



## **Questionnaire to Governments**

### **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)**

#### **For preparation of regional review and appraisals in the context of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2010**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The United Nations regional commissions will carry out a review and appraisal of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), in preparation for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2010. The regional commissions will collaborate with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in this process.

The review and appraisal of progress will cover the five-year period between the responses submitted by Member States to the questionnaire in 2004 and the end of 2009. It will identify achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of areas where actions and initiatives are most urgent to further implementation.

In preparing the review and appraisal of progress, the regional commissions will utilize the responses of Member States to this questionnaire. In addition, a variety of sources of information and statistics will be drawn upon, including reports submitted by States parties under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; information generated in the context of the Commission on the Status of Women; regional action plans and national reports to regional bodies; as well as and the outcomes of expert group meetings and other activities at regional level. Other sources of information include Common Country Assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, (CCA/UNDAFs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, (PRSPs), national Human Development Reports and national Millennium Development Goal (MDG) reports.

## II. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of four parts. Member States are requesting to provide information on efforts made and progress achieved since the most recent review and appraisal in 2005.

In **Part One**, reporting States are invited to highlight **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. Responses in Part One of the questionnaire should be no longer than three pages.

In **Part Two** of the questionnaire, reporting states are encouraged to provide specific examples of achievements, including policy development, legislative change, advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity-development and programmes and projects which they have undertaken on implementation in the **critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action** (except for critical area H which is covered in Part Three), as well as areas requiring further initiative and action identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Obstacles and remaining gaps and challenges in relation to the critical areas of concern should also be identified and a summary of lessons learned provided. Response to Part Two of the questionnaire should be no longer than 10 pages.

**Part Three** focuses on **institutional development** or those structures and measures countries have put in place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. It covers the critical area of concern H in the Platform for Action: Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, and chapters V on Institutional Arrangements and VI on Financial Arrangements, as well as actions identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Information on national machineries, capacity-building programmes for line ministries, resource allocation, statistics and indicators, monitoring and accountability mechanisms and partnerships should be described in this section. Responses to Part Three of the questionnaire should be four pages in length.

In **Part Four** respondents are invited to provide information on the **remaining key challenges and constraints** in the reporting States, as well as any **plans for future actions and initiatives** to address these and to ensure full implementation of the Platform for Action in each of the critical areas of concern. Reporting States are encouraged, in particular, to indicate any **new commitments** they will make to accelerate implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at national level over the next five years. Responses to Part Four of the questionnaire should be no longer than three pages.

The annex provides some examples of issues which could be covered under each part of the questionnaire. These examples are provided as guidance only. Reporting States are not required to cover all these issues but should focus on issues which are most relevant in their national contexts. Additional issues not included in the annex can also be raised in the responses.

### III. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The information being sought through the questionnaire is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Emphasis is placed on implementation, and reporting States are urged, as far as possible, to provide concrete information on impacts of initiatives and activities described. Activities and outputs and actions should be differentiated from achievements and impacts on the situation of women and on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. Reporting States are encouraged to provide quantitative data, disaggregated by sex and age, or to indicate where such data has already been submitted in other contexts. Countries wishing to provide information on indicators used at the national level to monitor activities for gender equality and empowerment of women may do so. Reporting States are also urged to provide information on the specific time periods for initiatives and actions taken.

For guidance, a list of reports submitted by Member States to the United Nations Secretariat prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), and the ten-year review and appraisal in the Commission on the Status of Women (2005), as well as the most recent reports submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, can be found on the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>).

### IV. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Responses to this questionnaire should be sent in both hard copy and electronic format in one of the six official United Nations languages, no later than 31 March 2009 to the relevant regional commissions:

#### **Economic Commission for Africa**

African Centre for Women,  
P.O. Box 3001 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Contact: Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Officer in Charge  
African Centre for Gender and Social Development  
Fax: (251-1) 5 51-2785  
E.mail: [truzvidz@uneca.org](mailto:truzvidz@uneca.org)

#### **Economic Commission for Europe**

Palais des Nations 1211, Geneva, Switzerland  
Contact: Ewa Ruminska-Zimny, Senior Social Affairs Officer  
Office of the Executive Secretary  
Fax: (41-22) 917-0036  
E.mail: [Ewa.Zimny@unece.org](mailto:Ewa.Zimny@unece.org)

#### **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean**

Women and Development Unit  
Casilla 179-D, Santiago, Chile  
Contact: Sonia Montano Director a.i.

**Comment [UN1]:** Change requested by ESCWA to 30 April. However ECE needs it to be 31 March. I don't think we can have two different dates. I suggest that ECSWA separately lets the national machineries know that the deadline is extended a month for them.

Division for Gender Affairs  
Fax: (56-2) 208-0252  
E.mail: [sonia.montano@cepal.org](mailto:sonia.montano@cepal.org) and [ximena.sanchez@cepal.org](mailto:ximena.sanchez@cepal.org)

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Gender Equality and Empowerment Section  
Social Development Division,  
UN Building Rajdamnern Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand  
Contact: Beverly Jones  
Fax: (66-2) 288-1030/1000  
E.mail: [gad@un.org](mailto:gad@un.org)

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**  
P.O. Box 11-8575, Beirut, Lebanon  
Contact: Miranda Hawa, Officer in Charge  
Centre for Women  
Fax: (961-1) 98-1510  
E.mail: [hawam@un.org](mailto:hawam@un.org)

## ANNEX: GUIDANCE ON ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED IN RESPONSES

The examples below are provided as guidance only. Reporting States are not required to cover these issues but should focus on issues which are most relevant in their national contexts. Additional issues not included in the annex can also be raised in the responses.

