



# Network

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## Interview with Lakshmi Puri, Acting Head of UN Women



*"Be a changemaker, says Lakshmi Puri. Today, we have the opportunity to shape history."*

**Lakshmi Puri** is the Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, the nascent super entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women recognized as a driving force in the world of women's empowerment. Ms. Puri was designated by the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon as the Acting Head of UN Women upon the departure of Michelle Bachelet from her post as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women in March this year.

Ms. Puri joined the United Nations in 2002 after a distinguished 28-year career with the Indian Foreign Service, where she held the rank of Permanent Secretary of the Government of India and has held various posts in political and economic policymaking and bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Prior to

joining UN Women, she served as Deputy Secretary-General a.i. and Director at the UN Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD – and as Director in the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States - UN-OHRLS. Throughout her career, she has promoted the gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda in various capacities in the context of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. She has pursued studies in history, public policy and administration, international relations and law, and economic development.

She came on board at UN Women shortly after its creation, in March 2011. As a member of the senior leadership team, she has been a force in elevating UN Women’s global prominence in its first few years and actively contributed to its consolidation and institutional strengthening, including by inking its first Strategic Plan. She has led UN Women’s engagement in major intergovernmental processes, such as the Rio+20 Conference and the Commission on the Status of Women. She also spearheaded efforts to build strategic partnerships, particularly with civil society and women’s organizations, and oversaw the adoption and implementation of the first UN system-wide action plan (UN-SWAP) aimed at accountability for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

She talked with the Network Newsletter about her experience and the challenges faced by the superagency, which was born in September 2010 through the consolidation of four previous U.N. women's rights agencies.

**Q1. You have had a long-standing career as a diplomat representing India around the world, tell us about your experience in diplomacy and intergovernmental relations and how this experience shaped your opinion on the importance of the advancement of women?**

**A.1** My career shaped my opinion as much as my personal experience. My grandmother was a child bride who died in childbirth at merely 26. In order to prevent suffering the same fate, my mother was sent to school and eventually became one of the first women to obtain a post-graduate degree in Maharashtra. She was a very early feminist as well as my father who truly believed in women’s empowerment, especially for his daughters. Building on this, I became part of the third generation of diplomats in post-independence India. Throughout my career, I have worked on ensuring inclusion of a gender perspective in all areas from human rights to development, from trade investment to climate change. I felt privileged to be part of the creation of UN Women and to contribute to the establishment of the agency as the global leader on gender equality and women's empowerment.

**Q.2 You joined UN Women two years and a half ago and it will be 5 months since you took charge as Acting Head of UN Women when the new Executive Director takes over; What in your view has been the most significant achievements since the founding of UN Women?**

**A.2** We have transformed UN Women into a strong organization with a strategic focus on eliminating the greatest barriers to gender equality and achieving development results through the inclusion of women and girls. In a letter to us, one Member State has labeled UN Women “a success story” that “can serve as a model for other UN agencies”. We are not merely the sum of the four original entities, but we have added value through our consolidation, reduction of duplication and fragmentation. We have

really telescoped in these two years so much in terms of institution building. Few institutions have come together so fast and have been able to at the same time deliver on so many different fronts and establish processes that are going to be making the qualitative and quantitative leaps.

One of our landmark accomplishment and an enormous step forward has been the launching in April 2012 of the [UN System-wide Action Plan](#) (UN SWAP), a UN system-wide accountability framework designed to measure, monitor and drive progress towards a common set of standards to which to aspire and adhere for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Currently being rolled out across the UN system, the UN SWAP applies to all entities, departments and offices of the UN system and will enhance the UN system's ability to hold itself accountable for and deliver in a unified and more comprehensive manner in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The recently collected evidence reporting by 55 entities provides clear direction for next steps, both commonly for the UN system and for individual entities. With this mechanism, UN Women is delivering on its role of leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Another key UN Women achievement this year was the adoption by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) of historic agreed conclusions on the critical theme of preventing and ending violence against women. The text, progressive and forward-looking, commits Member States to actions that were never before so explicitly articulated in international documents. Member States reached a consensus on the fundamentals of what constitutes violence against women and the text reinforces the importance of zero tolerance for it in all forms and manifestations, in different contexts, settings, circumstances and relationships. And most importantly, for the first time, there is a strong emphasis on a comprehensive, holistic, prevention strategy, which goes beyond taking short-term measures and addresses the structural and underlying causes of violence, which include broad-based gender discrimination and inequalities.

UN Women was praised by Member States, civil society and other stakeholders for the unprecedented scope and level of preparations for the CSW. Beyond substantive expertise and servicing of the Commission, we mobilized Member States, civil society, UN partners and other stakeholders throughout the year to ensure a successful outcome. This process brought credit to the organization, especially in terms of our value-added in the establishment and strengthening of international norms and standards. Now is the time for implementation and UN Women, through its normative-operational link, will play a key role in this process, too.

### **Q.3 What do you see as your key priorities now, especially as the post-2015 development agenda approaches?**

**A.3** My overall priority is to keep our foot on the power pedal and carry on. I think we have made tremendous progress so far, and that must continue. We are focused on consolidating gains and building on momentum to make greater progress for gender equality and for the empowerment of women. We must continue to lead by example to make gender equality a lived reality.

We have established a great institution in these two years and a half and across all areas of our functioning: intergovernmental normative support, advocacy and communication, coordination of the U.N. system to deliver on gender equality and women's empowerment and programmatic work in countries.

As the post-2015 development agenda is being elaborated, UN Women advocates to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment feature prominently in the post-2015 development framework. This effort is particularly critical at a time when both women and their rights are being subjected to a number of high-profile attacks. Specifically, we advocate for an enhanced new generation development goal focusing on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment, as well as gender mainstreaming in all other goals through gender-sensitive targets and indicators.

It is essential to see greater attention to addressing the structural obstacles to gender equality. What we need is a truly transformative development agenda that can drive change on systemic issues and structural causes of discrimination, including unequal power relations, social exclusion and multiple forms of discrimination.

We envision three areas that require urgent action. First, ending violence against women and girls must be a priority. It is one of the most pervasive human rights violations, and carries tremendous costs for individuals, families and societies. Violence against women and girls is a manifestation of gender discrimination that seriously inhibits their abilities to enjoy rights and freedoms on the basis of equality with men and boys.

Second, women and men need equal opportunities and women's economic empowerment is essential. Equal access to land and credit, natural resources, education, health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, decent work and equal pay need to be addressed with renewed urgency. Policies, such as child care and parental leave, including for men, are needed to promote equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in caregiving and domestic work. This will relieve working women's double burden, so women and men can enjoy equality at work and at home.

Third, women's voices must be heard. Women are entitled to participate equally in decision making in the household, the private sector and institutions of governance. Despite progress in recent years, women comprise just 20 per cent of parliamentarians and 27 per cent of judges. For democracy to be meaningful and inclusive, women's voices and leadership must be amplified in all public and private spaces.

#### **Q.4 What do you feel are the key challenges ahead for you? How can these be overcome?**

**A.4** Despite many achievements, we still have challenges ahead. In order to deliver results, we need a robust budget backed by adequate income. A major priority is to enhance our funding base. One of the reasons UN Women was created was to overcome the lack of resources allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment. This project still needs continued and urgent attention. Unless we have a leap in financial support, we cannot meet the high expectations of the international community and of women and girls around the world. We rely heavily on governments' support as 98 percent of our

resources come from voluntary government contributions – that is the reason why we appreciate and look forward to greater contributions.

Our funding goal for 2013 is \$300 million which we expect to achieve. UN Women was born during the economic and financial crisis yet we need all donors to prioritize funding for gender equality and women's empowerment at this critical time. Despite challenges, we are confident that the tide is turning. We have received funding during our first two years in our start-up phase as a sign of support of our important mandate. Member States should now increase their pledges in recognition of our strong performance and positive results. At this time of the year, we have almost 90 pledges of contributions whereas last year we had only reached that number in November.

We are also diversifying our resource base, including through resource mobilization from non-traditional donors, foundations and the private sector. We have mobilized the private sector around gender equality and women's empowerment through the Women's Empowerment Principles, but also through partnerships such as with Coca-Cola, Microsoft and so many others.

**Q.5 What is your vision for the future with regards to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations? How do you intend to contribute towards the achievement of this goal?**

A. 5 The establishment of UN Women itself signifies a renewed and determined priority to improve the status of women in the United Nations and to achieve gender balance in the United Nations system. Female staff in the United Nations system can find encouragement in the high priority that the Secretary-General himself has assigned to the improvement in the status of women, which implies an unprecedented emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

As part of its broader global mandate, UN Women leads, promotes and coordinates the accountability of the United Nations system in respect of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN system and its network of departmental focal points across UN entities play a crucial monitoring, counseling and reporting role for improving the status of women in the United Nations. The Reports of the Secretary-General on the Improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system show that achieving gender parity still is a distant goal, but also attest to the feasibility of reaching that goal. Targeted action and demonstrable leadership are necessary on appointments and promotions of women for each level but especially at the decision-making levels.

Recent increases at the Under-Secretary-General level demonstrates the effectiveness of the authority exercised by the highest level of leadership, in partnership with Member States, in support of the goal of gender parity for the most senior staff levels.

