

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRESS OF THE WORLD'S WOMEN 2008/2009

Who Answers to Women?

GENDER & ACCOUNTABILITY

United Nations
Development Fund for Women



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Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009: Who Answers to Women? *Gender and Accountability* shows that realising women's rights and achieving the Millennium Development Goals depends on strengthening accountability for commitments to women and gender equality. The examples highlighted throughout the Report suggest that for women's rights to translate into substantive improvements in their lives, and for gender equality to be realized in practice, women must be able to fully participate in public decision-making at all levels and hold those responsible to account when their rights are infringed or their needs ignored. Published at the halfway point to the 2015 deadline for achieving the MDGs, *Progress* presents clear evidence that women's empowerment and gender equality are drivers for reducing poverty, building food security, reducing maternal mortality, and enhancing the effectiveness of aid.

The chapters in this volume examine how women's efforts to expose gender-based injustice and demand redress have changed the ways in which we think about accountability. Acknowledging that different groups of women encounter distinct challenges in gaining access to their rights, *Progress 2008/2009* highlights a wide range of examples, including those that show how the most excluded women are identifying accountability gaps and calling for redress.

Improving accountability to women begins with increasing the numbers of women in decision-making, but it cannot stop there. It requires stronger mandates, clearer performance indicators, better incentives and sustained advocacy efforts – in short, good governance. *Progress 2008/2009* shows that good governance needs women and women need good governance if commitments to gender equality are to be met nationally and globally.

The Report at a Glance:

To date, women are outnumbered 4 to 1 in legislatures around the world; the majority (over 60 per cent) of all unpaid family workers globally are women; women earn 17 per cent less than men; in sub-Saharan Africa, three women are infected with HIV for every two men; and in some parts of the world, 1 in 10 women dies from pregnancy-related causes even though the means for preventing maternal mortality are cost-effective and well-known. Discrimination on this scale after decades of national and international commitments is symptomatic of an accountability crisis.

Progress 2008/2009 focuses on five key areas where the need to strengthen accountability to women is urgent: politics and governance, access to public services, economic opportunities, justice, and finally the distribution of international assistance for development and security.

- **There are more women in government than ever before.** The percentage of parliamentarians at national level who are women has increased by 8 per cent to the current global average of 18.4 per cent in the decade from 1998 to 2008. Yet even if we sustain the present rate of increase, women's political representation in developing countries will not reach the 'parity zone' of between 40 and 60 per cent until 2045. Quotas or temporary special measures are a proven way of ensuring progress: women hold an average of 19.3 per cent of parliamentary seats in countries that applied some form of electoral quota, as compared to 14.7 per cent in countries with no quotas.
- **Service delivery that responds to women's needs is the litmus test of government accountability.** *Progress 2008* shows that the challenge is formidable. In sub-Saharan Africa alone women spend 40 billion hours each year collecting water – the equivalent of a year's worth of labour by the entire workforce of France – because many households lack access to water in or near the premises. Globally, maternal mortality is going down at a rate of just 0.4 per cent a year – compared to the 5.5 per cent needed to meet MDG 5. Women continue to face significant access barriers to health, education and agricultural support services. Health clinics and schools are often too distant and too costly to access, agricultural services are geared towards male farmers, and government services are sometimes based on the assumption that the applicant is an employed, literate or propertied man.

- **Women experience corruption differently from men.** One expression of accountability failure is corruption, and *Progress* shows that women and girls are subject to different – often unnoticed and unchecked – forms of corruption than men. Sexual extortion for instance is an unrecognised ‘bribe’ women are asked to pay. Women around the world also tend to perceive higher levels of corruption than men in public institutions. In developed countries, for example, 30 per cent more women than men perceive high levels of corruption in the education system.
- **Women are especially vulnerable to shifting patterns in global markets in the absence of protective measures.** The recent food crisis, for example, has had a severe effect on women, who not only assume primary responsibility for feeding their families but also contribute as much as 60 to 80 per cent of agricultural labour in sub-Saharan Africa and 50 per cent in Asia. Women’s employment is also shaped by global trends. For instance, the average rate of emigration among women with tertiary education is higher than men’s across all regions, except North America. This ‘brain drain’ is likely to have a negative impact on women’s social and economic leadership in developing countries.
- **Improving women’s access to justice requires gender-based reforms in law enforcement and informal justice institutions.** Evidence from Liberia suggests that the presence of an all-female police contingent sent by the government of India as part of the peacekeeping force is encouraging women to engage with the police, both by registering their complaints and joining the Liberia police service. Similar examples can be found in other post-conflict countries, such as Timor-Leste and Kosovo. With respect to informal justice systems, progress has been extremely slow, as most such systems are often exempt from the application of human rights and gender equality standards.
- **Multilateral aid and security institutions can do much more to meet their own commitments and standards on gender equality.** To date, no agreed system-wide tracking mechanism exists within multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations and the International Financial Institutions, to assess the amount of aid allocated to gender equality or women’s empowerment. Within the OECD there is a Gender Equality Marker (GEM) to track allocations, but less than half of the funds eligible for ‘screening’ use this marker. Since the introduction of the GEM, amounts marked for gender have almost tripled in absolute terms – from US\$2.5 billion in 2002 to US\$7.2 billion in 2006 – but remain small as a percentage of the total.