Comment [UN2]: Inserted by ECLAC

### **Part One: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (3 pages)**

Please note that the response to Part One of the questionnaire should contain highlights of achievements and challenges. The issues raised in this part can be discussed in more detail in responses to other parts of the questionnaire. For example, issues related to globalization would be discussed in more details under Part Two of the questionnaire and issues on gender-responsive budgeting would be discussed under Part Three.

Comment [UN3]: Suggested by ECE

Guiding questions: The response could, for example, address the following issues and questions:

*a) Has a national policy on **gender equality and the empowerment of women** been adopted and at what level? Was a strategy or plan of action developed to support the implementation of the policy? What mechanisms were established for monitoring and how are different actors held accountable for its implementation? Is there a national coordination mechanism at the highest level to ensure that the policy is implemented in all sector areas?*

Comment [UN4]:

Comment [UN5]:

*The Government of Lesotho has adopted a National Gender and Development Policy since 2003 and development a framework for the implementation of the Policy in 2007. In order to ensure effective implementation of the Gender and Development Policy (2003), the following structures have been established:-*

- a) Gender Focal Points (GFP): These have been drawn from the line ministries, parastatals, University and Civil Society Organisations. Their specific role is to propose appropriate and effective gender mechanisms within their respective institutions and to provide support and direction for taking gender concerns into account in all aspects of planning and programming;
- b) Gender Caucus Group (GCG): This body supports the Ministry responsible for Gender to sensitise policy makers and traditional leaderships on current and emerging gender issues. Members of GCG are selected on the basis of their expertise on thematic gender issues.
- c) The Basotho Women's Parliamentary Caucus (BWPC) has been established. It is made up of the members of Parliament. The BWPC discusses gender and development issues across party lines. The objective of the caucus is to enable members to present, discuss and analyse issues from a gender-sensitive perspective.

#### *Successes, obstacles and Lessons Learned*

- ✓ Gender and Development has gained a wider appreciation from the public.
- ✓ Social mobilization on gender and development creates a conducive environment for implementation of the Gender and Development Policy.

- ✓ Intensive lobbying and advocacy on equal participation of women and men in politics and decision-making is a necessary basis for the appreciation of gender and development issues by the Basotho society.
- ✓ Gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes
- ✓ Equal participation of women and men in the coming 2007 national elections.
- ✓ Economic empowerment of women.
- ✓ Gender sensitivity in a highly patriarchal society.

*b) What impact does the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, and the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have on the promotion of gender equality? How is implementation of the Convention progressing?*

Lesotho has never submitted a State Party report to the CEDAW Committee. It is in the process of compiling its initial, first, second, third and fourth report for submission. An Inter- Ministerial Sectoral Committee has been set up to support the process. So far, key national legislation and policies have been reviewed in line with CEDAW guidelines.

*c) What are the **main legislative and policy-making achievements** in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment over the past decade? Please provide details.*

The Government has adopted the following legislation and policy documents over the past decade

- National Gender and Development Policy 2003
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006

*d) To what extent have gender perspectives and the concerns of women been taken into account in preparation of **budgets** at national, regional and local levels? Has this resulted in increased resources for gender equality? Describe efforts to increase and track budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. Have gender-responsive budgeting procedures been introduced and to what effect?*

**Comment [UN6]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

Since the setting up of the Department of Gender in 2000, it concentrated on creating an enabling environment for gender equality and women's empowerment which will set a tone for the engendering of budgets in the near future.

e) *To what extent are the Millennium Declaration Goals (MDGs) utilized as the national framework for development? What attention is given to Goal 3 on gender equality? Is national-level data available to effectively monitor the achievement of the targets under MDG3? Are gender perspectives and the concerns of women considered in all other MDG goals?*

**Comment [UN7]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

The MDGs are substantially utilized in national development frameworks as a whole. However, MDG 3 focus specifically on the education sector for which there is the probability of meeting the target set by 2015 including a strong supportive environment. Nevertheless, for the MDG3 to be fully achieved, there is need to engender all the MDGs and develop additional targets for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

f) *Provide information on major government policy discussions and/or parliamentary debates where gender perspectives and the concerns of women have been taken systematically into account and resulted in policy and/or programmatic changes. What recent major reforms have taken place in the country where these perspectives were taken into account? What major problems are being debated in the country where the perspective of women and gender equality are considered as an integral part of the overall debate?*

**Comment [UN8]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

Since the adoption of the Gender and Development Policy, there has been parliamentary and cabinet debates on how it is going to be implemented. These discussions led to the preparation of the Policy Implementation Plan which has been costed and will be used for the engendering of government programmes and policies. The major problem being debated in the country of late has been the legal capacity of married women. This debate has resulted in the enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act.

g) *In countries emerging from armed conflict, to what extent were women involved, and gender perspectives and women's concerns included, in peace negotiations and in planning of reconstruction efforts?*

N/A for Lesotho

h) *How has globalization (for example, the use of ICT, market liberalization, changes in trading patterns, etc) affected the empowerment of women and girls and the promotion of gender equality? What efforts are being made to reduce potential risks and to build on opportunities for women?*

In its quest to achieve this potential, The Government has developed the Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Policy 2005 as tool to enable Lesotho to achieve its development goals as articulated in the Lesotho Vision 2020 Policy Document and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

Under the cross-cutting issue of Gender and Youth, ICTs can provide a powerful means for reaching out to youth and women and including them in the development process. Access to ICTs can have an empowering effect on youth and women through the acquisition of new skills

and exposure to opportunities. ICT training programmes for youth can also help ensure that the future drivers of the economy have the necessary skills to become entrepreneurs, decision makers, educators and software developers. Government is committed to deploying ICTs as tools in the process of ensuring gender equality, empowering and recognising women and youth in the development process with the objective to

- use ICTs as a vehicle to increase participation of youth and women in the development process.
- Use of ICTs as tools to promote gender equality in areas of education, employment, land and other social benefits.
- Include information needs of both men and women in designing ICT training programmes.
- Increase access to ICTs for youth and women in rural areas

Some trainings on Gender and ICT have been conducted for young women and men.

