

100
COMMITMENTS

for gender equality
and empowerment of women



MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

World leaders agreed on the ambitious Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 to help create a better and more secure world by the year 2015.

The eight Millennium Development Goals form a blueprint agreed to by all countries and the leading development institutions in order to focus on efforts to overcome crucial barriers to development.

The MDGs are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

The formulation of the MDGs has intensified development considerably and substantial progress has been made globally. Many countries, however, remain off track to achieve the goals by 2015.

Collective and concerted action is imperative if the MDGs are to be met globally and by all regions and countries.

Denmark's Global Call to Action on MDG3 is based on the conception that gender equality and empowerment of women is not only a goal in itself but a means by which to achieve all the other MDGs.



**MDG3 CHAMPION TORCHES HAVE BEEN LIT
ALL AROUND THE WORLD**

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100 Commitments for gender equality and empowerment of women
September 2008

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GENDER EQUALITY: IT TAKES ACTION

PHOTO: CISCO



A Norwegian female Cisco engineer brought a “virtual torch” to the North Pole to bring attention to the importance of empowering women. (See commitment 3).



Political commitment to gender equality and empowerment takes more than words. It takes concrete actions and priority of resources. That was the reason why we initiated this Global Call to Action on MDG3.

This book clearly illustrates the high level of resolve from many actors around the world. They are willing and committed to deliver concrete actions that will help accelerate progress on gender equality and empowerment. And this is what we should commit to continue to generate.

A World Bank report states that a doubling of resources is needed in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goal on gender equality – MDG3 – and thus promoting empowerment of fifty per cent of the world’s population. In most countries, the capabilities of girls and women far exceed their opportunities. Globally, these gaps imply an enormous loss of development potential – to the individual girl and woman, her family and community, to the private sector and to countries.

It takes leadership and action to bridge these gaps. All actors must engage to bring about change. It demands long term dedicated efforts from the highest level in governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society.

Governments, international organizations, actors from the private sector and civil society as well as citizens have all chosen to be part of the Global Call to Action on MDG3. Together, we constitute a Global Coalition of partners who are committed to make women’s empowerment a key issue in the run up to 2015. We stand ready to be held accountable for commitments on concrete actions. We will continue our Call to Action to ensure that the wave of joint resolve spreads even further. We will work for:

- a substantial increase in resources to gender equality and women’s empowerment,
- increasing accountability on MDG3 efforts both at international and national levels, and
- the active involvement of the private sector.

I encourage all actors to join this Global Coalition – to increase investment in the women of today and the women of tomorrow.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen
Prime Minister of Denmark



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PHOTO: JØRGEN SCHYTTTE



DANISH GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION ON MDG3

PHOTOS: JOACHIM RODE



Participants in the Copenhagen MDG3 Conference on economic empowerment of women, 17 April 2008.



Denmark initiated the Global Call to Action on MDG3 to establish a global wave of resolve to “do something extra” for gender equality. The response has been tremendous.

The logic behind the Global Call to Action on MDG3 is simple: women are an untapped potential for development. To truly combat poverty, women should be turned into equal partners in a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

Millennium Development Goal 3 is a goal in itself. But it is also a means to achieve all the other Millennium Development Goals. Women are in many ways development multipliers. To invest in the empowerment of women is an investment in not only one but all of the Millennium Development Goals.

MDG3 Champion Torches have travelled the world, generating 100 new commitments from governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society and citizens. The torches have also increased awareness of the need to act now to reach the MDG3 targets by 2015.

I sincerely welcome the many commitments. All the MDG3 torch bearers have one thing in common: they take responsibility to “do something extra” to improve today’s world for women, men and children.

The Danish government is concretely putting resources behind the Global Call to Action on MDG3 by committing to double Danish targeted aid allocations to gender equality and women’s empowerment in 2010. In addition Denmark will provide substantial support to women’s empowerment in Liberia, primarily to strengthen their economic opportunities.

Increased donor allocations are crucial, but money alone will not be enough.

We need a change of attitudes towards women in all countries, in private companies, international organizations and among individuals. Despite progress and new commitments, the picture remains far from perfect. We need MDG3 champions to create change and to stay committed to empower women. The 100 new torch commitments will provide a strong platform.