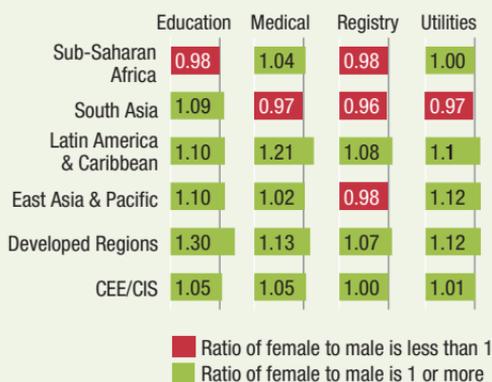
CHAPTER 1: WHO ANSWERS TO WOMEN?

Chapter 1 provides a gender-responsive definition of accountability and focuses on the key elements that are required to ‘make accountability work’ for women. It argues that government commitments to gender equality are important, but they are likely to remain words on paper unless supported by performance assessments for public officials and corrective actions in cases of performance failure.

- Progress 2008/2009 understands accountability as the capacity of citizens in general – and women in particular – to:
 - ask for explanations and information regarding government actions;
 - where necessary, to initiate investigations or to get compensation;
 - and, finally, to see officials sanctioned, if they have failed to respond to women’s needs or protect their rights.
- Essential accountability processes often do not work for poor people, who may lack information about how public authorities make decisions and spend money, as well as the ‘voice’ and power to initiate investigations or demand redress. These problems affect

Gendered Perceptions of Corruption by Region: Service Provision Institutions

Respondents with high levels of perceived
corruption, ratio female to male, 2005



Source: UNIFEM analysis of Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer database (2005).

Imihigo is a tradition that Rwanda has institutionalized as a means to enhance local government reform and stimulate development. It draws on a long-standing cultural practice in Rwanda whereby two parties publicly commit themselves to the achievement of a particular task. Failing to meet these public commitments leads to dishonour, not only for the individual but for the community. Since 2006, Imihigo have been signed at the local government level with district, sector, cell, and umudugudu (village) officials (2007), as well as at the household level (2008), and will be signed at the individual level (planned for 2009). Obligations under Imihigo are reciprocal between signatories. District leaders, for example, are obligated to work with their constituents toward the achievement of national development priorities over the course of a year, and the President is committed to supporting districts with the requisite financial, technical and human resources to facilitate the achievement of these goals. Recently, accountability for addressing gender-based violence (GBV) has been included in household surveys against which district leadership are to be evaluated. This signals a widespread commitment to prevent violence against women in a very explicit form. (See Box 1B)

women, especially poor women, more acutely because of gendered social relations that can mute their voice and influence in public decision-making, or because of gender biases that undermine their efforts to seek redress or justice when their rights are abused.

- Women often have a different perspective on accountability than men because of different experiences of accountability failure. For example, women perceive more corruption in public services than do men in most regions.
- Improving accountability to women means women's rights and gender equality need to be 'mission critical' in at least three areas: mandates, implementation, and culture and attitudes.
 - *Mandates:* For example, new laws might be necessary for police to investigate violence in the home.
 - *Procedures:* This can include changing incentives, implementing performance measures and review, and removing barriers and improving access. For example, in the 2006 Liberian elections, UNIFEM helped women's groups transport market women to voter registration offices that were situated far from marketplaces.
 - *Culture and attitudes:* For example, campaigns involving men and boys to end violence against women have been effective in countries as diverse as Brazil and Timor-Leste.

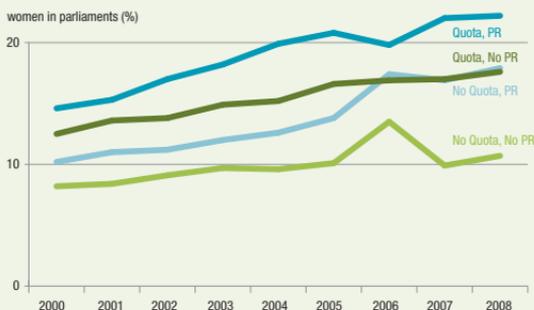
CHAPTER 2: POLITICS

Women's direct engagement in public decision-making has long been seen not just as a matter of democratic justice, but as a means of ensuring better government accountability to women. Quotas have been an effective vehicle for supporting women's political engagement. But increasing the numbers of women in politics is in itself not sufficient to ensure better public sector responsiveness to women's needs. It must be linked to gender-sensitive good governance reforms — understood as inclusive, responsive, and accountable management of public affairs that increases state capacity to implement gender policies.

