



**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (Beijing + 10)
Decade Review of the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action:
Outcome and the Way Forward
Addis Ababa**

12-14 October 2004

1. The African ministers in charge of gender and women affairs met at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (Beijing+10), in Addis Ababa, October 2004 to review the status of implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action. They reaffirmed and renewed their commitment to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment as stated in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 and related UN and international, regional and subregional agreements as stated in this document on the **Outcome and the Way Forward**.

1. Context

2. Over the past decade, international commitments to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment have been reaffirmed in different UN Conferences, including those contained in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action (BPFA). The world's leaders have agreed to take these commitments forward in the Millennium Declaration and to set targets for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Beijing+10 review process coincides with the ICPD+10 and MDG+5 review, offering an opportunity for greater coherence and focus on gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women in all areas. The Beijing +10 review process is about accountability for the delivery on existing commitments and concrete steps forward to ensure gender equality, equity and women's empowerment, in all areas.
3. The decade following the adoption of the Beijing PFA has witnessed many changes in the African continent, including the development of regional declarations and mechanisms on gender and development. The advances achieved in democracy and peace fronts at the national level have contributed to positive change at the regional level. The creation of the African Union (AU), which is committed to the principle of gender equality and equity, provides further opportunities for increased participation of women in national, subregional and regional decision-making. The AU Commission was formed on a 50/50 gender parity basis. The first Speaker of the AU Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is a woman and at least one in every five national members of the PAP is a woman. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa has been adopted. In 2004, African Heads of State adopted a Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, which obliges States to respect normative standards on women's human rights. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is also expected to enhance women's human rights through the social development indicators included in its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).
4. The new impetus for regional integration is improving the capacity of Africa to collectively negotiate new international trade agreements, including those conducted under the World Trade Organization (WTO). Should current negotiations on the abolition of agricultural subsidies succeed, this would help ensure fair competition for Africa's agricultural products – the bulk of which are produced by African women, who would thus be able to escape economic marginalization.
5. Efforts to promote gender equality, equity and women's empowerment in Africa gained momentum on several fronts over the past 10 years thus setting the stage for further gains. 51 of the 53 African Member States have ratified Convention on the Elimination

of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), known as the women's international bill of rights, and 17 have signed the Optional Protocol. Some countries have aligned their national legislation to the provisions of CEDAW. Attempts are underway to engender poverty surveys conducted during the poverty reduction strategies (PRS) and process, which will demonstrate the feminization of poverty and provide the basis for stronger gender analysis in macroeconomic and socio-economic policies. The consideration of gender in some countries' budgets has triggered more transparent processes for gender responsiveness in public expenditures. Information available on gender responsive budgets (GRB) and the inclusion of women's unpaid work in national accounts are likely to have tremendous impact on resource allocation in the context of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the MDGs. In addition, some countries have managed to reduce gender differentials in education through affirmative action and gender-aware policies aimed at improving enrolment, retention and quality of education for girls.

6. However, and in spite of African women's mobilization, advocacy, and increased representation in governance at regional and national levels, normative gains are not yet reflected in substantial changes in women's lives. African women, especially those living in rural communities and those with disabilities, still face daunting challenges. Women's limited access to productive resources including land, water, energy, credit, means of communication, education and training, health and adequately remunerated employment has contributed to the situation wherein more African women live in absolute and relative poverty today than 10 years ago. The cumulative effects of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, food insecurity, low economic productivity, low levels of education and the upsurge of sexual violence have left African women and girls vulnerable and with considerable challenges. Women are the most exposed to HIV/AIDS infection due to extreme poverty and their responsibility in caring for infected and affected persons. Even in countries where overall HIV prevalence is low or has been reduced, the number of infected and affected women is still on the rise. Women and girls continue to be seriously affected by gender-specific violations of their human, sexual and reproductive rights. Indeed, situations of armed conflict take the heaviest toll on women and have become increasingly marked by rape and other forms of sexual violence of which they are victims. Women and girls continue to risk death from maternal mortality with 1 in every 16 pregnancies in Sub-Saharan Africa resulting in death.
7. Ten years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and BPFA, governments have recognized that passing laws and policies alone does not bring about substantial gender equality and equity or respect for women's human rights. The national and subregional reports on the 10 year review of BPFA from both governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) identified the need to bridge the gap between commitments and their implementation. The purpose of this ministerial statement is to renew commitment to gender equality, equity and empowerment of women and to suggest concrete steps to address the gaps between commitment and implementation.

