%, in some States with 15%, 20%, 25% etc.

2.1.4 Special capital funds were provided under the UBE programme to states to build additional classrooms and renovate existing ones to create adequate learning spaces for children. The government embarked on series of laudable initiatives to increase quality and number of teachers for basic education. These include: certifying all qualified teachers through the National Teachers' Registration Council, reviewing of the Teacher Development Minimum Standards to ensure qualitative product turn out, introduction of the School Based Teacher Development programme as continuous measure to orientate and refresh teachers' skills on the job and aggressive training of teachers by NTI under the PTT programme. The NTI has also begun the Special Teachers' Upgrading Programme (STUP) for selected unqualified Teachers who have been in the Education system for a long time.

2.1.5 Other achievements in the education of women and girls include:

- a. The institutionalization of free and compulsory Universal Basic Education (UBE) is a prioritized action in the field of education as a fundamental human rights and basis for women empowerment
- b. Sensitization of communities on importance of girls' education
- c. Adaptation of the tools and teaching methods to the socio-cultural context of communities mainly by using the local languages
- d. Construction of new schools in the urban and rural areas to accommodate the increased enrollment of pupils, particularly girls in schools
- e. Improved educational curriculum with Government's approval for introduction of Family/Sexuality education at junior and senior secondary school levels
- f. Special consideration granted to women and girls in the award of scholarships
- g. Existence of laws in some States for retention of girls in the school and also laws prohibiting the withdrawal of girls from school for marriage
- h. The establishment of Women and Girls Education Unit in the Federal Ministry of Education
- i. The Women Development Centres in Local Government Areas have made it possible to improve the skills of women and girls, especially those trained in vocational/business and entrepreneurship.

2.1.6 Constraints: The following impact negatively on programme implementation in the educational sector:

- i. Poverty hindering the enrolment of women and girls in education and literacy programmes
- ii. Gender bias and girls' access to education, gender stereotyping in the school curriculum
- iii. Socio-cultural impediments militating against girls' education, such as preference for boys' education, dropout rates of girls from schools due to early marriage, pregnancy and domestic chores demand at home and distance of schools from homes

- iv. The gaps between policy adoption and implementation and between policies and community needs; also the gap between the number of schools and classrooms and the school age population at all levels of the education system
- v. Insufficient political will to translate into reality the formal commitments to ensuring access to quality and basic education
- vi. Inadequate human and financial resources, infrastructure and facilities
- vii. Lack of comprehensive data for planning
- viii. Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanism

3. **Women and Health**

In addition to the provision of the BPFA, Section 17(3) (c) of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution made provisions for ensuring adequate health, safety and welfare services for all persons.

In pursuance of these provisions, relevant government ministries at all levels and with the assistance of developmental partners, have vigorously pursued programmes for the provision of health care services and particularly, the reproductive health rights of women.

3.1 The Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Health has improved on the policy environment towards enhancing the provision of health care services to women and children.

Measures taken to reduce the high Maternal Mortality Rates (MMR) and the disparities include the following; -

- i. Declaration of state of emergency by the former President in 2005 which is being sustained by the current administration with human capital development (health, especially improving maternal health) as a focused area of the President Yar'adua's 7 points Agenda;
- ii. Increased budgetary allocation to the health sector at all levels of governance to ensure adequacy of Primary Health Care Facilities, and increase in the number health manpower at both rural/urban areas;
- iii. Aggressive advocacy campaign and consultations with policy makers/policy implementers, Traditional and Religious leaders at States and local government levels by stakeholders and particularly, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development since 2005;
- iv. Sustained nationwide public enlightenment campaign on the socio-cultural determinants of MMR since 2006 embarked upon by the Ministry;
- v. The positive outcomes of the above efforts today are the following: -
 - a. Increase to 15 in the number of state governments with draft legal/policy frameworks on improving maternal health;
 - b. Completion of a nationwide Baseline Survey on Maternal Health Indicators that is knowledge based, policy driven and action oriented in focus. The results/findings are currently being analyzed and the final report will be ready by December 2008 after peer review and stakeholders' forum to validate it at a workshop.

- c. Road map to improve the status of maternal, newborn and child health situation developed by the Federal Ministry of Health in 2005.

3.2 In recognition of the high U5MR and MMR, the government has since adopted the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses Strategy (IMCI) and recently Integrated Maternal New Born and Child Health Strategy (IMNCH) to reduce childhood morbidity and maternal mortality. To date the IMCI is being successfully implemented in most States.

The government has also shown a greater commitment to substantially reducing maternal, newborn and child mortality as well as meeting the MDGs targets. The implementation of some interventions calling for a scaled momentum includes exclusive breastfeeding, adequate complimentary feeding, oral dehydration therapy and the treatment of acute respiratory infection.

3.3 Priority interventions for morbidity and mortality reduction during the immediate post partum period include:

- Promotion, protection and support for exclusive breastfeeding
- Detection of complications (e.g breathing difficulties, infection, jaundice, complications of prematurity, birth injury and other malformations)
- General monitoring of the well being of the mother and neonate

Other areas of focus are:

- Infection prevention and control
- Rooming-in
- Information and counseling on home care
- Advice on danger signs
- Emergency preparedness and birth readiness
- Immunization
- Sleeping under ITN
- Proper cord and eye care
- Administration of Vitamin k
- Identifying and management of the low birth weight babies

3.3.1 Measures to scale up high impact intervention for maternal, newborn and child health include:

- **Integrated Management of Pregnancy and Child birth (IMPC)**

The 'Making Pregnancy Safer Initiative' through the Integrated Management of Pregnancy and Child birth (IMPC) offers opportunities for addressing early newborn care. The clinical guidelines for the integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) have also been expanded to include the new born in the first 7 days.

- **The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)**

The implementation of NHIS started in 2005 focusing initially on public sector employees. The potential for this scheme to improve access for the poor and informal sector is dependent on

how quickly it can build up a sizeable number of contributors. The NHIS was established to support secondary and tertiary health payment systems.

- **Health Service Delivery System**

Health services are provided through the various hospitals and clinics owned by Federal, State and Local governments. The Local government is responsible for Primary Health Care (PHC) which includes comprehensive health centres, primary health care centres, health clinics and health posts. Overall, the number of PHC facilities indicates reasonable availability with less regional disparities than is the case with hospitals. There were over 13,000 public sector PHC facilities and about 7000 private PHC facilities. Although the population/PHC facility ratios are higher in the north east, northwest and south – south, the disparities are not as marked. More importantly, there are relatively more public sector PHC facilities in the north compared to the south.

- **Health Management Information System**

The established Health Management Information System has been significantly revised to ensure that standard forms are available to both public and private health care. Information thus generated by the health system is designed to flow upwards from the community (collected by Junior Community health extension workers) through the local government and the state ministries of health to the Federal Ministry of Health. The information collated and exchanged is employed to improve the health care systems in the country.

- **Health Sector Reform Programme (HSRP)**

There is an ongoing Health Sector Reform Program in Nigeria (HSRP). The HSRP is the Federal Ministry of Health led fundamental realignment/transformation of the organization, management and financing of the Nigeria Health care system driven by its new bold vision and anchored within the wider regeneration of Nigeria as encapsulated in NEEDS 11.