- Today there are more women in government than ever before. The proportion of women in national assemblies, for example, has increased by 8 per cent to the current global average of 18.4 per cent from 1998 to 2008, compared to an increase of just one per cent in the two decades after 1975. Yet even at the current rate of increase, developing countries will not reach the 'parity zone' where neither sex holds more than 60 per cent of seats until 2045.
- Political accountability to women requires:
 - *Strong mobilisation*: Women's movements have played an important role in challenging authoritarian regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Nepal, Peru and the Philippines; in building

Making a Difference: Electoral Systems & Quotas

Countries with a PR system have more women in parliament. Quotas make a difference, regardless of electoral system.



Sources: IPU database; IDEA Global Database of Quotas for women; IDEA (2003); IDEA website; ACE Electoral Knowledge Network website.

pressure for peace in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Uganda, Burundi, Timor-Leste and the Balkans; in lobbying for legislative change to stop genital mutilation in Senegal and Burkina Faso, to guarantee inheritance rights in Rwanda, and to promote rights in marriage in Brazil and Turkey.

- *Strong representation:* Quotas and other temporary special measures, such as reserved seats, are a proven means for supporting women's engagement in political competition; they are currently used at national and sub-national levels in 95 countries.

- In elections held in 2007, the average representation of women was 19.3 per cent in those countries that used some type of electoral quota, as opposed to 14.7 per cent for those countries without quotas, regardless of electoral system.

- Eighteen of the 22 countries that boast 30 per cent or more women in national assemblies applied quotas in some form.

- *Strong legislation and policy:* Higher numbers of women in parliament generally contribute to stronger attention to women's issues.

- A 2008 study of UK politics, for example, confirms that since the number of women in parliament doubled to 18.2 per cent since the 1997 election, issues of particular importance to women – such as childcare and social protection – have received more attention.

- At the local level, examples from India and Norway suggest that women in decision-making positions tend to have a positive impact on the delivery of services to women and children.

- *Strong implementation:* Even when the political will does exist, many governments do not have the capacity, resources, or know-how to ensure that gender equality policies are carried out.

- Bureaucracies that mirror the patterns of diversity in the public they serve are more likely to be responsive to the specific needs of a variety of marginalised social groups. In Afghanistan, the government recently committed to fast track the increase of women's participation in the civil service at all levels to 30 per cent by 2013. Currently, only 22 per cent of all regular government employees are women and only 9 per cent of these are at the decision-making level.

- Political accountability to women begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but it cannot stop there. It requires governance reforms that equip public institutions with the incentives, skills, information and procedures to respond to women's needs.

In 2001, the World Bank report Engendering Development through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice suggested that societies where women enjoy greater participation in public life have “cleaner” businesses and governments. A 2003 study pitted indicators of the “fair sex” hypothesis (i.e., women in parliament, women in ministerial positions, and women in sub-ministerial positions) against measures of liberal democracy (i.e., rule of law, press freedom, and elections) for a sample of 99 countries. Results showed that both women in government and liberal democracy were significantly and inversely related to corruption when they were isolated from each other. But when put into the same model, the effects of women’s political presence on corruption became insignificant, whereas liberal institutions remained very powerful predictors of low corruption. To elect or appoint more women to leadership positions is a noble and just goal in itself, but would not on its own “clean up” government. Effective checks and balances on power are needed, whatever the gender of politicians (see Box 2F).

CHAPTER 3: SERVICES

The delivery of public services is the most direct measure of government accountability to women. By this measure, many governments do not fare well: women around the world face failures in public service delivery on a daily basis. By contrast, where women enjoy access to appropriate and good quality services, it is likely that public resource managers and public service delivery staff are informed of women’s needs, and that women as citizens are able to influence decisions over the allocation of public resources.

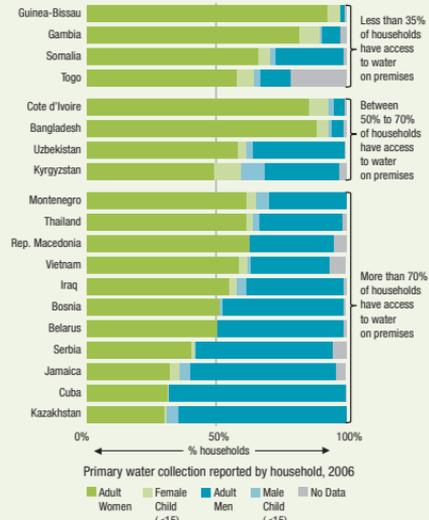
- Failing services can undermine women’s ability to realise basic rights.
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of universal access to water means that women spend 40 billion hours a year collecting water - the equivalent of a year’s worth of labour by the entire workforce of France.
- Sexual extortion is an unrecognized ‘currency’ of corruption.
 - In both developed and developing countries, there are increasing reports regarding violence and sexual abuse in schools, often by teachers. The Forum of African Women Educationalists has successfully campaigned to expose the discriminatory effects of rules against pregnant pupils. In Kenya, since 2003 female students who become pregnant have had the opportunity subsequently to apply for re-admission.
- Service delivery has been a rallying point for women’s collective action.
 - In India, women’s mobilisation around the Right to Food has sparked a process that led to the reform of the city-wide

food distribution system in Delhi.