With determination and focused policy and practice, gender parity in the United Nations system is attainable. The continuing challenge for the United Nations system, including the Secretariat, is to reverse the inverse relationship between the proportion of women and their seniority, bearing in mind the need to target each level independently. Advancement of women can be attained with more intensive senior leadership sponsorship; more rigorous implementation of existing policies, including special measures for women and flexible working arrangements; enhanced monitoring and

accountability; and career development for internal female staff members, accompanied by targeted outreach. In this context, the UN SWAP will play a defining role in improving the status of women in the UN system.

The challenge is to enhance accountability for, and the implementation of, measures that specifically target and accelerate progress at all levels, but especially where progress is slow and at the decision-making levels.

**Q. 6 You have managed to balance your family-life with a very successful career. What has guided you while achieving this balance? What advice do you have for other women who aspire to become leaders?**

**A.6** I have managed to balance my family-life with a demanding career path but it has never been an easy task and, along the way, there have been many sacrifices. I have been fortunate to have a very supportive and understanding family especially when there were cruel choices to be made and physical separation to be endured. There were times when my professional commitments meant that I was not able to give the attention to my family-life to the extent that I would have liked to, but my husband and my two daughters, who are equally motivated professionals, always supported me. My advice to other women aspiring to professional careers, including in the UN, is to keep faith and equally invest time, efforts and emotional energy in your profession and in your family relationships.

**Q.7 Is there a key learning on the topic of the advancement of gender equality that you could pass on to young women and men?**

**A. 7** My key message is that gender equality is one of the biggest potential game changer for development, economic growth, peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development. Like poverty and environmental degradation, gender-based inequality and discrimination are an on-going and continuing threat to development, and they are also a threat to peace, security and stability. Women's vulnerability to violence and the long term impact it has in their lives and on society, such as social exclusion, entrenchment of poverty, and exposure to more violence, are all a consequence of gender inequalities. We need gender equality not only for social justice and human rights, but because it is a critical element in achieving sustainable development. This is the message that we continue to convey to policy and decision makers who often are reluctant to prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment and relegate it to social issues.

## *Letter from the Focal Point for Women*



Dear Friends,

Greetings to all our readers.

We are happy to bring you the first edition of Network newsletter for 2013. This issue is a special issue and it brings to you news on leadership changes at UN Women amongst other gender related news from around the UN and worldwide.

2013 so far has been a challenging and transformative year indeed. With much disappointment we bring you the news of the departure of Michelle Bachelet, the Under Secretary General and founding Executive Director of UN Women. She stepped down from her post at the conclusion of the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women on 14<sup>th</sup> March with plans to return home to Chile to take part in the upcoming presidential elections in November 2013. We wish her all the success and thank her for her steering the UN entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women and setting it on the path to lead by example.

We also welcome Lakshmi Puri, the Assistant Secretary General and Deputy Executive Director, UN Women on her appointment as the Acting Head of UN Women by the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. In this issue we feature an interview with Ms. Puri focusing on her agenda and the challenges she faces while at the helm of the superagency.

As always, the team at NETWORK endeavors to focus each issue on the happenings at the UN as well as globally that impact on advancing gender equality and women empowerment.

In this issue we highlight news on violence against women, it being a priority area for International Women's Day and the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March. We spotlight on the launch of *One Woman, a song for UN Women* a musical celebration of women worldwide to the historic Agreed Conclusions adopted at the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the CSW paving the way for action to prevent violence against women and girls to an inclusive and gendered post 2015 agenda.

This issue also includes news on completion of the first round of reporting on the UN System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - UN SWAP and partnership of Micheal Kors with UN Hunger Initiative as well as opening of the new UN Women Nordic Liaison office in Copenhagen., Denmark.

In bringing actions related to representation of women this edition of Network spotlights on election of women to one fifth seats in Kenya Parliament and partnership for better tracking female leadership and participation at the local level. We also bring updates on a new smartphone application to alert your circle of friends when you feel at risk for abuse/violence amongst other stories. As always we end with information on latest reports and publications.

We strive to present a wide spectrum of stimulating and enlightening news and trust that you find these narratives inspiring to impact your advocacy and work for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment wherever you may find yourself around the world.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra

Focal Point for Women in the UN system &

Senior Advisor for Coordination,

Division for UN system Coordination

UN Women

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## Bidding Farewell to

**Michelle Bachelet**, the former President of Chile and the founding head of UN Women since 2010, stepped down in March 2013 to return to her home country and contest the next Presidential elections scheduled for November 2013.



Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon “expressed his ‘tremendous gratitude for her outstanding service’ as the executive director of U.N. Women. He said Ms. Bachelet’s achievements include new steps to protect women and girls from violence, new advances on health, and a new understanding that women’s empowerment must be at the core of the United Nations work. UN Women will continue to build on her stellar legacy and thank her for her contributions and wish her every success as she embarks on the next chapter in her extraordinary life. She will always have a home at the United Nations.

## Congratulations to

**Lakshmi Puri**, on her appointment as the Acting Head of UN Women.



Following the departure of Michelle Bachelet, founding Executive Director of UN Women, the UN Secretary-General designated Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General and UN Women Deputy Executive Director, as the Acting Head of the organization, until further notice. Ms. Puri took on her new role on 26 March 2013.

**Mary Robinson**, on her appointment as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region of Africa. This is the first-ever appointment of a woman as UN Special Envoy marking an historic first for the United Nations and a major milestone in the progress of women's rights and gender equality.



Mary Robinson

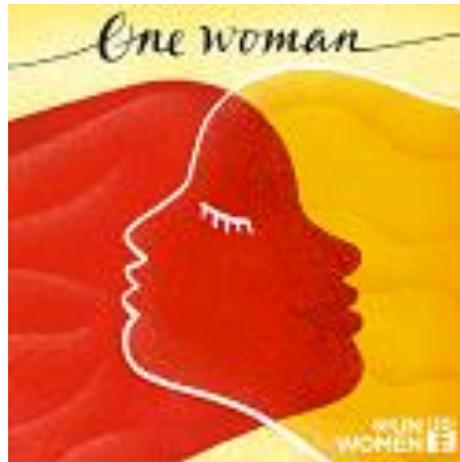
Ms. Robinson was previously Ireland's first woman President and the first female UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Mary Robinson's passionate commitment to gender equality and human dignity has led to major breakthroughs for women's lives worldwide.

## **Around the UN**

### **Events Celebrating International Women's Day-8 March 2013**

***"One Woman: A song for UN Women" launched on International Women's Day, 8 March 2013***

*A musical celebration of women worldwide  
Artists from 20 countries participate*



The track is globally available for download as of 8 March 2013 on <http://song.unwomen.org>, together with the full song video and behind-the-scenes videos chronicling the song's year-long production.

The song calls for change and celebrates acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who make daily extraordinary contributions to their own communities and countries. "One Woman" is the first theme song for a UN organization. The lyrics are inspired by stories of women whom UN Women has supported.

"One Woman gives us a message of hope and inspiration", said outgoing UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet. "This song carries a message of unity and solidarity with women worldwide and reminds us that equality, human rights and human dignity are the birthright of all of us, every human being. I thank everyone who made this song possible."

Singers and performers from all regions, women and men, donated their time and contributed their talent. They include: Ana Bacalhau (Portugal); Angelique Kidjo (Benin); Anoushka Shankar (India); Bassekou Kouyate (Mali); Bebel Gilberto (Brazil); Beth Blatt (US); Brian Finnegan (Ireland); Buika (Spain); Charice (Philippines); Cherine Amr (Egypt); Debi Nova (Costa Rica); Emeline Michel (Haiti); Fahan Hassan (UK); Idan Raichel (Israel); Jane Zhang (China); Jim Diamond (UK); Keith Murrell (UK); Lance Ellington (UK); Marta Gomez (Colombia); Maria Friedman (UK); Meklit Hadero (Ethiopia); Rokia Traoré (Mali); Vanessa Quai (Vanuatu); Ximena Sariñana (Mexico); Yuna (Malaysia).

Initially performed during the launch event for UN Women in the UN General Assembly Hall in 2011, "One Woman" aims to become a rallying cry that inspires listeners about the mission of UN Women and engages them to join in the drive for women's empowerment and gender equality.

The music of the song is by Graham Lyle (Tina Turner's "What's Love Got To Do With It" and many other hits) and British/Somali singer-songwriter Fahan Hassan; the lyrics are by Beth Blatt. Jerry Boys . Microsoft, as UN Women's corporate partner for "One Woman" has sponsored the song and music video production.

The song will be available for purchase on the song website and all common channels like iTunes and Amazon for \$0.99. All proceeds go directly to UN Women in support of its programmes to empower women on the ground

## Marking International Women's Day

### A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women



Michelle Bachelet and Ban Ki-moon

This year's theme for International Women's Day, *"A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women"* sought to strengthen international community's commitment to put an end to violence against women. It underscored the fact that urgent, concrete action was needed to end such heinous violations of human rights.

In an opening session at the United Nations New York on March 8<sup>th</sup> organized under the umbrella of the UNiTE Campaign, moderated by CNN International anchor Isha Sesay and attended by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki- Moon, Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director UN Women, H.E. Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the UN, Member States, representatives of civil society and the private sector, Secretary Ban said that violence against women is not inevitable and everyone, women, men, girls and boys must wage the struggle to end it. He said mindsets can change. Data collection can be strengthened. States can and must provide legal aid, increase police capacity, extend the reach of protection plans and bring to justice perpetrators. He stressed to not forget the simple power of naming and shaming, with prevention being the central watchword.