*i) In which **sector areas** have specific policies, strategies and/or action plans for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment been developed and implemented? To what extent are gender perspectives and the concerns of women routinely taken into account in legislation, policy making and programme development in other sectors, so that inequalities and gaps are identified and addressed?*

**Comment [UN9]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

The Government of Lesotho has enacted Education Act 2007 to enforce the right to education by making it compulsory and free. Non compliance of this is punishable by law. The education developments in Lesotho have, for more than twenty years, been guided by the Education Sector Survey Task Force Report which contains policy recommendations and guidelines (Ministry of Education and Training, 1992). In 2005 the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) launched a strategic plan to guide its activities for the period 2005-2015.

Sub sectoral policies which guarantee equal access to education and training for both women and men have been developed. They include among others non-formal education, teacher education, technical and vocational education and training, information and communication technology.

Gender and Development Policy 2003 advocates for the review and reform of curricula to eliminate stereotypical concepts of the roles of women and men, boys and girls and gender sensitive career guidance at all levels of education.

National University of Lesotho and the Institute of Extra Mural Studies have introduced a course on gender mainstreaming.

*j) What types of significant **partnerships** have been established with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, as well as the private sector and other stakeholders, in support of different aspects of national efforts on gender equality and empowerment of women – through for example, advocacy, participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes and service delivery?*

**Comment [UN10]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

*k) What efforts have been made to actively engage **men and boys** in the promotion of gender equality, including for example in eliminating violence against women and combating HIV/AIDS? What successes have been achieved and what constraints have been identified?*

Lesotho has one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates (the percent of people living with the disease) in the world, a much higher rate than the sub-Saharan African region overall (28.9% compared to 7.5%). The Government of Lesotho formed the Lesotho AIDS Programme Coordinating Authority (LAPCA) in 2001, and is currently developing a National AIDS Strategic Plan for 2005-2008. The Government has also established a National AIDS Commission (NAC) to coordinate the country's response to the epidemic. In March 2004, Lesotho introduced an innovative strategy to increase HIV testing, raise awareness and reduce stigma for the whole population. The "Know Your Status" Testing Campaign was launched to provide universal voluntary testing and counseling.

In addition to this scheme, Lesotho's AIDS effort is now guided by the National AIDS Policy and Strategic Plan for 2006-2011. To address the feminization of the pandemic, the National Action Plan on Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS (2007-2010) aims at reducing vulnerability and mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls in the following six thematic areas: prevention of HIV and AIDS among women and girls, girls education, gender based violence, property and inheritance rights, putting value to women's care work and women and girls' access to HIV and AIDS care and treatment.

*l) What is the impact of **climate change and food and energy crises** on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women? What steps are being taken to reduce the potential risks for and impact on women and to engage women effectively in prevention and mitigation processes? Have social protection measures been put in place to reduce the impact on women and have measures been adopted to support women farmers?*

**Comment [UN11]:** Additional changes from ESCAP

*m) What is the impact of the financial crisis on the promotion of gender equality? What measures have been taken to reduce the negative impact on women's access to resources, income and social protection? To what extent have measures to revive growth mobilized women's economic potential?*

**Comment [UN12]:** Suggested by ECE

**Part Two: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (10 pages)**

Please organize the response to this part of the questionnaire according to the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (except for critical area H which is covered in Part Three of the questionnaire).

**Guiding questions:** The response within each critical area of concern could address, but does not need to be limited to, the issues outlined below:

A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects

a) In relation to the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action and other key issues, what **successful actions** (such as legal measures, policy reforms, media campaigns, and pilot programmes or projects) have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples.

b) To what extent have **specific commitments** on the critical areas of concern – for example in terms of resource allocation, legislative change and policy and programme development - made by the Government at the Fourth World Conference on Women or in other contexts, been met?

**Comment [UN13]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges

c) Describe the **obstacles, gaps and challenges** encountered in implementation of the critical areas of concern and other key issues identified.

C. Lessons learned

d) Provide information on the **main lessons learned** in implementation in relation to each of the critical areas of concern and other key issues identified.

e) Provide concrete examples of **successful interventions** and explain why these were judged to be successful? Describe any effort to replicate these efforts.

**The Beijing Platform for Action**

As several other major gatherings on gender equality, women's empowerment and rights, the Government of Lesotho actively participated at the Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in Beijing in 1995. In line with the 12 critical areas, Lesotho subsequently developed its Gender and Development Policy which was extensively informed by the strategic interventions of the Platform for Action. Although Lesotho has never submitted a specific report on the progress of implementation of the Platform for Action, several initiatives by Government, civil Society Organizations and Development Partners have been undertaken as follows:

Women and Poverty

Education and Training for Women

Women and Health

Violence Against Women  
Women and Armed Conflict  
Women and the Economy  
Women in Power and Decision Making  
Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women  
Human Rights of Women  
Women and the Media  
Women and the Environment  
The Girl-Child

### **Beijing Platform for Action information on CEDAW Report**

As several other major gatherings on gender equality, women's empowerment and rights, the Government of Lesotho actively participated at the Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in Beijing in 1995. In line with the 12 critical areas, Lesotho subsequently developed its Gender and Development Policy 2003 which was extensively informed by the strategic interventions of the Platform for Action.