- In Argentina, women's groups have used the Right to Public Information to investigate adequate service delivery and as the basis of a broader agenda aimed at fighting corruption and supporting democratic governance.
- In Peru, the *comedores*, originally community kitchens set up for the urban poor, became important sites of social mobilisation, particularly for women.
- Conditional cash transfers can make service providers more accountable, but not always.
- In Mexico, Bangladesh and Cambodia, cash transfer programmes have contributed to improving girls' educational opportunities by offering payments to families who enrol their daughters in school. However, evidence from Brazil and Paraguay suggests this can only work if women have relatively easy physical access to services and can choose from a range of providers.

Women Carry the Buckets

Water collection is a task mainly undertaken by women. Women's responsibility for water collection tends to coincide with poor access to water, thus suggesting a high time burden on women.



Source: UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2007).

In February 2003, Triveni Devi, a resident of Sunder Nagri in Delhi, India sparked off a process that led to the reform of the city-wide food distribution system and ensured that thousands of poor women receive their entitlements to food rations. Devi demanded to see records from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies, which showed that 25 kilogrammes of rice and 25 kilogrammes of wheat were purportedly being issued to her every month. These were rations that were vital to her family, but which they had never seen. Following Triveni's application, the Public Grievance Committee, a city government mechanism set up to handle citizens' complaints, asked for the records of all 3,000 food ration shops in Delhi to be made public. When shop owners refused, 109 women from different areas across Delhi filed separate applications for the records of rations owed to them and participated in public hearings on the distribution system (see Panel on the RTI in India).

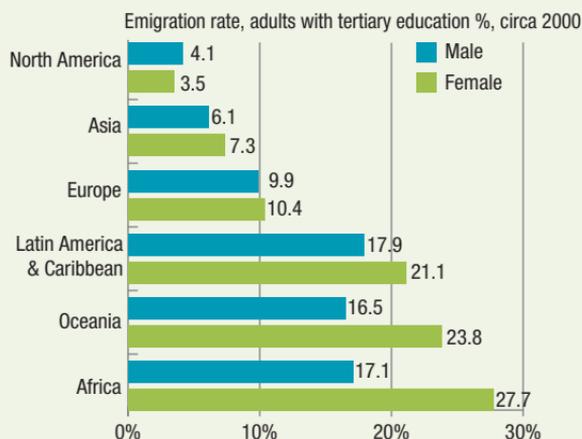
CHAPTER 4: MARKETS

Women's everyday lives are increasingly shaped by the dynamics of the market. Yet many of the assumptions about accountability made in the previous chapters do not hold true in this area, where decisions are often shaped by the principles of free trade and free financial flows. Nevertheless, women are learning to leverage their collective rights as workers and consumers in order to achieve important shifts in corporate practices.

- The recent food crisis has revealed that women's role as critical drivers in building food security is severely vulnerable to market shocks if these are unmitigated by government intervention.
 - Women not only assume primary responsibility for their families, but also contribute significantly to the world's food production processes. In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, women contribute at least 60 to 80 per cent of the labour required for agricultural work, while in Asia they contribute at least 50 per cent.
- A key path for women to realize their rights in employment is to ensure that companies adhere to national and international labour standards. But women's employment increasingly takes place as part of 'global supply chains,' where accountability relationships are often unclear.
 - Women dominate employment in most Export Processing Zones. For example, in Bangladesh 85 per cent are women. Accountability mechanisms in EPZ, if at all present, are often limited to voluntary codes of conduct adopted by companies.
- Women now lead the brain drain among people with tertiary education in all regions except North America.
 - In Africa and Oceania, 7 to 10 per cent more women than men with tertiary education migrate. This has worrying implications for women's economic leadership roles in developing countries.
- Trade unions have played a critical role in securing better accountability for women. Union membership for women is strongly linked to a lower gender wage gap, for example. However, globally, women represent only about 19 per cent of trade union members.
- Men are five times more likely to enter managerial positions than women. Whereas on average one in 8 men in formal employment

Women Lead the Brain Drain

With the exception of North America, the average rate of migration of women with tertiary education levels is higher than that of men, particularly in Africa and Oceania where the difference is as high as 8% and 10% respectively.