Ulla Tørnæs
Minister for Development Cooperation



MUHAMMAD YUNUS
Founder of Grameen Bank and
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

BANGLADESH

1 Giving women access to micro credits

The Grameen Bank has been working with women since its inception. At the start 50 per cent of our borrowers were women, and we found that when we lent to women, not only were they successful in their economic activities, it had a far greater impact on the welfare of their families, especially their children. So we started focusing on women. Now 97 per cent of our borrowers are women.

As the first torch bearer of Bangladesh for this MDG3 Call to Action, I commit myself to support the process of empowering women in Bangladesh. Grameen Bank will continue to provide opportunities for women to benefit from micro credit programmes in order for them to ensure that their families never go hungry, their children go to school and their neighbourhoods are better living places. I also commit to help replicating the Grameen model in other countries so that more poor women around the world can get an opportunity to live a dignified life.



Founder of Grameen Bank and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Muhammad Yunus (left) receives a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh, Einar H. Jensen (middle) and passes on the torch to the MDG3 Champion Network member, Geetara Safiya Choudhury (right).



BOLETTE CHRISTENSEN
Deputy Director-General
Confederation of Danish Industries (DI)

DENMARK

2 Stronger focus on female leaders in developing countries

DI is the voice of business in Denmark with 12,000 member companies and offices in Copenhagen, Brussels, Shanghai, Moscow, New York, Mumbai and Sao Paolo. DI is the companies' organization and is financed and managed by its members, which are private enterprises within manufacturing and services covering virtually all subsectors.

Bolette Christensen received a torch on behalf of DI and stated in her commitment: "The Confederation of Danish Industries will work towards a stronger involvement of women as leaders, employees and business partners in the activities of Danish companies in developing countries. DI will carry out this commitment through activities to inform companies of the positive effects of engaging with women as well as implementation support to companies."



Bolette Christensen (to the right) was handed a torch by Denmark's Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



NIELS MÜNSTER-HANSEN
Acting General Manager
Cisco Denmark

CISCO

3 Promoting gender empowerment through IT education

Cisco's Networking Academy program is helping thousands of women all over the world to an IT education. With this Call to Action on gender equality we commit to expand our Networking Academy program, so that women have even better access to IT education.

In addition to this, a Norwegian female Cisco engineer, who has the highest networking certification in Cisco, is bringing a "virtual" MDG3 Champion Torch all the way to the North Pole as a symbolic activity to bring attention to the importance of empowering women through education. After returning from the North Pole, she will host meetings for coming female IT students to talk about the importance of education.



Niels Münster-Hansen received the MDG3 Champion Torch in Copenhagen.



TRAN THI MAI HUONG
First Vice-Chairperson
National Committee for the advancement of Women

VIETNAM

4 Creating more jobs for women in Vietnam

I pledge to have the National Committee for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam coordinate with relevant ministries to identify difficulties and bottleneck, and to agree on solutions to create more jobs for women, increase their income as well as to improve their working and living conditions. I will put priority on recommending to the government and relevant ministries to issue policies to support women in vocational training, in accessing information, science and technology and in improving their housing conditions. I will particularly pay attention to advocate policies to support female workers in industrial zones and also actively advocate for higher budgets and resources for relevant agencies in order to achieve gender targets in the National Socio Economic Development Strategy and in the Strategy for the Advancement of Women until 2010. This is the basic foundation for Vietnam to fulfil its MDG commitments.

One of the key factors is to build the capacity and to enhance the economic position of women. With such a perception, I have accepted the invitation to join the Global Call to Action on Empowerment of Women. I consider this a special responsibility and commit to do my utmost to contribute to this Global Call.



PHAM THI LOAN
Chairperson and CEO of Viet A group,
Deputy of the National Assembly and
member of the Hanoi Business Women Network

VIETNAM

5 Changing the perception that 'men are better than women'

In cooperation with the Vietnamese Women's Union, the National Committee for the Advancement of Women, and the Businesswomen Network, I commit to influence professional associations and enterprises so that they will

- i) pay more attention to recruitment and training of female workers;
- ii) create more jobs and job opportunities for women;
- iii) ensure equal pay between women and men.