### **Women and Poverty**

Lesotho is concerned that the goal of poverty eradication, is the first Millennium Development Goal and one of the cross-cutting themes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits. Poverty in Lesotho is deeply entrenched in rural areas, where about 70 per cent of the people live. More than half of rural people are poor, and more than one quarter of them are extremely poor. Poverty is closely linked to lack of income and unemployment, as well as to severe degradation of the natural resource base on which the livelihoods of many rural poor depend to a varying extent. Lesotho's economy has for a long time been closely tied to that of the Republic of South Africa through the migrant labour system. Labour migration by Basotho men into the South Africa mines left women with the responsibility of household heads, as well as responsibility to do the bulk of subsistence agriculture production. As a result of this, Basotho women are still the backbone of the rural economy in spite of the increasing rates of retrenchment of men from their jobs in the mines of South Africa. *In the formal employment sector of Lesotho, men also form a larger proportion of the employed, while women predominate in the informal sector and constitute about 67% of the labour force in this sector (Letuka, Matashane and Morolong 1997). Their involvement in this sector typically does not provide Basotho women with adequate means of livelihood nor does it help in elevating their social status. Instead, it has contributed to their continued dependence on men because their earnings are low and not enough to meet their basic needs.*

*Source: Empowering women to serve as catalysts in poverty reduction in Lesotho: using adult education as a strategic approach, Mantina Mohasi*

## **Women and the Economy**

Women are active in a variety of economic areas, which they often combine, ranging from wage labour and subsistence farming to the informal sector. The Government of Lesotho continues to pursue growth and expanding opportunities with the goal to deliver results and benefits where they matter most, that is in the lives of the poor for which women are the majority. This has been the case of Lesotho where women still have limited access to economic as well as productive assets, loans, land, agriculture, inputs and markets. The relevant legal provisions of the Land Act of 1979 and the Deeds Registry of 1967 do not provide specific attention on gender issues especially as they do relate to women owning land and having land registered on women's names.

### *Successes, Obstacles and Lessons Learned:*

The enactment of Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006 has provided a conducive environment for reviewing a couple of laws that are economically discriminatory to women namely: the Land Act, the Customary Law, the Company's Act and the Savings Bank Reformation Act. This Act has been translated into Sesotho and a lay person friendly version has been developed in Sesotho. The advocacy programme has gone further to disseminate and create awareness on the existence of the law and its implications of uplifting the low economic status of women. Chiefs are beginning to appreciate the need to allocate pieces of land to married women.

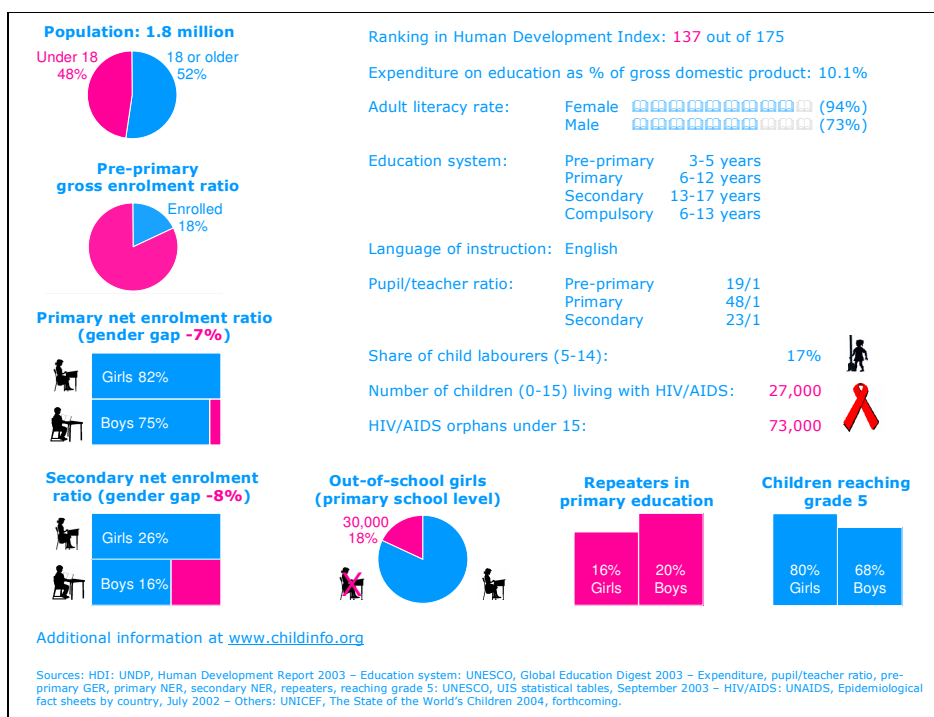
Patriarchal attitudes, behaviours, practices, values and norms pose a major obstacle to the success of realizing a higher participation of women in the economy.

Attitude, behaviour, information, education and communication change requires gender sensitive interventions whose impact often requires a very long time to be realized.

