

Sharing and Learning Monitoring Mechanisms and Tools: MDGs, PRSPs, CEDAW and Media & ICT's

Chaired by the SAARC Secretary-General

SAARC Gender Database

Mr. Kesang Wangdi
Director, SAARC Secretariat



The need for a Gender Database (GDB) has been continuously articulated in many fora and consistently echoed in the South Asia Regional Ministerial Conferences through the years. The Bhutan Forward-moving Strategies of 2003

explicitly identified the need for sex-disaggregated data and for adequate mechanisms to monitor the progress of women against indicators specific to the realities of South Asia, whether against the backdrop of the Beijing Platform for Action or the Millennium Development Goals.

The Leaders of SAARC at the Tenth Summit recognized that a sex-disaggregated database provided by the Member States would be a valuable means of assisting the formulation of national and regional policies and programmes.

The SAARC and UNIFEM signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in December 2001 to:

- (i) Mutually cooperate in assisting the Member States to strive towards gender equality and women's empowerment; and,
- (ii) Promote mutual learning and cross fertilisation for effectively tackling the challenges relating to gender discrimination, women's human rights and women's participation

Among other things, the MoU identified the "Development of a SAARC Gender Database on Progress towards Gender Equality in the South Asia Region".

The presentation outlined the areas which need to be urgently covered in a central gender database in the region:

- Women's response to globalisation
- Women in conflict situations and peace-building
- Violence against women,
- Political participation and decision-making,
- Environmental conservation, and
- Stories of struggle and change

The objectives of the "Development of a SAARC Gender Database on Progress towards Gender Equality in the South Asia Region" are:

- To develop a regional resource database on the Progress of Women of South Asia by collecting, processing and analysing all relevant gender related information in the region.
- To enable advocacy with national governments and international agencies for introducing a gender perspective in governance and bringing about greater gender equality, equity and sustainable development.
- To catalyse gender mainstreaming in the region by enabling, informing, and advising governments to develop appropriate and gender sensitive policies, programmes and plans, using the vast reservoir of gender-related information.
- To facilitate drafting of a South Asian Region Plan of Action to promote gender equality, peace and development and end gender discrimination.
- To promote regional learning and provide a forum for sharing between the Member Countries

The project is aimed at achieving the following:

- Provide substantive inputs to the Progress of South Asian Women.
- Document existing empowerment strategies along with their impact for determination of more effective future strategies.
- Include best practices to empower women and end gender discrimination.

The GDB would be located in the SAARC Secretariat. It will function in close collaboration with UNIFEM, South Asia Regional Office. The scope and methodology of the project was also shared in the presentation, noting that primary research to generate information was necessary and the process would go beyond the traditional indicators to understand the status of women. Both tangible and intangible indicators would be studied and, hopefully, the results could provide new paradigms for gender equality.

SAARC has identified the steps involved in the project, thus:

1. Prepare a concept paper on the SAARC Gender Data Base.
2. An Expert Group Meeting would be held in mid-June, comprising of relevant SAARC focal points, statistical organizations, relevant ministries, and research institutions of all the Member States to:
 - (a) Finalise the concept paper
 - (b) Discuss the methodology and indicators
 - (c) Identify a national research institution and a Core Group for each country, to advise/guide the process and feed information to GDB. The Core Group will comprise of government departments, researchers, women's groups, academia, etc.
 - (d) Determine time frames for various activities.

3. Collection and analysis of data and documentation of the Progress of South Asian Women.
4. Documentation of the policies, strategies and programmes of country governments, UN bodies and other international agencies for promoting women's rights and women's empowerment.
5. Documenting women's movement/NGO interventions and their impact.
6. Documenting strategies that have failed as well as those that have succeeded.
7. Commissioning short studies profiling ethnicity, religion, social classification and indigenous practices and their negative and positive influences on women as well as to gender relations.
8. The draft GDB will be initially presented at the appropriate SAARC meeting for feedback and comments that will be incorporated in the final document, for endorsement from the Member States and finalised.
9. Publishing the GDB and launching it at the appropriate SAARC Meeting.
10. Developing a dissemination strategy for the GDB using brochures, CD ROMs, posters, fliers, etc.
11. Organising round tables at country and regional levels with users and producers of data for learning and experience sharing.

Activities have been divided organisationally and programmatically. The following are the organisational activities:

- Identifying a key research institution in each SAARC country for being mandated as a partner in building the Gender Data Base in that country and for feeding data to the SAARC GDB on a regular and continuing basis.
- To constitute a Core Group of government departments, researchers, women's groups/NGOs, academia, etc. to advise/guide the process and feed information to the GDB.
- Mapping programme activities, strategies, investments and materials of national governments, UN Agencies, women's movement and other player/actors.
- Documenting changes brought about through women's empowerment programmes and strategies.
- Identifying and documenting good and emerging new practices.
- Identifying gaps and locating key partners to address these gaps.

Programmatic activities include the following:

PHASE I

A compendium of social, economic, political and human rights initiatives made nationally, regionally and internationally will be collated to reflect on:

- Milestones achieved.
- Interventions made/enabled by governments, the women's movements, NGOs, international and UN agencies at various levels.

Analytical research as already outlined above and documentation of stories of experiences.

PHASE II

- Documenting benchmarks of the women's movement in the SAARC region and within respective countries.
- Listing major legal and policy changes and landmark judgments made to end gender discrimination at the national and regional levels dating to the BPFA.
- Collating important agreements and international conventions such as CEDAW and others, e.g. migrant workers.
- Evaluating the progress to make these agreements operative and effective and document cases wherein these agreements have been operationalised successfully.
- Recording strategies that have proved useful in creating awareness for lobbying and advocacy.
- Identifying limitations for implementation and working out strategies to overcome them.
- Strategising on SAARC's role in supporting and advocating effective implementation.
- Identifying emerging trends and tools that can help in ending discrimination against women, equality of opportunity, equality of result, e.g. gender mainstreaming, gender audit and gender budgeting.
- Identifying new areas requiring efforts to check gender discrimination such as HIV/AIDS, trafficking, migration and conflict situations.
- Documenting and reviewing different interventions and lessons learnt.
- Conducting in-depth analysis of work on gender discrimination contextualised as increasing violence in society.

In conclusion, the presentation highlighted the positive aspects of the Gender Data Base, viz:

- The Gender Data Base would serve as a single-window, one-stop gender data-shop of SAARC in all aspects of gender equality.
- Facilitate and strengthen networking for regional-level advocacy.
- Build closer relations and cooperation between Member-Countries through the 'Women's Agenda'.
- Facilitate drafting of a South Asian Regional Plan of Action to promote gender equality, peace and development and fight gender discrimination.
- It would be a historical regional initiative.

