

**MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS, GENDER AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**PROGRESS REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE
ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION
AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE OUTCOME
OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)**



ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy
AAP	Affirmative Action Policy
AU	African Union
ARVs	Anti-retrovirals
ART	Anti-retroviral Therapy
BACOSSI	Basic Commodities Supply Side Intervention
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
BPA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBD	Community Based Distributor
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern African
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
DVA	Domestic Violence Act
EFA	Education for All
EMA	Environment Management Agency
EIAs	Environmental Impact Assessments
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
FBO	Faith Based Organisations
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organisation
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GFPs	Gender Focal Persons
GMMG	Gender Media Monitoring Group
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GPA	Global Political Agreement
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
KRA	Key Results Area
LAMA	Legal Age of Majority
MP	Member of Parliament
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIMS	Multiple Indicator Monitoring Survey
MWAG&CD	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
MAD	Making a Difference
MCH	Maternal Child Health
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change (Mutambara faction)
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change - T (Tsvangirai faction)
NAC	National AIDS Council
NGMS	National Gender Management System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP	National Gender Policy
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children

PLHIV	People Living with HIV
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
PASS	Poverty Assessment Study Survey
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PPTCT	Prevention from Parent to Child Transmission
PSC	Public Service Commission
RBM	Results Based Management
RCDF	Rural Capital Development Fund
STERP	Short Term Economic Recovery Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEDCO	Small Enterprise Development Corporation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SNV	Swedish NGO
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAT	Value Added Tax
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WASN	Women & AIDS Support Network
WILSA	Women in Law Southern Africa
WiPSU	Women in Politics Support Unit
WT	Women's Trust
WFP	World Food Programme
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZDHS	Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers Union
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZIMDAT	Zimbabwe Statistics Database
ZWLA	Zimbabwe Women's Lawyer's Association
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre & Network
ZUNDAF	Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework

CONTEXUAL BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

This Report outlines the progress made to date by the Republic of Zimbabwe on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA) (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000). The review and appraisal of progress covers the period 2004-2009. The Report provides a brief backdrop of progress made since the Beijing Declaration from 1995 - 2003.

The Progress Report is in four parts. Part One highlights the major overall achievements and obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Part Two provides evidence of achievements made i.e. policy development; legislative changes; advocacy and awareness-raising activities; capacity development and programmes and projects that have been undertaken by the Government of Zimbabwe to implement the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action (minus critical area “H” which is covered in Part Three). This section also covers areas requiring further initiative and actions, existing obstacles, remaining gaps and challenges in relation to the critical areas of concern in this section, including a summary of lessons learned and areas for further action.

Part Three focuses on the institutional development, structures and measures that Zimbabwe has put in place to support the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment i.e. critical area of concern “H” in the Platform for Action. Finally, Part Four covers information on the remaining key challenges and constraints as well as plans for future actions and initiatives and new commitments underway to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in Zimbabwe.

The Report Writing Process

This Report is a by-product of a consultation that took place with the participation of both government Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) and representatives from civil society/Non-Governmental Organisations (CSOs/NGOs).

The Report also draws from the Combined Report of the Republic of Zimbabwe in Terms of the Zimbabwe Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (2009), especially those sections which add value to the Report.

Contextual Background

Beginning in 2000, Zimbabwe was faced with numerous challenges characterised by a hyper-inflationary environment; acute shortage of goods and services; poor harvest resulting in massive food shortages, and deterioration of public service delivery i.e. electricity/energy delivery, education, health, water and sanitation. As of February 2009, Zimbabwe now has an inclusive government, a result of negotiated agreements under the Global Political Agreement (GPA) comprised of the three political parties represented in parliament i.e. the Zimbabwe

African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the two Movement for Democracy (MDC formations) (MDC-T) (the Tsvangirai faction) and MDC (Mutambara faction).

As a result of the new political dispensation, the general mood of the country is now more optimistic, with a promise that more progressive development initiatives that address the existing socio-economic, political and gender inequalities will soon be comprehensively addressed. A recovery programme, the *Short Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP)* officially launched in March 2009, is now in place to re-energise the economy. STERP prioritises initiatives that are aimed at addressing gender equality and women's empowerment.

PART ONE: OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

1. Introduction

Zimbabwe reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the provisions of the BPA and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The BPA and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly continue to guide the priorities for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in Zimbabwe.

Numerous achievements have been recorded to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in Zimbabwe. Various policies, programmes and projects are in place to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. A National Gender Policy has been developed to guide various sectors in mainstreaming gender at various levels. An Implementation Strategy and Work-plan for the Gender Policy has also been developed. The National Gender Policy and its Implementation Strategy provide a framework through which a common perspective and approach to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment can be adopted and used in all sectors.

Since 1995, Zimbabwe has implemented a number of policies, legislations, programmes and projects aimed at promoting the implementation of the BPA and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The government has also enacted and amended laws that have an impact upon the status of women and the girl child.

Part One outlines the major achievements and obstacles in the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

1.1 National policies and strategies on gender equality and women's empowerment

- The key national policy instruments to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment are The National Gender Policy (NGP) and The National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Work Plan which outlines Priorities for Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment of Women for the period 2008-2012.

The NGP addresses measures to be undertaken to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all the strategic areas identified by the BPFA. The policy has been translated into indigenous languages.

- The highest level for coordination comprises the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Gender (chaired by the MWAG&CD). In the current transitional period, however, some structures i.e. the Inter-Ministerial Committee are not in place. Other mechanisms are the National Gender Management System (NGMS) comprising of Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) and women NGOs. Not much awareness-raising has been done around the strategy and there is need for the Ministry to vigorously carry out more awareness campaigns.