## **Education and Training of Women**

Although Lesotho has exceeded gender parity in access to primary education (82% for girls and 75% for boys), completion rates are higher for girls (80%). The Government of Lesotho, with support from its development partners, is committed to expanding educational opportunities for its girls and boys. It is an active participant in regional and international fora to build consensus on initiatives that contribute to improving the provision of quality education. A Gender Audit of the Education Sector was conducted in (February 2003) which has informed ongoing programmatic efforts in the country in the area of education as a whole.

## **GIRLS' EDUCATION: LESOTHO AT A GLANCE**



(Source UNICEF Country Office Lesotho)

*Successes, Obstacles and Lessons Learned:*

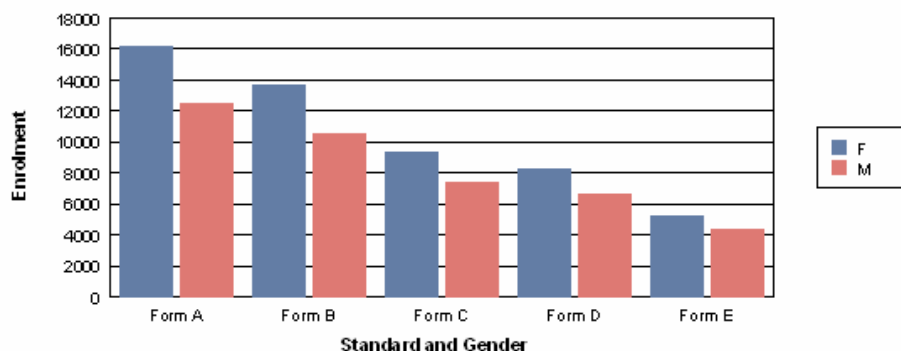
The Government of Lesotho has enacted Education Act 2007 to enforce the right to education by making it compulsory and free. Non compliance of this is punishable by law. In 2005 the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) launched a strategic plan to guide its activities for the period 2005-2015. Sub sectoral policies which guarantee equal access to education and training for both women and men have been developed. They include among others:

- non-formal education,
- teacher education,
- technical and vocational education and training,
- information and communication technology.

Gender and Development Policy 2003 advocates for the review and reform of curricula to eliminate stereotypical concepts of the roles of women and men, boys and girls and gender sensitive career guidance at all levels of education.

National University of Lesotho and the Institute of Extra Mural Studies have introduced a course on gender mainstreaming

Figure 2.1 Enrolment in Registered Secondary Schools by Grade and Gender 2006



According to the Education Statistics of 2006, the enrolment rate of female pupils' at secondary school level was as indicated below:

**Enrolment Rate at the National University of Lesotho by Residence and Sex in 2006**

Residence	Female	Male	Total
Hall of Residence	692	553	1245
Non Residence	3810	2863	6673
Total	4502	3416	7918

**Male-Female Teacher Ratio**

The number of teachers recruited in secondary schools (government, private, community schools and others) stood at 3905, out of which 2219 were female and 1686 male. The table below provides information on qualified and unqualified teachers by district and gender in 2006.

**Qualified and Unqualified Teachers by District and Gender 2006**

	All Teachers			Qualified Teachers			Unqualified Teachers		
	Males	Females	Total	Male	Females	Total	Male	Females	Total
Butha-Buthe	146	567	713	61	352	413	85	215	300
Leribe	291	1390	1681	134	945	1079	157	445	602
Berea	245	1009	1254	97	744	841	148	265	413
Maseru	405	1731	2136	227	1304	1531	178	427	605
Mafeteng	302	877	1179	119	532	651	183	345	528
Mohale's Hoek	241	737	978	84	466	550	157	271	428
Quthing	158	552	710	36	301	337	122	251	373
Qacha's Nek	134	341	475	53	176	229	81	165	246
Mokhotlong	159	394	553	45	201	246	114	193	307
Thaba-Tseka	254	485	739	74	190	264	180	295	475

Although women are not excluded from participating in sports and physical education, sports and other activities are predominantly male and no tertiary institution offers sports and physical education thus reduces the opportunity for women to engage in sports.

Despite the available education opportunities for both girls and boys, families still expect girls to do house chores and play other roles in the family when boys do recreational activities which mean more opportunities for them.

Girl children miss out on school days when they are menstruating and they go to school without under wear. This makes teaching very difficult because male teachers feel intimidated.

## **Women and Health**

In an effort to address the health needs of women, Lesotho has signed several conventions including the ICPD Plan of Action, the MDGs, It has put in place Safe Motherhood Programmes and family planning services to ensure women go through pregnancy and child birth safe.

Key policies adopted to support maternal health include among others the National Health Policy, the National HIV and AIDS Policy and Strategic Plan 2006-2011, the National Reproductive Health Policy 2008 and the National Action Plan on Women Girls and HIV and AIDS 2006-2010.

The National Reproductive Health Policy considers special needs of the different target populations and the need to abide by conventions guarding against discrimination such as gender, disability, culture and social status. Through the policy the government advocates for the provision of amongst others, essential Sexual and Reproductive Health Package aimed at ensuring safe motherhood, family planning, infertility, reproductive health and gender based violence, male involvement, access to sexual and reproductive health services.

The National Action Plan on Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS (2007-2010) aims at reducing vulnerability and mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls in the following six thematic areas: prevention of HIV and AIDS among women and girls, girls education, gender based violence, property and inheritance rights, putting value to women's care work and women and girls' access to HIV and AIDS care and treatment.