Being a Deputy of the National Assembly, I will contribute to discussions and debates on macro policies to ensure equality for women. I will try to make sure that these policies are transparent and accompanied with budgets and resources to enable women to participate fully in political, economic and social work of the society. I will also pay attention to advocating for policies to support women's reproductive health, their pregnancy and their maternity period.

With this pledge I commit to do my utmost to advocate and to influence so as to change the perception that "men are better than women".



*Tran Thi Mai Huong (left) and Pham Thi Loan (right)
accept the MDG3 Torch for the empowerment of women in Vietnam.*



URVASHI BUTALIA
Director and Co-founder of Kali for Women

INDIA

RUTH MANORAMA
National Federation of Dalit Women

6 Empowerment of women in India

Ruth Manorama is widely known for her contribution to mainstream Dalit issues, especially the precarious situation of Dalit women in India. Ruth has also contributed enormously to breaking the upper-class, upper-caste image of the women's movement in India. In 2005, she was one of 1000 nominees for the '1000 women for the Nobel Prize' campaign. With the MDG3 Champion Torch, she commits to increase her efforts for the empowerment of women and to increase attention in India to the Millennium Development Goals.

Urvashi Butalia is a leading Indian feminist and historian. She is the Director and Co-founder of Kali for Women, India's first feminist publishing house and the subsequent Zubaan. Urvashi Butalia commits to increase her efforts to work for stronger empowerment of women in India.



Ruth Manorama (in the middle) and Urvashi Butalia (to the right) have received the torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to India, Ole Lønsmann Poulsen.



YURIKO KOIKE
Member of House of Representatives
Former Minister for Defense and
Minister for the Environment

JAPAN

7 Focus on climate change

Environment and climate were highlighted when Yuriko Koike received the MDG3 Torch and pledged:

“I will use my influence to contribute to a mobilization and strengthening of women's empowerment in Japan, both generally in society and specifically when it comes to improving the environment and focusing on climate change.”



Yuriko Koike will contribute to mobilizing and strengthening women's empowerment in Japan.



ROBERT B. ZOELICK
President
World Bank Group

WORLD BANK

8

Six concrete steps

The World Bank Group is committed to increase its efforts towards gender equality and empowerment of women through the following measures:

1. To measurably improve the integration of gender equality into World Bank agriculture and rural developments projects by the end of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan in December 2010.
2. To channel, through the new IFC program, at least USD 100 million in credit lines at commercial banks for women entrepreneurs, by the end of 2012.
3. To have World Bank Country Directors report to me, by June 1, on what we are doing and what more we should be doing to empower girls and women economically in countries that we support.
4. To launch a work program on “young women count for economic development”, starting with an event prior to the 2008 Annual World Bank Meetings.
5. To create a Private Sector Leaders’ Forum and convene their first meeting on the margins of the 2008 Annual Meetings. Thereby expanding World Bank efforts on opportunities for girls and women in developing countries – as both the right and smart thing to do.
6. To increase IDA Investments for Gender Equality, with the objective of increasing IDA investments on gender equality in operation.



President Robert Zoellick commits to increase investments for gender equality at a press conference with Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnas.





HEIDEMARIE WIECZOREK-ZEUL
Federal Minister for
Economic Cooperation and Development

GERMANY

9 Specific Aid Allocations for gender to reach EUR 60 million in 2009

In order to deliver on its own commitments, the BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) will “walk the talk”:

BMZ will increase targeted bilateral development measures in support of gender equality and women’s empowerment across all sectors and raise bilateral aid allocations to specific programs and projects for gender equality and women’s empowerment in 2009 to EUR 60 million.

The purpose is to increase visibility and accountability of our commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women.



Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul received the torch from Denmark’s Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Törnæs, together with World Bank President, Robert Zoellick.



SUSMITA MASKEY
Team Coordinator

NEPAL

First Inclusive Women Sagarmatha Expedition 2008 (FIWSE)

10 From the rooftop of the world to enterprising adventure sports

FIWSE is an exemplary story of women’s empowerment. A story of ten young women getting together and setting their sights on something big: scaling Sagarmatha (Mount Everest). Through sheer determination and dedication the team turned dream into reality. In the process becoming experienced, confident and bold go-getters, – and now looking forward to impart similar confidence to other women.

