



*Josephine Ouedraogo, Director, ACGD*

**T**he team at the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) is happy to welcome you to this new edition of *Gender Net* 2002. As you may well know, ACGD is the new appellation of the ECA African Centre for Women (ACW).

ACW conducted a review of its work in order to live up to the challenges posed by the International Conference on "African Women and Economic Development: Investing In Our

## Message from the Director

Future", hosted by ECA in April 1998 to celebrate its 40th anniversary.

The Conference has indeed recognized that an essential part of informal, household and rural economies in which women play a major role is overlooked in poverty diagnosis and GDP estimates. These two areas represent important indicators that strongly influence the prioritization process when elaborating national development policies. The Conference also recognized that public expenditure never takes domestic sectors into consideration, although they are the backbone of society.

The participants underlined the need to mainstream gender as an indicator of good governance, to be taken into consideration in all sectoral development strategies. They also urged the African Centre for Women to undertake policy advocacy to support implementation of the major recommendations made in this regard and to develop an adequate framework for furthering the debate, analyses and experience-sharing triggered by the Conference. The participants also asked ACW to launch capacity-building programmes.

This led the Centre to embark on a review of its mission, methods and means in 2000 and this paved the way for elaboration of a new work programme and expansion of its team. The new name given to ACW in March 2002, ACGD, reflects the changes in policy, technical and institutional dynamics.

*Gender Net* is now reappearing after a two-year absence, to serve

as a tool for echoing and promoting the ideas and analyses that underpin current and future ACGD work. It will provide readers with adequate and prompt information on the various surveys, seminars, and meetings that ACGD is undertaking and their outcomes. As a means of information and communication, *Gender Net* also serves as a link to foster dialogue and exchange with ACGD partners at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

We invite your feedback and plan to publish comments, suggestions and experiences with regard to the topics highlighted in each issue. We also welcome requests for topics that you wish us to cover.

This edition highlights the work of the Committee on Women and Development (CWD) and the issues it will review at its meeting to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 9 to 12 October 2002. It also features a synthesis report on the Evaluation Framework of the African Plan of Action for acceleration of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms implementation process, in preparation for Beijing +10. This edition also includes a presentation on the new Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facilities for Women Entrepreneurs (EDFs), based in Lome (Togo) and Kampala (Uganda).

We shall rely on the enthusiastic interest and contributions of our readers to help *Gender Net* grow and last, as a tool of information and exchange that will help enforce the advancement of African women and promote gender mainstreaming in Africa's development process.

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# The Committee on Women and Development holds its Statutory Meeting in Johannesburg

The ECA Committee on Women and Development (CWD) is meeting in Johannesburg just a few days before the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, in October 2002.

That such a body was needed was the recommendation of the First Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development that

*“Investing in women is, first of all, a moral imperative. It is the fair thing to do. Investing in women is also essential for reducing poverty and promoting growth...Supporting a stronger role for African women will boost the economy, reduce fertility, improve child survival and slow the population explosion. These are all proven ways to help achieve and maintain family stability and national development.”*

**K. Y. Amoako**  
**Executive Secretary, ECA**

was organized by ECA in Nouakchott, Mauritania, in 1977, to promote the exchange of experiences, strengthen solidarity among African women, and plan a common strategy for the integration of women in development. The African Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC), which preceded CWD, was then launched.

In 1997, an evaluation to review its structure, composition and functioning was conducted by the ECA African Centre for Women (ACW), known today as the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD). The role of ARCC was re-examined in the context of ECA's new strategic directions, which established gender concerns as a crosscutting issue to be mainstreamed in all ECA programmes. ACW recommended that the role of ARCC should

encompass advocacy activities in addition to providing support for gender mainstreaming at national, sub-regional and regional levels. In order to adapt to the new orientations, it also recommended a change of name to the Committee for Women and Development, and expansion of its membership so as to foster cooperation with NGOs, civil society, and the regional and international donor community.

## CWD membership

Membership of the Committee comprises representatives of member States, NGOs and resource persons. A total of 21 member States are selected by alphabetical order and per sub-region.

Representation is by country and language balance is taken into

North Africa	3
West Africa	5
Central Africa	3
Eastern Africa	4
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consideration when selecting the members. Every two years 2/3 of the membership is renewed while 1/3 is retained through elections to preserve continuity.