2. **Achievements and Remaining Challenges in the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action**

8. A critical link must be drawn between the Beijing and Cairo Platforms for Action and the other frameworks for development planning, funding and delivery at the national, subregional and regional levels, such as the targets set in the Millennium Development Goals and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. The persistent challenge is to demonstrate through analyses and up-to-date data the centrality of gender equality and equity in the PRSPs, the MDGs, as well as policies and programmes of development. It is no coincidence that the greatest progress has been registered in those aspects of the BPFA that have become prioritised in national development plans and whose correlation with the MDGs is most obvious.
9. The subregional and national reports prepared for the decade review of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action indicate that there have been some success and achievements in promoting gender equality, equity and empowering women in Africa in the areas outlined below.

Poverty and gender

10. Between 1995-2002, 48 African countries prepared national plans of action for poverty reduction that included gender concerns. Furthermore, some African countries have strategies for supporting women's entrepreneurship through micro-credit schemes and capacity-building in enterprise management.
11. However, while the number of people living in poverty dropped in all developing regions in the world between 1990 and 2000, it actually rose, in Africa, by over 82 million. African women constitute the majority of both urban and rural poor (over 70 per cent in some countries). Unequal power relations between women and men, the skewed distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work, unequal inheritance rights in some countries, food insecurity and lack of secure access to land, property, and other productive resources, as well as inadequate support for women's entrepreneurship are some of the major causes of women's poverty. Widespread poverty among women also affects other critical areas, such as women's health and education.

Education and training for women

12. During the last decade, there have been improvements in basic education in many countries. A number of countries report increased gross and net enrolment ratios for both boys and girls, while others have almost reached 100 per cent enrolment for boys and girls. At the secondary level, a few countries report having achieved parity between boys and girls or reducing gender gaps. Many African countries have made progress in reducing illiteracy levels, particularly among women and girls.
13. However, despite these improvements, Africa has still, by far, the lowest number of children in schools. Only 58 per cent of children of school age are actually enrolled in school. With few exceptions, educational statistics show large gender disparities. Female-to-male school enrolment, retention and completion favour boys in a majority of countries. Moreover, African women have the highest illiteracy rates in the world, which in some countries are rising. In addition, gender disparities in schooling undermine national efforts for human capital development, thereby slowing down the pace of economic and social development. At the tertiary and university levels the low

participation for young women continues. Gender gaps are particularly pronounced in science, mathematics and computer sciences.

Human Rights of Women

14. In the last decade, progress towards the promotion and protection of the human rights of women has concentrated on strengthening legal and policy frameworks. At the regional level, the AU has adopted the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa, and 31 countries have signed while 4 have ratified it. At the subregional level, intergovernmental bodies (ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, IGAD, ECCAS, COMESA) have adopted gender policies, declarations and guidelines for the promotion and protection of the human rights of women. At the national level, some governments have enacted or amended legislation on women's human rights and some have adopted constitutions that take on board gender equality. These legal instruments support the creation of an enabling environment for the realization of women's human rights.
15. Nonetheless, many challenges remain. The domestication of international instruments on women's and girls' rights and the enforcement of existing legislation remain low. Twenty-two countries have not signed the women's protocol to the African Charter, and 49 countries have not yet ratified it. Women's and girls' access to the justice system is limited by legal illiteracy, lack of resources, and, gender insensitivity and bias of law enforcement agents. Violence against women and girls, including rape and domestic violence, is rampant, particularly in conflict zones. Some cultural and traditional practices continue to inhibit progress in promoting women and girls' human rights. In some countries, women are denied equal rights to inherit property. Furthermore, public awareness of women's and girls' human rights and the obligation to ensure the enjoyment of their rights remains low. In some countries, several sources of (modern, religious, traditional) laws continue to govern the lives of women and restrict the enjoyment of their rights.