- Accountability is through line ministries. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out by gender focal person (GFPs) and gender committees but not in a structured manner, and through quarterly reports. There is no feedback mechanism when quarterly reports are submitted to the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAG&CD). Receiving feedback, however, could encourage GFPs to put more effort in to their reports.

A challenge is that GFPs are often not recognised by their seniors and are excluded from senior management and policy planning meetings. Senior managers have not been sufficiently sensitised on gender issues and not all have received gender training. Lower level employees, however, tend to be more familiar with gender issues.

A major challenge is that it is not possible to account for something for which no resources have been allocated. Quarterly review workshops are supposed to be conducted but this has not been done and the required checklists are not in place to monitor progress made. The Public Service Commission (PSC) is not held accountable although it has adopted an aligned policy to mainstream gender. The role of gender officers at provincial level also needs to be strengthened.

Zimbabwe's National Budget has been made gender-sensitive through the issuing of a directive (Call Circular) by the Ministry of Finance promoting participatory and results based budgeting. The process began in 2007 and is being applied at all levels in government.

- Notable constitutional achievements include: Constitutional Amendment 17 of 2005 which brought about the prohibition of discrimination on the ground of sex. Notable changes include the proposed establishment of the *Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC)* and the *Office of the Public Protector*. New inclusions into the Zimbabwe Constitution relate to sex, marital status and physical disability as prohibited grounds for discrimination under Amendment 17, Section 23(3a).
- Laws put in place include those protecting the inheritance rights of women, legal age of majority, sexual offences, domestic violence, equal opportunity in employment, marriage laws. (These will be explained in detail under Human Rights of women)
- With regards to the *Suppression of Trafficking Act*, the Zimbabwe Parliament ratified the Convention on Transnational Organised Crime. The process of ratifying the additional protocols to the Convention, namely the *Protocol Against Trafficking of Human Beings* (mainly women and children) and the *Protocol Prohibiting the Illegal Transportation of Immigrants by Land, Air or Sea*, is also underway. Zimbabwe has been used a transit and source country for the trafficking of women and children to other countries for purposes of forced labour and exploitation, through false promise of jobs, scholarships or marriage. The *Red Light Campaign*, sponsored by Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) Zimbabwe branch has helped in reducing the potential risks raised by the 2010 World Cup in terms of bringing awareness against increased exploitative sex work and trafficking of women and sexual abuse.
- The Zimbabwe Government has embraced Results Based Management (RBM) in line with the thrust of the MDGs. The MDGs have been incorporated into national development policies, with Goals 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger); MDG 3

(Promote gender equality and empower women) and MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) being Zimbabwe's MDG priorities.

- The Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, collaborating with various CSOs/NGOs, has started implementing a national strategy and public campaigns on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to enhance women's capacities so that they can protect themselves against domestic violence.
- Other positive developments include the incorporation of gender budgeting in government policies and programmes by the Zimbabwe Government. Zimbabwe's National Budget has been made gender-sensitive through the issuing of a directive (Call Circular) by the Ministry of Finance promoting participatory and Results Based Management (RBM). The process began in 2007. Gender budgeting is being applied at all levels in government. Training in gender budgeting has taken place at the national level for GFPs and Directors of Finance.

The ZWRCN, a women's NGO working in the area of information dissemination, research and publication has been collaborating with the government over the years and especially with the MWAG&CD to popularise gender-responsive budgeting in government, in parliament and local government levels through various capacity building training activities. This is a partnership that is working very well. Funding for such activities has come from the UNDP and UNIFEM as well as from European assistance.

- Women are actively engaged in economic empowerment activities. There has been a noticeable increase, for example, in the involvement of women in the formal sector while equal opportunity policies are heralded in job advertisements. Women's potential is, however, much more visible in the informal sector.

At political and decision-making level, many more women have come out and campaigned for political positions but they were let down by a less than successful 'vote for a woman' campaign and did not do well in the election process. Women thus want gender parity and full implementation of the *SADC Gender and Development Protocol* which calls for 50-50% representation at all leadership and decision-making levels.

- Zimbabwe is coming out of intense political polarisation. Women's participation in the political discussion which gave birth to the inclusive government was a negotiated process where women's involvement was an afterthought.
- In terms of partnerships, the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF) aligns the work of Government and the UN system to shared goals. ZUNDAF also outlines key partnerships around Gender issues.

Civil society and Government in Zimbabwe have been collaborating at various levels. Another partnership is the UNIFEM chaired Gender Forum, between the UN and civil society. This Report is an outcome of such collaboration. Civil society and government have also partnered in the formulation of the *Domestic Violence Act (DVA)*. In addition, they have both advocated for legal reforms, gender-responsive budgeting and the reform of the Constitution.

- In Zimbabwe, the main platform for the engagement of men and boys is Padare/Ekudhleni Men's Gender Forum. Padare represents the voice of men and boys on gender equality. It is also a platform for dialogue, engagement and action. Padare challenges patriarchal attitudes, beliefs and practices through mobilisation of men in schools, rural communities and urban areas. Specifically, the organisation challenges violence against women and girls, violence amongst men, *toxic masculinities (masculinities that verbally, physically and psychologically abuse women at all levels)* and irresponsible fatherhood. Padare also explores the notion of men as care givers, men's and boy's gender related inequalities, HIV and also celebrates diversity.

Padare works with the women's movement to support national and international processes of deconstructing toxic masculinity.