With a groundswell of support for women's rights rising in all corners of the world, the international community must seize the momentum and keep its promise to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, said the Secretary General. Secretary Ban said, it was also a day for zeroing in on the barriers that remained. Around the world, women were still paid less than men for the same work. All too frequently, their invaluable household and care-giving work went unrecognized, and women and girls remained objectified and oppressed. Most troubling of all, they were still subject to shocking attacks and abuse committed by those they should be able to trust. "Impunity compounds the hurt," as perpetrators went free and were able to strike again.

At the packed event UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet made a rallying call to the international community to move forward on gender equality and women's rights. She highlighted the progress that has been made in the last century but called for more robust action and commitments to ensure the protection of the rights of women and girls to live in dignity, free of violence and discrimination. "There can be no peace, no progress, no equality without women's full and equal rights

and participation. And there can be no gender equality without women's realization. Women's realization of their full reproductive rights, their right to sexual and reproductive health, are essential to the empowerment of women and to gender equality," she stressed. She announced that 50 governments and the European Commission had committed to take concrete action to end violence against girls and women...From Argentina to Australia, Brazil to Colombia and Denmark, Germany to Jamaica, Liberia to Thailand, from Slovakia to the Republic of Korea, countries have committed to take action. She also announced the signing of the Violence against Women Act by President Obama in the United States. Ms. Bachelet agreed that the world was at a "tipping point" with regard to women's rights. Never before, had there been such global momentum or widespread public outrage at cases of violence against women and girls. In her closing remarks she said that we had to move forward, and we owed it to the millions of women fighting for their rights globally.]

### **UN Women 2013 International Women's Day Panel: Implicit stereotypes, explicit solutions: Overcoming gender-based discrimination in the workplace**

UN Women in partnership with the Government of Australia organized a panel discussion on March 8<sup>th</sup> focusing on the different faces of gender discrimination in the workplace entitled, "*Implicit Stereotypes, explicit solutions: Overcoming gender-based discrimination in the workplace.*" Aparna Mehrota, Senior Advisor on Coordination and the Focal Point for Women in the UN system, UN Coordination Division, UN Women moderated the panel and speakers included Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director, UN Women; Ms. Elizabeth Broderick, Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Former Commissioner on Aging; Lieutenant General David Morrison, AO, Chief of Army, Australian Defence Force; Ms. Kristina Filipovich, Adjunct Professor, American University Washington College of Law; and Ms. Shanthi Dairiam, CEDAW Expert and Director International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific.

In her introduction Ms. Mehrotra highlighted that despite getting women in the workplace, research and the lived experience of women indicates clearly that there are still many gender inequalities in the workplace. Women are still paid less than men for doing the same work, (approximately 80 cents to the dollar for men) and harassment and violence continue to plague them disproportionately. Also, more subtle forms of discrimination affect their career paths.

One of the problems she said is that this generation of workplace initiatives was aimed at removing the obstacles that hold women back. We need to move ahead from this conventional platform What is needed now is an upgrade – a series of interventions to aggressively pursue the imperceptible, subtle barriers: the mind sets of managers and employees, the organizational cultures, the parts that are rarely spoken about but which continue to block the way for women. This is because gender discrimination can also be implicit and these stereotypes can undermine objective decision-making. Understanding how stereotypes manifest themselves in key organizational decisions can help explain why gender inequality is still experienced in the workplace. There is a need to agree to uncover the situation we face as one cannot confront what one does not agree to face. The challenge today is to uncover qualitative issues to capture and change.

Ms. Broderick discussed programs in Australia to eliminate gender stereotypes, workplace discrimination and how national legislation and oversight institutions are contributing to address gender inequalities in Australia. She said that through her work as Sex Discrimination Commissioner she has found that despite much of the work that is being done through laws, policies and programs for eliminating gender equality there is a lag between rhetoric and reality. She stressed that although women's voices remain critical to advancing gender equality and eliminating violence against women, what is also clear is that we also need men taking the message of gender equality to other men to achieve real change. She said that in order to reshape stereotypes and rules we need to work with men to do so. She said that the Champions of Change programme she has initiated draws on powerful men to be advocates of change and to take action. The Male Champions see gender equality as both a human rights issue and a business imperative. They use their collective influence to advocate for gender equality at both an organisational and national level.

General Morrison said that strong leadership is crucial to take practical steps to make positive difference and without this change is unlikely. He said that existence of cultural problems has to be accepted in order to address them. A more gender diverse workforce has a better culture, better use of its men and women and delivers better capability as a result and that is the journey the Australian armed forces are on. The target for women workforce is increased from 10% to 12%.

Ms. Dairiam described the workplace-related rights, she said that women's rights to equality can be realized only if strategies for fulfillment of equality for women work in tandem with each other such as the CEDAW framework, the acceleration of the realization of equality and the creation of a conducive social environment for the advancement of women's rights and elimination of stereotyping.

She said that the right to work with safety is very critical and CEDAW has through recommendation 19 brought the issue of freedom from violence in the workplace in focus. However she noted that this right along with other rights remains contested. Employers are resisting implementation of this right and do not want legislation or strict rules that regulate and provide a safe environment for women. The government also colludes with the employers and this right remains contested.

Ms. Cristina Filipovich said that the bigger issues to be tackled are the subtle discrimination issues which are harder to identify. She said that where there is less transparency in organizations women face more discrimination. She said that strong leadership and lawsuits bring media attention and help to battle gender discrimination.

Summing up Ms. Lakshmi Puri said that playing field is uneven for women and change cannot happen on its own and unless institutions are gender responsive and gender sensitive and need to take special measures to make the change happen.

In closing Ms. Mehrotra said the UN must lead by example and along with strategies for bringing attitudinal equality and changing mindsets, it must focus on altering structural inequalities in order to change the paradigm.

**Agreed Conclusions adopted at the Commission on the Status of Women  
57<sup>th</sup> Session  
4<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> March**



As 2012 has vividly demonstrated, violence against women and girls remains a horrific reality across the world. Although more than 125 countries have specific laws that penalize domestic violence, still, 603 million women live in countries where it is not considered a crime. Much more needs to be done.

Against this backdrop the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women-CSW 57 took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 4 to 15 March 2013 with ***“Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls”*** as its priority theme. It focused on two key areas: prevention of violence and the provision of support services/responses. Held annually, CSW sessions bring together thousands of Government officials and representatives of the UN, civil society, media and the private sector. This year saw the largest ever gathering of over 6000 delegates. They met to review progress, share experiences and good practices, analyse gaps and challenges and agree on priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality. The Commission is informed by the recommendations made in the Secretary-General’s reports: Prevention of violence against women and girls; and Multi-sectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence.

Meeting on the heels of high-profile violence cases that fuelled global outrage and rising demands for justice, the 57th session of the Commission is widely hailed by governments and civil society as an historic session, especially given the lack of Agreed Conclusions in 2003, when the issue was last discussed at the Commission.

Following much deliberation and fierce negotiations, the Commission on the Status of Women reached full agreement and adopted the Agreed Conclusions at its 57<sup>th</sup> session. The historic 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women produced an agreement that paves the way for action to prevent and end violence against women and girls. The agreed outcome document of the 57th CSW, was hailed as an "important step" to end violence against women and girls.

After months of behind the scenes lobbying and over the two weeks of the 57th session on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 57), member states, inter-governmental organizations, civil society and UN agencies worked tirelessly to negotiate the Agreed Conclusions. Together, all actors committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, ending impunity for perpetrators, fully engaging men and boys, and ensuring women's reproductive rights and access to sexual and reproductive health services – an area of particular contention, and advancing women's empowerment and gender equality to prevent and end these human rights violations. The outcome document emphasised the need to end harmful traditional practices, including child marriage, and called on member states to ensure services were focused on marginalised groups, such as indigenous women, older women, female migrant workers, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, and women held in custody. It reaffirmed previous international agreements on women's rights, such as those made in Cairo in 1994. The result is due not only to marvelous work of the negotiators but also to the persistence and advice of the more than 600 NGOs gathered too, and the real partnerships forged between them and some governments. UN Women tried its utmost and inspired them to greater efforts to reach a good outcome because they were there not just for themselves or even for their governments but for the women and girls of the world.

UN Women was heartened that agreement was reached this year to end violence against women and girls. This agreement comes in unison with rising voices worldwide saying enough is enough. The Agreed Conclusions are a testimony to the commitment of Member States to do the right thing, to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. The document adopted by the Commission condemns in the strongest terms the pervasive violence against women and girls, and calls for increased attention and accelerated action for prevention and response. UN Women welcomed the important focus on prevention, including through education and awareness-raising, and addressing gender inequalities in the political, economic and social spheres. The best way to end violence against women is to stop it from happening in the first place.

The document highlights the importance of putting in place multi-sectoral services for survivors of violence, including for health, psychological support and counseling, social support in the short and long term. It draws attention to the need for services to protect the right to sexual and reproductive health. Punishment of perpetrators is also highlighted as a critical measure to end impunity, as is the need to improve the evidence base and availability of data to inform an effective response.