The HSRP is the government's response to dealing with the outlined organizational, systemic and financial challenges facing the national health system. The comprehensive reform is structured along seven strategic thrusts:

- Improving stewardship role of government
- Strengthening the national health system and its management
- Reduction of disease burden
- Improving availability of health resources and their management
- Improving access to quality health services
- Improving consumer awareness and community involvement
- Promoting effective partnership, collaboration and coordination

Reducing the distance to health consumer's travel to the health service delivery point is another objective of the health sector reform programmes. The National Primary health care Development Agency is building and equipping an additional 200 PHC Centres across the country to improve consumer access and provide quality health care. The Debt Relief Fund (DRF) is being used to fund this activity in addition to other ancillary activities aimed at achieving the health related MDGs in Nigeria.

3.3.2: Steps taken or planned to increase the number of Primary health Care (PHC) facilities and their accessibility to rural areas include the following: -

- i. In the past five years, the Federal Government has provided funds each year to build model PHC Centers, 200 centers in 2001, 120 centers in 2004 and 61 centers in 2005. The new model PHC centre is to serve as apex health facility and referral centre within the ward. It is to coordinate and supervise all the health services within the ward, both at the facility and community level. These health centers are managed by their respective communities and emphasize community-based services. The communities are actively involved right from the construction stage of the health centers, and the centers are handed over to their Ward Development Communities (WDC) to ensure ownership and co-management of services.

The goal of the Ward Health System (WHS) is to improve and ensure sustainable health services with full and active participation of people at the grass root level.

The aims and objectives of the Ward Health system are as follows: -

- a). To promote full and active community participation at the grass root level in order to sustain an effective and efficient delivery of PHC services in the ward.
- b). To improve access to quality health care and ensure equity.
- c). To promote local initiatives and encourage poverty alleviation activities in the ward.
- d). To re-enforce political commitment to PHC at the grass root level i.e. the ward.
- e). To reduce morbidity and mortality especially amongst women of child bearing age and children under five years.

3.3.2.1 The manpower requirements for the ward health service is designed to be affordable to the Local Government Areas (LGAs) and the communities. At the community level, the community-based workers, Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), Village Health Workers (VHWs), and Junior Community Health Extension Workers (JCHEW) constitute the workforce while at the facility level, the Community Health Officers (CHOs), Midwives, Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs) and the Junior Community Health Extension Workers (JCHEWs) are the care providers.

The objectives of Maternal and Child Health Services under WHS are to: -

- Locate all pregnant women in the ward and provide Ante-Natal Care (ANC) services to them
- Prepare women for exclusive breast-feeding
- Identify women at risk and refer them appropriately
- Provide labour, delivery and post-natal services in the community
- Immunize pregnant women and children under 5.

- Provide appropriate case management for common childhood diseases using standing orders
- Identify danger signs of ill-health and advise on timely referral
- Motivate men and women for family planning services.

3.3.2.2 Opportunities offered by the Ward health System are as follows: -

1. **Local capacity** for community driven socio-economic development and poverty alleviation.
2. **Investment in health:** - Investing in health is good economics; increased productivity and socio-economic progress.
3. **Health Sector Reform** Community ownership and increased private sector involvement in health; vis: international agencies, NGOs and civil society organization; decentralization of management; efficient resource mobilization, utilization and accountability; equity and quality care.
4. **Effective collaboration** with stakeholders in PHC.

3.3.3 *Access to basic health facilities and care* has been greatly enhanced; given significant increase in health care centers at both urban/rural areas. Also increased are the numbers of health manpower revealed by table 21.3 below on the growth in the number of medical doctors, nurses, health educators, trained traditional birth attendants. This has progressively impacted on the quality of health/welfare of Nigerians.

Table 3 - Health Statistics

HEALTH	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
HEALTH STATISTICS							
Federal Gov. Allocation To Health (million)	16,180.00	20,445.2	44,651.5	63,171.2	39,685.5	52,406.1	77,498.8
Capital expenditure	7386.8	11579.6	20128	12608	6431	18207.7	21,835.8
Recurrent expenditure	8793.2	7386.8	24523.5	50563.2	33254.5	34198.5	55,663.0
Expenditure Ratios:							
Capital/Total	0.46	0.57	0.45	0.20	0.16	0.35	0.28
Recurrent/Total	0.54	0.36	0.55	0.80	0.84	0.65	0.72
Capital/Recurrent	0.84	1.57	0.82	0.25	0.19	0.53	0.39
HEALTH MANPOWER							
Doctors	31,359	33,106	35,215	38,355	40,159	41,935	44031
Nurses	123,390	125,240	109,790	128,559	136,751	158,920	166,866
BASIC HEALTH INDICATORS							
Life expectancy Male (in years)	56.27	-	-	-	-	-	57.91
Life expectancy Female (in years)	54.85	-	-	-	-	-	56.35

Source: - National Planning Commission: - Economic Performance Review, April/July 2006, p.17

3.3.4 HIV/AIDS

The Impact and results of the HIV/AIDS strategies, policies, mechanisms and programmes adopted at various levels among others includes: -

- i. Considerable awareness campaign on the HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in a consistent decline in HIV/AIDS prevalence rate. The first case of HIV/AIDS was confirmed and reported in Nigeria in 1986. Adult (15-49 years) HIV prevalence rate increased from 1.8 per cent in 1991 to 5.8 per cent in 2001. A consistent decline has

been observed from 2002. From a peak of 5.8 percent in 2001 the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate has declined to 4.4 per cent, a decline of 1.4 per cent as at 2007.

ii. The thrust and significant successes recorded so far in addressing the pandemic is for the most part attributable to the Strong political commitment which translated into greater support for intervention thereby resulting in the following:

- Gender Issues are mainstreamed into the eight objectives of the National Strategic Framework (NSF) to ensure adequate targeting through gender sensitive intervention at all levels and by all stakeholders. The same document also serves as a guide for both the State Strategic Plans. These documents are used by all stakeholders at the different levels in their National Response to ensure that interventions are carried out from the gender perspectives.
- To further ensure implementation, the gender technical working group meets regularly to track implementation and address matters arising at both the National and the State levels
- The Nigeria National Response Information Management Systems (NNRIMS): is a Monitoring and Evaluation tool that captures Data from all stakeholders providing services within the National HIV/AIDS Response. It was designed with indicators that address both sexes with a view to ensuring that both sexes are reached equally. This tool has given women visibility in terms of service delivery in the national response because all partners will have to make sure that their activities are disaggregated by sex and age. The total country coverage is made available to all stakeholders on monthly basis and it also form the background of the country report sent to the UN General Assembly
- Women are considered to be most at risk group, as such special attention and efforts have been placed by all stakeholders to reach out to the different – groups with Information, Care and Support, Prevention of mother to child transmission programs and income generation activities. Funds are regularly made available from the World Bank credit to ministries, NGOs, CBOs, Private sector and faith based organizations at the national, states and local governments to target women through women groups or those working with

women. The strategy has resulted in reaching out to more women with information and services that is specific to them and also addressing their problems. This has also resulted in the gradual decrease in the HIV/AIDS Sero prevalence rate experienced by Nigeria (5.8% in 2001 to 4.4 % in 2005)