Concerned about high maternal mortality in Lesotho, a study was conducted in 2005 which revealed that most women die due to obstetric care complications that occur during and after delivery. In the light of this, the Government has adopted the Roadmap for Accelerating Reduction of Maternal and Newborn Morbidity and Mortality in Lesotho (2007-2015) with the support of UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO. It has also developed a five year PMTCT and Paediatric HIV Treatment scale up plan 2007-2011 which includes the four pronged approach outlined below:

- Primary prevention of HIV infections among women of child-bearing age
- Prevention of unintended pregnancies among HIV infected women
- Prevention of HIV transmission from infected mothers to their children
- Provision of continuous care, treatment and support for infected mothers, their partners and children.

The Ministry of Health offers counseling and testing for pregnant women as part of ante-natal care. According to the annual joint review report 2007/8 Financial Year of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare the trend of ANC HIV testing and counseling stood as shown in the table below:

**Trend on ANC HIV TESTING/ Number of Pregnant Women Counseled and Tested for HIV in 2005-2007**

YEAR	New ANC Clients	Pre-test Counseled	HIV TESTED	Post Test Counseled
2005	9700	10,684	5459	4913
2006	11,952	13,047	9,277	7,168
2007	24,651	26,293	23,965	23,196

In government clinics and hospitals, pregnant women receive ante-natal check-ups for free. Thereafter, infants are entitled to an immunization course without charge. These services are offered and available to all regardless of their marital status.

To ensure that women receive adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation, the Government has ensured that hospitals and clinics provide advisory services on healthy eating to pregnant women and nursing mothers. In public hospitals and clinics Vitamins and food supplement are given to pregnant women as their increased intake is needed during pregnancy and breastfeeding periods.

Non- governmental organizations have formulated programmes offering training and counseling on PMTCT and HIV and AIDS such as Institute of Development Management and Lesotho Plan Parenthood Association. Mobile clinics have been provided to hard to reach areas to ensure women have access to health care services. The Ministry of Health has developed guidelines on the how to administer PEP to survivors of rape.

*Successes, Obstacles and Lessons Learned:*

According to the Annual Joint Review Report 2007/8 FY by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare there is no reliable source such as a National Condom Management Strategy to inform the distribution, access and appropriate use of condoms by either men or women in Lesotho has not been developed.

Despite the efforts made to reduce maternal mortality ratio, it is increasing due to poor health systems aggravated by shortage of trained health care providers, insufficient essential equipment and low supply of medicine at all levels.

Some sex workers are discriminated against at health facilities which discourage them from to seek health care services thus rendering them vulnerable to HIV and STIs.

PEP is not nationally accessible as it is administered only to survivors of rape with authentic police medical form. Other groups such as care givers do not have access to PEP after exposure to HIV during their care work.

**Violence Against Women**

As one form gender based violence, violence against women and girl children is a serious concern and hidden issue in Lesotho. The causes and consequences are numerous and interrelated, contributing significantly to the spread of HIV/AIDS and to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. It is widely accepted that such violence is increasing yet there is still lack of proper reporting and evidence to portray the magnitude of the problem.

In an effort to address the gender based violence in the country, the Government has in the past adopted A Sexual Offence Act which addresses gender equality without discriminating between men and women, giving men and women same rights and equal protection by law against all instances and offenses of a sexual nature, including sexual violence. It has recently through the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation and in close collaboration with stakeholders drafted a draft Gender Based Violence Action Plan.

The Ministry is working in close partnership with UNFPA, UNDP and civil society organizations towards finalizing the establishment of a One Stop Centre to ensure an integrated response to survivors of gender based violence. The Centre will provide appropriate services such as education, counseling, treatment, care and support. The Government has also prioritized finalization and the enactment of Domestic Violence Bill. In an initiative led by PHELA and other stakeholders a critical analysis of the policy and legislative framework as they relate to domestic violence in Lesotho has already been conducted. With the support of UNFPA, the Ministry has recently commissioned a baseline study on the prevalence forms of gender-based violence in selected districts as well as an assessment of ten institutions to determine their capacity and capability to prevent gender-based violence.

#### *Successes, obstacles and Lessons Learned*

Section 18 (4) 1 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination of any kind and unfair treatment while Section 18 (4) (c) condones such discrimination under Customary Law. By implication, these two clauses are contradictory of each other thus the latter has the effect of discriminating against women by denying them the opportunity of being equal to men.

Lesotho has put in place the above mentioned pieces of legislature, policies and other machineries but has not assessed their impact on the advancement of women because most of them have just been established and/or promulgated. Moreover, there is no infrastructure to develop and maintain data base.

The country does not have a national and dissemination strategy for most of the pieces of legislations which hinders the smooth application of the laws. Translation and dissemination carried out has been on ad-hoc basis.

#### **Women and Arm Conflict**

The Government of Lesotho is deeply concerned that armed conflicts continue to hinder economic growth in Africa and elsewhere which is in violation of the respect for basic principles of international humanitarian law by parties to armed conflicts. Continued commitment has been made by deploying and involving women to support the African Union efforts in peace building missions in the continent, for instance in the Sudan.

## Women in Power and Decision Making

Women have demonstrated considerable leadership in community and informal organizations, as well as in public office.

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Lesotho has signed the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development which commits governments to ensure that there is thirty percent participation by women in politics.

National Gender and Development Policy 2003 makes provision for special protective measures in the following manner: "take deliberate measures such as legislated quota and zebra system as well as affirmative action to ensure equal representation in the numbers of women and men including people with disabilities in the National Assembly".

On the basis of the above measures, the government embarked on a national mobilization on 30 percent quota for women at local government which resulted in 58 percent women representation at this level. This achievement tops the list of SADC states. In 2006, Government has also launched 50/50 campaign towards the realization of equal representation of women and men in politics at national level.