- Social protection measures have been put in place i.e. the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), especially for orphaned and vulnerable children; Education for All (EFA); the Zunde RaMambo (granary scheme); the land reform and agricultural mechanisation programmes; the Basic Commodities Supply Side Intervention (BACOSI), food relief and disaster mitigation.

Women farmers have also been recognised as a vulnerable group. Women are to receive some support through women farmers' associations. This programme is specifically targeting contract farmers. Special loans are to be given to women in agriculture through the Zimbabwe Farmers Association. The Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU) already has a gender policy aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the agricultural sector.

The Zimbabwe Government has developed the following measures to cushion women and the vulnerable social groups in the country. Access and ownership of land, loan windows for women. The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Small and Medium Enterprise Facility and general measures to revive growth and mobilise the country's economic potential.

Challenges

- Constitution of Zimbabwe still discriminates on the basis of customary law.
- The other challenges is that most women are generally not aware of the laws that enhance their legal status. There is no sustained legal programmes.
- Attitudes and beliefs inhibit the implementation of the legislative and constitutional amendments put in place.
- *Gender budget tracking*: there are monitoring challenges when it comes to gender-responsive budgeting as no gender budget tracking modality is currently in place to track the gender-responsiveness of government spending.

- *Globalisation, trade and markets:* has also impacted on Zimbabwe's ability to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. When it comes to trade and market issues, cross border trading has raised household income levels because it is a trade where women tend to dominate. However, it also brings with it some social problems i.e. disintegration of the family. In addition, changing trade patterns affect ordinary women farmers and traders as they have to compete with the more organised traders. Zimtrade (*the trade body set up to coordinate trade issues*) can enhance its mandate by protecting vulnerable women from being priced out of markets and services.
- *Power and decision-making:* there are still unresolved debates around securing 50:50% representation in politics and other decision-making levels e.g. in Parliament; in the Constitution; in conflict resolution and national healing structures as per SADC Gender and Development Protocol and AU parity principle.
- *Service delivery:* concerns relate to issues of water and sanitation and household and utility rates where women's practical gender needs are yet to be fully addressed.
- *Climate change*
Climate change i.e. recurrent droughts, deforestation, increases in disease incidence and an energy crisis have affected household food security. This has the greatest impact upon women, especially those heading families, as they spend more time searching for food during droughts and, therefore, cannot take part in other activities. Women are also at risk when carrying out isolated activities such as collecting fire wood. This situation causes a reversion to the immediate practical needs of women, and a neglect of their more fundamental strategic interests.
- *Impact of the global financial crisis*
The global financial crisis has caused a shift in priorities. Money initially intended for women could thus be diverted to other priorities deemed more important. This will obviously affect women fundamentally different from men. The following activities will be affected: women's health, especially Maternal and Child Health (MCH); access to education and participation in decision making. It may even lead to forced marriages (*where young girls will be forced to marry as a way to enhance family incomes*).

If women in leadership and decision-making positions do not have adequate resources due to the global crisis, they are not able to contest for parliamentary and local government positions.

In the work setting, women are the most vulnerable to the impact of the crisis because they tend to hold lower positions than men and are also more likely to be retrenched.

1.5 Conclusion

- Remarkable achievements have been made in Zimbabwe as the various legislative enactments show, however, various obstacles highlighted in this section need to be addressed and redressed so that the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly are fully complied with in all future initiatives. Plans underway to review the Zimbabwe Constitution under the inclusive government so that it truly reflects gender equality and women's empowerment in all socio-economic, political, cultural, religious and traditional spheres and at all leadership and decision-making levels. There are proposals to set up a representative Gender Commission to coordinate all gender concerns in the country.

PART TWO: PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

2. Introduction

Part Two of the Report provides specific examples of some of the major achievements at policy, legislative, advocacy and awareness-raising, capacity development, programmes and projects levels undertaken on implementing the 11 critical areas of concern i.e. Women and Poverty; Education and Training of Women; Women and Health; Violence Against Women (VAW); Women and (*Armed*) Conflict; Women and the Economy; Women in Power and Decision-Making; Human Rights of Women; Women and the Media; Women and the Environment, and finally The Girl-Child. The critical area of concern dealing with Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women will be covered in Part Three of the Report. Education and Training of Women and the Girl-Child have been combined as one critical area.

2.1 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and Poverty

Deep-rooted structural impediments impede the advancement of women. Poverty, especially *feminised* poverty (PASS, 2006) exists where women are more impoverished compared to men. Cultural and patriarchal power relations dis-empower women from accessing, owning and controlling resources. Not having a voice in decision-making results in women not benefitting from national resource distribution or other entitlements. This depravity increases women's vulnerability and translates to greater poverty amongst women compared to men.

- Some policy successes include the *Policy Strategies for Stimulating Agricultural Production, 1999* and the *Zimbabwe Agricultural Policy Framework 1995-2020 and the Macroeconomic Framework 2005-06* which were all developed to address the growing poverty in Zimbabwe through the creation of policies and programmes that benefit vulnerable social groups, especially women farmers. The Framework sought to address the growing impoverishment and growing unemployment, a result of the declining economy. The Land Reform exercise reserved 20% quota to women.

Specific commitments have been incorporated in the STERP document. Mobilised resources will target women and vulnerable groups. Programmes are also in place to make it easy for women to access and own land in their own right.

The Tourism Policy has also made it possible for women to economically benefit. The policy proposes that there must be 30% women participation in the sector. Women, however, need to be at the high market end of the sector and not just located in the periphery as informal sector traders. A Women's Fund is in place include a Gender Budgeting Programme in government.