- In order to give visibility to women issues, an umbrella body of support groups of positive women was set up as part of the Network of people living with HIV/AIDS, The body (ASHWAN) coordinates the activities of women groups and gives them visibility for proper targeting of women. They now enjoy funding and engagements by Government/donors to address women issues and to increase access to HIV/AIDS interventions at all levels. For 2003 -2005, the number of women support groups has increased at all levels and they now have state branches which are being coordinated by the national body that is duly registered. More women have been linked up with other organizations to access other services such as
 - Skills transfer in different trades
 - Nutrition
 - Micro credit
 - Treatment of opportunistic infections and home base care

3.3.4.1 Other initiatives includes:

- Behavioural Change Communication Strategy: A gender sensitive Behavioral Communication Change (BCC) strategy has been developed in collaboration with all stakeholders since 2004 and is widely used to target the different groups. As a result more women have been reached with the prevention information and strategies at the different levels using gender sensitive interventions.
- Initiation of the Bill on anti-discrimination and stigmatization.
- Nigeria was the first country in sub-Sahara Africa where the government committed some 10,000 adults and children on Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) using HER OWN

RESOURCES in 2002, using 25 hospitals as pilot sites. The number of ART sites has since increased from 25 in 2002 to 85 with about 69,000 people on treatment as at April 2006.

- Awareness of an adoption of preventive methods has been enhanced.
- Attitude towards infected people is changing; the stigma associated with the diseases is being addressed.
- Tuberculosis, the major killer of HIV/AIDS patients in Africa is also declining in Nigeria.

Table 3.1 below reveals the declining rate of HIV-AIDS in Nigeria

AIDS	1999	2001	2003	2005
National HIV/AIDS Prevalence rate	5.4	5.8	5.0	4.4
New infections	-	-	4.0	3.6
Median age at first sex	-	-	18.3	18.5
% of people who had ever used condoms	-	-	43.0	55.59
% of people with knowledge of HIV/AIDS	-	-	88.0	93.5
% of people ever tested for HIV/AIDS	-	-	6.8	10.8
% of people with positive attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS	-	-	54.9	65.2
% of people who had sex with multiple non-marital partners in the last 12 months	-	-	8.9	8.7
% of people with knowledge of prevention of HIV/AIDS	-	-	64.9	70.7

Source: - National Planning Commission: - Economic Performance Review, April/July 2006, p.21

3.3.4.2 Constraints

Despite the increased attention, the health of women is undermined by multiple factors, which include:

- i. Lack of access to health services in the sparsely populated areas where they live
- ii. Inadequate sanitation and nutrition and low levels of education and information.

- iii. Harmful Traditional Practices continue to plague the health of women compounded by violence.
- iv. Referral system is still poor and essential obstetrics care remains insufficient.
- v. Maternal mortality rates are still unacceptably high, that is, 704/1,500 per 100,000 live births
- vi. Poor logistics system for contraceptive management and distribution

4. Discrimination and Violence Against Women

4.1 Violence against women is a multifaceted problem and its manifestation is varied, perpetrated by the State, community and family members. Nigerian women are discriminated against and this is due to the institutionalised patriarchal ideologies, repressive laws and age-old customs, which manifest in poverty, the high rate of female mortality and the increase in various forms of violence. The 'family' is the prime place where most of the crimes are committed. Inadequate understanding of the root causes of all forms of violence against women and girls hinders efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. However, the violence is further made more difficult with non-reporting and proper documentation of incidences.

4.2 Discrimination and violence against women are evidenced in:

- a. Trafficking of women and children, child labour and exploitative migration
- b. Women are subjected to proof of their custodianship of children and dependants before they can receive tax clearance
- c. Families of men in management levels are entitled to medical treatment sponsored by the employers while the same treatment is not applicable to spouses and families of women in the same management level.
- d. Gender discrimination in appointment to strategic and sensitive political and elective positions
- e. Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria guarantees every male and female the same fundamental rights; but certain penal code provisions and procedures tend to undermine this equality.

4.3 There has been increased awareness of and commitments to preventing and combating violence against women by Governments, Civil Society Groups, Women Organizations, NGOs and Development Partners. Crisis and counseling centres have been established by both Government and NGOs and some organizations have provided support services to women victims of violence.

Progress is being made particularly regarding the more general acceptance of the existence of discrimination and violence against women and the raising of the awareness in the society. It is however certain that much needs to be done to prevent the problems, to change attitudes, to strengthen women and for the proper implementation of the law and the protection of the victims.

4.4 Other measures taken to eliminate discrimination and violence against women include acts like the following:

- a. Sometimes ago, the court of Appeal amply demonstrated its competence and effectiveness by declaring three customs in Enugu and Anambra States as discriminatory against women and violating of women's rights and human dignity
- b. Passing of the Act legislating against Trafficking in Women and Children
- c. Establishment of a National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters.
- d. Existence of safe houses for victims of domestic and sexual violence in some states of the Federation.
- e. The establishment of Gender Desks in the Police Stations nationwide. However, due to financial constraints no monitoring visits have been implemented;
- f. Police Officers have been sensitized and awareness created on the Beijing Platform for Action, African Plan of Action and CEDAW and other women empowerment frameworks.
- g. Legislative measures criminalizing the practices of Harmful Traditional Practices including widowhood practices and Female Genital Mutilation put in place;
- h. Legislations prohibiting early marriage (Kebbi, Niger States); Retention in schools and Against withdrawal of Girls from schools (Kano, Borno, Gombe and Bauchi States);
- i. Produced a compilation of the Constitution, National and State statutes and Regulations, Local Government Bye-laws, Customary laws and Religious laws, Policies and practices and Court decisions relating to the Status of Women and Children, applicable in Nigeria;
- j. Establishment of Legal Aid Council, which provides free legal counsel to women;
- k. A Bill on "Abolition of all forms of discrimination against women in Nigeria and other related matters, 2006" still before the National Assembly;
- l. A Bill on Elimination of Violence in the Society submitted by a Coalition of NGOs still before the National Assembly;
- m. A national women's rally demanding zero tolerance for violence against women was held in 2009;
- n. Nigeria 6th Periodic Report was defended June 2008 and efforts to domesticate CEDAW are being intensified.

4.5 Constraints: Despite these gains, socio-cultural attitudes, which are discriminatory and economic inequalities reinforce women's subordinate place in society. A coordinated multidisciplinary approach to responding to violence, which includes the health system, work places, the media, the education system, and the justice system, is still limited.

5. Women and Armed Conflict

5.1 Nigeria has witnessed both civil and armed conflicts, which continue to cause serious obstacles to the advancement of women. One of the manifestations of systematic violence against women has been in times of ethnic and civil conflicts, where women and girls are among the most vulnerable. References can be made to the very recently Jos and Bauchi civil/religious clashes, repression of women's protests in oil-producing Niger-Delta region, oil-pipe bunkering and vandalization, kidnappings and other crises.