### Women in Politics as of 2008? ( Info to be provided by the IEC)

Gender	Ministers	Assistant Ministers	MPs	Senators	Councillors
<b>F</b>	6	3	29	9	717
<b>M</b>	12	3	91	26	761
<b>TOTAL</b>	18	6	120	35	1478

### Number of Registered Voters in 2002 and 2007 General Elections

	2002	2007
<b>Female</b>		<b>522, 933</b>
<b>Male</b>		<b>393, 272</b>
<b>UNKNOWN</b>		<b>26</b>

### Women who stood for Elections in 2002 and 2007 General Elections

	2002	2007
<b>F</b>	146	118
<b>M</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		502

### Women in the Public Service Sector as of 2008

GENDER	PRINCIPAL SECRETARY	DEPUTY PRINCIPAL SECRETARY	DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	COMMISSIONER	DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT
F	5	3	2	2	15
M	13	9	8	3	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	18	12	10	5	21

### Women in the Judiciary as of 2008

Gender	Judges	Registrars	Magistrates	Judicial commissioners	Central courts presidents	Local courts Presidents
F	5	1	23	3	11	55
M	6	1	24	4	4	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	11	1	47	7	15	70

### *Successes, Obstacles and Lessons Learned*

National Assembly Elections (Amendment) Act No.1 2001 encourages every registered party and every candidate to:

- facilitate the full participation by women in all political activities on the basis of equality;
- respect the right of women to communicate freely in political parties;
- refrain from forcing women to adopt a particular political position or to engage in, or refrain from engaging in any political activity other than in accordance with their free choice.

-Local Government Elections Amendment Act 2005:

### **JUDICIAL MEASURES**

#### **Tsepo Molefe v. IEC Civ/App. 2005**

After promulgation of Local Government Act 1998 which provided for women quota representation in the local government elections, Molefe approached the court on the ground that such provision was discriminatory in nature and application thus unconstitutional and null and void. The Court having considered the facts decided that it was positive discrimination which upholds the Government's commitment to women's advancement in decision making structures.

### **Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women**

The Government of Lesotho has established a full fledged Ministry of Gender and Youth and Sports and Recreation in its efforts to promote women's rights. The Ministry has three departments with the Department of Gender strongly addressing women's specific needs – economic, social, cultural and political. To strengthen its work at the district level, District

gender officers have been placed in the ten districts. Several projects and programmes are run by the Ministry with the support of development partners like UNDP, UNICEF, Unions FPA and Civil Society Organization. Project activities include among others women's political participation and their representation in government at all levels, women's organizing, sharing of lessons learned and best practices with the government and its institutions, educating political candidates and voters about the government systems, and inform the public service and legislative systems about women's issues and training elected councillors on gender mainstreaming and human rights issues.

### **Human Rights of Women**

All human rights are very essential for the advancement of women. Human Rights awareness raising and educational programmes are being undertaken by the Government in collaboration with the civil society to promote human rights and the rights of women. Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and the Correctional Service, Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation, Ministry of Health and Social welfare as well as PHELA, WLSA, TRC and others are engaged in such educational programmes.

Several framework documents have been formulated to promote women's human rights such as Gender and Development Policy, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Legal capacity of Married Persons Act 2006, Gender and Development Implementation Framework 2007, the National Action Plan on Women, Girls and HIV and AIDS 2007, and the National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence 2008.

The Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006 gives women the *locus standi* in court with respect to the right to enter into contracts, sue or be sued, registering immovable property in her name, acting as trustee of an estate, acting as a director of a company and binding herself as surety.

#### *Successes, obstacles and Lessons Learned*

Section 19 of the Constitution emphasizes the principle of equality of both men and women before the law in all areas of life including marriage.

Section 3 of the Marriage Act 1974 provides that ' No person may be compelled to enter into a contract of marriage with any other person or marry against his or her wish.'

Section 25 further provides that ' No marriage officer shall solemnize a marriage between parties of whom one or both is under the age of twenty-one years and who has previously contracted a valid marriage...'

Section 27 also provides that ' No boy under the age of eighteen and no girl under the age of sixteen years shall be capable of contracting a valid marriage except with the written permission of the Minister, which he may grant in any particular case in which he considers such marriage desirable...'

The Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006 accords the husband and the wife equal rights and responsibilities as parents irrespective of the marital status and repeals the marital power.

The Government of Lesotho has established the Legal Aid Unit to deal with amongst others maintenance cases, most of the beneficiaries of which are women. In addition, to facilitate the service of the courts process in maintenance cases against Basotho men working in the mines, a partnership has been established with South Africa Court Sheriffs and Clerks. In maintenance cases where parents defy the Court Order and not support their children, there are both summoned by the Magistrate and ordered to agree on such support. Failure to comply with the agreed support attracts custodial detention. This has proved very useful in the districts where there is no Legal Aid.

Lesotho has a dual legal system. For instance Customary Law is in conflict with the Marriage Act 1974 with the regards to the age of marriage. Puberty determines marriage under Customary Law, whereas the Marriage Act 1974 has 18 years for boys and 16 years for girls.. The Legal Aid Unit is established only in Maseru meaning that clients from the other nine districts have to travel to Maseru to obtain the services. The fee of M200,00 is considered as expensive as the services are meant for the underprivileged. The Law is also silent on certain acts of violence occurring marriages such as interference by in-laws.