By adopting this document, governments made clear that discrimination and violence against women and girls has no place in the 21st century. They reaffirmed their commitment and responsibility to undertake concrete action to end violence against women and girls and promote and protect women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The agreement is one step more for realizing the rights and dignity of women and girls. But one cannot stop here. UN Women, together with its partners in the UN system, will continue to advance the rights of women and girls through strong and coordinated support. It will work with Member States to turn the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women into concrete results for women and girls. UN Women with its strong programmatic focus, experience on ending violence against women,

and field presence in 85 countries stands ready to fully support implementation of the Agreed Conclusions.

There is no turning back. UN Women will keep moving forward to the day when women and girls can live free of fear, violence and discrimination. The 21st century is the century of inclusion and women's full and equal rights and participation.

For text of Agreed Conclusions see:

[http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/CSW57\\_agreed\\_conclusions\\_advance\\_unedited\\_version\\_18\\_March\\_2013.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/CSW57_agreed_conclusions_advance_unedited_version_18_March_2013.pdf)

## CSW - Focus on Child Marriages:

### 39,000 Every Day – More than 140 million girls will marry between 2011 and 2020

On 7 March, 2013 a special session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) focused on child marriage, sponsored by the Governments of Bangladesh, Malawi and Canada. It is held in support of Every Woman Every Child, a movement spearheaded by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that aims to save the lives of 16 million women and children by 2015.

The session addressed the problems created by early marriages and ways to prevent them. If child marriage is not properly addressed, UN Millennium Development Goals 4 & 5 – calling for a two-thirds reduction in the under-five mortality rate and a three-fourths reduction in the maternal deaths by 2015 – will not be met. Child marriage – defined as marriage before the age of 18 – applies to both boys and girls, but the practice is far more common among young girls.



Tahani, 8, is seen with her husband Majed, 27, and Ghada, 8, and her husband, outside their home in Hajjah, Yemen

Child marriage is a global issue but rates vary dramatically, both within and between countries. In both proportions and numbers, most child marriages take place in rural sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. In South Asia, nearly half of young women and in sub-Saharan Africa more than one third of young women are married by their 18th birthday. The 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage are: Niger,

75 per cent; Chad and Central African Republic, 68 per cent; Bangladesh, 66 per cent; Guinea, 63 per cent; Mozambique, 56 per cent; Mali, 55 per cent; Burkina Faso and South Sudan, 52 per cent; and Malawi, 50 per cent. In terms of absolute numbers, because of the size of its population, India has the most child marriages.

Between 2011 and 2020, more than 140 million girls will become child brides, according to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). If current levels of child marriages hold, 14.2 million girls annually or 39,000 daily will marry too young. Furthermore, of the 140 million girls who will marry before the age of 18, 50 million will be under the age of 15. Despite the physical damage and the persistent discrimination to young girls, little progress has been made toward ending the practice of child marriage. In fact, the problem threatens to increase with the expanding youth population in the developing world.

“Child marriage is an appalling violation of human rights and robs girls of their education, health and long-term prospects,” says Babatunde Osotimehin, M.D, Executive Director, UNFPA. “A girl who is married as a child is one whose potential will not be fulfilled. Since many parents and communities also want the very best for their daughters, we must work together and end child marriage.” Girls married young are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence and sexual abuse than those who marry later.

“No girl should be robbed of her childhood, her education and health, and her aspirations. Yet today millions of girls are denied their rights each year when they are married as child brides,” says Michelle Bachelet, M.D., Executive Director of UN Women.

Despite the fact that 158 countries have set the legal age for marriage at 18 years, laws are rarely enforced since the practice of marrying young children is upheld by tradition and social norms.

## **Towards an inclusive and gendered post-2015 agenda**

UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra participated in a panel on the *“Key gender equality issues to be reflected in the post-2015 development framework”* on 7 March during the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57). The objective of the panel was to solicit the views of CSW Member States and civil society on key issues in the post-2015 agenda.

Mr. Hendra outlined UN Women’s perspective on what a post-2015 agenda that has gender equality and women’s empowerment at its heart might look like. He described the need for the inclusion of a substantive stand-alone gender equality goal that is firmly grounded in women’s rights, based on existing human rights norms and standards, including CEDAW. This goal must be comprehensive, avoid repeating the narrow focus of Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDG3), and include the specific gender issues that other goals and targets do not address, such as aim to eliminate violence against women and girls, expand women’s choices and opportunities, ensure their full participation in decision-making at all levels, and include sex-disaggregated targets and indicators.

One of the recurring critiques of the MDGs during the discussion was that the existing framework fails to address the structural and root causes of poverty and gender inequality, violence against women, and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls around the world. Member States acknowledged that the denial of women’s rights is the most widespread driver of

inequality in the world, and that gender inequality and the absence of equal opportunities diminishes the potential for development and exacerbates poverty. Calls were made for the post-2015 framework to focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized populations.

There was strong consensus among Member State delegates and representatives of civil society that gender equality and the empowerment of women must be central in the post-2015 development framework. They agreed that the future framework should be based on the principles of human rights, equality and non-discrimination, and that there should be coherence between the new framework and sustainable development goals. Many participants expressed support for a stand-alone gender equality goal and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all other goals. There was also a call for a transformative development framework that would be action-oriented, inclusive, people-centered and applicable to all countries.

Dr. Caren Grown, Senior Gender Advisor in USAID's Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning, and Economist-In-Residence at American University, was the panel's discussant. As the lead author of the 2005 UN Millennium Project Taskforce report "Taking action: achieving gender equality and empowering women," she recalled the seven strategic priorities that the Task Force identified as minimum requirements to empower women: 1) strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls; 2) guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights; 3) invest in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens; 4) guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights; 5) eliminate gender inequality in employment by decreasing women's reliance on informal employment, closing gender gaps in earnings, and reducing occupational segregation; 6) increase women's share of seats in national parliaments and local governmental bodies; and 7) combat violence against girls and women. These priorities were adopted by the General Assembly in 2005 World Summit Outcome. She said these seven priorities resonate with the statements made by delegates during the event, and thus should be reflected in the post-2015 agenda.

In addition to recommendations focused on preventing and eliminating gender-based violence in the post-2015 agenda, participants called for improvements in maternal health and the integration of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and proposed that the post-2015 framework include a financing and investment agenda for governments to play a central role in funding gender equality and accountability.

The summary of the discussion will serve as input to a report by ECOSOC based on the perspectives of all the functional commissions. That report will then be submitted to the General Assembly.

## **Promoting system-wide accountability of the United Nations for its work on gender equality and empowerment of women**

### **UN SWAP – 55 UN entities complete first round of reporting 2012-2013**

Launched in April 2012, the UN-SWAP (UN System-wide Action Plan) is a UN system-wide accountability framework designed to measure, monitor and drive progress towards a common set of standards to which to aspire and adhere for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It applies to all entities, departments and offices of the UN system. UN entities are to meet all of

the UN-SWAP performance standards by 2017. Those with a mainly technical focus may meet them by 2019.

The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women-UN SWAP has enhanced accountability for the United Nations system's work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Its adoption and use across the United Nations system reaffirm the value of applying a gender perspective to the broad spectrum of United Nations mandates for peace and security, human rights, development and humanitarian assistance.

With its agreed set of 15 performance indicators clustered in six broad and common functional areas, the Action Plan established a new model for accountability, allowing a snapshot of the state of work to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. In addition to setting common standards and providing a monitoring framework, it is also expected to motivate action and investments to meet those standards.

The first round of reporting was successfully completed in April 2013 by 55 entities (82 per cent of total) of the UN system. As the first UN system-wide accountability framework for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, the Action Plan has resulted in several significant and immediate shifts in how the United Nations system approaches its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as shown in the table below:

<i>Pre-Action Plan</i>	<i>Post-Action Plan</i>
Limited guidance and direction on gender equality and the empowerment of women for the United Nations system	Agreed standards applied and monitored across the United Nations system
Repeated and unfulfilled requests from Member States for an accountability framework	A uniform and system-wide accountability framework, welcomed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2012/24 and by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226
Responsibility for work on gender equality and the empowerment of women limited to gender units and focal points	Decentralized responsibility and revitalization of gender equality and the empowerment of women across the United Nations system
Disparate and fragmented data and reporting on work on gender equality and the empowerment of women work	More coherent and harmonized data and reporting identifying United Nations-wide strengths and weaknesses

The results of the first year of Action Plan reporting will establish the baseline against which all future performance will be measured. United Nations system entities, departments and offices have until 2017 or 2019 to meet the performance standards.

For more info see:

<http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/UN-SWAP-brochure.pdf>

<http://www.unwomen.org/2012/04/un-women-welcomes-a-landmark-action-plan-to-measure-gender-equality-across-the-un-system/>

## **Evaluating UN results: Are we achieving them?**

“UN Results – Are we achieving them? How do we know?” was the title and focus of a high level panel event organized by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) as part of its 2013 Evaluation Week from 15-19 April 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The panel followed the evaluation practice exchange seminars and preceded the Annual General Meeting of UN heads of evaluation. It was an opportunity for UN evaluators to better explain how to strengthen the effectiveness of the UN and the importance of evaluation for learning, decision-making and accountability.

“Evaluation is not easy, nor is it popular, but it is essential,” said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who delivered the opening remarks. “The current constrained budgetary climate makes it more important than ever. All of us share a responsibility to strengthen this important function, he said.”



Panel members reflected on whether or not the United Nations is achieving its objectives, how evaluation is contributing to measuring results, whether evaluation findings and recommendations are actually used for programme and policy improvements, and how the collective capacity of UN programmes can be improved through evaluation.