Conflict Prevention, Peace building and Reconstruction

16. Women's voices in conflict prevention and peace building are only faintly listened to often leaving them at the margins of peace processes. Dilemmas persist between post conflict reconciliation and gender justice, reintegration and rejection, participation and partisanship all of which call for a continued focus on women in conflict and post conflict situations.

Health

17. In the last decade, some African countries have prioritized women's health as an area of concern. This has resulted in increased attention to the reproductive health and rights of women, encouraging breast-feeding and other infant feeding options making facilities available for the management of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and raising awareness among men of their responsibilities in reproductive health. In many countries, progress has been made in offering free or subsidized sexual and reproductive

health care services and commodities, affordable preventive health services for rural populations and training grassroots health providers.

18. However, the offer of and access to comprehensive health services continues to be a major challenge, especially for rural and urban poor women. Furthermore, health gains made in the last decade in Africa are being reversed due to HIV/AIDS, high levels of maternal and neonatal mortality, the resurgence of malaria and STDs, TB in more virulent forms and all forms of cancer that affect women. Effort is still needed to make anti-retroviral drugs available at affordable costs or for free. Women and girls in Africa continue to suffer from food insecurity and malnutrition. The rates of maternal morbidity and mortality are higher than anywhere else in the world. Female genital mutilation and other practices that harm women's and girls' health continue to be a grave concern in many parts of Africa.

Participation in governance

19. Some positive trends in the area of governance are exemplified by the consolidation of democracy and the increasing number of countries that have conducted peaceful democratic elections in the last decade. The creation of regional instruments such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the creation of a Gender and Civil Society Sector within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) are positive and promising initiatives. Several countries have significantly increased the level of women's representation in parliament, with one country reaching an impressive 49 per cent and two at over 30 per cent. Women have also been elected and/or appointed into powerful decision-making positions in the civil and public services. However, gender equality and equity principles are not yet fully integrated into democratization processes, and, women continue to be under-represented in most structures of power and decision-making, including leadership positions in political parties, local government, the public and private sector and civil society organizations. Another evaluation area, relating to gender concerns, should be included in the APRM.

Gender Mainstreaming and Institutional Mechanisms

20. African governments have established various mechanisms at different levels, including national machineries to mainstream gender in the formulation of policies, plans and programmes, policy advocacy and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of international, regional and national commitments. Gender focal points have proven to be a valuable but fragile link between Women's/Gender Affairs and line Ministries. Particular attention has been given to the formulation of national gender policies and implementation plans, with some countries having prepared sector-specific gender policies. Capacity-building for gender mainstreaming has been undertaken at national and regional levels. Issue-based advocacy has been successfully conducted in some countries, for example on violence against women and legal literacy.
21. Nonetheless, the mechanisms for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment remain weak at all levels – lacking adequate capacity, authority and funding. Line ministries have not reached gender equality targets due to low levels of

resource allocations. Gender concerns continue to be treated rhetorically or as separate women's projects. Sex-disaggregated data and information from gender-sensitive indicators are often not collected, lost in aggregation of published data or not used.

HIV/AIDS

22. There is growing public awareness about STDs and HIV/AIDS in Africa, through advocacy by governments, parliaments, public sector, development partners and civil society organizations. The threat posed by HIV/AIDS and related diseases such as malaria and TB, is now widely acknowledged at the policy level throughout Africa. Every country has established a National AIDS Commission. Some countries have succeeded in reducing infection rates while a few others have succeeded in keeping infection rates relatively low. Several African countries have approved codes and declarations on non-discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA). Increasing attention is being paid to the HIV/AIDS pandemic's link with poverty and sustainable development.
23. African women are the most affected by HIV/AIDS. Almost 70 per cent of people infected with HIV/AIDS live in Africa. Women form 58 per cent of those infected in Africa and they carry the overwhelming burden of the impact of the HIV/ADS epidemic. HIV/AIDS has decimated the ranks of the most productive age groups, and restructured families such that the burden of care now falls on the oldest and the youngest members, usually grandmothers and girl-children. In many countries of Africa HIV/AIDS is having negative impacts on women's economic empowerment, health, education, and on the enjoyment of all human rights. The public sector's provision of care for HIV/AIDS patients has steadily diminished in the past decade; thereby placing a greater burden on women to care for sufferers, regardless of whether those (women) who are infected have the care they need (especially post-natal treatment). Women are also having to provide economic sustenance for their families even as they themselves are afflicted. Growing poverty, traditions in many parts of Africa, such as female genital mutilation, and beliefs and attitudes that empower men and subordinate women are key factors in increasing the spread of the epidemic.