Membership includes:

- 18 women's non-governmental organizations, which are selected at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. The requirements include demonstrated track record of stability, good practice and sustainability.
- 5 service/ specialized organizations
- 5 resource persons selected to be ex-officio members, who have technical skills and knowledge in any of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. Their mission is to provide expertise in the areas of focus selected by the member

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### The Core Mandate of CWD

The Committee on Women and Development is entrusted with the following tasks:

1. To play an advocacy and policy guidance role with a view to promoting gender-sensitive policies and prompting to make necessary institutional changes at national, sub-regional and regional levels;
2. To undertake periodic review of progress in the implementation of strategies for the advancement of women at the national, sub-regional and regional levels;
3. To play a substantive role in influencing ECA policy and strategies through the decisions of the Ministers responsible for economic and social planning and finance;
4. To facilitate the exchange of information and experiences;
5. To participate in the activities and meetings of the United Nations and other relevant organizations;
6. To convene every 5 years the African Regional Conference on Women and Development; and
7. To report to the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on the activities and programmes carried out at the continental level.

## The African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of Beijing Platform 2000-2004

# A Monitoring and Evaluation Programme to make action speak for itself

The outcome of the Sixth Regional Conference on Women for mid-decade review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) (1999) revealed that the progress achieved was less than what was expected. The implementation process had not been clearly articulated or grounded on specific measurable objectives, which made the impact of these policies on the status of women hard to assess. Therefore, the Sixth Regional Conference adopted the African Plan of Action as a framework to assist every country in accelerating implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, particularly the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into policies,

Out of the few African countries that had formulated national gender policies, hardly any had developed appropriate institutional mechanisms and adequate capacity for the implementation of such policies.

plans and programmes.

It is in this context of facilitating implementation that the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (M&E Programme) came to be developed by the ECA's African Centre for Gender and Development.

### Focus and scope

At the national level and within each sector, the following issues will be the object of monitoring and evaluation:

- **National gender policy framework:** Evaluation will

encompass the scope, content, strategy, methodology and impact of the gender policy framework as an effective tool for gender mainstreaming.

- **Institutional mechanisms:** The African Plan of Action recommended the creation of National Coordinating Committees to ensure that gender is being integrated in different development sectors at the national, provincial and local levels. Such a mechanism will be assessed to gauge the efficiency of its coordinating role. In addition, monitoring and evaluation will also cover the efficiency of the Accountability Mechanisms, if any, in ensuring implementation of the national gender policy framework. Such mechanisms, therefore, monitor the extent to which commitments made by governments are being honoured. They are likely to target such institutions as parliaments, local councils, women organizations and other representatives of civil society.
- **Mechanisms for capacity building:** Since building capacity and skills is essential for sustainable and effective gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation will focus on capacity-building programmes, the relevance of their content, the adequacy of resources allocated to them and their impact in the different sectors and on the status of women.

The M&E Programme which targets 21 countries from all the five sub-regions of Africa focuses on monitoring and evaluating the extent to which national gender policies have been developed in these countries and the adequacy of these policies in effectively promoting and implementing gender mainstreaming in 5 strategic sectors. These sectors were selected on the basis of the strong implications their policies have on women. They include agriculture, trade and industry, health, planning and finance.

### Living up to the promises

The ECA's African Centre for Gender and Development is gearing up to implement the M&E Programme of the African Plan of Action to accelerate the implementation process of the Beijing PFA within the time frame planned. By 2004, it is hoped that all African countries will have enhanced their capacity to mainstream gender in their policies and programmes, in addition to developing tools and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating their performance in this area. National progress reports on the implementation of gender policies and prioritization of new areas of focus are also expected from all countries by that time.

As to impact evaluation, which is the last phase of the M&E Programme, its focus will be the extent to which gender gaps have been reduced in the strategically selected areas, as reflected by the status of women ten years after the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action were adopted. This evaluation will be conducted in 2004 and every 5 years thereafter.

## Keeping an Eye on Beijing +10

# ECA goes ahead with the evaluation process

**B**eijing +10 is expected to take place in 2004, to review the state of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA). Africa is joining the rest of the world to start preparing for this exercise. In order to develop an adequate evaluation mechanism, the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) recommended that the United Nations Regional Commissions "promote and assist national institutions in monitoring and implementing the PFA".

To this end, and in response to its mandate, ACGD formulated the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme for implementation of the African Plan of Action (PA), 2000-2004, which the Sixth Regional Conference on Women in 1999 adopted to accelerate follow-up to the Beijing PFA.

### Back to basics

As was clearly stated in the Dakar and Beijing PFAs, the most effective strategy for achieving gender equality is mainstreaming the gender dimension in all development policies, plans and programmes, thus addressing the systemic causes of gender inequity. Therefore, successful implementation of gender mainstreaming requires an explicit and well-articulated national gender policy framework that provides guidelines on how to institutionalise gender internally and implement, monitor and evaluate gender-responsive development goals.

