IN BRIEF

UN WOMEN
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

BEIJING +20

A Time for Renewed Commitment and Action

The Platform for Action adopted at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, is an agenda for women's empowerment, offering a defining policy framework and roadmap for achieving gender equality and women's rights. It has stimulated unprecedented political energy and social mobilization around the world, with governments, civil society and others using it to take steps to end inequality and discrimination. UN Member States have repeatedly reaffirmed its normative force.

But there is still far to go in realizing the full promise of the Beijing agenda. With 2015 marking the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Platform for Action, now is the time to galvanize recommitment and mobilize all actors for accelerated and effective implementation. UN Women has a leading role in this process to achieve gender equality and realize women's rights.

A Once-in-a-Generation Opportunity

Beijing+20 takes place at an historic moment when major international efforts to advance human development and human rights converge. The global community is intensifying efforts to accomplish the eight Millennium Development Goals by their 2015 endpoint and considering a post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals as a global roadmap for the future.

IN MID-2013, POLITICAL MOMENTUM GATHERED AS the UN Economic and Social Council requested the Commission on the Status of Women to review and appraise implementation of the Platform for Action in 2015, in a session known as Beijing+20. To inform deliberations, the council also called on UN Member States to perform comprehensive national reviews, and encouraged regional commissions to undertake regional reviews. At the end of 2013, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of the Beijing+20 review and appraisal and called for appropriate commemorative activities by all stakeholders with the support of the UN system, in particular UN Women.

These and other interconnected processes provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment at the heart of the global agenda. Gender equality and women's rights must be reaffirmed as essential ends in themselves and means for achieving peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development.

UN Women aims to ignite renewed momentum behind Beijing+20, also with a view to inform a forward-looking post-2015 agenda. These efforts will strengthen the case for a transformative goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment, and call for gender mainstreaming across all other goals and targets.

UN Women's Beijing+20 Action Plan

UN Women will give strong visibility to Beijing+20 through a dynamic, forward-looking process that will galvanize diverse stakeholders: governments, parliamentarians, civil society, media, opinion leaders, the UN system and the private sector. It will engage women and men, boys and girls, and youth, with actions at global, regional and national levels. Core objectives and key actions include the following:

Renewed political will, commitment and concrete action by Governments and all partners to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. UN Women will:

- Promote the coming together of all stakeholders to commit to accelerated and effective implementation.
- Support comprehensive, consultative and action-oriented national and regional reviews, including by helping national women's machineries to act as catalysts for change.
- Provide guidance on preparing inclusive national reviews geared towards identifying key issues and actions.
- As part of the reviews, encourage governments to agree on specific, time-bound actions to end gender-based discrimination, such as constitutional amendments, new laws and policies, special measures, services, etc.
- Partner with civil society organizations—especially women's movements and grass-roots groups, and the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Groups—to assist their efforts to develop their own appraisals, and to participate in national and regional processes.
- Engage the UN system at the national and global levels to increase coordinated and system-wide commitment to implementation.

Enhanced social mobilization, awareness-raising and revitalized public debate across all sectors of society. UN Women will:

- Engage all constituencies, including the general public, to emphasize the continued relevance of the Beijing agenda and make it one that anyone can understand and embrace.
- Develop a visual brand as an umbrella for the Beijing review process.
- Highlight each of the Platform's 12 critical areas of concern through targeted outreach, starting in March 2014.
- Communicate through an array of influential traditional and social media to reach as many people as possible, including through the launch of editorial partnerships.

TO SUPPORT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL REVIEWS, UN Women together with the five regional commissions has issued a Guidance note to member states for preparation of national reviews. Submissions are expected from Member States by 1 May 2014. National consultations and reports should identify key gaps in implementation of the Platform for Action, and their causes and outline priorities to close these gaps, within specific timelines. By helping to identify trends in national implementation – what key issues should be prioritized, what actions are needed and when, the Beijing+20 review will provide critical inputs to the post-2015 discussions.

- Develop key global messages, and tell compelling, evocative stories to illustrate the issues women face and existing success stories.
- Publicize widely the national and regional reviews of implementation to carry the process into the public sphere, highlighting achievements and pointing out gaps.
- Mobilize gender equality champions and celebrate women and girls from all backgrounds who are pioneers and role models.

Strengthened evidence to increase knowledge and understanding of the structural causes of gender-based discrimination and inequality and of solutions and best practices. UN Women will:

- Produce cutting-edge knowledge, analysis and data, including to identify regional and national trends, and to help frame policy options for reducing gender equality.
- Engage with governments, academia and the UN system to draw together existing data and knowledge that demonstrate progress is being made.
- Offer programmes for different stakeholders to develop capacities to implement the Beijing Platform.

Enhanced and sufficient resources invested in achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. UN Women will:

- Advocate that donors provide additional funding for Beijing+20, and help bring together donor and partner countries to pool resources for national reviews and consultations.
- Call for proactive action to reverse the chronic underinvestment in the gender equality agenda, including through governments earmarking more resources for gender equality in national budgets.
- Set up private sector platforms for advocacy and funding.