3. Programme of Action

24. In the light of the above, the African Ministers adopted the following programme of action that needs to be undertaken to accelerate further implementation of the BPFA in the coming years and agree to monitor results regularly.

Section A – Key Actions for Accelerating the Implementation of the BPFA

Economy

25. It is imperative that urgent steps be taken to enhance the gender-analytic capacity of macroeconomists at all levels and in all institutions so as to redefine concepts, approaches and methodology that underpin the generation and collection of data. This includes the development of technical capacity and tools for further advancing the inclusion of women's unpaid work into the systems of national accounts. There is a need to mainstream gender analysis into economics and involve gender experts in the

formulation of macroeconomic policies, so that economic policies support women's paid activities in the subsistence and the care economies. Gender-aware social security and pension systems should be developed and extended to all women. In order to improve women's position in the labour market, national programmes creating opportunities for decent jobs and working conditions for women and men must be developed and implemented.

Poverty

26. Measures to mainstream gender concerns into poverty reduction strategies should include gender analysis of macroeconomic policies. This would expose differential impacts of poverty on women and men and identify constraints on poverty eradication. Gender equality principles must be incorporated into all budgeting to ensure equitable resource allocation. Processes in the development of poverty reduction plans should be consultative, gender-sensitive and inclusive. Indicators for monitoring the impact of poverty reduction programmes and measures and the MDG target on poverty should be engendered. In the area of globalization, there should be a programme of training for women.

Education and Training

27. To address gender imbalances in education and training, countries should institute and strengthen affirmative action measures including scholarships at all levels for female students; distance and non-formal education and literacy programmes for women; innovative and aggressive strategies to redress the under-representation of women and girls in the sciences, mathematics and technology-related disciplines and careers, including the promotion of science among children in general and young girls in particular. Women's access to professional training should also be strengthened. In addition, the main financial partners of African education systems should show their firm commitment to the female population in their interventionist policies.

Health

28. In order to reach MDG 6 and ICPD targets on reducing maternal mortality and morbidity, Governments in collaboration with parliaments, NGOs and the private sector must provide accessible sexual and reproductive health care services and education for women and girls in accordance with the legislation in force in each country. Preventive interventions to curb the spread of malaria, cardiovascular diseases, cancer that affect women, as well as HIV/AIDs and TB particularly among women and girls, should be supported. Processes and programmes to achieve the MDG target of reducing child mortality should also be engendered.

Governance, power and decision-making

29. All political/governance bodies must institutionalize policies that guarantee gender equality. The AU 50:50 gender parity principle must be replicated and implemented at

all levels of national, subregional and regional governance, including through affirmative action and set timelines. Women's access to elected positions (municipal and parliamentary) must be supported to reach these targets. Leadership training programmes for women, especially young women, should be developed and supported to enable them to exercise responsibilities at all levels. Considering the value of the independent women's movement representing women's voices in Africa, women's organizations should be encouraged and supported. The Pan-African Women's Organization should also be reorganized and revitalized.

Media

30. Given the importance of communication and the speed with which information and communication technology (ICT) evolves, it is important that the region adopts and implements gender-aware media policies. There is also a need to: improve women's access to media and new ICTs; support women's press and communication initiatives; and, encourage the use of media and new ICTs to promote women's activities, project positive images and fight against stereotypes and discrimination. In this regard, there is a need to stress the importance of the World Summit on the Information Society that will be held in November 2005 and we call upon the international community to actively participate in the work for this summit, with a view to reducing the current digital divide.