- It would certainly give an unmistakable signal of the Member-Countries' commitment and support to gender justice and empowerment of women.

The project is presently underway. It is expected to be ready and will be launched at the appropriate SAARC Body in 2006. The GDB will have to be annually updated to enable the mechanism to attain sustainability within individual Member Countries, as well at the SAARC Secretariat level.

CEDAW As A Monitoring Mechanism

Ms. Salma Khan

CEDAW Committee Member



Ms. Khan briefly discussed CEDAW and elaborated on monitoring mechanisms, specifically in the context of state obligations. The Convention obligates a state and holds it responsible to implement the Convention,

particularly to address the substantive inequality between men and women in the public and private sphere of life. She observed that for purposes of monitoring, what the state achieves is more important than what it does, and this is the underlying focus of the monitoring system.

The state is accountable for the violation of individual rights by the state itself, private institutions, individuals and anybody living under the state jurisdiction. Under Article 18 of the Convention, state-parties undertake to submit to the Secretary General of the United Nations regular reports on the compliance of the provisions of the Convention as well as the progress made. Generally, after the initial report to the Committee is submitted (which is due to be presented within a year of ratification), the next reports have to be presented within four years of the previous report. A twenty-three member committee (in accordance with article 18 of the Convention), known as the CEDAW Committee, is set up to review the reports submitted.

Over the years, the monitoring mechanism has gone through changes as the Committee tried to improve its method of reviewing the reports and able to refine its own process. One result is that the reports are now much shorter and focused. Also, there is an emphasis now on appropriate measures undertaken by the state and the concrete results rather than a focus on gaps only. Emphasis is now on assisting states in fulfilling their obligation. The Committee also formulates time lines and looks at the efficiency of the reporting process. Ms. Khan said that the Committee has allowed combining as many as five reports, since many countries had not submitted reports, even when they had signed CEDAW as many as twenty years ago!

Except Nepal and Sri Lanka, all the other South Asian countries have entered reservations which the Committee takes very seriously as these are seen to be incompatible with the objective and purpose of the Convention.

The Committee continually interprets and clarifies various articles of the Convention. For example, the Convention was drafted nearly forty years ago and some issues were not taken into consideration then, e.g. the issue of violence against women. Therefore, the Committee uses interpretation, clarification of various articles and provisions of the Convention, which sometimes are explicitly mentioned, while at other times it is implied. For example, in the case of education and health, these are directly and explicitly mentioned in the Convention. Other issues like violence against women have not directly been mentioned in the Convention. However, there are as many as six or seven articles which can be interpreted to deal with the issue of violence against women, e.g. Article 6 focuses on one of the outcomes of violence against women, e.g. prostitution, Articles 2 and 5 deal with culture and stereotypes, Article 11 deals with women's rights, equal rights in employment, Article 12 deals with equal access to health, Article 15 with equality in the eye of law and Article 16 with equal rights of women in the family and in marriage. The Committee has now developed the process of formulating general recommendations to guide the state party, including guidelines on how to prepare a report. There are two types of general recommendations, some directly cover the provisions of the Articles and some are issues-related. An important general recommendation, which the Committee has adopted, is stated in Article 25 on affirmative measures to accelerate the *de-facto* equality of women. Both types of recommendations carry equal weight and the state party is equally obligated to fulfill the specific provisions under the Convention, as well as the general recommendation.

The Optional Protocol to the CEDAW Convention was adopted in 1999. The Committee has mandated itself to monitor individual claims of grave or systematic violation of women's rights put forth in the Optional protocol. Bangladesh and Nepal are the only countries that have ratified the Optional Protocol. Rapporteurs are appointed to improve the review process or head a Task force.

The Committee tries to establish a close working relationship with the state-party and inform it, through a constructive dialogue, and work with the country by looking at the major challenges and how best those can be resolved. On the basis of those constructive dialogues, the Committee issues a final outcome or Concluding Comments of the monitoring process and

each Concluding Comment is mirrored by recommendations directed to the state party.

The Committee has various means of gathering information, e.g. from the Secretariat which prepares a document for the UN agencies but, most importantly, from the NGOs who prepare a shadow report to the Committee. This system was introduced through a gradual process in the Committee after the 17th Session of the Committee. The scheduled meeting with the NGOs is part of the structured system.

The Committee has not limited itself to only monitoring and reviewing process of the Articles of the Convention. It also raises emerging issues, even if these are not covered under the general recommendation. For example, the Committee issued a statement whenever it felt that women were being affected: during a civil war in Rwanda, in Bosnia and during armed conflict, on exploitation of women and migrant labour from Philippines and other cases. Ms. Khan informed the group that the CEDAW Committee's major contribution has been the formulation of General Recommendation Article 19 and recommendations for women affected by the tsunami or the war in Afghanistan.

CEDAW Indicators for South Asia: An Initiative

Prof. R. Savitri Goonesekere
Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR), Sri Lanka

Professor Savitri Goonesekere shared the research undertaken by her Centre to develop indicators to monitor CEDAW in the region, an initiative that was supported by UNIFEM. She appreciated the solidarity effort which UNIFEM has catalyzed and by bringing women's human rights to this region, adding that the indicators would support the UNIFEM-initiated process of taking stock by reviewing the implementation of CEDAW, recognising the gaps and strategising for moving forward.

CEDAW imposes obligations on the state to respect women's rights, protect women from infringement of those rights by third parties and to fulfill those rights with proactive interventions. It is important to have both civil and political rights, right to bodily integrity as well as right to basic needs, e.g. health, education, etc. In South Asia, the ideology of the indivisibility of human rights has not been internalised by the legal mechanisms and the law. For example, countries have set a minimum age of marriage, but have not made schooling compulsory. Further, the CEDAW process' emphasis on monitoring performance is not only putting the civil rights and security in place, but also the economic rights. And, that is of added value in the region since monitoring performance through development-specific indicators is the only way



that governments can be held accountable.

Women's family survival strategy should not be seen as a livelihood option as a woman who chooses prostitution or migrates for work in difficult conditions is

doing it for her family's survival and not to exercise her livelihood entitlement, which is primarily due to the failure of our governments to meet their commitments, e.g. the commitment that human rights are indivisible.

The CEDAW indicators have been crafted in a way to not only hold states accountable but, also, the private sectors' performance can be assessed and monitored for the realisation of women's rights. This is especially relevant in the context of globalisation, where states are pulling back and the private sector is taking over in some areas.