- In terms of capacity development, there have been training programmes in entrepreneurial skills and agricultural production for women i.e. sewing, bread making and the Master Farmer certification for participating in the agriculture sector; the certification used to be dominated by men. A Women's Fund is in place as of

2007 to assist women in various income generating projects i.e. agriculture and agro-related. The Fund is coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development.

- Several programmes have also been set up to economically empower the more vulnerable and impoverished social groups i.e. women and children and poor men. These range from credit and microfinance, educational assistance, agricultural assistance trade and marketing assistance and social safety nets. Some of the programmes include village banking and provision of microfinance; the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) set up to assist orphans and vulnerable children to access educational; the Basic Commodities Supply Side Intervention (BACOSSI), a programme that assisted vulnerable households and public service employees with food hampers; irrigation schemes targeting women farmers, cross border trade and the Vulnerable Groups Agricultural Input Programme.
- Women are mobilised into grassroots associations to enable them to effectively participate in key sectors of the economy such as Women in Mining, Women in Tourism Trust, Women in Agriculture; the Zimbabwe Women Farmer's Association and various women's clubs. Projects in place include conservation agriculture, herbal and nutritional gardens and income generating projects i.e. candle making, bread making.

Challenges

- Challenges range from resource constraints, lack of skills, accessing markets, cultural barriers and HIV/AIDS.

2.2 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Education and Training of Women & The Girl-Child

- The Government of Zimbabwe adopted the National Gender Policy Implementation Plan, the Zimbabwe National Plan of Action on Women and Girls and HIV and AIDS (2008-2010), the National Gender-Based Violence Strategy, the National Strategic Plan for the Education of Girls, Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children to address discrimination against women and the girl child in the field of education. An Affirmative Action Policy (AAP) also exists at institutions of higher learning to increase female enrolment at these institutions. Enrolment of women at tertiary institutions now accounts for 50% of total enrolment. In high schools, girls are allowed to enrol in science subjects with two points or lower while girls who fall pregnant while in school are allowed to deliver their babies and then come back and resume their studies.
- The introduction of maths and science camps for girls is aimed at addressing gender stereo types in technical carrers.
- There are various programmes in place at both primary, secondary and tertiary education and training levels. These range from educational assistance i.e. Basic Educational Assistance Module (BEAM) programme; young women's empowerment programmes; career guidance and counselling; gendered curriculumsand affirmative action for enrollment at universities.

At advocacy level there is also a *Campaign for Female Education* that seeks to encourage young girls to be educated and continue with their education ambitions. There is also the *Go Back to School Campaign* sponsored by UNICEF to encourage young girls to go back to school. Scholarship Funds have been put in place by various NGOs. There is also the University Youth Development Fund which provides loans to youths.

Challenges

- Socio-economic imbalance due to the economic hardships causes youths to engage in business ventures that discourage them from attending school. Challenges are mostly around financial and material resources. Religion/culture also acts as an inhibitive factor for the girl child. The affirmative action policies are not being strictly followed-up and no resources are being put to monitor compliance.
- Limited coverage of career guidance programmes to encourage girl children to venture into technical carrers.
- Limited scholarship for girls' education

The lessons learned are that if assistance is provided to disadvantaged children, there is likelihood that they will make it in life and can influence others to improve. The other lesson is that if women are given the opportunity to lead, they have the capacity to excel.

2.3 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and Health

- The Ministry of Health has a Gender Policy, a notable achievement considering that some other government ministries still have to develop their own sector gender policies. Women bear the brunt of the HIV pandemic and are disproportionately infected by the virus. They bear the brunt of carrying a disproportionate share of the burden of caring for their ill relatives and those sick members of the community through home based care. Unfortunately, all this is done with little or no remuneration for the arduous work being done.
- Successful policies that have been adopted in the health sector include: A gender policy in the National AIDS Council (NAC); A National Behaviour Change Strategy; A National Gender-Based Violence Strategy, and The Zimbabwe Agricultural Sector Strategy on HIV and AIDS within the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Various legislative enactments are in place to support the health policies i.e. the *Domestic Violence Act*; the *Sexual Offences Act*; the *Criminal Codification Act*, and the Labour Regulations of the *Labour Act* that have a non-discrimination clause on the grounds of HIV status.
- Some of the programmes that have been put in place to address the HIV/AIDS impact among women include a National HIV and AIDS Programme, Programmes on Prevention and Mitigation, Care and Support for HIV/AIDS sufferers; HIV/AIDS Research; Programmes around improved nutrition; Access to Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART); and programmes aimed at addressing stigmatisation issues in society, especially in relation to provision of help for People Living with HIV (PLHIV).
- The Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development works with many NGO partners in running sensitisation and capacity development programmes on gender. The programmes target school-going children, women, men and traditional leaders through their networks, workplaces and communities. A small number of men have been trained in care work within their communities. This is a positive step towards reducing the burden of care on women.
- At advocacy level, various initiatives are in place. These include: Advocacy around Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT); Advocacy around female controlled devices (*female condoms*); Research is also being used as advocacy tool i.e. the 2003 Zimbabwe Human Development Report (HDR) was on HIV/AIDS; Research on HIV/AIDS prevention intervention through the University of Zimbabwe medical research facilities; Promotion of nutritional diets and herbal gardens advocacy work was started in 2005 with the facilitation of the Ministry of Agriculture, and finally Production of a *Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS Plan of Action Booklet* by the MWAG&CD.