5.2 Displacement compounded by loss of home and property, poverty, family disintegration and separation and other consequences of ethnic/civil conflicts is severely affecting the population, especially women and children. Even though women are discriminated against, no one disputes their capabilities and strengths, particularly at the time of crisis, to renew life. There has been increased agitations that human rights should be made the focus of Nigeria's political agenda.

5.3 The constraint with respect to this area is that women are not involved in the debate and consultations for peace.

6 Women and Economy

6.1 Chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution provides for equality and equal work for equal pay. The implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the provisions of CEDAW has considerably improved the status of women, raised consciousness about women's issues in organizations and male dominated institutions. The importance of a gender perspective in the development of a macro-economic policy is gradually being integrated into the economic system. Many women still work in the rural and informal sector as subsistence producers and in the service sector with low levels of income, little job and non-existent social security. Their participation in the labour force is constrained both by their generally low educational status and by discriminatory tendencies.

6.2 Women's contributions to the economy are rarely acknowledged. The failure to acknowledge their contributions perpetuates and reinforces barriers to their equal rights to access economic goods and services. These include:

- Compelling single girls to sign employment contracts agreeing to postpone marriage until the third anniversary of their employment.
- Compelling newly employed married women to sign job contracts agreeing not to have children until the third anniversary of their marriage.
- Employment of single girls as marketing officers with stringent schedules for sourcing customers and deposits with high targets which exposes them to sexual exploitation.

6.3 Gender specific division of labour is still very much common in Nigeria's employment pattern. Traditional perceptions and some sort of stereotypes have skewed women into some jobs, leaving them nearly absent in some others. Nigeria's Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2003 shows that more women are employed in sales and services and agriculture than in other sectors such as professional, managerial and technical jobs.

Table 6.1 Percent distribution of women employed by occupation, according to background characteristics

Background Characteristics	Professional/ Managerial/ Technical	Clerical	Sales & Services	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Domestic Service	Agriculture
Age							
15-19	2.5	1.7	53.3	9.6	5.5	4.6	22.8
20-24	7.3	2.1	53.8	13.9	3.8	1.5	17.5
25-29	7.7	1.8	57.3	14.6	2.0	0.5	16.1
30-34	7.8	1.7	56.6	11.2	2.1	1.1	19.6
35-39	9.9	2.0	60.7	6.5	2.0	1.1	17.8
40-44	11.2	1.3	54.4	3.0	1.7	1.3	26.7
45-49	9.0	0.5	55.4	2.0	1.8	0.3	30.9
Residence							
Urban	13.2	3.4	58.0	13.3	3.5	1.6	7.0
Rural	5.1	0.7	55.1	7.5	2.1	1.2	28.1
Region							
North Central	7.0	0.6	45.2	6.5	2.2	1.8	36.7
North East	4.6	1.2	63.5	11.4	1.1	2.0	16.2
North West	3.3	0.4	68.3	12.9	4.3	1.4	9.4
South East	15.2	3.7	45.1	8.1	2.1	0.3	25.5
South South	12.0	2.9	42.8	8.1	3.3	0.7	30.0
South West	11.5	2.7	61.9	7.8	1.7	1.6	12.7
Total	8.0	1.7	56.1	9.5	2.6	1.4	20.6

NDHS, 2003

6.4 Unemployment level is high among women. According to the NDHS 2003, percentage of men employed during the period of the survey was 70% while there were only 56% of women who were employed during the period. 29% of men were unemployed during that period while 44% of women were unemployed. Unemployment rate is higher among women because in most cases family responsibilities, employees' preference for male workers and some other discriminatory practices deny women access to gainful employment.

Table 6.1 below is Survey's key findings which shows that, there is a gender bias by type of income generating activity. More females (57.9 percent) engaged in fish smoking activity than males (42.1 percent). Participation in food processing activities showed females leading with about 75 percent compared with 25 percent for their male counterpart. Females in age group 30-44 years had a higher participation rate (63.5%) while for males it was group 60 years and above (53%).

Table 6.2: - Percent distribution of participants in income generating activities by age and gender.

		5-14 yrs	15-29 yrs	30-44 yrs	45-50 yrs	60+ yrs	Total
Fishing smoking	Female	48.3	58.8	63.5	58.9	47.0	57.9
	Male	51.7	41.2	36.5	41.1	53.0	42.1
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Food processing	Female	58.3	75.1	84.6	75.2	61.5	74.7
	Male	41.7	24.9	15.4	24.8	38.5	25.3
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Soap making	Female	43.2	62.4	63.4	43.6	46.4	55.6
	Male	56.8	37.6	36.6	56.4	53.6	44.4
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Crop farming	Female	39.0	41.4	36.6	36.3	26.8	37.3
	Male	61.0	58.6	61.4	63.7	73.2	62.7
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Fishing	Female	35.5	33.4	32.9	29.4	23.1	31.2
	Male	64.5	66.6	67.1	70.6	76.9	68.8
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Tailoring	Female	56.3	75.1	68.9	51.9	30.2	66.5
	Male	43.7	24.9	31.1	48.1	69.8	33.5
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Trading	Female	56.0	66.8	67.0	66.7	62.5	65.8
	Male	44.0	33.2	33.0	33.3	37.5	34.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Other activity	Female	47.6	46.2	34.2	27.8	29.7	40.7
	Male	52.4	53.8	65.8	72.2	70.3	59.3
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: - NBS, 2006 CWIQ Survey, Nigeria p. 213

According to the data published by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on Quick National Employment Generation Survey (QNEGS), 2006 and Social Statistics in Nigeria Report 2005, employment population of government parastatals, private and other establishments engaged in activities like agriculture, fishing, manufacturing services, public administration, education, health and social work, etc could be regular, casual, unpaid or self-employed.

Table 6.3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES BY SEX & ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (1990-2005)

	1990		2000		2001		2002	2003	2004	2005	7-YR AVG	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	M	M	M	M	F
AGRICULTURE	86.14	13.86	84.30	15.70	82.29	17.71	84.34	81.04	81.10	78.24	82.49	17.51
MANUFACTURING AND PROCESSING	88.53	11.47	89.50	10.50	89.60	10.40	90.01	87.66	87.81	87.70	88.69	11.31
BUILDING AND CONTRUCTION	94.01	5.99	94.02	5.98	94.56	5.44	93.73	94.24	93.37	93.41	93.91	6.09
HOTELS, RESTAURANTS & TOURISM	62.27	32.73	66.48	33.52	64.48	35.52	64.34	64.08	64.55	65.13	65.19	34.81
TRANSPORT	88.88	11.12	89.18	10.82	90.83	9.17	88.30	88.42	87.92	85.15	88.38	11.62
COMMUNICATIONS	83.57	16.43	84.87	15.13	68.95	31.05	68.71	72.96	70.92	71.31	74.47	25.53
EDUCATION SERVICES	50.00	50.00	48.43	51.57	58.71	41.29	58.79	60.01	65.89	62.35	57.74	42.26