There are other monitoring processes which have been established such as the CEDAW reporting mechanism, the Optional Protocol which has been ratified and is an individual complaints procedure. Then, there is constitutional jurisprudence which has emerged from the South Asia region and which monitors the performance of our governments viz-a-viz the constitution and links it with CEDAW. This historical experience of ten years of monitoring with regard to BPPA and CEDAW can also be used for monitoring the MDGs. Prof. Goonesekere observed that the MDGs have contradictions, setting basic standards but, CEDAW has a much higher standard. The CEDAW indicators went beyond institutional constraints to realising women's rights and this brought out a whole range of qualitative indicators, with regard to laws, policies and programmes. The indicators devised by CENWOR are categorised as quantitative (the traditional indicators) and qualitative indicators, which are much broader, and provide the basis of assessment of performance of the key actors in realizing human rights by the state, the private sector and civil society.

The quantitative indicators focus on number, e.g. literacy rate, maternal mortality rates, labour-force participation rates and number of successful prosecutions. Sex-disaggregated data will have to be collected and analysis to be undertaken in terms of such data. Quantitative indicators provide information on the extent to which women enjoy equal rights and gender-based discrimination has been eliminated.

The qualitative indicators are broader and focus on legislation, institutional arrangements, programmes and policies that are conducive to implementing the rights referred to in each article of CEDAW, e.g. legislation on equal inheritance rights, law on nationality. Similarly,

policy indicators will refer to social and other government policies, e.g. policies on compulsory education, quotas in educational institutions for girl children, quotas for women in local and national legislative bodies and in decision-making positions. Programmatic indicators will refer to interventions such as legal aid services, shelters for women victims of violence, legal literacy programmes, food subsidies, micro-credit programmes, women and children's desks in police stations, "One Stop" service for women in hospitals and health centres .

The qualitative indicators will provide information on the measures taken by the government towards achieving women's human rights and the extent to which it fulfills its obligations to the Convention that it has ratified. Qualitative indicators may also be quantified to ascertain the situation of women. Thus, both can be combined to provide information on women's rights and elimination of discrimination, e.g. X number of law protecting women workers, X number of shelters for women victims of violence at the District, National levels.

The speaker concluded with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: "When we initiate any policy or programme for reform, let us think of the weakest and the most disempowered; if any process can impact on that life, then we have achieved a lot."

Prof. Goonesekere stated that the indicators were a modest step to create synergy between CEDAW, which has been ratified by all the South Asian countries, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals so that, ultimately, the quality of life of women in South Asia can be improved.

Monitoring MDGs for Gender-Responsive Indicators of the SAARC Region

Dr. S. K. Nath
Additional Director General, CSO
Ministry of Statistics and Planning, New Delhi

Dr. Nath explained the methodology developed by him to monitor the MDGs statistically, which he has also used for the SAARC countries through some case studies. This paper attempts to develop a quantitative tool for monitoring women-specific MDG indicators for the SAARC Region. A review of various socio-economic indicators including MDGs reveals that there are no uniform statistical methodologies used by the SAARC countries.

Another problem is the data system itself, e.g. data not being uniformly available and, for some countries, data is not available at all. The baseline year should be 1990 but, in many countries, the data for 1990 is not available. A rigid analysis has to be done to extrapolate, or

interpolate, to make the data system at par for consideration. Thus, comparison of performance of MDG indicators (in terms of absolute values of the indicators) across various countries of the SAARC Region does not appear to be statistically possible. This calls for formulation of an index which will allow computation of country-wise comparable indices in order to develop monitoring indices for the SAARC Region as a whole. Dr. Nath shared his attempt to develop a suitable methodology for such index for monitoring MDGs for the SAARC Region, the Monitoring Index of MDGs (MIM).

The progress on MDGs are to be reported every five years and, thus, quantitative index for monitoring is likely to be useful for monitoring MDGs in the SAARC region. Using 1990 as baseline, most of the MDG targets are to be achieved by 2015. It is expected that all countries would report their instruments in such a way that by 2015, the value of MIM should be at least close or equal to zero. Dr. Nath used twelve indicators out of twenty-four gender-sensitive indicators for the case study, because data was not available for all the indicators. The twelve indicators used for different goals are universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment, child mortality indicators, health indicators and development of global partnerships, among others.

Concluding, Dr. Nath reiterated the challenges of obtaining data for all the countries in the region. The data system is decentralised. There is no system of getting the data from one source. Generally, data is collected in the SAARC region through household surveys. But, the methodologies are different and the concept is different. There is no systematic collection of gender-responsive data. Also, data is not shared. Without improving the data collection system, the monitoring of the MDGs will not be possible. He recommended the development of a gender database for the SAARC region.

Media and ICTs as Tools for Women's Advancement

Ms. Bandana Rana, Sancharika Samuha, Nepal

Information and communication is the core of every society's process of negotiating power, norms, values and realities. By the same token, the advancement of women in media and ICTs were identified at the Beijing World Conference on Women as one of the twelve critical areas of concern. At the time, central challenges were seen to be stereotyping of women in the media, the occupational segregation and glass ceilings encountered by women in the media profession and the need to harness the new electronic networks for women's empowerment. All of these challenges are still very much there, however, many more challenges have arisen with the advancement of ICTs and their inequitable spread within and among societies.





The ICT sector (as diverse as telecommunications, television and radio, computer hardware and software, computer services and electronic media like the internet) has relevance for women's empowerment as they can be used as

development tools, vehicles for greater participation in national, international and global structures, governance structures, platforms for business and economic empowerment, bringing the business to the doorsteps of rural women, avoiding middlemen and ensuring equal wage. New media spaces allow women to connect, network, find a voice, own and control information and knowledge. ICTs have been used most extensively to network, communicate and build alliances between the local and the global, especially by women.

A study was conducted by ISIS International where women reported that the ICTs have been very useful in building alliances and networks and in accessing venue for raising one's voice, in wider dissemination of low cost newsletters, in short wave radio and in accessing wider range of materials and rapid means of information exchange. However, ICTs have not been used consciously beyond these purposes for women's empowerment. Disregarding the potential of these tools can have a negative impact on women's advancement but, barriers persist for women in terms of socio-cultural discrimination and the lack of infrastructures that particularly impede women's access as they also have to cope with poverty, illiteracy and language barriers.

To achieve the objectives of the MDGs, CEDAW and the BPFA, media and ICTs can play a crucial role and be used as tools for social transformation and gender equality. ICTs have been used in skill development of women, to deliver educational and literacy programmes targeted to poor women, bring awareness and influence public opinion about equal rights of women, give them economic opportunities, lend a voice to fight against discrimination and, most importantly, lead them to empowerment.