Nepal is a country rich in adventure sports which offer lucrative income generating opportunities. FIWSE aspires to encourage women’s professional participation. The FIWSE action plan is:

- After reaching the top of Mount Everest, the FIWSE team will train to become trainers – and develop an adventure sports training module.
- Sindhupalchowk district is rampant with girl trafficking. FIWSE aspires to change the district's identity from 'district of girl-trafficking' to 'district of courageous women'. A group of underprivileged women from the district will be provided adventure sports training along with educational and personal development courses. The model will then be replicated in the Far-Western Development Region and the Terai area.



Susmita Maskey and Usha Bistha flag the Call to Action on top of Sagarmatha (Mount Everest).



Ambassador of Denmark to Nepal, Finn Thilsted having handed over the MDG3 Torch and banner to the ten Champions: Pema Diki Sherpa, Nima Doma Sherpa, Shailee Basnet, Nawang Phuti Sherpa, Pujan Acharya, Asha Singh, Chunu Shrestha, Maya Gurung, Usha Bistha and Susmita Maskey. Joined by expedition facilitators: Da Gombu Sherpa, Pema Dorje Sherpa and Danish Embassy staff: Bandana Sharma, Mira Ghale Gurung and Shiva Bhusal.



JACKIE OGEGA
Women, Faith and Development Alliance

WFDA

11 Commitments that amount to over USD 1 billion

Jackie Ogega accepted the torch on behalf of the non-governmental organization Women, Faith and Development Alliance. WFDA was formed in 2006 to create partnerships for investing in women and girls in order to transform communities and reduce global poverty and has grown into one of the most far-reaching anti-poverty coalitions.

The Alliance has committed itself to create a strong and diverse coalition for action.

As a beginning the Alliance committed to convene “Breakthrough: Women, Faith and Development Summit to End Global Poverty” to challenge and inspire organizations to expand what they are doing for women and girls around the world.

The Alliance has gathered a significant amount of commitments from our partner organizations that amount to over USD 1 billion.

Jackie Ogega expresses the commitment of the Alliance in the following words: “We devote ourselves to ensure that all these commitments are carried out. We will monitor progress and issue reports”.

PHOTO: DONOVAN MARKS



Jackie Ogega pledges that the Alliance will create a strong anti-poverty coalition.



KEMAL DERVIS
Administrator
United Nations Development Programme

UNDP

12 Further women’s political and economic empowerment

To promote women’s political empowerment, UNDP will launch a global initiative that will guide the organization’s work in coming years. UNDP will work with partner governments to reform electoral systems so that they reduce campaign costs and bolster inclusiveness, and work with electoral commissions to reform campaign finance regulations so that women have equitable access to public funding schemes. These activities would be accompanied by efforts to develop the fundraising skills of women candidates and women’s political networks so they can be instrumental in mobilizing new resources.

UNDP will work to increase women’s participation in economic decision-making spheres: strengthening the capacities of networks of women entrepreneurs, knowledge and information sharing among fledgling and more experienced women entrepreneurs. UNDP will support country-level and global efforts to increase women’s access to finance and credit for entrepreneurship, including through mobilizing support from development banks for flexible lending terms for member-based women entrepreneurs. Finally, UNDP will work with partners to build the capacity of women entrepreneurs to effectively participate in regional and global markets in order to reduce their reliance on subsistence trading and thereby improve their business’ profitability.



Kemal Dervis receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



ANNA BOSSMAN
Acting Commissioner
Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice

GHANA

13 Awareness and encouragement to achieve economic empowerment

Anna Bossmann, Acting Commissioner for the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice in Ghana, pledges to speak to, motivate and encourage young girls and women in all social spheres in any way that she can. By organizing fora and activities, to let them be seen and heard and to make them aware of their rights and what they can do to achieve economic empowerment.



Anna Bossman stresses the importance of young girls and women knowing their rights.





ASHA-ROSE MIGIRO
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

UN

14 Making the UN Secretariat a gender balanced institution

It is with great honour that I receive this torch. The MDG3 Call to Action is a wake up call – a reminder of the work that remains to be done in the implementation of the MDGs. It is also a reaffirmation of the centrality of gender equality and women’s empowerment in the attainment of the MDGs.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has assumed the responsibility to ensuring that this objective is fulfilled. He cannot do it alone. He needs everybody’s support.