MINNING AND QUARRYING	99.93	0.07	99.80	0.20	99.80 0.20	97.56 2.44	98.01 1.99	98.34 1.66	97.50 2.50	98.71 1.29
UTILITIES	99.26	0.74	98.86	1.14	98.86 1.14	98.88 1.12	98.91 1.09	98.93 1.07	98.52 1.48	98.89 1.11
BANKING	64.86	35.14	67.31	32.69	62.62 37.38	57.04 42.96	52.10 47.90	51.20 48.80	55.72 44.28	58.69 41.31
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADE	77.96	22.04	78.70	21.30	76.74 23.26	77.39 22.61	79.63 20.37	76.84 23.16	77.14 22.86	77.77 22.23
PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	83.75	16.25	78.97	21.03	82.17 17.83	76.71 23.29	79.82 20.18	76.54 23.46	77.18 22.82	79.31 20.69
REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	90.37	9.63	91.52	8.48	91.25 8.75	92.23 7.77	91.06 8.94	91.43 8.57	86.20 13.80	90.58 9.42
HEALTH	37.90	62.10	38.88	61.12	37.31 62.69	35.41 64.59	35.84 64.16	35.45 64.55	37.43 62.57	36.89 63.11
FINANCE	76.13	23.87	73.45	26.55	73.20 26.80	71.60 28.40	71.80 28.20	70.92 29.08	68.26 31.74	72.19 27.81
NATIONAL	81.03	18.97	81.43	18.57	80.72 19.28	79.95 20.05	79.22 20.78	79.05 20.95	78.94 21.06	80.05 19.95

Source: - NBS, QNEGS 2006 Survey, Nigeria p. 44

Table 6.2 shows the percentage distribution of the working population by employment status, sex and activity in the year 2005. Employment status here includes the regular employee, casual employee, unpaid workers and self-employed worker. Agriculture recorded the highest percentage with 65.8% of the working population of males under unpaid-worker status, with their female counterpart having also the highest with 48.7%. Self-employment produced the highest with 54.2% also under Agriculture, while the female self-employed had the highest with 45.8% under wholesale and retail activity. In a reverse situation, however, employment activity like electricity, gas, water, financial services, mining, real estate and public administration, showed the lowest working population under causal, unpaid and self-employed workers with 0.00% each.

6.5 Constraints

- Women's full and equal rights to own land and other properties are not recognized yet in legislation.
- National and State budgets are still largely gender-blind
- Absence of a national legislation for the protection of pregnant women and nursing mothers in employment
- Inadequate crèches at work places

- e. Denial of tax relief and sundry benefits to female workers like their male counterparts
- f. Gender stereotype and attitudinal practice by employers

7. Women in Power and Decision-making

7.1 Nigeria recognizes that democracy and good governance requires that men and women have unrestricted access to spaces of power where they can realize their political value where their individual demands and preferences can be manifested and satisfied.

Section 42 of the 1999 Constitution guarantees every Nigerian (women and men), the rights to freedom from discrimination and freedom of association, which by extension includes political association and participation by all on level ground. The same Constitution stipulates that free and fair elections be conducted with utmost transparency and security of all participants.

Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality still persists; only very little improvement in the level of involvement of women in decision-making and still a long way to go to the minimum 30-35% measure. There is however token representation in the political sphere, indicating a gradual improvement from what obtained about two decades ago.

7.2 Measures to Accelerate Women's Participation in Power and Decision-making

A number of measures have been taken by government, CSOs and political parties to give effect to the provisions of 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the area of decision-making. These include:

a). Progressive agitation for 30% Affirmative Action in favour of women to bridge gender gaps in both elective and appointive posts at all levels by 2015 which led to the Increase in the number of female appointed to key portfolios such as First Female Speaker of the House of Representative (though short lived), State Deputy Governors and Speakers, First Female Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Ministers of Environment, Health, Education, Works and Housing, and Heads of agencies such as Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Bank of Industry, (BOI), and others.

This has also translated into gains for women in the military and para-military set ups as more women are being promoted into the top level decision making positions. The principle of Affirmative Action has also translated into gains in the area of judicial appointments. Most of the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory judiciaries now have women as High Court Judges, accounting for about 30% of the total number of Judges in the Country.

- b). 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;
- c). Political party commitments to promoting women's participation through the waiver of participation fees;
- d). Strategic design and constant airing of media messages (print and electronic) in English and other local languages as well as IEC materials drumming up support for women political office seekers,
- e). The adoption of the National Gender Policy and its subsequent launch by the former President, Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2007 with specific objectives, targets and monitoring framework to pursue the realization of the above policy declaration. It is particularly meant to guide activities towards eliminating discrimination and improving the participation of women in national life,
- f). The setting up of a Joint Donor Trust Fund for women political activities.
- g). Advocacy/sensitisation and lobby at all levels to ensure increase women's involvement including media mobilisation.

The tables and charts below demonstrate a comparison of the figures of elected women between 1999 and 2007. From these figures there has been a steady increase of 2% in the numbers of women over the past three general elections. There is no doubt that, over the years the stakes of partisan politics in Nigeria have become higher and the battles tougher for women. These increases no matter how marginal attests to the fact that women are determined to overcome these challenges and register their participation and contributions to Nigeria's democratic governance. These figures also affirmed the impact of programmes to support women while highlighting the need to sustain and fine-tune future programmes in order to improve on the present gains.

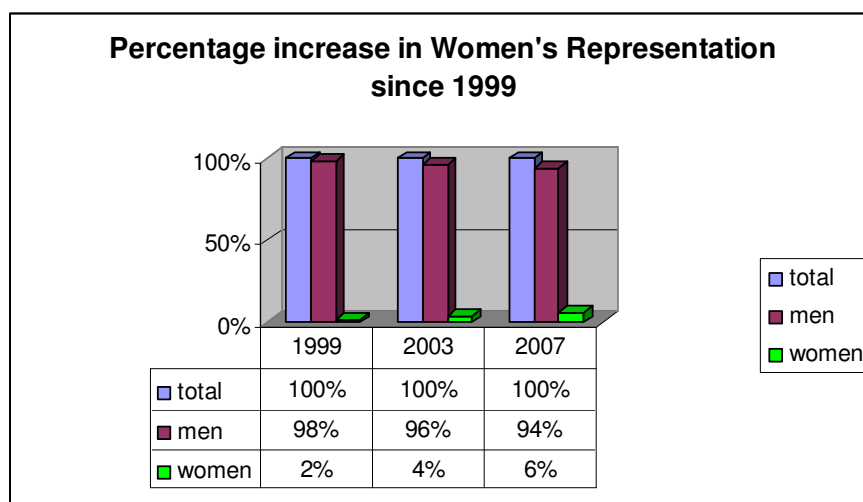
Table7.1: The table shows a progressive increased participation of females in appointive/elective positions between 1999 - 2007