UN Women is continuously active within the UNEG, promoting the integration of gender equality in evaluation. UN Women’s Evaluation Office recently developed an evaluation scorecard for the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender equality. UN agencies will use the same tool to report on how evaluations have integrated gender equality dimensions into evaluations with the goal of increased harmonization. UN Women also is taking part in an innovative international evaluation initiative – EvalPartners — aimed at building the evaluation capacity of civil society organizations. During 2012, the Chief of the UN Women Evaluation Office acted as the UNEG Chair.

UNEG is an inter-agency network that brings together the evaluation units of the UN system, including 43 members of UN departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and affiliated organizations.

## Around the World

### UN Women opens Nordic Liaison Office in Copenhagen

The opening of UN Women's new Nordic Liaison Office in Copenhagen was made official with the signing of a host country agreement by Acting Head of UN Women Lakshmi Puri and Danish Minister of Development Cooperation, Christian Friis Bach, on 23 April.

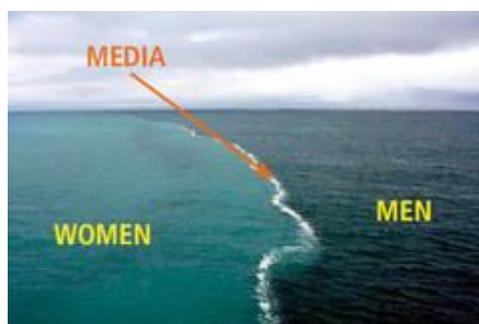


Ms. Puri thanked the Minister and the Government of Denmark for their offer to host the Nordic Liaison Office in Copenhagen and underlined the close relationship UN Women enjoys with Denmark and all Nordic countries.

The new UN Women presence in Copenhagen provides a strategic opportunity to liaise with Nordic governments, parliamentarians and key decision-makers, as well as UN Women National Committees in Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, the private sector, media and civil society. It will also work closely with the UN Women liaison office in Brussels and with all other UN agencies based in Copenhagen. The Nordic countries have a steadfast relationship with the UN, and the Nordic countries have historically been strong advocates for gender equality both within their own countries and as part of their development cooperation policy.

The Director of the Liaison Office is already onsite at the new UN city campus, an office complex for all eight UN agencies and entities based in Copenhagen, which is expected to officially open by June.

### UNESCO Launches Women Make the News 2013



On the occasion of International Women’s Day (IWD), 8 March, UNESCO joined forces with international and regional partners to launch the annual Women Make the News (WMN) initiative under the theme, “Towards a Global Alliance on Media and Gender”.

Launched annually on the occasion of the International Women’s Day (8 March), *Women Make the News* is a global initiative aimed at fixing global attention on an issue relating to gender equality in and through the media, driving debate and encouraging action-oriented solutions until global objectives are met. It is to this end that UNESCO has developed resources such as the [Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media](#).

This year’s theme is related to the [Global Forum on Media and Gender](#) (GFMG) to be held in November 2013. It is our intention to draw attention to the need for a global means, including media partnerships, to follow-up on the gender and media objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The theme of the United Nations observance of IWD 2013 is **“A Promise is a Promise: Time for Action to End Violence Against Women.”** This theme will be one of the main topics to be addressed during the Global Forum on Media and Gender. Another key topic will be integrating media in national gender policies and strategies.

In this backdrop UNESCO and its partners invited media organizations, professional associations, journalists’ unions, women and men working in the media and civil society to use 8 March to share their thoughts on what could be the possible form of the Global Alliance for Media and Gender, what should it do and priority themes that the GFMG should address. In addition, experiences and best practices in reporting or advocating for the end of violence against women will be shared.

## **Domestic workers gain equal rights in Brazil**

A Constitutional amendment passed by the Brazilian Senate on 27 March and enacted on 2 April 2013 will provide for unemployment insurance, ensure that overtime is paid to domestic workers who work more than 44 hours a week, and create a Guaranteed Fund for Time of Service in case of firing without just cause, along with a dozen other worker’s rights.

On the occasion of the enactment of the new law last week, UN Women, the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) and the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) launched a new study on the impact of such expanding social protection for domestic workers at an event in Brasília. The research was supported by UN Women under the Inter-agency Programme for the Promotion of Gender Equality, Race, and Ethnicity, developed in partnership with the IPC-IG and UNDP.

The research study underlines that the formalization of domestic work through this new law, corrects a historical debt to millions of Brazilian women and will generate economic growth for the country.

The report aims to address concerns raised over the potential rise in the cost of hiring domestic workers and its economic impacts. Entitled Impact of Welfare Changes in the Brazilian Market Home Services, the study suggests that approximately 630,000 indirect jobs may be generated due to the increased income of domestic workers, mainly in health services and the production of household appliances. The study also shows that gains in income at the bottom of the social pyramid generate benefits for the society as a whole and that evidence suggests that the demand for domestic workers' services remains stable even when there are increased costs.

"The survey also provides an economic justification for the ratification of the Convention on Decent Work for domestic workers and workers of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 189," says Rebecca Tavares, UN Women Representative in Brazil. "This adds to the efforts of UN Women to promote the importance of a decent work agenda based on values of social justice. UN Women has been working closely with the ILO, especially by supporting organizations of domestic workers in their demands for labour rights," she added.

## **Lakshmi Puri leads discussion on gender equality post-MDGs at Women Leaders of New Asia Summit**

From 12-14 April, Lakshmi Puri, UN Women Acting Head and Assistant Secretary-General spoke at the Women Leaders of New Asia Summit in New Delhi, organized by the Asia Society, an educational organization dedicated to strengthening partnerships and understanding between the people and institutions of Asia and the United States. The Summit brought together experts from different fields and countries across Asia-Pacific and beyond to discuss the role of women and gender, including in a future global development agenda, once the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) conclude in 2015.

While the Asia-Pacific region has made great strides in narrowing gender gaps over the last decades, significant disparities remain within individual countries and across the region. The conference addressed issues such as violence, systemic discrimination, and the barriers that stymie their potential and progress. It also explored issues of political will and engagement and ways to ensure that policy is put into action.

On 13 April, Ms. Puri led the discussion on "Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women: the post-MDG Agenda." While promoting gender equality and empowering women is one of the eight MDGs, it remains unfulfilled and women continue to face discrimination with regard to access to education, economic opportunities, and political participation. In addition, among all MDGs, the goals that are most off-track and least likely to be achieved are the ones that most depend on achieving gender equality, such as MDG 5 to improve maternal health.

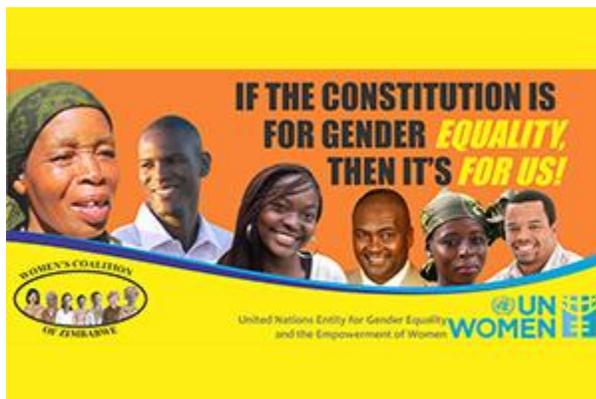
In her remarks, Ms. Puri highlighted how gender equality and women's empowerment is central to sustainable development. She argued for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment in the next generation of the global framework on development for which discussions

are currently underway, and she explained how such a goal should address structural inequalities and discrimination in a more comprehensive way than in the current MDGs.

Such a stand-alone goal should establish minimum standards and push change forward in three critical areas: expand women's choices and capabilities so that they have full choice and options about how to live their lives; ensure women's safety and end violence against women; ensure that women take full part in household, public and private decision making. She also advocated the need for comprehensive integration of gender equality across all other new goals, targets and indicators.

## Zimbabweans say yes to new Constitution strong on gender equality and women's rights

"As a woman of Zimbabwe, I personally wanted a Constitution that is fit for me," said Zimbabwe's Deputy Minister of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development and Member of Parliament, Jessie Majome, who participated in Zimbabwe's Constitution-making process as part of the Select Committee of Parliament that facilitated the process.



The women's movement in Zimbabwe mobilized women and men to vote yes for a new Constitution. In an overwhelming endorsement, 95 per cent of Zimbabweans (3,079,966) voted yes to a draft Constitution in a referendum on 16 March – a vote 10 years in the making. Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, women have lobbied arduously to be treated as equal citizens with equal entitlements before the law.

The successful approval of the draft Constitution represents an inherent victory for them, with positive provisions for women in several areas. The 'Yes' vote will herald a new Supreme Law, to be enacted by Parliament after it reconvenes on 7 May, which will mandate gender equality and protect women's rights.

The new Constitution will also be more aligned with several of the key international and regional gender equality and women's rights instruments that Zimbabwe has signed and ratified. These include the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa – and the Southern African Development Community Gender and Development Protocol – among others.

The draft Constitution approved by referendum opens with provisions stating that respect for gender equality is one of the country's Founding Values. The Declaration of Rights includes a section on

women's rights, has been expanded to include socioeconomic and cultural rights, and it could be used in legal or judicial proceedings. This means new opportunities for women in jobs, education, finance and credit must be ensured by the government and in national funding.