ICTs can empower women and help them to overcome gender inequality by raising awareness of their social and political status and creating new economic opportunities. The use of ICTs in areas like health, education, agriculture extension and in law and social justice programmes brings about many changes to the delivery of these services. These are being tapped by women's organizations and civil society groups – through building communities and on-line networks, expanding women's access to global and local markets, developing women's ICT capabilities for furthering empowerment goals, employing ICTs for

human development in health, nutrition and education, and promoting advocacy & mobilisation and for solidarity-building.

There are several examples of successful ICT programmes, e.g. in Nepal, 'HipKnit¹¹' is an e-commerce project that markets online a wide range of custom-designed woollen clothing hand-knitted in Nepal. The market has been taken to the doorsteps of rural women and, in eliminating the middlemen, has provided livelihood and economic empowerment to the poorest. There are examples of how health facilities have been improved and, also, there are examples of radio and video programmes on taking the health services to the public and also on education. In Bangladesh, the village phone programme, Grameen Telecom, has provided loans to Bangladeshi women micro-entrepreneurs to purchase and operate cellular phones.

New ICTs can enhance public health delivery, enable health education and information dissemination and offer simple solutions for collecting and analyzing information about disease and health-seeking behavior to help health interventions become more locally relevant.

In combination with old ICTs like satellite, radio and TV, ICTs offer many possibilities for non-formal and continued education, especially for women with constraints on mobility and access to public places. For example, in India, the Distance Education for Women's Development and Empowerment Programme is jointly operated by the Department of Women and Child Development and the Indira Gandhi National Open University. The programme provides a Certificate-level course based on a multi-media training package to make women's self-help groups sustainable by enhancing their decision-making ability and resource-management skills in 150 low literacy districts.

ICTs have also facilitated the building of a more inclusive public sphere – allowing the aged, the disabled and the discriminated to communicate, network and also to reach policy makers.

In conclusion, Ms. Bandana Rana noted that in spite of all the achievements, challenges remain. The digital divide exists in most of the institutional structures of the government and ICT is related more with science and technology and the women's focal point do not relate to it. The role of the gender advocate is really important, to build a broader perspective and link ICTs with gender. She drew the attention of the delegates to the failure of the 'The World Summit on Information Society' to promote gender equality as key concern in the ICT arena, and requested for country-level and regional advocacy during its second phase coming up in November, 2005.

11 Digital Dividends, <http://www.digitaldividend.org>

Discussion

Issues raised: The reason why the feminist movement is not getting legitimacy is the lack of capacity of women to mobilise and organise. It's very easy to mobilise women for vested interests like getting votes or for economic purpose. But, making the movement indigenous, reaching and providing access to the disadvantaged women is even today a central issue. Translating all the concepts and making them real so that the ordinary woman can relate these concepts to herself is extremely important. It was regretted that there is an environment of mistrust between government and civil society, between national and international and among all development stakeholders.

It is important to capture the process data, as well to help assess the extent of women's satisfaction with services and whether they feel empowered to use them. Those are very important qualitative indicators. Commenting on Dr. Nath's presentation, which was very useful, the need is for data to be really generated and made visible below the district level to assess impact, especially at the rural level. It is very difficult to get data from the tribal areas.

Responses: Mistrust comes from the failure to perform. A process of an honest review through a monitoring process which is internal and, internalised, is needed. Therefore, the whole process of monitoring and finding out information on what's working and what's not working and then using that to catalyse activism to achieve those results, is one way of perhaps bridging that mistrust.

The monitoring indicators are both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative will, for example, limit the indicators to literacy, mortality, etc. The qualitative indicators will assess, for example, what has been done to intervene with the establishment of shelters for women and access to justice issue. To find out what are the interventions which go beyond numbers with regard to quality, e.g. what is the quality of the services offered, this is what qualitative data collection would do. An important fact is that indicators presuppose an information base and data collection.

The Centre for Women's Research trains people how to access information in a professional way as part of their research work and this results in good data. Projects on violence against women, for example, require a lot of qualitative data and this is achieved when a good community-based worker collects data. It was recommended that UNIFEM will support the training of community-based workers in data collection, as an important component of successful indicators.

S K Nath informed the participants that statisticians can, likewise, translate the qualitative indicators into quantitative indicators with certain methodologies.

PRSP Vision: Gender Dimension

Chaired by the Government of Nepal
Prof. Mahmuda Islam, Women for Women, Bangladesh



Ms Islam stated that Bangladesh formulated its poverty reduction strategy following an extensive and participatory process towards pro-poor growth and sustainable development. Several thematic groups were formulated to prepare

sectoral strategy papers as a step towards the main report. Of the eight (8) thematic groups, one was on Women's Advancement and Rights. The Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs, being the lead agency for women's advancement, was given the responsibility of this thematic group. The speaker mentioned that the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs formed a technical committee on women's advancement and rights. This technical committee consisted of members from civil society, organizations, academics, researchers, development partners and the government. This committee worked on developing a specific paper on PRSP with a gender perspective. In addition, this technical committee on women's rights and advancement also coordinated with other thematic committees to ensure that the gender perspective was incorporated in all the other sectors. Finally, this committee established a linkage with PRSP, Gender Perspective Group, which consisted of women's organizations, civil society, development partners and the government.

The purpose of the committee on women's advancement was to look at ways of engendering the PRSP. Other reasons identified were to uphold fundamental human rights, to achieve poverty reduction and economic growth, to achieve sustainable social development and to address gender gaps in PRSP. While developing the report, the committee looked at gender as a cross-cutting theme and poverty with its multi-dimensional aspects such as economic deprivation (in terms of inadequate opportunities and time constraints), human deprivation (in terms of capability), vulnerability to risk and insecurity, political deprivation (in terms of inadequate political participation and empowerment), international deprivation (due to lack of concern about women in international fora) and, finally, the institutional deprivation (due to lack of gendered institutions).

The report on women's rights and advancement attempted to integrate gender from women's rights and advancement perspective. It did an extensive review, which identified various constraints faced by women due to the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, and identified

seven strategic objectives for intervention during the next three (3) years. These are:

- Ensuring women's full participation in mainstream market-oriented economic activities;
- Improving women's efficiency particularly reducing time used to perform household and reproductive roles and responsibilities;
- Ensuring that infrastructure services reach them;
- Building women's capacity in accessing health and education and improving women's productive capacity in fulfilling personal goals;
- Ensuring social protection for women and reducing their risks, including violence against women;
- Ensuring women's political empowerment and decision-making. Here, it recommended that women's entry into parliament be through direct election;
- Ensuring women's concerns in international fora;
- Strategies for strengthening institutions, particularly in monitoring and evaluation.