Source: Martin, J.P., Dumont, J. & Spielvogel, G. (2007).

may expect to be in senior management, this is true for an average of just one in 40 women.

- The use of quotas to bring women onto company and corporate boards, as has been the case in Norway, is an innovative means of breaking the glass ceiling in senior management and merits replication elsewhere.
- Despite challenges, women are making important inroads towards achieving better accountability in the market
 - Women have appealed to national and regional oversight bodies when their labour rights have been infringed, and in some countries have taken collective legal action through 'class action' suits. In *Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores*, women are demanding accountability for gender discrimination from the world's largest retailer. This is the largest class action lawsuit ever filed in the United States.
 - In Bangladesh, women workers who once entered the garment industry driven by poverty and dispossession have today become increasingly vocal in collective action to support their rights, including the implementation of a new Labour Code adopted by the government in 2006 after 12 years of deliberation.

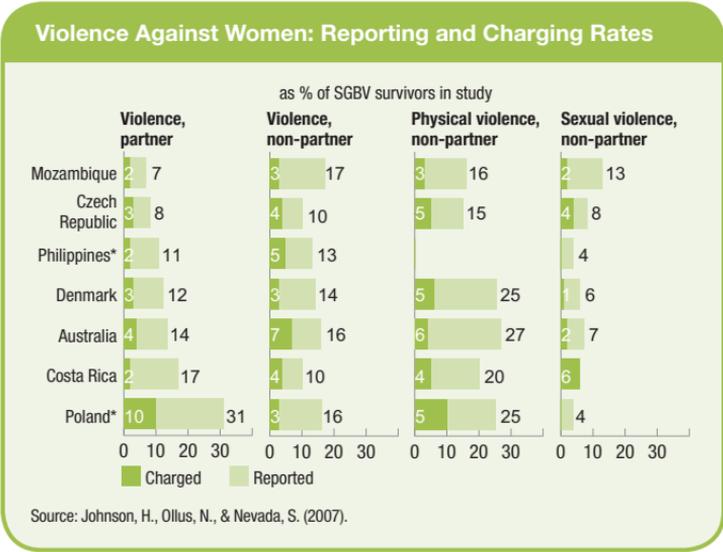
The first wave of women to enter the garment industry in Bangladesh in the early 1980s was driven by circumstances outside their control: poverty, dispossession, male unemployment, widowhood and abandonment. These women were generally unaware of their rights and grateful for jobs that paid far more than they could hope to earn elsewhere. From an employers' perspective, they were an ideal workforce for an industry that sought to compete in the global economy on the basis of cheap labour. Today, things are beginning to change. Female education has gone up steadily; there has been widespread dissemination of ideas about women's rights through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), state pronouncements and the media, while microfinance has increased and diversified employment opportunities in the countryside. Women enter the industry not just because of poverty, but also for the prospect of improving their family's standard of living, sending their children to school, saving for their dowries or supporting ageing parents. They have been able to leverage their earnings into increased decision-making power within their families and independent purchasing power in the market place. They have also become increasingly visible in collective actions in support of their rights, which have linked local and global movements (See Panel on Bangladesh Garment Industry).

CHAPTER 5: JUSTICE

Women's contribution to building the accountability of the judicial system to all citizens has come in large part from the insistence that justice starts at home, and that courts and the judiciary have a critical role to play in ensuring that the legal framework is applied fully, justly and evenly to benefit all individuals. Yet even as the number of equal rights and anti-discrimination statutes has grown at both the national and the international levels, many of these face considerable implementation and enforcement challenges. Informal justice systems pose a particular challenge, as they are often exempt from applying human rights and gender equality standards.

- Effective prevention violence against women is an important signal that the justice system is accountable to women.
 - By 2006, 86 countries had instituted some sort of prohibition against domestic violence. In Liberia, one of the first laws passed following the election of President Johnson Sirleaf was a law criminalising rape and making it a non-parole offense.
 - Yet laws on sexual assault and marital rape, as well as laws on sexual and domestic violence, are greatly in need of development across all geographic regions. Only a fraction of countries worldwide have specific legislation criminalizing rape in marriage, for example.

- For gender-responsive laws to be implemented and enforced, law enforcement institutions, such as the police, often need to be reformed to eliminate gender bias.
 - In Liberia, Timor-Leste and Kosovo, specialized police units and an enhanced female presence in the police forces is encouraging women to engage with the police, both to register their complaints and to join the service.