The new Constitution also includes a special measure to increase women's representation in Parliament, introducing for this purpose in the National Assembly, 60 reserved seats for women who will be elected through a system of Proportional Representation based on the votes cast for political party candidates in a general election for the 210 members. The 60 reserved seats for women will be additional to any women elected to the other 210 seats. This measure will be in effect for the first two Parliaments after the Constitutional enactment is published in the official Gazette. It is still unclear whether the new measures will apply to the upcoming elections, dependent on whether the enactment happens before then.

The provisions will also apply to the Senate, to the 60 directly elected members among a total of 80 (the other 20 are reserved for tribal Chiefs and people with disabilities). The new constitutional measure states that the 60 elected Senators will be chosen from a party-list system of Proportional Representation, in which male and female candidates are listed alternately, with every list headed by a female candidate.

The new Constitution will also establish a Gender Commission tasked with promoting gender equality in all spheres of life. Its mandate will include: the investigation of possible gender rights violations, receiving and considering gender-based complaints from the public, conducting research on gender and social justice issues, recommending changes to discriminatory laws and practices, and proposing affirmative action programmes.

As all existing laws will be reviewed to ensure they comply, the new Constitution is expected to have a domino effect. Additional laws will also be drafted where gaps currently exist.

With technical and financial support from UN Women and UNDP, women activists, senior politicians, women parliamentarians and academics formed what they dubbed the Group of 20 (G-20), a gender equality and women's rights constitutional lobby group. This group strategized, drafted constitutional provisions, lobbied the constitutional drafters, and honed their lobbying and advocacy skills to become a key information source on gender equality, women's rights and the Constitution.

## **Michael Kors Partners With UN Hunger Initiative**

Michael Kors has partnered with the United Nations on a long-term fundraising project to help tackle world hunger. The designer has joined the UN World Food Programme which aims to provide assistance and sustenance to those in need, particularly mothers and children. Kors plans to raise money and awareness of the programme through a series of campaigns and events - starting with the launch of two unisex watches in March, under the slogan: "Watch Hunger Stop". Each watch sold will allow for 100 children to be fed through the initiative.

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"Over the years, I've had the great fortune of traveling the world and experiencing new cultures and people," said Kors. "And if there's one thing I've learned, it's that millions of people all over the world are struggling to feed themselves, and their families, every day. I want to lend my voice and my efforts to this international cause."

Kors has also put together a public service announcement to support the campaign, featuring some of his high profile industry friends, such as Karolina Kurkova and Bette Midler.

## **Violence against women**

### **Thailand launches One-Stop Crisis Centre to respond to violence against women**

The launch of Thailand's pioneering One-Stop Crisis Centre by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on 9 April reinforced the continuing efforts to respond to and prevent violence against women and girls after Thailand joined UN Women's newest global initiative, [COMMIT](#).



UN Women Regional Director Roberta Clarke congratulates Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra at the launch of the 1,300 mobile units

The One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) includes a hotline managed by trained staff, a network of 22,000 crisis centres around the country and 1,300 mobile units to access communities nationwide. The crisis centres will receive complaints, transfer cases and coordinate responses between Government agencies. Despite existing response services, multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms remain a challenge. The mobile units will raise public awareness, and also proactively lead interventions in communities where complaints have been received.

Forty one per cent of ever-partnered women in Bangkok and 47 per cent in rural Nakhonsawan reported having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner.

The OSCCs will be administered by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. They will be fully computerized and able to track specific cases or survivors' rehabilitation programmes. They will also feature a database that will eventually provide a snapshot of the true extent of violence reporting and the demand for social assistance, while collecting information on the OSCC's use, to ensure improvements in their responsiveness and effectiveness.

The national initiative will respond to violence by providing immediate social assistance to children, women, elderly and persons with disabilities who confront problems such as human trafficking, gender-based violence, child labour and teenage pregnancy. It will also play a preventive role by raising public awareness and focusing on rehabilitation.

"The Government has put gender equality at the heart of policies and planning," said Prime Minister Shinawatra, at the launch of the OSCC. "The OSCC is the symbol of our national commitment to make the social support system work for people of all sexes and ages," she said.

On International Women's Day this year, Thailand joined UN Women's newest global initiative "COMMIT" to end violence against women and girls, becoming one of the first countries in Asia-Pacific to set out concrete steps to tackle this pandemic. Thailand committed to reinforce national efforts to protect women's rights to live free of violence.

Roberta Clarke, Regional Director of UN Women Asia Pacific and Representative in Thailand, attended the launch together with Government ministers, 700 Government staff, civil society organizations, women's NGOs as well as the diplomatic corps.

## New G8 initiative a beacon of hope for victims of sexual violence – UN envoy



Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura

ON 11 April 2013, the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized countries launched in London an initiative to ramp up the fight against rape and other sexual violence in conflict. This represents “a beacon of light and hope” for the countless survivors around the world, said the Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura at the launch of the Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence. “We have an opportunity like at no time before in history to break the back of this age-old evil,” “May this be a decisive moment; our moment to put an end to this heinous crime which is a blight on our collective humanity,” she said.

The Declaration, which was endorsed by all G8 members – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Britain and the United States – commits the group to help victims of sexual violence in war, prevent further attacks and hold perpetrators responsible for their crimes, with \$35.5 million in funding targeted to those efforts.

In a statement, Ms. Bangura stressed that the Declaration “affirms our conviction that this crime constitutes a fundamental threat to international peace and security, and as such requires an operational and strategic security and justice response.”

She noted that conflict-related sexual violence does not only affect one person, but is an assault on the peace and security of entire communities. This crime makes post-conflict reconciliation more difficult, and hinders efforts to create enduring peace.

“Even as we concentrate on our obligations to the survivors of sexual violence – the critical health, psycho-social, legal and other services needed for them to rebuild their lives – we now also train a more concerted spotlight on all those who commit, command, or condone sexual violence in conflict,” Ms. Bangura said.

The special envoy for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Angelina Jolie, was also present at the G8 meeting. She welcomed the Declaration but said it was “long overdue” for sexual violence survivors.

“For too long, they have been the forgotten victims of war, responsible for none of the blame but bearing the worst of the pain,” Ms. Jolie said.

## Bolstering efforts to end impunity for femicide and gender-motivated killings



UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet participates in a panel discussion during the CSW57 side event “Gender-Motivated Killings of Women, including Femicide” on 8 March 2013 alongside Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Kyung-wha Kang (left), Special Rapporteur Rashida Manjoo (second from the left) and Fernando Fernández-Arias, Counsellor Minister, Spain (right)

A side event on femicide was held on 8 March during the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57) in New York. “We are here to discuss the most extreme manifestation of violence against women: gender-motivated killing of women, also called femicide. We are here to discuss the killing of women, simply because they are women,” said UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet, speaking at the event. According to a 2012 UN report by Rashida Manjoo, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the rate of killings of men has been stable over the last decade but there has been an increase in the rate of killings of women.

Citing that report, Ms. Bachelet said that between 2004 and 2009 the global scale of femicide was estimated at approximately 66,000 victims per year – almost one-fifth of all homicide victims. However, she cautioned that most countries do not classify these as “femicide” or “gender-motivated killings,” so it is currently impossible to know its true magnitude.

“And today, in many countries, we find that impunity is too often the norm, rather than the exception,” noted Ms. Bachelet. “It is time to strengthen justice systems; provide training to the police and judges to eliminate stereotyping and prejudices towards women; improve support services to survivors and families; and dedicate planning and budgeting to preventing violence against women and girls.”

Ms. Bachelet elaborated on the work UN Women is undertaking in this regard, in partnership with other UN agencies and through the Secretary-General’s Campaign UNiTE to end violence against women,

including the development of a regional “Protocol for the Investigation of Violent Gender-Based Killings of Women: Femicide for Latin America.” This pioneering work is being done with the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights, the Federation of Associations of Human Rights, and the Government of Spain.

This protocol will provide guidelines for the effective investigation of violent deaths of women, to ensure that the process takes into account the context, identifies the relationship with the perpetrator, and conforms to States’ international obligations.

The side event focused primarily on Latin America because half of the 25 countries with very high femicide rates are in that region, according to a 2012 report by the Small Arms Survey cited in a presentation by Kyung-wha Kang, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.[2]

In addition to the need for a regional protocol, she highlighted the need for specific legislation criminalizing gender-motivated killings so that femicide is not covered by aggregating homicide.

Ms. Kang said laws should “integrate prevention and protection measures for victims, witnesses and their families, allowing for victims’ participation in criminal processes and providing for gender-sensitive investigation mechanisms.” Ms. Kang also stressed the need to ensure norms and laws are understood by the officials responsible for investigating and prosecuting such crimes.

At a global level, Spain is also currently spearheading a resolution on femicide/feminicide. The resolution is to be presented at the next session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2013.

## **Women’s health**

### **Sustainable Energy for All: Launch of the Energy and Women’s Health High Impact Opportunity**

A panel discussion on *Energy and Women’s Health: The Way Forward*, was held on 19 April 2013, in Washington, D.C. at the Sustainable Energy for All - Launch of the Energy and Women’s Health High Impact Opportunity, which aims to save lives and reduce costs by improving access to power and lighting, providing clean, hot and sterile water to clinics, and introducing renewable and efficient energy sources. This initiative is supported by partner organizations, the World Health Organization, the World Bank and the United Nations Foundation, to advance women’s empowerment and gender equality and sustainable energy for all.