The report emphasised the need for effective and continuous monitoring while also involving the wider public. It provided the guideline for identifying the partners and actors in the process and gender-responsive selection criteria. A medium-term policy matrix was also finalized. Monitoring and evaluation indicators were also provided.

Under the justice sector reform, law and justice, it was recommended that some immediate interventions be made. For example, the immediate withdrawal of reservations on CEDAW and the adoption of a uniform family code to protect the rights of women in the family: the women's movement has been lobbying for last two decades for these two demands. It also recommends amending Section 5 of the Bangladesh Citizenship Act of 1951 and Bangladesh Citizenship Order to recognize the right of every woman to transmit her citizenship to her children and her spouse. It also recommends amending family and inheritance laws to ensure woman's equal access to and right to own and inherit property.

Under political participation, the report recommended laws providing for direct election of women to the national parliament, also a recommendation from 'Women's Rights and Advancement Paper.' Ms Islam reported that the draft report does not incorporate all the recommendations but the committee is hopeful that the issues will be incorporated in the final PRSP. The Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs held a workshop with the civil society organizations and development partners to review the papers that they have facilitated on the advancement of women's rights.

In the process of the preparation of the PRSP, three aspects were highlighted. The formulation of programme

and projects and the main criteria to make this gender-responsive were identified. In particular, it was suggested that civil society, women's organizations and the Government be involved in the monitoring process.

Bangladesh expressed its commitment to achieve the goals of MDGs and PRSP. The report, 'Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerating Poverty Reduction', states, thus: "one of the important instruments to achieve the various MDGs and PRSP goals is to act pro-actively through goal-oriented interventions with relevant programmes".

Linking CEDAW, BPFA and MDGs: Nepal's Experience

Mr. Shyam Sunder Sharma, Joint Secretary
Ministry of Women, Children & Social Welfare, Nepal



Mr. Sharma presented Nepal's experience of linking CEDAW, BPFA and MDG as currently, the whole planning process and development activities are done in accordance with MDGs.

Nepal is trying to incorporate the MDGs in its periodical plans and programmes. The question is, how to link BPFA and MDG in the implementation process. Currently, the BPFA is analysed with reference to the over-all targets of MDGs. In Nepal, the periodical plan consists of five years and, therefore, the MDGs must be developed for a five-year cycle.

The process of linking requires an analysis of the Action Plans of CEDAW, the BPFA and the over-all targets of MDGs, classified in periodical and sectoral basis. This analysis is verified against the government's own policies, plans and programmes, whether they are compatible or incompatible with MDGs. Finally, plans and programmes are adjusted according to the MDG, BPFA and CEDAW classifications. The National Planning Commission has a specific project on studying MDGs with the help of UNDP.

The local bodies are informed and sensitized about the MDGs and are in the process of designing their prospective and yearly programmes for the Planning Commission according to the guidelines (which already include BPFA and CEDAW provisions) of MDGs. The private sector is also playing a role in taking on corporate social responsibilities. Mr. Sharma noted that the main purpose of the state is to have an equitable and prosperous society. In order to achieve this, Nepal has a four-pronged strategy, including gender mainstreaming, enabling environment for women and

developing a gender management system. For this purpose, periodical plans are formulated. Currently, Nepal is guided by its 10th plan.

Mr. Sharma noted that caution is required as it is difficult to introduce new things like MDG in already formulated plans and policies. There is the possibility of gaps in effective materialization process between consultants/experts and executing agencies like government organisations. There is a need to have more discussion between the various stakeholders to develop a common understanding of MDG even though it is difficult to bring all stakeholders and responsible agencies together as there could be difference of interests among interest groups, pressure groups, activists, donors, public institutions, etc. He emphasised that MDGs, BPFA and CEDAW are long-term strategies and the targets cannot be achieved in the allocated time-frame. There are resource constraints, both in terms of its limited nature and the need to reallocate in priority areas.

Mr. Sharma highlighted a number of problems which could occur in linking MDGs with BPFA and CEDAW into the development plan such as corruption and indecisiveness, and difference of value system could hamper the process. The limited capacity of the state in areas like governance and public management can be another constraining factor. Inefficient tools of management such as coordination, collaboration, networking and partnership could also stall the implementation of MDGs. Further, there are differences between the donor's priority and the needs of the State. Prevailing poverty and discriminatory distribution system is also an obstacle, as is the armed conflict with its severe effects in the society.

Lessons Learned

The MDGs are not about a separate programme, each should be streamlined and included in all programmes and policies as guiding targets and goals. Periodical plans, plan of actions and other strategic documents are related with MDGs and these instruments should be correlated, coordinated and combined with each other. MDGs are compatible with BPFA and CEDAW so there is no difficulty in linking them.

There is a need for formulating comprehensive strategy document including all plans of actions, international commitments, national plan and relevant policies for their working mandate. It will be better if an effective and workable high-level mechanism is established to link all these documents and activities as consistent and correlated actions. Institutional linkage should be clearer to avoid institutional hierarchy and duplication of activities.

Mr. Sharma recommended that a regional mechanism should be established that can facilitate the linking of MDG, BPFA and CEDAW with state-level planning process so that it can facilitate uniformity, consistency and standardization of the linking process.

In conclusion, Mr. Sharma said that Nepal is fully committed to all the instruments developed by UN and is well aware that consistent implementation of CEDAW, BPFA and MDGs can help to accomplish an equitable and prosperous society

Discussion

Participants expressed concern that the MDGs dilute the substantive equality contained in the BPFA and CEDAW. The focus has shifted from equality to minimum progress. CEDAW, BPFA and CRC have emerged through a historic process involving civil society and a wide-range of stakeholders; the MDGs and the PRSP have not. Should the focus now be only on the primary education of women and reduction of poverty for women? Or, is our goal the equal share of economic resources?

Some of the South Asian countries have achieved gender parity at the primary level of education but it really does not empower women or girls because they don't gain individual agency and they have no autonomy on their reproductive health, reproductive rights or even marriage, unless a girl attains secondary education (as noted in a number of studies like UNFPA's). The MDG may not be contrary to equality of women but it is definitely a shift from the focus of equality.

The example of Sri Lanka was shared, referring to the country as having the highest indicators in the region in literacy, parity, etc., but which emerged from the structural adjustment programme at a lower rung. There was concern that the PRSP is also donor-driven and national governments have no power or authority over resources which are being privatised.

It was stated that the PRSP focuses on macro-economic indicators and stability, and there is a feeling that its link with women's poverty and condition or improving the lives of people is fallacious. Has the PRSP been able to do eradicate poverty for women anywhere?