Office Type	No. Available	1999		No. Available	2003		No. Available	2006		No. Available	2007	
		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female
<i>President</i>	1	1	0	1			1			1		
<i>Vice President</i>	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
<i>Senate</i>	109	106	3	109	106	3	109	102	4	109	100	9
<i>Senate President</i>	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	0
<i>Deputy Senate President</i>	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	
<i>House of Representatives</i>	360	348	12	360	338	22	360	339	21	360	335	25
<i>Speaker</i>	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	
<i>Deputy Speaker</i>	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	
<i>Governors</i>	36	36	0	36	36	0	36	36	1	36	36	0
<i>Deputy Governors</i>	36	35	1	36	34	2	36	32	4	36	30	6
<i>State House of Assembly</i>	1002	990	12	1,002	964	38	1,002	981	21	1,002	948	54
<i>State House of Assembly Speaker</i>	36	35	1	36	34	2	36	35	1	36	35	1
<i>State House of Assembly Deputy Speaker</i>	36	35	0	36	35	1	36	35	1	36	35	1
<i>Cabinet Ministers</i>	49	45	4	49	41	8	49	39	10	41		8
<i>Perm Sec.</i>	40	32	8	40	28	12	40	27	13	39		
<i>Snr.. Special</i>										14	12	2

<i>Assistants</i>												
<i>Special Assistant</i>												
<i>Special Advisers</i>									7	6	1	
<i>Local Govt. Chairman</i>	774			774			774		774			
<i>Councilors</i>	8,953			8,953			8,810	143	8,953			

Source: National Gender Data Bank of the National Centre for Women Development. Abuja, November, 2007

Figure 1 Percentage increase in Women's Representation since 1999



Source UNIFEM , 2007

UNIFEM records show that the gender gap is fast changing even though variations exist across the nation. The national gender gap average is 16.59% but it is as high as 48% in Sokoto and Zamfara. The trend of slight improvement in some segments of the country is certain to have positive effect on women as they now have role models of their gender in those who have attained prominence in politics or business.

7.3 Constraints:

Various measures and initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation in decision-making are being hindered by:

- Absence of legislative and administrative policy to back at least 30% Affirmative Action for women in all facets of national development
- Absence of a critical mass of women in decision-making bodies
- Entrenched harmful cultural and religious attitudes and practices
- Violent nature of politics
- Patriarchal political system/Male dominance/preference in politics
- Misconceptions about women in politics and public life
- Social barriers for married and single women
- Disadvantaged economic status of women
- Lack of human and financial resources for training and advocacy for political careers
- Community efforts to empower women in politics are still inadequate.

8. *Human Rights of Women*

8.1 The International obligations for the promotion and protection of the rights of women arise from Nigeria's commitment to various instruments. The most important of these instruments today for Nigerian women are the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Nigeria signed in 1985, ratified in 1989 and its Optional Protocol signed in 2000, the Beijing Platform for Action, the African Plan of Action and the Beijing +5 Outcome Documents.

8.2 While there is an increasing acceptance of gender equality, equity and gender mainstreaming concepts and principles, discriminatory legislations as well as harmful traditional and customary practices continue to impair the enjoyment of women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

To further attest to its commitment to this definition and the constitutional provisions, the Nigerian Government has signed, ratified, and domesticated in certain instances, all international and sub-regional treaties and agendas that uphold the principles and ideals of non-discrimination, promotion and protection of women's rights as human rights as well as the pursuit of women's empowerment and promoting gender equality.

The Federal Ministry of Justice is the lead agency charged with establishing mechanisms to guarantee basic human rights protection and access to justice. Other law enforcement and regulatory institutions that contribute directly to the protection of citizens from discrimination include the Nigeria Police, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Law Reform Commission, Legal Aid Council and the National Agency for the Prevention of Trafficking in

Persons (NAPTIP). The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Code of Conduct Bureau and Federal Character Commission all work to compliment government's efforts to operate a sound justice administration system that guarantees freedom from discrimination.

8.3 Some Progress Recorded

- i. The enabling environment created by the democratic nature of the nation's polity has given rise to a vibrant civil society, engaged in the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls to freedom from all forms of discrimination. Pertinent action include the design and implementation of programmes and activities aimed at challenging structures and systems that often negate the definition of non-discrimination, disempower women and promote inequalities. The women machinery at the federal level has also been very active in the quest for gender equity and equality.
- ii. In June 2006, the Nigeria Police launched the Human Rights Desk in all Police stations. Police officers has been receiving human rights training to enable them uphold human rights tenets in their dealings with the public regardless of gender and affirm in practice, the principles of non-discrimination.
- iii. The adoption of a National Gender Policy with its Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

8.4 Some of the constraints affecting the promotion of women's rights are:

- i. The implication of ratification of some international conventions/frameworks are not known or understood by law enforcement officers and their agency, hence they are less sensitive to the application of women's legal protection
- ii. The contradictions and inconsistencies arising with the application of Nigeria's three legal systems – Statutory, Customary and Religious laws
- iii. Most men and women remain unaware and insensitive to the legal rights of women
- iv. The cumbersome nature of the law and the delay in the administration of justice
- v. Many policy makers assume that gender equality is only for women

9. *Women and the Media*

9.1 The media is male-centred sector and in most cases the activities of women tend to be treated as subjects for gossip. With a few women working in the media, it has been difficult for the few to attract the media's attention. Recently, a small number of women have advanced into politics department of journalism, which is very encouraging.

9.2 The emergence of information communication technology is revolutionizing the industry. Knowledge of information technology constitutes a source of capital and power.

Unfortunately, most Nigerian women and girls are yet to fully project themselves into this technological environment, thus limiting their social and economic advancement, as well as contribution to national development.

9.3 The participation of women in both prints and electronics is about 37.8% with more in the private sector. The role of the media in changing public attitudes and perception of women is decisive and critical to the empowerment of women. The media represented the most powerful tool for achieving equality goals.

9.4 **Constraints**

- i. Negative, violent and/or degrading images of women, including pornography, stereotyped portrayals etc. have increased in different forms, using new communication technologies in some instances.
- ii. Shortage of resources, high illiteracy rates, the lack of access and opportunities, poor computer literacy and language barriers prevent a lot of women from using the information and communication technologies, including the Internet
- iii. Ownership of Radio/Television and Newspaper by men

10. **Women and the Environment**

10.1 Over 80% of rural women obtain almost all their resources from their environment, yet they receive little support in their efforts to rectify the imbalance in the ecosystems or the loss of biodiversity. Integrating gender in natural resources planning and management is the core of sustainable development strategy. The Federal Ministries of Women Affairs and Environment, with the support of civil society organizations have progressively criticized actions that damage the environment and have carried out sensitization programmes on environmental protection and management.

The Government also supports gender perspectives in programmes related to environment, but not much has been achieved. There is still gap in public awareness of environmental risks faced by women and of the benefits of gender equality for promoting environmental protection.

With the climate change and global warming, involvement of women in environmental sustainable development cannot be overemphasized.

10.2 Key measure taken to protect women and the environment include: Capacity Building and awareness creation programmes on effect of Pollution, Drought, Deforestation, climate change and others.