### **Women and the Media**

The media in Lesotho has a rich history, with the very first publication, *Leselinyana la Lesotho* published in 1863. The 2002 Gender and Media Baseline study carried out in 12 Southern African countries by Gender links revealed that women's views and voices are grossly under-represented in the media. However, using the measure of women sources, Lesotho, scored second best with 21% women news sources, 4% higher than the regional average of 17%. The sequel Gender and Media Audience study (GMAS) found that 15% of women in Lesotho (compared to an average of 12% in the overall regional study) cited news that asks for feedback like letters to the editors and talk shows as amongst their favourite genre. This shows that women in Lesotho are interested in engaging with the media. GMAS also showed that radio is still the most important source of news in Lesotho with more women (83%) than men (77%) citing radio as their most important source of news. Radio talk shows are therefore potentially a critical way of encouraging citizen participation in Lesotho, and specifically of engaging women in public debates.

The glass ceiling has not been broken especially in the media where there is only one private media house owned by a woman while five are owned by men. At the moment of writing there is none since that isolated case media house has since been closed down as a result of litigation. The strongest deterrent to women's advancement in the media in Lesotho is the polarization of the media in general and that of women in particular Organizations of women in media representing the rights of women in media in Lesotho are Media Women Association (LEMEWA), ... Another factor is the lack of an association of women media managers because there is so few of them. There is also a lack of women editors who are gatekeepers of media messages.

## Women and the Environment

Women have often played leadership roles or taken the lead in promoting an environmental ethic, reducing resource use, and reusing and recycling resources to minimize waste and excessive consumption. In order to create awareness of the environment, several initiatives have been put place by the Government .

## The Girl Child

The girl-child is discriminated against from the earliest stages of life, through her childhood and into adulthood. To address the needs of the girl child, the Government with the support of development partners has initiated projects that seek to meet the needs of adolescents and pays particular attention to the difficult status of girls. Information, education, communication and training activities show adolescents, parents, teachers, local leaders and other relevant groups the importance of girls' education.

It has reviewed workbooks for the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre to make them gender and HIV responsive. It has supported training on gender and HIV for Continuing Education Tutors as well as training on Life Skills Education for the Learning Post Administrators and Tutors. This training has a strong element of gender. It supports gender desegregation of Primary School Leaving Examination Results as well as construction of gender-responsive latrines for girls, boys and teachers in 62 primary schools. The boys' latrines have urinals to cater for boys' sex-specific needs.

UNICEF also supports Girls and Boys Education Movement whose aim is to work towards gender equality. There are clubs in some primary and high schools throughout the country. In their training workshops, the peer educators train their peers on gender, HIV and AIDS, Life Skills and child rights. During their training sessions, they use Sara Communication Initiative (SCI) materials which are resource manuals, comics, readers and videos. The SCI materials are adolescent-friendly as they address the topical issues that young people face in their daily lives and these materials are highly interactive as they employ participatory methods. ( *See Education and Training for Women Section*)

## Part Three: Institutional development (4 Pages)

**Guiding questions:** The response could address, but does not need to be limited to, the issues outlined below:

*a) What national mechanisms exist for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women – for example, ministry, national commission, parliamentary committee or commission? What mandates and resources does each body have and have these increased in the review period? How do these bodies work together? Describe the location of the national mechanisms and the access to decision-making processes. What networks have been established and how effective are these networks? What resources do the national mechanisms have in terms of staff and financial support? What percentage of financial resources comes from international or bilateral donors or other external sources?*

**Comment [UN14]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

b) Have **focal points** for gender equality and empowerment of women been established within line ministries, and in which ministries? What support is provided from within the ministries? What support (training, advice etc.) is provided by the national machinery? How effective are these focal points?

Please see Part One of Questionnaire for reference

c) What **monitoring** mechanisms have been established to measure progress in implementation – in relation to national policies, strategies and action plans as well as international commitments? How is accountability for promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women established across all ministries? How is coordination achieved? What role does the highest level of Government play?

**Comment [UN15]:** Additional inputs based on comments of ESCAP

Please see Part One of Questionnaire for reference. However, with regards Government's highest role in coordination, very little has been achieved.

What levels of **capacity** for promoting gender mainstreaming have been achieved? Through which mechanisms? What are the remaining challenges in the area of capacity building?

A core of group of trainers have been trained on gender mainstreaming and additional training to enhance capacity of institutions to mainstream gender.

e) Has a core set of **indicators** been established and where is responsibility for monitoring located? What gaps and challenges remain in relation to data and statistics? In which areas is lack of sex-disaggregation still a problem? In which areas do new types of data need to be collected? To what extent are the national statistical office and the statistical units in line ministries aware, committed and capable of providing the required data? In which sectors, and to what extent, is sex-disaggregated data being used effectively to inform policy-making and planning?

N/A

f) Provide information on the **roles of different stakeholders**. For example, what role does Parliament play in the promotion and monitoring of gender equality and women's empowerment? How could this role be strengthened? Describe the role of NGOs in planning and implementing the follow-up activities. Do NGOs participate formally in the mechanisms established to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women and support reporting on and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)?

N/A

**Part Four: Remaining challenges and actions to address them (3 pages)**

*Provide information on areas requiring future action.*

- a) *List any **further actions and initiatives** which the Government intends to take to fully implement the Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly beyond 2010.*

N/A

- b) *Describe the **priority areas** that have been identified for improving implementation in the next five years.*

N/A

- c) *Give **examples of measures** (with targets and timeframes) which will be taken in each of these areas.*

N/A

- d) *Outline explicit **new commitments** that will be made to accelerate implementation?*