Of the countries that did elaborate national gender policies, hardly any of them managed to set up adequate institutional mechanisms, to monitor and evaluate regularly the implementation process

Only 18 African countries out of 53 formulated or were in the process of formulating a national gender policy framework that would inform their national development policies. This need was highlighted in the mid-term review of the Beijing PFA that was undertaken by the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women, in November 1999.

of the Beijing PA, particularly the mainstreaming of national gender policy into all policies, plans and programmes.

To trigger action in order to fill the gap, ECA/ACGD elaborated this Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (M&E) and developed tools for its implementation at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

### Focus and scope of the M&E Programme

The overall goals of the M&E Programme are to:

- Promote and reinforce the mainstreaming of the gender perspective into national development policies, plans and programmes; and

- Contribute thereby to policy adjustments able to accelerate concretization of gender equality.

Reviewed by the Committee on Women and Development (CWD) Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2001, this programme targets 21 countries that are currently members of CWD and represent the five sub-regions of Africa. It focuses on monitoring and assessing the extent to which national gender policies have been developed in the participating countries, their adequacy in promoting gender mainstreaming in all sectors and the extent to which these policies are implemented in these sectors.

### Capacity building despite paucity of resources

Capacity building is a major component of the M&E Programme that is meant to prepare and facilitate the implementation of the Programme as part of the preparations for the Beijing +10 appointment in 2004 and 2005. The programme comprises a series of training workshops and a support component to the monitoring and evaluation process.

### Specifically, the M&E Programme seeks to:

- Strengthen the commitment of member States to the implementation of the Beijing PFA;
- Build the capacity of member States to integrate the objectives of the PFA in their national policies and programmes;
- Strengthen the capacity of member States to appraise, evaluate and report on the progress made at the national, regional and global levels; and
- Undertake impact assessment of gender mainstreaming on the status of women in Africa.

The workshops target those actors at the country level who are responsible for collecting the necessary data, producing regular monitoring reports to be discussed with the decision makers in order to make corrective adjustments in the implementation process, and coordinating the process as a whole.

Despite the resource constraints of time, finances and human resources, the participating countries were invited to nominate Monitoring and Evaluation Officers from 6 key ministries, namely Finance, Planning, Agriculture, Health, Trade and Industry, and Women Affairs, in addition to the national coordinating NGOs.

### Why these Ministries?

Women are significant players in large numbers in the specific sectors of agriculture and trade and industry, but their contributions, as clearly recognized now, do not find their way into the national accounts, nor do the

The choice of these key ministries is strategic given their specific mandates. Acceptance of gender mainstreaming in their policies and activities would have a multiplier effect on other Ministries, in the medium and long run. The expected support to combat the specific problems women are facing has been slow and inadequate because the solutions proposed at the level of national planning and budgeting are rarely based on gender-disaggregated data. Reviewing their gender-blind policies would allow these Ministries to influence national and sectoral planning and resource distribution in a more equitable and gender-responsive way.

women benefit proportionately from the support and services provided to the two sectors by governments. In the health sector, women are not any luckier because of their reproductive role, which exposes many of them to serious threats such as maternal mortality and morbidity, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

However it is important to stress that member States, intergovernmental institutions and NGOs concerned with development issues are the ones meant to use the M&E Programme. All countries have already determined their own priorities for implementation out of the 12 critical areas defined by the Beijing PFA.

Although these priorities do not necessarily coincide with the strategic sectors selected by the M&E programmes, the monitoring and evaluating guidelines can be used in any other sector of priority chosen by a member State. The sectoral indicators can be formulated according to the Monitoring and Evaluation Tools developed by ECA/ACGD .

### Training is paramount

Considering that training is essential to familiarize and prepare the Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, ECA has conducted workshops in Morocco for English-speaking countries in Northern and West Africa, and in Botswana for English-speaking countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The M&E Programme and its tools were presented and challenges anticipated in the implementation process were raised and prioritized by the participants, who were policy makers and experts from the 6 key ministries mentioned above, in charge of gender mainstreaming.

The participants also interacted and developed Plans of Action to enhance their capacity to imple-

Training ensured by ECA's African Centre for Gender and Development, as per its mandate, has proved useful. It has helped the trainees internalize accountability and appreciate the holistic approach as opposed to the sectoral approach in mainstreaming gender into national development policies and programmes.

ment the M&E Programme, using the M&E methodology. These workshops availed the participants and the ECA team with the opportunity to define respective roles and responsibilities, and to set a time frame for using the M&E Tools in the preparation process for Beijing +10.