10.3 Constraints:

Women's limited access to technical skills, resources and information, in particular in rural areas due to among others gender inequality, have impeded women's involvement and effective participation in decision-making regarding the sustainable environment. Others include:

- i. The non representation of women in high-level decision making organs in the environment sector
- ii. The rights to land are governed by customary laws, which are unfavourable to women
- iii. Lack of sustainable alternatives for women in general and the inability of the poor in particular to procure renewable energy sources such as solar energy
- iv. The adverse effects of population movement on the environment
- v. Inability to promote functional literacy on environmental problems

11. The Girl Child

With the signing and ratification of United Nations Child Rights Convention and its domestication through the Child Rights Act, 2003 Nigeria has demonstrated her commitment to the protection and promotion of children's rights, particularly the girl-child.

The provision of the Child Rights Acts supersedes all other legislations relating to the rights of the child in the country. At the institutional level, a National Girl child Education Implementation Committee was established to coordinate, advice government and monitor implementation of the Child Rights Act in the country.

Increased awareness of the needs of the girl child has not yet resulted in sufficient provision of necessary information and services. Despite the legal protection, the girl child still suffers from sexual abuse and exploitation. The girl child continues to be faced with harmful traditional practices and attendant problems such as early marriage which often leads to Vesico Vaginal Fistulae (VVF).

11.1 The survival and full development of the Nigerian child appear far from being realized with increased rate of violation of the right of the child to life, education, health, and good nutrition with the attendant poverty and high morbidity and mortality rates. The emerging issues of HIV/AIDS scourge, child labor, trafficking and prostitution, increasing conflicts and excruciating impact of the debt burden on the nation's economy combined to threaten the future of the Nigerian child.

With the domestication of the Child's Rights Convention, through the Child Rights Act and the formulation of the National Policy on Child; and recent measures taken by the government to specifically address the girl child concerns

11.2 The measures/provisions to empower the girl-child include:

- Legislative measures to ensure right of expression to the girl-child;
- Legislation against publications that promote pornography and immorality
- Provision of Child Rights Act, 2003 which recognizes zero - eighteen years for a child.
- Protection and support for orphans and vulnerable girls and adolescents driven by poverty and deprived of protective family environment (education, health care, nutrition and psycho-social);
- Establishment of a temporary shelter for women and girls victim of violence and abuse to provide guidance and counseling, facilitate access to justice and basic needs
- Legislation against withdrawal of girls from school for the purpose of marriage, although, early marriage still occurs and ranges from 5.4 in the South west - 33.3% in the North west region.
- Girls Education Project has lead to an increase of 10 -15% in primary school enrolment for girls sand sharp drop in withdrawal rate for girls particularly in the Northern states;
- National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons was established by an Act in 2003, vesting it with the responsibility to for investigation and prosecution of offenders thereof and the counseling and rehabilitation for the victims;
- The Revised National Policy on Education (1998) encourages girls to embrace technical education;
- The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, though not restricted to girls, provides for compulsory education for all children from primary to junior secondary school level. It has special emphasis on dismantling cultural and other militating factors to girls' education plus incentives for girls' education.
- The establishment of scholarship scheme by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs for the disadvantaged children, particularly the girl child???
- States' laws and edicts on development of the girl child;
- States' laws against girls' withdrawal from school for marriage.
- Establishment of States Task Forces for development and promotion of the welfare of the girl-child;
- Establishment of Unity Schools for girls in each State of the Federation.

11.3 Several Civil Society Organizations are also addressing the needs of the girl-child particularly the handicapped and vulnerable children.

Part Three: Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women

The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social development (FMWASD), is the national women/gender machinery situated at the highest level of Government and replicated in all the 36 States of the Federation. Since its creation in 1995, the Ministry has been working towards securing sectoral and other stakeholders commitments to the implementation of the various women's instruments and frameworks with a view to enhance institutionalization of gender mainstreaming. These include the establishment of Sectoral Gender Desk Officers, the introduction of Women Development Coordinators (WDC) at the 774 Local Government Areas to facilitate coordination of women's development activities across sectors at the grassroots level.

The National Centre for Women Development (NCWD), a Parastatal under the Ministry has also contributed to gender policy development and mainstreaming in the country. Its present effort at generating a gender data bank will provide gender disaggregated data, policy analysis, qualitative and quantitative indicator for monitoring gender equality.

Inadequate financial and technical expertise are the main obstacles confronting the Federal/State Ministries of Women Affairs, the Women Development Coordinators (WDC) and the Sectoral Gender Units. This is further exacerbated by lack of gender disaggregated data and misconceptions and poor understanding of gender concepts among government structures. The sectoral ministries are equally affected.

B. Obstacles Encountered and Remaining Gaps and Challenges:

Despite this constraint, in relation to the 12 critical areas of concern, the successful actions taken by the Government and other actors to achieve the objectives of the Platform for Action and other key issues are:

- i. Lack of capacity technical expertise on gender at all levels and in all sectors
- ii. The reform in the UN systems has further impacted negatively on gender.
- iii. Inadequate budgetary allocations to women machineries
- iv. Non implementation of gender sensitive budgets
- v. Poor sectoral understanding of the importance of gender sensitive programmes/projects
- vi. Poor involvement of women in policy decisions that affect them
- vii. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have not worked due to lack of funds and ignorance of development sectors of their responsibilities
- viii. Insufficient number of technical analysts in every sector who understand gender equality development
- ix. Inability to collate gender disaggregated data because gender is not mainstreamed in all government and non-governmental policies

C. Institutional Arrangement

The **national mechanisms** that exist for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women are:

- i. Federal and State Ministries of Women Affairs
- ii. National Centre for Women Development (NCWD)
- iii. Senate Committee on Women Affairs
- iv. House Committee on Women Affairs
- v. Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Women Affairs
- vi. Sectoral Gender Desk Officers in line ministries and parastatals
- vii. Civil Society Groups
- viii. Development partners

- The **mandate** of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA) as national women machinery and its State counterparts (SMWA) is to promote and coordinate gender equality and women empowerment agenda within and across sectors. They all derive their resources from the Federation account and receive support from Development Partners.
- All the Agencies have **working arrangements/relationships** with and among each other in view of the cross cutting nature of gender issues.
- The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA) and its States counterpart are **located** at the highest apex of both Federal and State Governments manned by Ministers and State Commissioners respectively who have access and participate at the Federal and States Executive Councils' **decision-making processes**.
- The **main partners** of the national mechanisms are the relevant sectoral Ministries and Agencies, States Counterparts, African Regional and Sub-regional bodies, UN Agencies/Commonwealth, bilateral donors and other development partners
- The **networks established** are in the areas of policy development, programmes development and implementation, capacity building, running advocacy campaigns and building coalitions, monitoring and evaluation. The networks are however weak in terms of effectiveness.
- The **resources** the national mechanisms have in terms of **staff and financial support** are grossly inadequate from the national budgets.
- The **monitoring** mechanisms established to measure progress in implementation are:
 - The annual National Council of Women Affairs Forum
 - The National Gender Policy Implementation plan with Monitoring Indicators
 - The Parliament