Addressing the panel discussion, Lakshmi Puri, Acting Head UN Women said the success of UN Women is reflected when more and more constituencies, stakeholders and people embrace gender equality and women’s empowerment as central to their own agenda. The Sustainable Energy for All is one such initiative, she said.

Engaging women is essential to eradicating poverty – which is really at the center of this initiative. But we are not just speaking about economic poverty. Women are essential to eliminating poverty in access to essential services and in access to energy, she said.

Women can and must play an active role in the planning, producing, supplying and managing of energy. There can be no energy for all that is sustainable unless we tap into the energy, engagement and expertise of women.

Engaging women, achieving gender equality and promoting women’s empowerment must be a critical part of this initiative in its design and execution. This is essential to achieving the objectives of this initiative.

UN Women is already addressing these aspects in multiple ways. Together with the Barefoot College of India, UN Women is supporting rural women to become solar engineers and results are electrifying! When they return home, they are capable of fabricating, installing and maintaining solar lighting systems and ensuring that 60 households in their villages become technically and financially self-sufficient.

The Rio+20 outcome recognized the critical linkages between sustainable energy, health and gender equality and women’s empowerment. This initiative addresses these linkages

## **Women’s Representation**

### **Women’s Empowerment Principles Drive Critical Private Sector Change to Advance Gender Equality and Inclusion**

#### *Inaugural WEPs Leadership Awards Salute Five CEOs as Champions*

Bolstered by nearly 550 chief executive supporters around the world, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, highlighted the urgency to achieve gender balance at all levels of business operations at the 5th Annual Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Event, Inclusion: Strategy for Change held on March 6<sup>th</sup> in New York.

The 5th Annual Women’s Empowerment Principles meeting inaugurates the WEPs Leadership Award to salute CEO commitment and innovation to realize gender equality. The Awards highlight concrete and innovative actions taken to advance the 7 Principles, and particularly showcases Principle One: Leadership Promotes Gender Equality. The WEPs Leadership Awards Committee is comprised of members of the WEPs Leadership Group, a multi-stakeholder volunteer body that provides strategic guidance to the WEPs partnership of the UN Women and the UN Global Compact. It represents business, academia, civil society, women’s organizations and international institutions.

“We need to support women’s leadership and equal opportunity because this is good for women, and it is good for democracy and a healthy and productive society,” said UN Women Executive Director [Michelle Bachelet](#). She also referred to the [57th Commission on the Status of Women](#) meeting held simultaneously at the United Nations, which is focused on ending violence against women. “The 21st century has no place for violence and discrimination against women. We need all segments of society to come together

to promote zero tolerance, including in the workplace. I applaud our private sector partners that promote these values and set an example for others.”

“If we are to truly achieve a sustainable and inclusive global market, business must implement a range of tailored strategies and actions to achieve measurable impacts for women and men, girls and boys,” said Georg Kell, UN Global Compact Executive Director. “The companies highlighted today demonstrate that implementing the WEPs and advancing gender equality is possible through corporate leadership and innovative programmes that create change not only within their own organizations, but throughout the value chain.”

The companies and individuals receiving the [2013 WEPs Leadership Awards](#) were:

- The **Bank of New Zealand** and **Andrew Thorburn**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, are recognized with the **WEPs Benchmarking for Change Award 2013** for its comprehensive approach towards tackling what it identified as its greatest challenge: to increase representation by women at the middle to senior leadership and management levels.
- **Taj**, based in France and a member of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Ltd., and **Gianmarco Monsellato**, Chief Executive Officer, are recognized with the **WEPs Business Case for Action Award 2013** for its drive to reach market leader status through a coordinated, eight-year-long strategy that required implementing innovative broad-based policies to drive gender diversity and transform the company’s culture.
- **Dean's Beans Organic Coffee**, USA, and **Dean Cycon**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, are recognized with the **WEPs Community Engagement Award 2013** for its record of community engagement by empowering coffee growers, primarily women, to improve their lives and their children’s futures.
- **MAS Holdings**, Sri Lanka, and **Mahesh Dayalal Amalean**, Chairman, are recognized with the **WEPs Cultural Change for Empowerment Award 2013** for MAS Women Go Beyond, a distinctive programme established in 2003 that challenges the accepted norms of garment industry employment for women in Sri Lanka and the South Asia region.
- **Itaipu Binacional**, Brazil, and **Jorge Miguel Samek**, Brazilian General Director, are recognized with the **7 Principles Award 2013** for developing and launching its Guidelines of Gender Equality, a policy designed in 2011 to strengthen and enhance gender equality and combat poverty among women in Brazil and Paraguay.

Based on the strength of the nominations, the WEPs also recognized three chief executives and companies with an Honour Roll designation: **Anant Gupta**, CEO, **HCL Technologies**, India; **Hisayuki Suekawa**, Representative Director, President and CEO, **Shiseido Company Limited**, Japan; and **Nur Ger**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, **Suteks Tekstil**, Turkey.

As a result the growing support for the Women’s Empowerment Principles, a number of national WEPs stakeholder groups have formed in countries as diverse as Japan, Serbia, Australia, South Africa, Switzerland, Vietnam, New Zealand, Iceland, the United Kingdom, Brazil and Turkey, among others. These multi-stakeholder groups develop projects to implement the WEPs for their context.

See- [www.weprinciples.unglobalcompact.org/site/WEPsLeadershipAwards](http://www.weprinciples.unglobalcompact.org/site/WEPsLeadershipAwards).

## **UN Women signs agreement to better track female leadership and participation at the local level**

To enhance women’s leadership and participation efforts, UN Women and the organization United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) forged a cooperation agreement on January 31, 2013 to collect local data on female political participation, to monitor local action plans on gender equality, to create a world observatory to track equality between men and women at the local level, and to adapt and upscale UN Women’s Safe Cities Programme to confront violence against women.



From left to right, Begoña Lasagabaster, Chief of Leadership & Governance for UN Women, and Anne Hidalgo, Deputy Mayor of Paris and Chair of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality of UCLG sign a Memorandum of Understanding on 31 January in Paris.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed at the opening gala of the “Global Conference of Local Elected Women,” being held in Paris from 31 January-1 February. Attended by more than 500 locally elected leaders, the event was organized by the UN Women, Paris City Hall and the UCLG. The UCLG is a global network that represents and promotes the interests of local and regional Governments in over 1000 cities across 140 UN Member States.

“The MOU aims to enhance the effectiveness of both organizations’ development efforts, which share a common commitment to improving women’s access to local level decision-making and service provision,” explained Begoña Lasagabaster, Chief of Leadership & Governance for UN Women. “For UN Women, this agreement will help deepen and improve our work at the local level, ultimately improving women’s quality of life

## Women elected to one-fifth of seats during Kenyan elections



A Kenyan activist at a 2011 demonstration in support of the new constitution, which enshrines women's rights.

After one of the most high-profile campaigns in Kenyan history, 87 of the 416 seats in the newly-established National Assembly and Senate chambers will be held by women. Previously, just 22 women sat in the old 222-seat Parliament, which did not have a Senate. The elections were held in January 2013.

This is an historic high for Kenyan women with one-fifth of seats to be held by women- doubling their representation. Electoral success for women didn't happen overnight: Constitutional support, increased support from party leadership, and training and support provided to women candidates made an impact.

The process began as Kenya's new Constitution was drafted. UN Women supported a five-year civil society campaign for the enshrinement of key rights, including a ban on all forms of violence against women and girls, the right to own land, and equality in marriage. The campaign also included the right to political representation, in the form of a rule stating that no more than two-thirds of elected seats could be held by persons of either gender. In 2010, Kenyans overwhelmingly endorsed the new Constitution, heralding a step forward for women, and a new era for the country.

In 2012, UN Women, with UNDP, established a 'team of eminent persons'- prominent Kenyan advocates for women's rights, who met with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and political parties to ensure that nomination lists included the required number of women. After nominations closed, UN Women worked with partners to train and support female candidates from all parties, in all 47 counties.

Then the Campaign for Women in Leadership kicked off- designed to encourage all voters to consider electing women to positions of leadership. It featured advertising in major newspapers as well as TV and radio stations, in local languages.



Kenya's Women's Situation Room is launched by UN Women Country Director Zebib Kavuma (on far left), Assistant Police Commissioner Beatrice Nduta (centre), and members of the Team of Eminent Persons.

During the election period, UN Women, along with local civil society organizations and the Angie Brooks Centre, established the Women's Situation Room. Employing the expertise and experience of women to

prevent conflict during elections, the concept saw recent success in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Senegal. UN Women Country Director Zebib Kavuma says that it “provided women and youth organizations with a platform to respond rapidly to election-related incidents through a coordinated system.”

## In your interest

### Five Questions for Nancy Schwartzman about a Smartphone App to alert your friends when you feel at risk for violence/abuse



Millions of women and girls worldwide face sexual harassment on a daily basis – on the streets, in public transportations, at work or in schools. An innovative preventive tool, Circle of 6 ([www.circleof6app.com](http://www.circleof6app.com)) is a free smartphone application against sexual assault that won the White House “Apps Against Abuse” challenge in 2011. It is being used in 26 countries, mobilizing - young people who have access to technology. The app was recently launched in New Delhi, India, in English and Hindi, in partnership with local organizations. Nancy Schwartzman, film-maker, activist, and one of the creators of Circle of 6, says that Circle of 6 connects users threatened with possible sexual assault and abuse to a network of six trusted friends using GPS technology, texting, anti-violence resources, and a commitment to support each other.