- Various awareness-raising activities are also in place i.e. Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT); New Start Centres have been set up in various parts of the country to provide continuous support to People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART) programmes; HIV was also declared a national disaster in Zimbabwe. An integrated approach has been incorporated in hospitals to mainstream HIV and Reproductive Health issues.
- Women's health is a developmental issue. Therefore, gender needs to be incorporated in the HIV response through greater involvement of women. More resources need to be availed to deal with the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Zimbabwe. There is also value in including HIV/AIDS issues in the educational curricula of the country as part of the awareness- raising strategy.

Challenges

- Challenges include setting up programmes to change attitudes, perceptions and cultural beliefs; financial and human resources and shortage of equipment; the increasing burden of care, especially on women, girls and the elderly. There is the observation that care work should be undertaken by the country's national health delivery system and the issue of "*Who cares for the carers*" should be addressed. Challenges also relate to issues of continuing poverty, especially for people on treatment. There is also the issue of unequal power relations between women and men, especially the contestations over practicing safe sex which often result in gender-based violence and women's continued economic dependence on men. The Cholera outbreaks that rocked the country have also created new challenges, especially for vulnerable households and for People Living with HIV/AIDS.

2.4 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Violence against Women

- Notable achievement is the enactment of the Domestic Violence in 2006. The Act criminalises domestic violence as well as providing relief and protection to victims.
- A *National Gender Based Violence Prevention Strategy* was put in place in March 2005 by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Strategy focuses on prevention, service provision, research, documentation and advocacy in the area of gender based violence. A *National Behaviour Change Strategy* has also been put in place to change how people in Zimbabwe perceive and put in practice healthier relations that do not condone domestic violence or any other form of violence.
- An Anti-domestic Violence Council has been put in Place to constantly monitor the problem of Domestic Violence in the country.
- Efforts have been made to build the capacity of those who advocate for the enactment of the law, such as the Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus i.e. capacity

building the Caucus with gender sensitive skills to enable it to make gender-sensitive decisions as well as effectively support the enforcement of the Domestic Violence Act.

In terms of capacity development around domestic violence, training has been held to conscientise patriarchal gate-keepers i.e. traditional leaders, village and ward heads as well as peer educators.

At programme level, programmes to create awareness of the Domestic Violence Act and about the prevalence of domestic violence are ongoing from the national to grassroots levels. The programmes are also intended to enhance women's capacity to deal with and overcome domestic and gender based violence. Several programmes have also been set up around DVA and GBV-related activities i.e. psychosocial support to provide crisis counseling and general counseling; victim friendly courts; rape clinic at Parirenyatwa Hospital, the biggest hospital in Harare data collection and research to track and document incidences and recurrences; trafficking projects, especially with assistance of the International Office on Migration (IOM) campaigns; media programmes on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and providing gender training and sensitisation to stakeholders.

Challenges

- There are uncoordinated efforts in the response initiatives around the DVA campaigns; resource constraints and lack of access to information. There are challenges, however to the effective implementation of the Criminal Code in as far as prohibiting marital rape.

Lesson learned from the DVA campaign include that:

- The DVA campaign needs to take on a more multi-sectoral and integrated response;
- That violence and HIV fuel each other they are *evil twins*;
- That Communities can take charge of efforts to end violence against women;
- Involvement of the abuser in ending violence against women (VAW) is critical
- The commitment at national level, simplifying the legislation in the indigenous language is essential to make the Domestic Violence Act more user-friendly and accessible.

2.5 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and Armed Conflicts

- There is no armed conflict in Zimbabwe. There was, however, political polarisation after the 2008 general elections. The recent Global Political Agreement (GPA) seeks to end the political polarisation in the country. An Organ on Reconciliation, National Healing and Integration has been set up to facilitate the country's healing process. One of the Core Ministers of the Organ is a woman.

2.6 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and the Economy

- Successful initiatives include the *The Immovable Property Prevention and Discrimination Act* [Chapter 10.12]. This Act prohibits discrimination in respect of disposal of immovable property. This Act further prohibits financial institutions from perpetuating discrimination on the grounds of sex, among others grounds, by refusing to grant loans or other financial assistance for the acquisition, hire, construction, maintenance or repair of any immovable property, to people of a particular sex.
- Legally, women of any marital status can procure loans from financial institutions for investment purposes and to purchase immovable or other forms of property.
- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Policy provides for 30% of loans be reserved for women.
- In the Tourism sector, a quota system has been introduced where 25% of licenses are given to women.
- The Zimbabwe Government has developed a pension policy to enable widows of unregistered customary law marriages to gain access to state pensions upon the death of a spouse.
- Legislative enactments in place include the Indigenisation and Empowerment Act and the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Bill.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the establishment of EMPRETEC Zimbabwe, an NGO that provides training in entrepreneurial skills. Zimtrade provides information and training relating to trade and markets.

Some of the activities put in place at programme level include the following: a loan booth facility for vendors who are mostly women in the informal sector; Plant Hire Scheme for those in the agricultural sector who are mostly women.

Various income generating projects ranging from agriculture-related and agro-processing related projects with a few in the non-traditional income generating

projects i.e. construction and manufacturing have also been undertaken by women entrepreneurs.