- The establishment of the National Gender Committee (NGC) and the National Technical Team of Experts (NTTE)
 - The existence of the Planning, Research and Statistics Department of the national and states machinery for women.
 - The National Centre for Women Development (NCWD).
 - The Federal Office of Statistics (FOS)
 - The CSOs
 - The Development partners/UN System
- The **accountability** for promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women established across Ministries and Agencies is the hosting of rotational Annual Ministry of Women Affairs Council with stakeholders in attendance (National and State Governments, CSOs and NGOs) in attendance. There are also periodic meetings held with the focal points for submission of reports, sharing of best practices and identifying constraints and challenges. The designed National Gender Policy Strategic Development Results Framework is a product of an extensive consultative process aimed at enhancing policy implementation, monitoring and accountability.
- Efforts are also in place to reform and engender the Federal Audit Law, with a view to promote gender mainstreaming and accountability across sectors.
- **Coordination** is achieved by the Women machinery through requests of stakeholders' reports on the implementation of the 12 critical areas of Beijing Platform of Action and CEDAW
- The **role** the highest level of Government, that is, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA) plays is: initiating policies, strategic planning, collect and collate data and develop reports on behalf of the country. The Ministry is also the convener and coordinator of the annual council meetings, serves as the secretariat, produces and disseminates the final reports and outcome of the meetings.
- The level of **capacity** achieved for promoting gender mainstreaming is the occasional training of staff of Women Affairs Department; the Sectoral Gender Desk Officers in line Ministries at Federal level, Directors and Desk Officers of Women Affairs Department at the State level.
- The **mechanism** was through training workshops facilitated by Gender and Development Experts, sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs with support from MDGs office, UNIFEM, UNFPA and UNCEF.
- The **remaining challenges** in the area of capacity building are:
- Strong commitment/political will

- Implementation of the National Gender Policy Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan
 - Paucity of funds
 - Changing attitudes, values and behaviour
 - Coordination, networking and monitoring
 - Non-professionalization of the women machinery/high Staff turnover across sectors and in all states Ministry of Women Affairs.
 - Yes, the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) has mandate to developed set of **indicators** for all sector. In addition, the adopted National Gender Policy Strategic Implementation Framework and Plan comes with sets of indicators to monitor the Policy implementation.
- The **gaps and challenges** that remain in relation to data and statistics are:
- Poor sector based gender indicators and statistics
 - Weak capacity to formulate and collate gender sensitive data and indicators
 - Poor funding to generate gender data and statistics
 - Inadequate gender disaggregated databanks
 - Poor coordination and monitoring mechanisms for systematic reporting
 - Non implementation of gender budget initiatives
- The areas where **lack of sex-disaggregation** is still a problem are:
- For engendering National/States development policies, plans and programmes
 - In the evaluation of the scope, contents and status of sectoral policies
 - In the management of human resources
- Areas where **new types of data** need to be collected are:
- Women with Disabilities, Destitute women, female Headed Households,
 - Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) patients across the country – those yet to be repaired, those repaired (both successful and unsuccessful), those exposed to income generation skills and successfully reintegrated into their communities
 - Girls on the Street
- The **national statistical office and the statistical units in line ministries** are aware, committed and capable of providing the required data if provided a pep-up training in gender approach and provided sufficient resources to execute the assignment
- The sectors where sex disaggregated data are being used effectively to inform policy-making and planning are:

- Health – for HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, Reproductive health issues, Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs), National Immunization Programme, Guinea worm eradication,
- Education – School enrolment from primary to tertiary institutions,
- Agriculture – which resulted to the establishment of Women in Agriculture Division
- Income generating activities

Part Four: Main Challenges and Actions to Address Them

a). The following summary of main persistent or new challenges in line with the National Gender Policy Strategic Framework and Plan constitutes a national framework for further actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full implementation of equality in the next five years (2008 – 2013).

- i. Change perception of the roles of women and increase respect for women and girls rights ;
- ii. Women and Child Rights Promoted and protected (Legal and Constitutional Reforms);
- iii. Reduction in the overall poverty index for women;
- iv. Enhanced National accountability to gender equality (women and girls);

b). Challenges:

- i. Gender dimension is not factored into macroeconomic policies
- ii. Situation of rural women (Women are concentrated in the informal, rural and subsistence sectors)
- iii. Sectoral, Legislators and political parties capacities to mainstream gender and promote women's empowerment
- iv. Non-institutionalization of gender sensitive budgeting
- v. Low budgetary allocation to women machineries.

Poverty is a serious challenge facing Nigeria in her pursuit for a sustainable socio-economic growth. And like most countries of the world, she is committed to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and other instruments for which poverty reduction and gender equality are areas of concern. About 70% of Nigerians live in poverty and with vast majority being women and girls, who make up about 70% of the rural poor. These women and girls work in the informal economy with lower incomes, greater financial risks, lower standards of human development and greater social exclusion compared to those who work in the formal sector.

This social condition is in contrast to the country's vast wealth and therefore calls for a reformation of the economy for enhanced economic growth. With the advent of democratic governance in 1999, the Government in collaboration with relevant institutions and agencies

reviewed and harmonized past poverty alleviation programmes, which hitherto overlooked gender concerns.

To adequately address the issue of poverty, the Government in 2007, came up with a seven-point agenda aimed at improving the quality of life of Nigerians and also create social safety nets for the vulnerable groups. Its main focus areas include: Human development (education and health), Physical infrastructure, Peace and security, macroeconomic stability/service delivery, Regional development, Poverty reduction, employment. It is hoped that, a united and secure society underpinned by strong democratic principles and a modern and industrialized economy, environmentally responsible is key to regional and global economy development.

c). New Commitment/Plans for Future Actions and Initiatives:

Other further actions the Government intends to fully implement the Platform for Action and Outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly (Beijing +10) beyond 2010 are:

- i. Review of school curricula from primary from tertiary institutions;
- ii. Renewed mass campaigns on the empowerment of women;
- iii. Increased partnerships with men and men based organizations;
- iv. Promotion of women reproductive health rights;
- v. Legal reforms and women's representation in decision-making positions;
- vi. Domestication of CEDAW provisions to provide legal status for the demand towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination/violence against women;
- vii. ICT and Entrepreneurship development for women;
- viii. Increased budgetary allocation/creation of special funds to fast track the implementation of the women agenda programme;
- ix. Gender sensitive early warning system;
- x. Improve situation of rural women
- xi. Institutional gender assessment.

d. Challenges to the New Commitment:

- i. Funding
- ii. Non-Domestication of CEDAW provisions

- iii. Persistence cultural and traditional practices harmful to women
- iv. Women's inability to access justice
- v. Poor Integration of gender considerations into legislation and sectoral policies
- vi. Technical skill
- vii. Men's indifference attitudes.

Despite the equality of men and women guaranteed in Chapter IV of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, discriminatory clauses abound. The international human rights instruments impose a duty on States to guarantee equality of rights between women and men. Yet, some laws, policies and certain practices within the society indicate obvious inequalities. Women's rights has continue to be violated as a result of contradictions and inconsistencies arising from the application of the country's three legal systems – Statutory, Customary and Religious laws.