Some participants felt that all the UN organizations and the National Planning Commission in various countries, the focal point for the formulation of programmes and allocation of resources, are all speaking the MDG language, hence we have to engage with it as well. On the positive side, the MDGs have provided the opportunity to talk to these planners and organizations with whom we otherwise do not engage with, about gender issues. In Nepal, for instance, a round table with

women's groups, activists and journalists was organised and the Vice-Chair of the National Planning Commission, who is the key person to formulate the reports and programmes, was invited for a dialogue. The level of awareness particularly among women's groups was

initially quite low. Even now, many are unaware of MDGs. We need to ensure that the MDGs acknowledge the achievements that the BPFA and CEDAW have achieved and that the targets can be flexible and related to the needs of the country, thus, the need to be involved.



Concluding Session

Chaired by H.E. Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar
Advisor on Women Development to
His Excellency, The Prime Minister
Government of Pakistan

Participants were divided into three working groups to identify key areas of concern, gaps and challenges and, priority areas for efforts and actions. The output of the working groups formed the basis for the outcome document, the Islamabad Declaration: Review and Action. The Islamabad Declaration was adopted by the delegates to the Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference.

The meeting concluded with the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives,

Nepal and Sri Lanka thanking the Government of Pakistan, in particular the Advisor on Women Development, Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, and appreciating the commitment shared by The Honourable, The Prime Minister, Mr. Shaukat Aziz, in his inaugural address, and the hospitality of The President, HE Gen. Pervez Musharaf, in hosting dinner for the delegates.

Dr. Girija Vyas expressed her appreciation of the hospitality shown to all delegates and the sharing that transpired in the meeting through a song, the words of which captured the spirit of the meeting.

Ms. Chandni Joshi and Dr. Noeleen Heyzer thanked all delegates for the enriching deliberations and ownership of the meeting and profoundly acknowledged the role of the Government of Pakistan in this meeting.



Islamabad Declaration Review and Future Action

1. WE, Ministers, Secretaries and Senior Officers of the Governments and SAARC Secretariat, women's groups, NGOs, and researchers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan (invited as an observer state), gathered at Islamabad on 3-5 May 2005 at the Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference - "Celebrating Beijing Plus Ten" jointly organised by the Government of Pakistan and UNIFEM South Asia Regional Office.
2. This conference acquires a special significance since the year 2005 marks the tenth anniversary of the historic Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995, as well as the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration. We have all gathered in Pakistan after the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women to celebrate a 10-year journey of regional cooperation and learning, reviewing our progress and identifying current challenges and formulating a road map for future action.
3. While recalling and reaffirming the commitments for the realisation of women's human rights and gender equality made in the Beijing Platform for Action 1995, the Outcome Document of the Beijing Plus Five and the resolutions of the Beijing Plus Ten review at the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the substantive framework provided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified by all countries of the region, Security Council Resolution 1325 and all other relevant follow up documents adopted.
4. **We acknowledge developments in the following areas:**
 - (a) The formulation of national policies and action plans to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women
 - (b) Increased access to education for women and girls
 - (c) Establishment of national machineries on women and institutional mechanisms towards effective realisation of women's human rights
 - (d) Drafting new legislations and/or amending laws especially on violence against women, sexual exploitation and trafficking of women and children
 - (e) Emerging jurisprudence on women's rights
 - (f) Forging partnerships between Governments, women's groups, civil society and interest groups, elected representatives, the media and the private sector
5. We recognise the **gaps and challenges** in implementation in the following areas
 - (g) Increase in women's access to economic opportunity, credit, and employment
 - (h) Enhanced affirmative actions towards increasing women's representation in political decision-making at different levels
 - (i) The adoption of policies on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care
 - (j) Adoption of regional instruments such as SAARC Social Charter and the SAARC Convention on Trafficking.

- (n) Continued lack of gender perspectives in macroeconomic policies, trade negotiations, national budgets and investment decisions
- (o) Inadequate reliable and relevant sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis at all levels
- (p) Insufficient resource allocations, authority status for national machineries on the advancement of women, and their marginalisation
- (q) The lack of regional cooperation and partnership initiatives to address problems of regional concerns such as trafficking in women and children, HIV/AIDS and promoting and protection of the rights of migrant workers
- (r) The increasing vulnerability of women in marginalised groups
- (s) The negative portrayal of women in the media
- (t) Inadequate initiatives to address the needs and concerns of women in remote areas and in disadvantaged communities
- (u) Inadequate progress in meeting and monitoring time-bound commitments.

6. In light of the above, we agree to prioritize our efforts and actions on a two-year plan on the following areas:

- (a) Violence Against Women (VAW)
- (b) Economic empowerment of women
- (c) Political empowerment of women
- (d) Disaster preparedness and management; and,
- (e) Health and Education.

7. In pursuit of the above priorities we will:

- (a) Develop and strengthen institutional mechanisms for gender equity and equality**
 - (i) Ensure sufficient resource allocations, authority and status for national machineries for women including women's ministries and national commissions
 - (ii) Ensure that mainstream institutions integrate women's human rights and gender concerns into their policies and programmes and, establish appropriate gender management systems
 - (iii) Repeal/amend discriminatory laws against women and initiate integrated efforts to implement laws
 - (iv) Ensure gender analysis of budgets and identification of allocations and expenditures at all levels needed to support women's advancement
 - (v) Promote men's and boys' participation in creating a gender just society

- (vi) Enhance and encourage corporate social responsibility
- (vii) Further strengthen partnerships with women's groups and civil society organizations
- (viii) Promote and strengthen gender sensitive media
- (ix) Acknowledge and appreciate the positive contribution of UNIFEM in sustaining and carrying forward the Beijing process, advocating for women's rights in the region and lobby for sufficient resource allocations for the organization and appropriate status for it within the UN system.

(b) Ensure linkages between Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and MDGs as mutually complementary processes

- (i) Recommend to integrate the "Islamabad Declaration: Review and Future Action" at appropriate multilateral forums and through these emphasize integration of gender perspectives in the high level plenary meeting to review the Millennium Declaration and Goals
- (ii) Recommend that CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action are integrated into national indicators and all other processes and the medium term development framework (MTDF) to monitor achievement of the Millennium Declaration and Goals.