The Small and Medium Enterprise Ministry has been at the forefront of advocating for more women to be engaged in income generating entrepreneurial activities as a strategy to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

2.6.3 Challenges

- The major obstacles encountered relate to the shortages of resources, especially finance and equipment shortages; lack of collateral security which inhibits women from accessing loans from banks. Other challenges relate to issues of sustainability; access to markets; inability to access Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as well as low ICT skills and expertise; the *dependence syndrome*, especially from donor aid which makes the recipients *perpetual infants*. Women's contribution in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country is not recognised or valued and most of the businesses run by women are located in the low end and unregulated informal sector, a sector characterised by low earning and remuneration.

2.7 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women in Power and Decision Making

- There is no legislated quota for women participation in decision making. The Zimbabwe Constitution though provides for non-discrimination in general. There are, however, several policies that have been put in place. The National Gender Policy seeks to redress the numerical imbalances in decision-making and politics by increasing the numerical representation of women to 52%. There has been an Affirmative Action Policy in the Public Service since 1992. A Public Service policy directive states that 50% of candidates for posts being offered should be female. As a result of the directive, there is now a 57% representation of women at Public Service Commissioner level. All the major political parties namely ZANU-PF and the two MDC parties (MDC-T and MDC) have adopted a quota system for women at political party level, this, however, must also be extended to government level.
- From 1997-2000, the then Ministry of National Affairs and Employment Creation, which housed the gender machinery, initiated the Women in Politics and Decision-Making Project to help increase the number of women in politics and decision-making positions. Advocacy and awareness raising activities by NGOs include the 2008 *Women Can Do It Campaign*; the *50-50 Campaign* and the *Media Campaign*.

Capacity development programmes for women Parliamentarians and Councillors are being carried out by the Women's Trust (WT) and Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU), two leading women's NGOs working on building women's leadership capacity.

Challenges

- The issue of representation and women's visibility in leadership and decision-making remains a major gap. In the current inclusive government, only seven women have been appointed to head Ministries out of a total of 35 ministries.
- Challenges include limited resources for women to campaign during elections; cultural beliefs and norms which tend to be patriarchal and reinforcing male superiority and lack of a constitutional quota for women. Lesson learned is that the electorate would need to be sensitised for more women to be elected to public office. Another lesson learned is that women have to be economically empowered to run successful political campaigns. There is need for further interventions in terms of gender awareness and sensitisation complimented by women's empowerment to enable women and men to demystify the stereotypes around women's participation in decision-making.

2.8 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Human Rights of Women

The Government of Zimbabwe has made commitments to the following: Ratification of CEDAW; Signed the SADC protocol ON Gender (*not yet ratified*); Ratified the AU Protocol on Women's rights and acceded to the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

- Laws that enhance the legal status of women include:
 - i. Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA) promulgated in 1982; it conferred majority status on women. Before this law African women were regarded as perpetual minors;
 - ii. Labour Relations Act (1984) which prohibited employers from discriminating against any prospective employee in relation to employment;
 - iii. Public Service Pensions (Amendment) Regulations (1985) which made provisions for female workers in the public service to contribute to their pension at the same rate as male contributors;
 - iv. Matrimonial Causes Act (1987) which provided for equitable distribution of matrimonial assets on divorce;
 - v. Maintenance Amendment Act (1989) which requires a negligent non custodian parent to contribute regularly to the maintenance of minor children in the custody of the other parent;
 - vi. The Electoral Act (1990) which allows women to participate in general and by elections for the Presidency or in Parliamentary and local elections as voters or candidates without any discrimination;
 - vii. The Administration of Estates Amendment Act (1997) and Inheritance Laws which protects the inheritance rights of surviving spouses and children;
 - viii. The Sexual Offences Act (2001) which protects women from sexual abuse and criminalizes marital rape and willful transmission of HIV and AIDS. The Act also prohibits trafficking of persons for purposes of prostitution and imposes stiffer penalties for violations;
 - ix. Domestic Violence Act (2007) which aims at protecting women as it seeks to criminalize domestic violence and such acts as abuse derived from any cultural or

- customary rites or practices that discriminate or degrade women. Examples include virginity testing, female genital mutilation, pledging of women and girls for purposes of appeasing spirits, abduction, child marriages, forced marriages, forced wife inheritance and such other practices;
- x. At Constitutional level, *Constitutional Amendment 17 of 2005* brought about the prohibition of discrimination on the ground of sex, marital status and gender. Notable changes include the proposed Establishment of the *Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC)*.
 - xi. The *Interpretation Act (Chapter 1:01)* recognizes women's human rights as it advocates for gender-sensitive language in legislative instruments. The Government came to the realization that the use of masculine prescribed gendered language in legislative instruments perpetuates discrimination against women. The Act has been amended to use language that denotes feminine concurrently with that of the masculine gender. Previously, the Act expressly recognizes words denoting masculine as also applying to women,

Challenges

- Challenges identified include piecemeal domestication of human rights instruments; no budget allocated specifically for implementation of laws; Section 23 of the Constitution allows discrimination against women on matters of customary law, no substantial legal literacy programme to educate women on their rights.
- Regarding the *Marriage Act*, the difference in the minimum age of marriage at 16 years for girls and 18 years for boys, can result in discrimination against girls who, as the law stipulates, can marry early. The maintenance of the age of 16 as the minimum age of sexual consent under the *Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act (Chapter 9:23)* may negate the efforts being made to harmonise the minimum age of all the types of marriage with the legal age of majority, as girls will be exposed to sexual activity much earlier than they are entitled to marry.

2.9 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and the Media

- There is no Media legislation that takes into account gender considerations. The country has two pieces of legislation, that have had a restraining impact on the media over the past few years i.e. the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA).

The National Gender Policy (2004), however, highlights the need to transform the media to make it gender sensitive through training media persons to be gender sensitive and thus facilitate a positive portrayal of women in the media among others.