Human Rights of Women

31. A gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach should inform planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of PRSPs, MDGs, national priorities, annual plans and expenditure frameworks. Harmful and/or discriminatory practices that sustain gender inequality and inequity must be eliminated, and social, cultural, traditional and religious norms and values that sustain equality, equity and justice must be promoted. Partnership between women and men in addressing practices which have a negative impact on gender equality should be developed. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women should be signed and ratified by all States in Africa, preferably by the end of 2005. Governments should domesticate and implement all the international and regional instruments on women's rights and gender equality and equity which they have ratified, and to ensure their implementation.

Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Reconstruction

32. Measures that affirm the role and rights of women during the negotiation, transition and reconstruction phases should be upheld and mechanisms for their implementation and monitoring should be strengthened at regional and international levels. The trauma of rejection of female refugees on account of the consequences of rape and other forms of gender based violence must be addressed. Support to women in political processes in countries emerging from conflict must be increased so they can influence conflict prevention, peace building and reconstruction. UNSC Resolution 1325 and the AU Protocol on Women's Rights must be fully implemented. Advocacy and punitive action against impunity must be stepped up. The principle of denying to warlords and perpetrators of violence against women and girls, positions of leadership in post conflict reconstruction should be adopted as an international norm. Governments must put in

place functional mechanisms and intervention programmes for the protection of women and girls in refugee and IDP camps against violence and all forms of sexual abuse. Humanitarian interventions must pay attention to the health needs, especially reproductive and sexual health, of women and girls in conflict, refugee, and IDP situations.

Environment

33. African governments should adopt gender-responsive policies, programmes, strategies and measures on environment. Women should play a prominent role in the design and implementation of policies and programmes on water, energy, sanitation, land and forestry conservation and management, as well as in rural and urban planning. Rural women and their concerns must be integrated into the planning and management of ecosystems, eco-tourism and biodiversity. The achievement of MDG 7 with respect to ensuring environmental sustainability must be engendered.

The girl-child

34. Specific efforts must be made to protect the girl-child against discrimination, ill-health, malnutrition, stereotyping, violence, including genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and exploitation through domestic work and trafficking. Successful strategies for improving girls' access to and retention in education should be scaled-up. The content and culture of schooling should be free from bias, discrimination and violence against girls. These would require curriculum reform, gender training for teachers and others working in education, as well as for boys and girls, together with continuous advocacy with parents, traditional and religious leaders, parliamentarians and other stakeholders. Access to professional and technical education for girls should be facilitated and there should be gender-focussed programmes for boys and girls. Furthermore, the main financial partners should reflect greater commitment to women and girls.

HIV/AIDS

35. There is an urgent need for government to address gender power relations in order to protect women and girls from all forms of violence and enable women to negotiate safe sex, through legislation, law enforcement, advocacy and sensitization. In particular, governments must establish, enforce and monitor strict legal frameworks to address the vulnerability of women and girls, and halt exploitation of orphans, especially girls. A fund should be established to ensure women's access to post-exposure prophylaxes, anti-retroviral treatment, mother-to-child transmission prevention treatment (before and after delivery), as well as support for homecare services. Resources should also be invested in making sure that methods of prevention that are controlled by women are available and accessible. Governments should monitor the newly emerging types of violence and human rights abuses within the context of the HIV/AIDS. Priority should be given to making available and monitoring care-taking services for orphans, protecting their inheritance rights and providing counselling. Governments must establish gender

indicators to monitor HIV/AIDS programme goals and outcomes, to measure progress and enforce accountability in the use of resources.

Partnerships with Men

36. Accelerating the implementation of the BPFA in the context of the MDGs requires that gender equality is no longer seen only as the women's agenda. Men's full commitment, accountability and partnership with women is crucial. Government decision-making institutional and organizational cultures must be transformed to embrace gender equality and women's rights in behaviours, attitudes and norms, through gender sensitization, capacity-building and monitoring at all levels. Innovative rights-based and culture-sensitive focused programmes must be developed for the participation and active involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Programmes that address families should be developed to integrate the culture of equality and human rights processes in all aspects of the socialization process, including the sharing of domestic work and childcare.