8. Eliminate Violence Against Women (VAW) and girls

- (a) Ensure that international commitments under CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the Beijing +5 meeting are fulfilled in regard to elimination of violence against women.
- (b) Prioritize the following:
 - (i) Law and administrative reforms and actions to address violence against women through health and other relevant initiatives
 - (ii) Ratification of the SAARC Convention on Trafficking by all member countries
 - (iii) Use existing research in law reforms, policy formulation and programmes and encourage further research
 - (iv) Reform of the criminal justice system to make it more responsive to violence against women and sensitization of the judiciary, the administrative and law enforcement machinery particularly the police and health professionals to violence against women

- (v) Consider ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW.
- (c) Promote concrete actions - safety net support systems and leadership development, to address the reality of violence in women's lives which exposes, which inter alia, women to HIV/AIDS
- (d) Promote and strengthen gender sensitive community based interventions to address VAW
- (e) Check negative forces and strengthen civil society to promote zero-tolerance against VAW.

9. Economic Empowerment of Women

- (a) Provide adequate infrastructure to support women's economic opportunity, independence and livelihood that ensures dignity and personal security
- (b) Provide and strengthen adequate social security systems
- (c) Ensure that women's contribution is visible in the national accounting system
- (d) Protect the rights of women workers in both the formal and informal sectors and home-based work
- (e) Support women's right to own property and land, to inheritance, to equal access to credit, to be fully employed and to receive equal remuneration for work
- (f) Ensure the participation and voice of women in the formulation of macro and micro economic policies
- (g) Address the need to promote shared responsibility in care-giving roles in the family and prevent women from being overburdened by multiple tasks and responsibilities
- (h) Support and facilitate processes to engender global and regional trade agreements and treaties.

10. Political empowerment of women

- (a) Secure political will of the States, political parties and other actors, along with mechanisms for implementation of gender-sensitive electoral codes and legislation for affirmative actions for women in the legislatures and prevent any reversal or dilution of affirmative actions already taken
- (b) Work towards ensuring that women are directly, rather than indirectly, elected
- (c) Create an enabling environment to allow women legislators to participate in and contribute to the deliberations and decisions of the elected bodies of which they are members

- (d) Ensure greater representation of women as office bearers and candidates
- (e) Ensure gender analysis of budgets and identification of allocations and expenditures at all levels needed to support women's advancement in the political arena.

11. Emergency situations and disaster preparedness

- (a) Ensure women are at the centre of the rescue, relief and recovery efforts, and at all levels of decision making and planning in all types of natural disasters and conflict situations
- (b) Support and promote regional women's networks and ensure that the needs of women and realities of women's lives are reflected in national policies and actions through the phases of relief and recovery work and post conflict reconstruction
- (c) Work towards capacity building of women and to ensure appropriate allocation of resources to deal with emergency situations.

12. Concrete Immediate Actions

- (a) Propose that in the next two years, the SAARC gender database housed at the SAARC Secretariat is organised, resourced and equipped to address the full range of challenges on sex-disaggregated data and is able to share best practices from the region on gender equality;
- (b) Incorporate SAARC and country-level indicators for the MDGs that reflect commitments made under Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW
- (c) Agree to meet, discuss and review progress on the Islamabad Declaration: Review and Future Action at the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women with the assistance of UNIFEM
- (d) Agree to hold six monthly meetings of Secretaries of national machineries of the member states and to address the issues of trafficking of women and children and review of the "Islamabad Declaration: Review and Future Action" to be sponsored by the UNIFEM
- (e) Agree that civil society groups of the region will participate in the public hearings being organised by the UNSG on MDGs to give their inputs in the formulation and expansion of indicators relating to MDGs
- (f) Each government will develop a plan based on this document with time-bound goals and targets within the two-year time frame and share it within the region
- (g) A website to be created to share information.

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|----------|--|----------|--|
| AF | Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation | MWCSW | The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare |
| BD | Beijing Declaration | MRR | Maternal Mortality Rate |
| BNWLA | Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association | NAP | National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women |
| BPFA | Beijing Platform for Action | NASSCOM | National Association of Software and Service Companies |
| BPL | Below Poverty Line | | |
| CBS | Central Bureau of Statistics | NCBP | NGO Coalition on CEDAW and Beijing Process |
| CC | Concluding Comments | NEC | National Education Commission |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women | NEMAP | National Environment Management Plan |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child | NGOs | Non-government organizations |
| CSW | Committee on the Status of Women | NHRC | National Human Rights Commission |
| CTF | Country Task Force | NIPFP | National Institute of Public Finance and Policy |
| DDC | District Development Committee | NSS | National Sample Survey |
| DDS | Deccan Development Society | PAP | Poverty Alleviation Programmes |
| DWCD | Department of Women and Children Development | PES | Post Enumeration Survey |
| FP | Family Planning | PFA | Platform for Action |
| FTZ | Free Trade Zone | PLDP | Participatory Livestock Development Project |
| FWCW | Fourth World Conference on Women | PREP COM | Preparatory Committee |
| FWLD | Forum for Women Law and Development | PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| FWPR | Female Work Force Participation Rate | RENEW | Respect, Educate, Nurture, Empower Women |
| GDB | Gender Database | RH | Reproductive Health |
| GDI | Gender-related Development Index | RMP | Rural Maintenance Programme |
| GEM | Gender Empowerment Measure | RPD | Regional Programme Director |
| GMS | Gender Management System | SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| GRAP | Gender Reform Action Plan | SAK | Stree Aadhar Kendra |
| HDI | Human Development Index | SAP | Structural Adjustment Programme |
| HE | His/Her Excellency | SARO | South Asia Regional Office |
| HIV/AIDS | Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome | SAWAK | Women's Consultative Group (Bhutan) |
| HPSP | Health and Population Sector Programme | SHG | Self-help Groups |
| HRCM | Human Rights Commission of Maldives | SMEDA | Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority |
| ICCPR | International Convention on Civil and Political Rights | STI | Sexually-transmitted Infections |
| ICESCR | International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights | TFR | Total Fertility Rate |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology | UDHR | Universal Declaration on Human Rights |
| ILO | International Labour Organization | UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| ISST | Institute of Social Studies Trust | UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| IT | Information Technology | UNICEF | United Nations Children's Emergency Fund |
| ITPA | Immoral Traffic Prevention Act | UNIFEM | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| JIT | Joint Initiatives Against Trafficking | VAW | Violence against Women |
| JMS | Jatiyo Mahila Sangstha | VDC | Village Development Committee |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals | VGD | Vulnerable Group Development |
| MIM | Monitoring Index of MDGs | WSIS | World Summit of the Information Society |
| MGFDSS | Ministry of Gender, Family Development and Social Security | WTO | World Trade Organization |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding | GADMIS | Gender and Development Management Information System |
| MTEF | Medium-term Expenditure Framework | MCH | Maternal and Child Health |
| MWCA | Ministry of Women and Children Affairs | | |

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PROGRAMME
Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference
Celebrating Beijing Plus Ten
At Islamabad, Pakistan, 3-5 May 2005