From my part, I hereby pledge to support the Secretary-General in making the UN Secretariat a gender balanced institution and to work towards establishing working conditions that ensure an appropriate work-life balance for both women and men.

I also pledge a renewed dedication and energy in supporting the work of Member States deliberations on how to strengthen the work of the United Nations in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women.



UN Deputy Secretary-General, Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro pledges renewed dedication to gender equality.



H.E. LUÍSA DIAS DIAGO
Prime Minister of the Republic of Mozambique

MOZAMBIQUE

15 The need to build synergies between government, private sector and civil society

Prime Minister Luísa Dias Diago gave her commitment to do something extra for gender equality and empowerment of women, when she addressed the Copenhagen MDG3 Conference in April 2008. The Prime Minister underlined that the process of women’s economic empowerment cannot be successful if we do not take into consideration the need for gender equity in the access, management and control of resources, both productive and financial.

“Our efforts are also aimed at fighting the structural causes that lead to female poverty, the inequality and subordination, such as discriminatory laws, cultural norms and patriarchal models that exist in our societies. The new family law and the recently approved law of combating and preventing trafficking of human beings are part of our struggle, which I pledge to continue.”

Luísa Dias Diago commits to establishing an empowerment center for women. Also, she will organize and host an international conference on Women and Employment in Maputo in August 2008.



The Prime Minister received a torch at the Copenhagen MDG3 Conference on Economic Empowerment of Women and immediately asked Calmira da Silva, National Director Ministry of Youth and Sports, to share her commitment.



H.E. ELLEN JOHNSON-SIRLEAF
President of Liberia

LIBERIA

16

Poverty reduction and gender equality are inextricably linked

No subject is more compelling and more exciting for leadership and change today than the subject of empowering women in Africa and around the world.

For development to occur – and be sustainable – it requires re-orientation of development paradigms and programs to focus on long term sources of economic change and growth. This will need to explicitly take into account the role of science and technology, as well as the role of women in socio-economic transformation and renewal. The role of women is particularly significant. Population and development are more effective when they center on improving the education, rights, roles, and status of women in society.

Poverty reduction and gender equality are inextricably linked and their achievement will remain illusive if they are not integrated with the actualization of the Millennium Development Goals. However, women leadership and economic empowerment is not exercised only when women become political leaders and formulate socio-economic policies that transform society. Rather, women empowerment, for the most part, is demonstrated in their roles in the production and distribution of goods and services in their national economies.

Minister Ulla Tørnæs presented a Global Call to Action Torch to generate stronger political and financial support for the third Millennium Development Goal – gender equality and women's empowerment. Recipients are called upon to do something extra in support of gender equality and women's empowerment. I give my fullest cooperation to the Danish Government and will use development assistance to the benefit of Liberian girls and women.

Liberia will pick up this torch in March 2009 when I along with President Halonen of Finland host an International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, and International Peace and Security in Monrovia.



PHOTO: JOACHIM RODE

H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf at the Copenhagen MDG3 Conference with Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Minister for Development Cooperation Ulla Tørnæs.



ADISA LANSAH YAKUBU
National Project Coordinator
Africa 2000 Network

GHANA

17 Economic empowerment of women through the provision of income generating activities

Africa 2000 Network has been working with women's groups in deprived communities nationwide and particularly in the Northern Region of Ghana to improve their standard of living through the provision of income generating activities, and education on sexual and reproductive health. In Sagnarigu, one of the six women centres supported through the Africa 2000 Network, women are being trained in the production and processing of shea butter into cream and soap, thus creating a base for economic empowerment.

“By accepting the MDG3 Champion Torch, I commit to facilitate the making of shea nut and shea butter production with needed resources, since this is traditionally the main income source for over 2,000,000 women in the three Northern Regions, one of Ghana's large foreign exchange earning industries.”



Adisa Lansah Yakubu, with many helping hands, accepts the torch at the women's centre in Sagnarigu from Vibeke Gram Mortensen from the Embassy of Denmark in Accra.



EMILY SIKAZWE
Executive Director of Women for Change

ZAMBIA

18 Three prominent representatives from the Zambian civil society have received torches and committed to do something extra for empowerment of women.