### What next?

Having developed the capacity of the participating member States, ECA will soon start to implement the M&E Programme, by providing technical support in the field with the help of collaborating agencies. Collaborating institutions include ABANTU for Development, the Secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Pan-African Institute for Development (PAID) - Central Africa; and the Pan-African Institute for Development - West Africa. This support will assist the respective countries to carry out several technical tasks that can be summed up as follows:

- Completion of the base-line assessment of the status of implementation of the PFA, and continuous monitoring exercises by the Sectoral Evaluation Officers;
- Review and synthesis of the sectoral base-line and inclusion of continuous monitoring reports by the National Monitoring Officers into national reports;

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## Boosting Business for Women

# Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facilities to help women entrepreneurs in Africa

*Improving the capacities of women in business through better access to information, enhancement of skills and economic empowerment.*

The Enterprise Development Facility is a technology-driven initiative that emanated from the full recognition of the significant role played by African women in informal and formal micro and small businesses on the one hand, and the need to address the constraints they face in a more systematic way, on the other. The realization of this initiative through the setting up of two pilot Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facilities for women entrepreneurs - one in Lome (Togo) for Western Africa, and the second one in Kampala (Uganda) for Eastern Africa - has been a long process. It has become, since 1998, part of the work programme of ECA's African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD).

Indeed, after the Africa-Asia Forum on the Economic Empowerment of Women that was held in Bangkok (Thailand) in 1997, ACGD was entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating this initiative. A study tour of African women entrepreneurs and delegates from technology institutes was then organized to India and Sri Lanka in collaboration with the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and the Asian Centre for the Promotion of Entrepreneurial Initiatives (ASCENT), with a focus on food-processing technologies. At the end of the study tour, participants stressed the need to build the technological and business capacities of African women entrepreneurs, foster networking and encourage the sharing of

technical know-how on the use of improved technology.

### The tale of two facilities

In compliance with the recommendations of the study tour, ACGD organized a follow-up meeting in Bujumbura (Burundi) in 1999 that urged the setting up of two sub-regional enterprise development

As multidisciplinary facilitation centres for women entrepreneurs, the two facilities are meant to help enhance business opportunities for women, upgrade their activities and reduce the feminization of poverty in Africa.

centres, now known as Enterprise Development Facilities (EDF). The feasibility study that ECA finalized in 2000, with the cooperation of ASCENT, recommended Togo and Uganda as the best locations in the respective sub-regions because of the fact that the two fulfilled all the criteria agreed upon for hosting EDFs.

The establishment of the two facilities is an ECA/ACGD field project that will be supervised during its four-year duration by an Advisory Committee composed of stakeholders and partners. Later, the facilities will become non-profit-making organizations in accordance with the legal provisions

of the two host countries. So far, the Chamber of Commerce and Industries of Togo has offered temporary accommodation for the Lome EDF until the Government of Togo provides, as promised, operational working premises and related facilities. With regard to the Kampala EDF, consultations are underway with the Government of Uganda for provision of appropriate offices and facilities.

### Introducing a new dynamics

Making a difference and introducing a new dynamics will be made possible thanks to the services that EDFs are expected to provide. To this end, these Facilities will serve as:

- Accessible storehouses for the generation, gathering, processing and dissemination of relevant business information in the areas of trade and markets, useful technologies, sources of credit, training and advisory services;

*"Of all the changes faced by Africa, one of the most important, is that which is represented by the information revolution. Our approach to information and communication technologies promotes inclusion of all African people, regardless of gender, level education, or social status, rather than further marginalizing disadvantaged people."*

**K.Y. Amoako**  
Executive Secretary, ECA

- Training centres in such fields as enterprise initiation, preparation of bankable project proposals, case study documentation, and development of training materials

for trainers, facilitators and entrepreneurs;

- Focal points for establishing linkages and networking between women entrepreneurs at all levels; and
- Focal points for enhancing South-South cooperation.

During the first phase of the project, ACGD conducted initial stage activities such as the training of trainers workshop on food-processing technologies held in October 2000, in Kampala. The workshop availed the participants of a good opportunity to initiate networking among women entrepreneurs in food-processing and to identify the technologies that could be transferred within Africa or imported from outside.

The second phase of activity

*“Globalization is bringing about unique challenges in the information technology field for Africa. If Africa fails to adjust successfully to the information society of the future, the continent’s competitiveness will be severely disadvantaged in the emerging global economy.”*

**K.Y. Amoako**  
**Executive Secretary, ECA**

encompassed the Workshop on the Development and Reinforcement of Networking among Women Entrepreneurs, held in June 2001, in Lome, during which the Lome Enterprise Development Facility was launched. Participants agreed on the need to develop adequate mechanisms for an optimal system of networking. Focal points were also appointed and requested to advocate for the network and help collect relevant business information in their countries.