- The UNFPA has supported training of media personnel in gender sensitive reporting on, HIV and AIDS and the Domestic Violence Act. There is a platform to air programmes that promote gender equality and empowerment of women e.g. *Gender Diaries* that are put out by civil society.

Government, in partnership with the Federation of African Media Women Zimbabwe (FAMWAZ) and the support of the British Council launched an initiative to promote media ownership by women, *The Africa Woman Publication*. There are media campaigns around the DVA and Trafficking by the IOM.

Challenges

- Major challenges include lack of specific gender legislation and policy in the media; under-representation of women in decision making positions in all media houses; unbalanced and stereotyped portrayal of women in the media and limited access to the media by both women and men in rural areas.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) are undergoing review in the inclusive government.

Limited access to information has forced ordinary citizens to resort to alternative media sources. Since the media is a critical tool for development, efforts to mainstream gender in the media sector need to be increased as per recommendation of the NGP.

2.10 Progress on the Critical Areas of Concern: Women and the Environment

- Zimbabwe has an Environmental Policy that was put in place in 2003. The significant legislative enactments include the Environmental Act and the Water Act (1998) where water permits issuance for agricultural use is gender sensitive.
- Capacity development is done via community gardens used to empower women (income and medicinal benefits). Capacity to make charcoal to use in cooking has also been build e.g. by the Farm Community Trust, an NGO working in farming communities. There are programmes to preserve natural resources; reclaim land; Water and Sanitation Programme (*seeks to increase water points and reduce distance women have to travel to fetch water*);
- In collaboration with United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNDP is supporting initiatives on biodiversity, climate change and sustainable livelihoods, encouraging women to work with various environment friendly techniques and technologies, in partnership with the Ministry of Environment. As part of the women empowerment programme, women have been trained in sustainable harvesting techniques, post harvest processing, storage and quality control.

Challenges

- Women need information on environment programmes and projects. Zimbabweans are generally unaware of environmental issues.

2.11 Conclusion

Part Two of the Report shows that a lot of work has been carried out in Zimbabwe to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the eleven critical areas highlighted. Numerous policies and legislative enactments have been put in place to comply with various international, regional and national instruments. There is also evidence that many programmes and projects are also in place to comply with the resolutions of the BPA and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

Many obstacles, gaps and challenges, however, still remain. The main obstacles relate to financial constraints and workforce turnover, especially during Zimbabwe's recent economic downturn. These challenges could be addressed if adequate resources are availed. It is the expectation of the Zimbabwe Government that the situation will soon improve under the inclusive government.

PART THREE:

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3. Introduction

Part Three of the Report focuses on critical area “H”, Institutional Development for the Advancement of Women. There are various institutional structures and measures in place in Zimbabwe to support the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

3.1 The National Machinery

- The national gender machinery is the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender & Community Development (MWAG&CD). It reports to the Executive (Cabinet). The other levels are the Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) Gender Committees, the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Gender. The Women’s Parliamentary Caucus mandate is to promote the gender agenda in parliament. The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on gender assesses progress and monitors activities and implementation of gender equality and women’s empowerment policies of the country.

The highest level for coordination comprises the UN Gender Thematic Group and the High Level Inter-ministerial Committee on gender (both chaired by the MWAG&CD). However, in the current transitional period, some structures, e.g. the Inter-ministerial Committee, are not in place.

The Ministry is in charge of implementing the National Gender Policy (NGP). The ministry is also in charge of implementing the strategy and work plan of the NGP including overseeing the activities of GFPs. The ministry is also in charge of coordinating the implementation of international commitments on gender equality and women’s empowerment i.e. human rights instruments such as CEDAW.

The MWAG& CD has a mandate to advance women, promote gender equality and community development. The MWAG&CD and the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus complement each other’s efforts in addressing gender issues. The mandate of the entire machinery, however, is gender mainstreaming. The Ministry seeks to address gender inequalities in a multi-sectoral and integrated manner.

When it comes to resources, the Ministry has a budget allocation from the Ministry of Finance but this is minimal. There is also resourcing from development partners, in particular the United Nations (UN). Human resourcing is a challenge because of the high turnover is due to uncompetitive remuneration.

3.2 Gender Focal Points

Gender focal points have been established in all line ministries and have support within the ministries in terms of time allocation and human resources but they are not yet effective because of exclusion of the appointed officers from decision making. Ideally, the GFP in each

ministry must be part of the senior management team and should have gender mainstreaming as one of their key result areas so that they are able to prioritise gender concerns.

The GFPs receive support from the MWAG&CD in the form of capacity development but this needs to be strengthened considerably, including through the provision of feedback to the quarterly reports produced by the GFPs. No accountability mechanism has been established by the ministry to determine the effectiveness of GFPs.

3.3 Institutional capacity building

Capacity is built through training workshops for heads of ministries, finance directors, gender committees, project officers, private sector and civil society organisations (CSOs). The chief challenge is that there are insufficient resources to train everyone in the line ministries. High staff turnover also means that the benefits of training are often lost, including institutional memory.

The recipients of training are usually the GFPs. Training has mainly been on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting. Training in gender and child analysis is also organised by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). There is further need to train the GFPs to be effective in collecting of sex/gender disaggregated-related data since this is what is still amiss. Such data should be coming from the line ministries themselves.

Resources are allocated through the Ministry of Finance. The ministry receives additional funding from civic groups and United Nations agencies. The Gender Machinery has, however, received the least allocation of resources from the National Budget over the past 5 years.