- In some countries, particularly in the developing world, most women will never come into contact with the formal justice system. Because it is very difficult to apply constitutionally recognised human rights standards to informal justice systems, such systems rarely guarantee women's right to substantive equality.
 - Some innovations by women's rights groups working with informal justice forums have created room for women to engage in the decision-making process. In Eastern Nigeria, for example, the advocacy of women's groups has ensured the appointment of women as 'red cap chiefs' who engage in local dispute adjudication.
 - In some post-conflict states, traditional dispute resolution systems – like *Mato Oput* in Uganda, *Gacaca* in Rwanda, or *Bashingatahe* in Burundi – offer the justice system much-needed help in identifying cases for the formal system, and adjudicating simpler cases. They have yet however to demonstrate an advantage in prosecuting cases of conflict-related sexual violence and other atrocities against women given the lack of adequate victim and witness protection.

- When domestic justice systems have failed to remedy their grievances, women have sometimes brought them to the attention of regional or international human rights bodies.
 - For example, the disappearance and murder of more than 300 women in Ciudad Juarez since 1993 came to the world's attention thanks to the actions of women's-rights NGOs that took up the matter before the regional Inter-American Commission for Human Rights and the United Nations CEDAW Committee.
- CEDAW represents an important tool for improving national accountability for women's rights.
 - UNIFEM's work in seven countries of Southeast Asia is an example of advocacy to build both the capacities of governments to implement CEDAW and the capacities of civil society organisations (CSOs) to use CEDAW in order to achieve better accountability for women. In Viet Nam, UNIFEM organized a training in 2006 for a network of 20 local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) known as GenComNet. This network subsequently prepared the first-ever shadow report on CEDAW implementation to emerge from Viet Nam.

On January 25, 2004, the Moroccan Parliament passed a series of sweeping revisions to the Moudawana, Morocco's Civil Status Code that encompasses family law governing women's status. These revisions amounted to the formulation of a new Family Code, establishing a woman's equal status within the family. Key provisions include joint responsibility for the family shared by both husband and wife (where previously responsibility rested exclusively with the husband), the removal of legal obligation for the wife to obey her husband, equality between men and women with respect to the minimum age for marriage, and important advances with respect to the state's obligation to enforce the law and protect women's rights. The Ministry of Justice has been playing a leading role in the implementation of the Family Code through the modernisation of the justice system and often in partnership with women's networks of crisis centres for women survivors of violence (See Box 5A).

CHAPTER 6: AID & SECURITY

Multilateral organisations and international security institutions have a critical role to play in supporting countries to enhance their accountability to implement national commitments and track investments for gender equality. But the record of these organizations in complying with their own gender equality policies often falls far short

of expectations. This chapter examines the changing context of aid and the role of international development and security organisations in assisting countries to meet promises to achieve gender equality in development and peace building.

- There are to date no agreed system-wide gender marking systems to track amounts allocated and expected for gender equality and women's empowerment in International Financial Institutions or in other multilaterals such as the agencies of the United Nations system. Investment in such systems would support efforts enhance accountability of international institutions for promoting women's rights.
- Mechanisms to identify and tag aid that contributes to gender equality exist and may encourage more attention to financing for women's empowerment. Many OECD donors code their Overseas Development Aid with a Gender Equality Marker (GEM). Since its introduction, amounts marked for gender have increased both absolutely and as a percentage of aid that can be marked this way. More donors should employ this tool as it is a useful contribution to efforts to hold donors accountable for meeting their commitments to gender equality.
 - Of the US\$26.8 billion in ODA disbursements that donors using the reporting system accounted for in 2006, US\$ 7.2 billion (roughly 27 per cent) was identified as contributing to gender equality. This is up from US\$ 2.5 billion (roughly 17 per cent) in 2002. However, only half of OECD aid eligible for this screening is gender marked.
- The distribution of gender-marked aid across development sectors needs to be diversified to include more funds allocated to economic infrastructure (only 5 per cent of gender-marked aid goes to economic sectors – compared to a 20 per cent allocation to economic sectors from ODA in general).
- In spite of increased amounts of aid spending on gender equality, official aid remains a small portion of the funding for women's organisations.
 - In 2006 net disbursements of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from donors to recipient countries stood at roughly US\$ 103.9 billion – equivalent to 0.3 per cent of developed countries' combined national income. Yet a 2007 study by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) that surveyed 729

women's organizations showed that the largest source of income for these organizations came from private foundations.

- Security, along with development, is an essential pillar of the international commitment to gender equality and the promotion and protection of women's rights.
 - The passage of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 in 2000, as well as Security Council Resolution 1820 in 2008, were significant advances in enhancing accountability of international security institutions to women.
 - Yet in 2007 and 2008, peace processes to resolve conflicts in northern Uganda, Darfur, and Somalia showed remarkably little progress in supporting women's inclusion on negotiating delegations or even among observers. In the peace talks for Northern Uganda in 2007-2008, for instance, there were never more than two women out of 17 negotiators on the delegations of either the government or the Lords Resistance Army.