### **An all-out mobilization to make EDFs operational**

EDFs are the positive outcome of cooperation among several partner organizations. Since finalization of the feasibility study, ACGD has been harnessing all its efforts to lobby

The ultimate goal of EDFs is to give women access to information, skills development, training and business opportunities in an enabling environment.

for the project and introduce it to various partners and donors. The responses from partners have been encouraging. Initially, Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie (AIF) have allocated seed money to fund the workshops. The ILO Regional Office for Africa and UNIDO has agreed to provide technical assistance when the project is launched. CISCO Systems has also offered to co-operate with ECA when EDFs commence operations.

In implementing phase 2, a partners meeting was held in March 2002, in Addis Ababa, with the participants from the two host countries, some partners, as well as women entrepreneur representatives from the two sub-regions. As a partner, Agence

Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie (AIF) agreed to provide the Lome EDF with computers and accessories to enable start-up operations. Representatives of Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) suggested that the two EDFs should forge partnerships with ECA/ACGD and provide assistance to women operators in the informal

sector. In this regard, a Regional Workshop on the Value Chain Approach in Food Processing will be held in December 2002, in Kampala.

Background activities are being undertaken to move EDFs forward. Consultations are underway with the Government of Uganda to launch the Kampala EDF, and Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie has been approached to start equipping Lome EDF with computers and related accessories. Likewise, guidelines are being developed for collection of country-level business data, and website design for this entrepreneurial initiative is making good progress.

### **The way forward**

In this regard, ACGD is calling for partners’ involvement in helping this initiative to become reality, through:

- Mechanisms to be worked out for coordinating partners’ assistance, especially in the areas of training and skills development;
- Collaborative arrangements designed to build the capacity of national associations of women entrepreneurs to serve as strong focal points for EDFs;
- Ways and means to be identified for collection of country-level business information related to women entrepreneurship development; and
- Partnership activities that allow all business development stakeholders to address the needs of women entrepreneurs in a more coordinated manner.

### **Keeping an Eye on Beijing + 10...**

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- Synthesis of national reports into one sub-regional report by ECA’s Sub-regional Development Centres (SRDCs), which will then submit them to ACGD, for preparation of the Regional Report.

Thanks to this M&E Programme and all its components, meticulously implemented by ECA, the National and Sectoral M&E Officers will play a central role in the final evaluation process at the African level, in preparation for the Global Beijing + 10 Conference.

## The Committee on Women and Development...

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States and by ECA's work programme. This includes preparation of technical documents, facilitation of sessions and servicing CWD meetings upon request.

The membership of CWD also comprises, as ex-officio members, the Chairperson of the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women, and a representative of the country that is chairing the Summit of the African Union. Observers from the African Union, the African Development Bank, sub-regional inter-governmental organizations, and United Nations specialized agencies are also included in CWD membership.

### The CWD Bureau

The Bureau has a two-year term of office and is composed of 5 member States (1 from each sub-region) out of the 19 countries selected as members. The positions of the members include: the Chairperson, the First Vice Chairperson, the Second Vice-Chairperson, First Rapporteur and

### CWD credits

CWD is to be given credit for promoting gender mainstreaming as a viable strategy to reduce inequalities between men and women and for putting women's issues on the agenda of the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance and Planning.

It has played a major role in articulating the aspirations and needs of African women as expressed in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action (PFAs) and in mobilizing African governments for effective implementation of these PFAs. It has consistently promoted the participation of African women in decision-making processes at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Second Rapporteur. Additional members of the Bureau include the Chairperson of the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women who is an ex-officio member until the next regional conference, and the representative of the country that is chairing the Summit of the African Union.

### Achievements of CWD

In compliance with its mandate, CWD has also conducted periodic reviews of progress achieved in the implementation of strategies for the advancement of women.

This year, its meeting in Johannesburg will discuss the framework for evaluation of the implementation of the African and Global Plans of Action for the advancement of women at national, sub-regional and regional levels. It will review, likewise, the analytical framework of the process for engendering national accounts and national budgets, and will examine the African Gender Development Index (AGDI). ECA's African Centre for Gender and Development has elaborated all these technical documents.

**Gender Net is a publication of the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD), a division of the Economic Commission for Africa .**

**We welcome your contributions and suggestions. Please feel free to write to: The Editor, Gender Net, African Centre for Gender and Development, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), P.O Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel. +251-1-443300 or 251-1-443301, Fax. +251-1-512785 or 251-1-514416.**

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