International Support

37. The support of the UN system to Africa to the implementation and monitoring of the BPFA and the MDGs is appreciated. Technical and financial support for training, capacity-building, research and documentation have been undertaken and should be strengthened in the coming years. The developed countries and international financial and trade institutions are called upon to strengthen the implementation of the commitments they have undertaken in UN conferences and summits, including Beijing and Beijing+5, to support African countries in their efforts to implement the agreed outcomes of these meetings. This should include the provision of official development assistance (ODA) at agreed levels, addressing comprehensively debt problems of African countries, ensuring access of African exports to world markets and the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building, in keeping with the spirit of partnership and mutual accountability.

Section B – Institutional Measures For Effective Gender Mainstreaming

38. An important ingredient for accelerating delivery of the BPFA is strengthening institutionalization of gender equality and equity through the provision of adequate resources, technical expertise and sufficient authority. The strategic objectives and actions defined in this section must be executed by all stakeholders, with national machineries and gender units providing oversight and facilitation of gender responsive delivery of development programmes.

Policy development and review

39. In Beijing, member States affirmed their political will to promote gender equality and equity by endorsing the Platform for Action. Governments should evaluate on a regular basis the extent to which political will is translated into concrete results, so as to identify and remedy the gaps in existing gender policies and implementation and support them with the allocation of the appropriate human and material resources. Governments must utilize gender expertise in designing all policies and programmes.

Responsibility and Accountability

40. Women/Gender Ministries and other line Ministries should agree upon a division of tasks for gender mainstreaming in their respective areas of responsibility and expertise. The core functions of gender officials need to be institutionalized in all ministries, so as to ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed into all policies, programmes and activities. It is essential that accountability for the achievement of gender equality is the responsibility of the highest authority in all ministries, not only gender machineries and focal points.

Capacity-building

41. Governments should provide adequate human and financial resources to national structures dealing with gender issues. To ensure that more gender specific data become available, national statistical offices should be supported to strengthen gender data collection and dissemination. In addition, data users need to be trained in the analysis and utilization of these data for planning, monitoring and evaluation. National capacity must also be built in the civil service, universities, and think-tanks to undertake gendered research and gender sensitive programmes.

Coordination.

42. The lack of effective coordination mechanisms within gender structures, and between these structures and all levels of other institutions, impedes gender mainstreaming. Therefore, institutions must develop effective coordination mechanisms with clear lines of communication, roles, responsibilities, accountability and levels of authority. Coordination frameworks must define specific terms for collaboration and partnership between the public sector, development partners and the private sector (including NGOs), for the effective coordination of gender mainstreaming at all levels.

Advocacy

43. In the first post-Beijing decade, civil society organizations featured highly in advocacy on gender equality and women's human rights and empowerment. In the coming decade, governments and regional institutions must build on this and strengthen their advocacy, and develop partnership with civil society organizations, in conducting education and information campaigns aimed at mainstreaming gender concerns. This advocacy work should be linked to policies and to programmes so as to enhance collective responsibility for mainstreaming and accountability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

44. The Committee for Women and Development (CWD) will have the responsibility for monitoring implementation of these renewed commitments. Instruments of accountability of the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism, the AU Commission, the regional economic commissions, as well as national planning, budgeting and implementation processes should be engendered and strengthened to assess the adequacy of inputs, level of results and remaining challenges to achieving gender equality and equity in all sectors.

It will be necessary to integrate the issue of gender into the mechanisms of APRM and other areas of evaluation. The MDG annual reporting process should integrate a review of the implementation of the BPPA. Furthermore, the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), currently being piloted, could provide a framework for priority-setting, tracking progress and accountability, and upon completion could be adopted for use by member States. The AU should be encouraged to convene a meeting of Ministers for Women's Affairs to agree on monitoring priorities for tracking delivery against the commitments of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adopted in 2004.