- At the United Nations, the current debate on how to strengthen the system's capacity to support countries by giving more authority, status and resources to the entities that specialise in gender equality is an encouraging sign of the recognition of the need for a more powerful institutional infrastructure to advance women's rights and gender equality. Alliances between gender equality experts and advocates within and outside of these institutions – as well as with gender equality advocates in the North who track their government's development assistance allocations – are essential for more effectively monitoring and pressuring international organizations to implement the visionary policies and programmes of support to which they have committed.

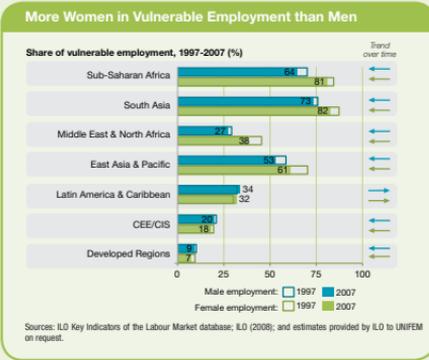
A former United Nations force commander recently noted that "it is more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier in Eastern DRC. In contemporary conflicts, women are increasingly on the front-line. Sexual violence against displaced women collecting fuel has become so common that camp workers in Darfur have abbreviated the phenomenon to "firewood rape". But is the sexual violence they suffer a matter for the world's foremost peace and security body? On 19 June 2008, the United Nations Security Council answered that question with a resounding yes – voting unanimously for a resolution that describes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a matter of international security. SCR 1820 (2008) stands as an essential complement to the full implementation of SCR 1325 on women, peace and security (see Box 6D)

MDGs & Gender

Part II of *Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009* reviews achievements in each of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from a gender perspective.

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

8 out of 10 women workers are in vulnerable employment in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia

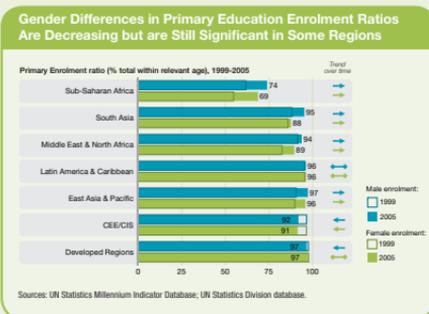


Informal work arrangements that are a characteristic of vulnerable employment are closely linked to poverty. Global data on extreme poverty is not disaggregated by sex, and it is therefore difficult to see how far women and girls enjoy recently reported gains in reducing poverty and hunger. National-level data indicate that women are still more likely than men to be poor and at risk of hunger because of the systematic discrimination they face in access

to education, healthcare and control of assets. For example, in South Africa, two thirds of female-headed households are poor, compared to only one third of male-headed households. In Malawi, there are three poor women for every poor man, and this proportion is increasing.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

57% of children out of school are girls



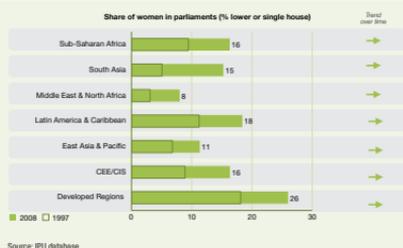
National and regional progress in increasing girls' enrolment in school shows how much can be achieved by governments willing to invest in girls' and women's rights. The global net enrolment ratio has increased from 80% in 1991 to 88 in 2005. Still, much remains to be done in relation to girls' education to ensure that girls finish primary and secondary school, to eliminate violence against girls in school, and to bring

more non-enrolled girls into school. Of the estimated 72 million primary-age children that were not in school in 2005, 57% were girls, and this may be an underestimate.

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

1 in 5 members of parliament worldwide are women. Quotas make a difference in increasing this proportion.

Women's Representation in Parliaments Has Increased but Regional Averages Are Still Below 30%



MDG3 is central to the achievement of all the other MDGs, yet it has only one target, educational parity. While there is a commitment to track, there are no targets for women's share of wage employment and women's share of representative seats in public decision-making.

- At the present rate of increase, in developing regions, it will take 40 years for women to reach the 'parity zone' of 40% to 60% of seats in national assemblies.
- Women's share of waged non-agricultural employment – which brings significant benefits in terms of women's capacity to control income and decision-making – has increased in the last decade, but only by 3 percentage points since 1990, to a total of 39% in 2005. At the regional level, in the Middle East and North Africa and in South Asia, only one woman has a non-agricultural paid job for every four men.
- Gender equality in primary and secondary education is a goal within reach by 2015. Parity in primary schooling has already been reached in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific and CEE/CIS. Parity will be more challenging but is achievable in secondary enrolment, where the female-to-male enrolment ratio averages 0.8. Tertiary education – essential for women's leadership roles in politics, the economy, and administration – presents a different picture, with ratios of 0.6 and 0.7 in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, respectively.

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality

The probability of a child dying before their fifth birthday is higher for girls than boys in South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific.