3 May 2005

- 10:00 – 12:30** **Inaugural Session and Cultural Programme at the Convention Hall**
Welcome Address by H.E. Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, Adviser to the Prime Minister
Address by H.E. Mr. Lyonpo Chenkyab Dorji, SAARC Secretary General
Key Note Address by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM, New York
Inaugural address by H.E. Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of Pakistan
- 12:45 – 13.45** **Lunch**
- SESSION I**
- 13:45 – 14:55** **Chair – Government of Pakistan**
13:45 – 13:50 Modalities of the meeting
13:50 – 13:55 Film – 'The Power of Doing'
13:55 – 14:10 'Our journey since Beijing' by Ms. Chandni Joshi, RPD UNIFEM
14:10 – 14:40 Presentation on Progress of South Asian Women 2004 by Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)
14:40 – 14:55 Discussion
- SESSION II**
- 15:00 – 16:30** **County Presentations– Bangladesh, Bhutan**
Chair – Government of Maldives
15:00 – 15:35 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Bangladesh**
15:00 – 15:15 Presentation by the Government of Bangladesh
15:15 – 15:25 Response from civil society
15:25 – 15:35 Discussion
15:40 – 16:15 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Bhutan**
15:40 – 15:55 Presentation by the Government of Bhutan
15:55 – 16:05 Response from civil society
16:05 – 15:15 Discussion
16:15 – 16:30 **Tea Break**
- SESSION III**
- 16:30 – 17:30** **Paper Presentation on "Gender, Livelihoods and Resources"**
Chair – Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy
16:30 – 16:50 Presentation on "Gender, Livelihoods and Resources" by Dr. Govind Kelkar
16:50 – 17:30 Open discussion
- SESSION IV**
- 17:30 – 18:45** **Country Presentations – India, Maldives**
Chair – Royal Government of Bhutan
17:30 – 18:05 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: India**
17:30 – 17:45 Presentation by the Government of India
17:45 – 17:55 Response from civil society
17:55 – 18:05 Discussion

- 18:10 – 18:45** **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Maldives**
 18:10 – 18:25 Presentation by the Government of Maldives
 18:25 – 18:35 Response form civil society
 18:35 – 18:45 Discussion
19:30 **Dinner hosted by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer,**
 Executive Director UNIFEM at "Marquee Hall", Marriott Hotel

4 May 2005

- 9:00- 9:10** **Summarizing the previous day's proceedings**

SESSION V

- 9:10 – 10:45** **Panel discussion on "Women's representation, leadership and effectiveness"**
 Chair – Government of India
 9:10 – 9:25 Presentation by the Government of Afghanistan and discussion
 9:25 – 9:45 Presentation on **"Women's representation, leadership and effectiveness"** by Ms. Khawar Mumtaz
 9:45 – 9:55 Presentation by a Parliamentarian from Pakistan
 9:55 – 10:05 Presentation by a Municipal level Representative form India
 10:05 – 10:15 Presentation by a District level Representative from Bangladesh
 10:15 – 10:25 Presentation by a village level Representative from Nepal
 10:25 – 10:45 Discussion

SESSION VI

- 10:50 – 12:00** **Country Presentations – Maldives, Nepal**
 Chair – Royal Government of Bhutan
 Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Maldives
 10:50 – 11:05 Presentation by the Government of Nepal
 11:05 – 11:15 Response from civil society
 11:15 – 11:25 Discussion
 11:25 – 11:40 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Nepal**
 11:40 – 11:50 Presentation by the Government of Nepal
 11:50 – 12:00 Response from civil society
12:00 – 12:15 **Tea Break**
12:15 – 12:50 **Country Presentations – Pakistan, Sri Lanka**
 Chair – Government of Bangladesh
12:15 – 12:50 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Pakistan**
 12:15 – 12:30 Presentation by the Government of Nepal
 12:30 – 12:40 Response from civil society
 12:40 – 12:50 Discussion
12:50 – 13:25 **Commitments, Action Plans & Challenges: Sri Lanka**
 12:50 – 13:05 Presentation by the Government of Pakistan
 13:05 – 13:15 Response from civil society
 13:15 – 13:35 Discussion

13:35 – 13:55 Presentation by Mr. Kesang Wangdi, Director SAARC on the SAARC Gender Data Base

13:55 – 14:30 Lunch

SESSION VII

**14:30 – 16:00 Panel discussion on "The Varied Contours of Violence"
Chair – Ms. Salma Khan**

14:30 – 14:50 Presentation on "The Varied Contours of Violence" by Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy

14:50 – 15:00 Intervention by discussant – Dr. Shalini Bharat

15:00 – 15:10 Intervention by discussant – Ms. Sapana Malla Pradhan

15:10 – 15:20 Intervention by discussant – Barrister Zafarullah Khan

15:20 – 15:45 Discussion

15:45 – 16:00 Tea Break

SESSION VIII

**16:00 – 17:40 Sharing and Learning Session on Monitoring mechanisms and tools –
MDGs, PRSPs, and CEDAW indicators
Chair – SAARC Secretary General**

16:00 – 16:10 Presentation by Ms. Salma Khan on CEDAW as a monitoring mechanism

16:10 – 16:20 Presentation by Prof. Savitri Goonesekere on CEDAW Indicators

16:20 – 16:30 Presentation by Ms. Bandana Rana on using media & ICT for the advancement of women

16:30 – 26:40 Presentation by Mr. S.K. Nath on Monitoring MDGs

19:30 Dinner and cultural programme hosted by the Government of Pakistan at the Presidency

5 May 2005

Chair – His Majesty's Government of Nepal

9:00 – 9:10 Summarizing the proceedings of the previous day

9:10 – 9:20 Presentation on engendering the PRSPs – Prof. Mahmuda Islam

9:20 – 9:30 Presentation by Mr. Shyam Sunder Sharma on Linkage between CEDAW, BPFA and MDG

9:30 – 9:50 Discussion

Chair – Government of Sri Lanka

9:50 – 10:40 Group work on key regional concerns and priorities for action

10:40 – 11:15 Reporting back: presentations by groups

11:15 – 11:30 Tea Break

SESSION IX

**11:30 – 13:30 Concluding Session
Chair - Hosts**

11:30 – 12:45 Presentation, discussion and adoption of "Islamabad Plan of Action"

12:45 – 13:00 Closing remarks by Delegates

13:00 – 13:15 Vote of Thanks by Government of Pakistan and UNIFEM

13:15 – 14:30 Lunch

13:15 – 13:45 Press Conference with Heads of Delegations, SAARC Secretary General & UNIFEM

****Evening Free****