Designed for college students, it’s fast, easy-to-use and private. It’s the mobile way to look out for your friends, on campus, on public transportation or when you’re out for the night. There is even a built-in speed dial to reach a rape or sexual assault hotline.

Need help getting home? With two touches, you can easily pinpoint your location and ask your circle to come and get you. Need an interruption? You can ask your circle to call. Icons represent actions, so that no one can tell what you’re up to.

The number "six" is a number chosen because it is small enough to remain intimate, but big enough so that hopefully at least one person of the six would be available in an emergency. The user can customize, and only add two or three people to their circle, but people can choose up to six.

The demo video can be downloaded and watched here: [www.circleof6app.com](http://www.circleof6app.com)



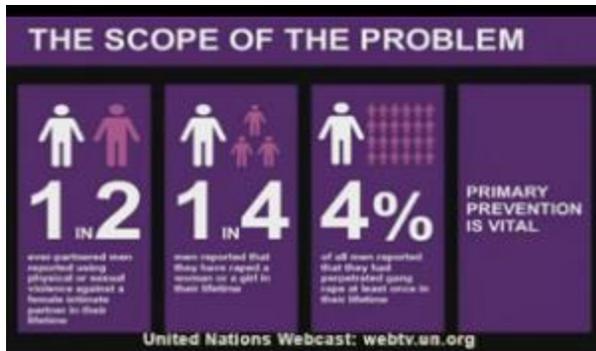
This tool was developed in response to the White House's - #1 is 2 many campaign to address rape and sexual assault for teens and young adults to challenge advocates and engineers to develop an App aimed at college students to prevent sexual assault and dating violence. In addition, as 90 per cent of young people value texting as a way to strengthen a friendship and over 70 per cent of college students have smart phones in the USA, it was expected that the application would become part of a student's life – the mobile equivalent of the buddy system.

The first version of Circle of 6 is already being used in 26 countries by 55,000 people all over the world. On 2 April, Circle 6 launched its first localization in New Delhi, India and had a translated version to Hindi with hotlines and resources localized for New Delhi. Circle 6 is exploring other cities around the globe.

For details see: <http://saynotoviolence.org/around-world/news/five-questions-nancy-schwartzman-about-smartphone-app-alert-your-friends-when-you->

## Recommended Reading and Watching

## Study reveals shocking new evidence of men's use of violence against women and girls in Asia Pacific



One in two men said they had used physical or sexual violence against an intimate partner, one in four reported having raped a woman and one in 25 admitted to having participated in gang rape.

These are among the shocking preliminary results of a study by a joint UN programme that surveyed more than 10,000 men on their use and experiences of violence against women and girls in nine selected sites across six Asia Pacific countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka).

The new research was presented at a side event for the 57th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57) on 8 March, titled *“Why do men use violence and how do we stop it? New evidence on men’s use of violence against women and girls and its uses for enhanced prevention,”* which was co-sponsored by the Australian Government, Government of Sweden and World Health Organization (WHO).

The preliminary findings stem from a study to be released in July 2013, which will represent the largest cross-country comparable data set on men’s use of violence in Asia-Pacific to date. The men surveyed were asked about their childhoods, relationships, health, sexual practices, gender attitudes and use of violence against women and girls.

A preview of the research was presented by James Lang, the Regional Programme Coordinator of [Partners for Prevention](#), which is administered jointly by four United Nations agencies – UN Women, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Volunteers – all of which [presented statements](#) at the side event. In addition to working with national partners on engaging men and boys in programmes that address gender-based violence, the programme seeks to understand the underlying drivers of violence and point to more effective ways to prevent violence from happening in the future.

The study’s preliminary findings also reinforce the need to address gender inequality as an underlying cause of violence. Overall, rates of violence tend to be higher in places where gender inequality is high, where there has been recent or ongoing violent conflict and where families are vulnerable to hunger and other forms of poverty.

Following the presentation of the preliminary research findings, a panel of experts discussed the implications and how this knowledge can be applied to enhance prevention programmes and policies.

In his statement for the side event, UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra said that as the report states, although 99 countries today are collecting data on women's experience of physical and sexual violence, less data is collected from men and boys.

"Such data is imperative for informing interventions related to social norms and behaviour change, and addressing the underlying causes of gender-based violence," said Mr. Hendra.

[Webcast](#) of the CSW side event: Why do men use violence and how do we stop it: new evidence on men's use of violence against women and girls and its uses for enhanced prevention

### **Issues Paper: Transforming social institutions to prevent violence against women and girls and improve development outcomes**

This Issues Paper by the OECD Development Centre draws on data from the Social Institutions and Gender Index. The Issues Paper finds that laws alone will not reduce violence against women. The prevalence of domestic violence is in countries with a high acceptance of violence is double that of countries where there is a low acceptance, even when taking into the existence and quality of domestic violence laws and country income level. Further, violence against women is linked to development outcomes. Read more findings in the Issues Paper.

Issues Paper "[Transforming social institutions to prevent violence against women and girls and improve development outcomes](#)" (OECD Development Centre, March 2013)

### **E Book: Gender Perspectives in case Studies Across Continents**

Several studies have shown that promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in sociocultural, economic and political processes can help address the root causes of poverty, violence and insecurity and consequently provide invaluable contributions to the reflections on and actions in support of sustainable development and peace at the national, regional and global levels. The present E-book, the result of collaboration among UNESCO Chairs and Networks on gender equality, gives hope for faster-paced progress in the coming years and decades by providing several case studies in different parts of the world, which demonstrate real achievements and challenges at the grassroots levels.

[http://issuu.com/catunescomujer.org/docs/gender-perspectives-case-studies\\_e-book\\_buenosaire](http://issuu.com/catunescomujer.org/docs/gender-perspectives-case-studies_e-book_buenosaire)

### **Launch of ILO New Briefing Kit- Domestic Workers Count Too: Implementing Protections for Domestic Workers**

A new briefing kit "Domestic Workers Count Too: Implementing Protections for Domestic Workers" was launched on 11 March at a side event on ensuring protection and upholding rights for domestic workers at the 57th Commission on the Status of Women. It was co-sponsored by UN Women, the International

Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Government of the Philippines. Panelists discussed how Governments can enact or strengthen national standards to protect domestic workers.



Holding the briefing kit “Domestic Workers Count Too,” on 11 March panelists launched the new publication at the side event on ensuring protection and upholding rights for domestic workers (from left to right): Saraswathi Menon, UN Women; Kevin Cassidy, ILO; Luzviminda Padilla, Government of the Philippines; Joycelyn Gill-Campbell, Domestic Workers United; Silvana Cappuccio, ITUC; and moderator Emmeline Verzosa, Philippine Commission on Women.

The briefing kit outlines promising national practice worldwide on promoting and protecting the rights of domestic workers. Informed by the struggles, resilience, voices and creative practices of local and overseas domestic workers and their support groups, it invites Governments and individuals around the world to implement protections for domestic workers.

See: [Briefing kit: Domestic Workers Count Too: Implementing Protections for Domestic Workers](#)

## **FAO Publication: Governing land for women and men- A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure**

This technical guide aims to assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, by providing guidance that supports the Guidelines' principle of gender equality in tenure governance. The guide focuses on equity and on how land tenure can be governed in ways that address the different needs and priorities of women and men. It moves away from long-standing debates about gender equality in access to land, towards the mainstreaming of gender issues to achieve more gender-equitable participation in the processes and institutions that underlie all decision-making about land.

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3114e/i3114e.pdf>

## **Video: Women at the helm**

Shipping has historically been a male-dominated industry and that tradition runs long and deep. However, through its global programme on the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector, IMO is making a concerted effort to help the industry move on from that tradition and to help women achieve a representation within it that is more in keeping with twenty-first century expectations. *Women at the Helm*

film shows how the work of IMO, and others, is beginning to promote change for the better for women in shipping, and highlights first-hand experiences from some of those who have already succeeded.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-9LGMxHMGY>

## **Recommended Websites**

### **The Knowledge Gateway to help entrepreneurs, workers and experts network and share information**

UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra introduced the new Knowledge Gateway for Women's Economic Empowerment, currently being developed by UN Women in partnership with the Government of Canada during a side event on 6 March at the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57).

The overall objective of the Knowledge Gateway is to facilitate improvements in women's lives and their communities and help them build their businesses, farms and enterprises, successfully market their products and services, help improve their working conditions and get better paid. The portal will facilitate the sharing of knowledge about what works and what does not while enabling networking.

"The Gateway's Knowledge Library will give members access to cutting edge research and up-to-date data and knowledge on policy and programming, lessons learned, and good practice," said Mr. Hendra in his introductory remarks. "The Gateway will help to build bridges and connections across countries and stakeholders – including governments, civil society, women entrepreneurs, and women workers – breaking down silos by providing Knowledge Circles – multi-stakeholder communities of practice. ... Members will be able to search the Knowledge Network to connect with others with specific interests or areas of expertise."

The collaborative partnership on the Gateway emerged as a result of the joint CIDA-UN Women global Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment in 2011.

Consultations will continue over the next couple of months to ensure that it meets the needs of as many women, governments, civil society organizations, and private sector partners as possible.

## **INFO**

Employment opportunities

You can find a monthly list of vacancy announcements

at <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>

You can read Network online at

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

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