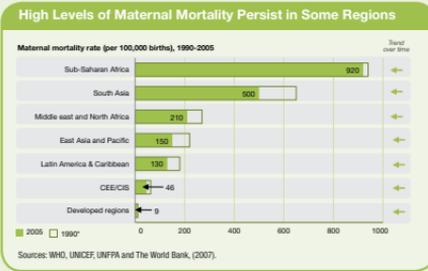
Under-Five Mortality Rates have Decreased, but Gender Inequality Still Exists in Some Regions



The mortality of girl children is a good indicator of gender equality and women's rights. Not only are the causes of child mortality (disease, malnutrition) linked to women's health and education, but if girls do not survive at equivalent or higher rates than boys, this can be a sign of specific gender-based discrimination.

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

One in four women who die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth could be saved by effective access to contraception.

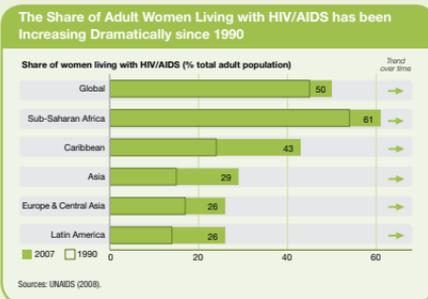


This is the most off-track of all MDGs. Globally, over half a million women every year die during pregnancy or childbirth, and over 90% of these largely preventable deaths occur in developing countries. There has been a less than 7% decrease in maternal deaths between 1990 and 2005. This translates into a decrease in the maternal mortality ratio from 430 (deaths per 100,000 live births)

in 1990 to 400 in 2005. According to recent estimates by the World Health Organisation (WHO), this rate (roughly less than 0.4% per year at the global level) falls far short of the 5.5% annual reduction in maternal deaths required to achieve the international target.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

3 of every 5 adults living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women. The feminisation of HIV/AIDS infection is increasing in other regions.

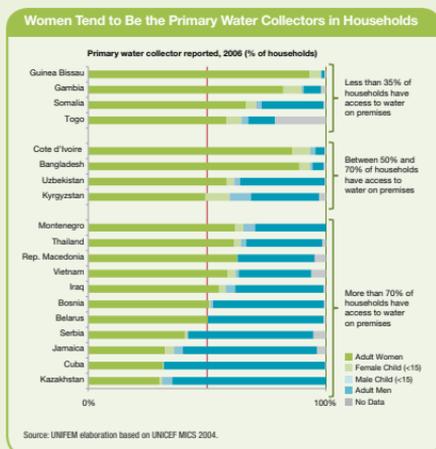


Recent estimates show that there has been a steady increase in the number of HIV-positive women and men. Among all adults living of HIV/AIDS, the share of women living with HIV has increased from 45% in 1990 to 50% in 2007. In developed countries, it can reach 30%. But in regions where the problem is most serious, the pandemic has become feminised. In sub-Saharan Africa the proportion of women among adults living with HIV/AIDs has increased from 54% in 1990 to over 60% in 2007. In the Caribbean, this has grown from 24% to 43%. According to WHO, violence is both a cause and consequence of HIV infection.

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MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Women's responsibility for water collection coincides with poor access to water imposing a high time burden on women.

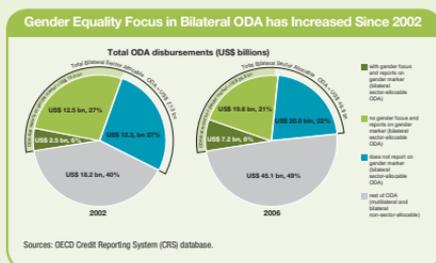


Data is scarce on the impact of environmental degradation and climate change on poor women, but as women often ensure household food security and do the bulk of water and household fuel collection, their time burdens will increase if drought, floods, erratic rainfall, and deforestation undermine the supply and quality of natural resources. Women and children are usually in charge of fetching and carrying water, an activity that is among the most time- and energy-consuming of household tasks, especially in rural areas. It is estimated that women and children in Africa alone

spend 40 billion hours every year fetching and carrying water – a figure equivalent to a year's labour for the entire workforce of France.

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Gender equality aid needs to be diversified to include more funds allocated towards economic infrastructure and private sector development.



To date, no consistent tracking system of investment on gender equality aid exists in multilateral institutions; an exception is the OECD gender marker, but less than half of the funds eligible for “screening” use this marker. One step towards improving accountability in this area would be installing a credible and consistent resource tracking system.

Gender-focused aid also needs to balance gender equality investments in social sectors such as health and education with investments in economic development and infrastructure. Another step would be to support the collection of sex-disaggregated data at the least across all of the MDGs but also in some of the “missing” MDG areas such as violence against women. Most importantly, the international development community must develop leadership and drive on gender equality. In this respect, the driving force of an authority or lead agency in the multilateral system is clearly required.