In terms of monitoring, the MWAG&CD coordinates all gender and gender mainstreaming programmes and its Department of Gender is responsible for the implementation of the National Gender Policy, including the monitoring of budgeting and resource allocation, and the development of action plans at programme level, using a multi-sectorial monitoring mechanism. Coordination is done through work plans, quarterly reports, consultative workshops and refresher courses.

Accountability is through line ministries. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out by gender focal persons (GFPs) and gender committees but not in a structured manner, and through quarterly reports. There is no feedback mechanism when quarterly reports are submitted to the MWAG&CD. In terms of effectiveness, GFPs provide quarterly reports. No accountability mechanism has been established by the ministry to determine the effectiveness of the GFPs. Receiving feedback could encourage GFPs to put more effort into their reports.

It is not possible to account for something for which no resources have been allocated. Quarterly review workshops were supposed to be conducted but this has not been done and the required checklists are not in place. The MWAG&CD needs to take the leading role so that proper monitoring systems are in place across ministries and to also incorporate the private sector and civil society organisations. The Ministry also needs to strengthen capacity of officers at provincial and district levels to assist in implementation of gender mainstreaming.

3.4 A core set of indicators

Establishment of a set of indicators is the responsibility of the MWAG&CD and donor agencies also have been very helpful in data collection. These indicators must be based on the MDGs and assessed in terms of disaggregation. The data, however, is currently scattered and unknown to the national gender machinery. More coordinated efforts are required to systematically process the data gathered.

More data needs to be collected especially in the private sector, for example, pertaining to women in leadership and decision- making positions.

3.5 Partnerships

The MWAG&CD works with many stakeholders i.e. the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), other line ministries, the Women's Caucus, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee etc. The GFPs report on a quarterly basis on progress in their ministries or departments.

In terms of effectiveness, the Ministry plays a coordinating role while civil society complements Government efforts. Networks have also been established with Civil Society e.g. with the Women's Coalition, the Gender Forum and Civil Society Organisations. These networks have been very effective in terms of producing reports, influencing changes in legislation (advocacy and lobbying) and assisting with capacity building.

The partners have different roles, some of which are outlined below:

- GOVERNMENT: Policy advice and direction;
- LEGISLATURE: Ensure more women in Parliament, and an oversight role regarding gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment;
- WOMEN'S CAUCUS: Overseeing the Committee on Gender on the initiatives for women's empowerment in Zimbabwe, and spearheading the enactment of laws that are gender sensitive;
- NGOS: Funding and advocacy awareness raising, research, policy analysis and monitoring and evaluation; NGOs provide technical and financial support; complement Government efforts; inform Government on policy change; conduct research and provide checks and balances;
- MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS, GENDER AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Coordination of the implementation of gender issues across all sectors, and provision of policy;
- UNITED NATIONS GENDER THEMATIC GROUP: Financial and technical support to the MWAG&CD;
- INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON GENDER: Advise on gender issues, and
- GENDER FOCAL PERSONS: Technical advice on gender issues in line ministries and parastatals

3.6 Conclusion

- Zimbabwe has a National Gender Machinery that promotes gender equality and women's empowerment which is the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAG&CD). Other structures in place to facilitate the mainstreaming of gender in Zimbabwe are the Gender Focal Persons (GFPs); Gender Committees, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Gender. There is also a National Gender Policy (NGP) and an implementation strategy/ action plan.

Monitoring mechanisms are also in place to monitor the advancement of women in Zimbabwe but they have not been very effective given the resource constraints and workforce turnover. The Ministry has, however, developed a good working partnership with civil society organisations, especially women's organisations and Padare Men's Gender Forum. The Ministry also works with various international organisations, especially those belonging to the United Nations system i.e. Economic Commission on Africa (ECA)/ Gender Unit, UNIFEM and UNDP who have been some of the Ministry's main funders. A lot of work has been done through these synergies and partnerships.

Some of the gaps relate to data collection, especially from various quarters from the private sector. The CSO has done a lot to gather sex/gender disaggregated data from government but more work still needs to be done. Government data collection and administration needs to be improved so as to complement CSO efforts.

Resource constraints still pose a major challenge in the effective collection, compilation and dissemination of data.

Gender expertise also needs to improve as not many people in government have received gender training while those who have received the training e.g. the GFPs move jobs leaving capacity gaps that take time to fill in the process.

It is the Government of Zimbabwe's expectation, however, that in the inclusive government, efforts to address some of the challenges facing the country in terms of fully implementation of the BPA and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly will be accelerated. Resources also need to be speedily availed so as to accelerate the gains already made.

PART FOUR:

REMAINING CHALLENGES

Part Four, the final segment of the Report, focuses on the remaining key challenges

4.1 Remaining challenges

The remaining challenges are:

1. Amending the Constitution to remove the claw back clause that allows discrimination on the basis of customary law.
2. Taking advantage of the Constitutional review process under way to ensure that all the gaps in the current Constitution are addressed, especially with regards to quota system for women in Decision-making, automatic domestication of ratified human rights conventions, social and economic rights etc.
3. Effective implementation of the 5 year Strategy and work Plan on gender mainstreaming.
4. Review of the National Gender Policy (NGP) to align it with current development issues.
5. Operationalisation of Gender Budgeting and decentralization to local government levels to ensure adequate resource allocation to gender programmes.
6. Strengthen Economic Employment Projects for women through opening special loan windows, and finally
7. Establishment of a coordinated system for collecting sex/gender disaggregated data.

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