KATEMBU NKANZA KAUMBA
Executive Director of Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
MARIAN MUNYINDA
Board Chairperson of NGO Coordinating Committee (NGOCC)

Emily Sikazwe, on behalf of Women for Change, commits to improving the social and economic status of women, in particular rural and vulnerable women. This shall be achieved through lobbying development agencies to increase their awareness on the key economic issues affecting rural women and linking rural and vulnerable women to socio economic empowering processes. This includes linking women to the Citizens Economic Empowerment Fund, micro financing institutions and programmes such as Cash Transfer Schemes.

Katembu Nkanza Kaumba, on behalf of YWCA, commits to doing something extra through increased advocacy, awareness raising and economic empowerment. Activities include lobbying government to ensure that women have equal access to law, education, land, property and housing and to promote public recognition of the importance of women's participation in all spheres of public decision making. Activities under economic empowerment include scaling up on the number of women provided with entrepreneurship skills training and micro loans.

Marian Munyinda commits the NGO Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) to walking an extra mile through intensifying provision of technical support to member organizations on gender budgeting. NGOCC will impart skills that will enable organizations to effectively engage in the processes and provide factual inputs into the national budgeting processes. The main activities shall include development of training manuals, training of trainers and conducting training of member organizations.



The Zambian civil society torch bearers are from the left: Emily Sikazwe, Katembu Nkanza Kaumba and Marian Munyinda.



PATRICIA MULASIKWANDA
Minister of Gender and Women in Development

ZAMBIA

19 **Launching a Joint Gender Support Programme**

By receiving a MDG3 Torch the Minister of Gender and Women in Development in Zambia committed to launching a new programme that provides a holistic framework for the promotion of gender equity, equality and the empowerment of women in Zambia. The programme will contribute towards strengthening national capacity to formulate, design and implement gender responsive policies and programmes. It will also enhance advocacy and communication of gender issues and strengthen strategies for addressing economic and social vulnerabilities at household and community levels through enterprise development, access to credit and addressing issues of gender based violence.

The Programme's main implementation strategies shall be the provision of joint and systematic training, sensitisation, lobbying and advocacy for pro poor programmes, improved availability of gender disaggregated statistics, legal reforms and targeting specific business interventions at community level for both women and men.

Since the approval of the National Gender Policy in 2000, the government has not made a concerted effort to implement the policy's implementation plan. The development of the Joint Gender Support Programme is viewed to be an extra effort on the government's side which not only concentrates on coordinating gender efforts but also to implement some result based activities. The formulation of a country development framework, the Fifth National Development Plan, has provided an opportunity for strengthening gender mainstreaming in the development process. It further provides an opportunity for developing gender equality and empowerment indicators that will illustrate Zambia's progression towards the attainment of the MDG3.

The MDG3 Torch ceremony in Zambia with – from the left: Minister of Gender and Women in Development, Patricia Mulasikwanda and Sylvia Masebo, Minister of Local Government and Housing.



SYLVIA T. MASEBO
Minister of Local Government and Housing

ZAMBIA

20 **Engendering the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme**

The National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (NRWSP) launched in November 2007 and now under implementation has set out three priorities: Improving access to sanitation to 60 per cent of the population; improving access to safe water to 75 per cent and improving the capacity of the local authorities and communities to operate and manage the facilities on a sustainable basis.

In launching the programme, Sylvia Masebo, underlining the distinct disparities in roles between different groups, emphasized that the programme mainstreams gender in the implementation modalities. The Gender Strategy developed by the ministry is used as a reference document for ensuring gender planning, decision making and implementation in the Programme, and the Minister has pledged to ensure that the targets are met and gender is fully integrated in the programme and its implementation.





ABDOULIE JANNEH
Executive Secretary
Economic Commission for Africa

ECA

21 **Monitoring of trends in gender equality in Africa**

The commitments made by Abdoulie Janneh are to:

- Monitor and evaluate trends in gender equality and women's empowerment and report on them to the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.
- Bring together the continental organizations of the African Union, African Development Bank and other UN agencies within the framework of the African Development Forum to adopt practical commitments with targets on gender equality and women's empowerment under MDG3.



Abdoulie Janneh has just received the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



GEETEARA SAFIYA CHOUDHURY
Former Government Advisor, Founder and
Managing Director of Adcomm in Dhaka

BANGLADESH

22 Raise awareness of women's rights in Bangladesh

From Bangladesh, Geeteara Safiya Choudhury is participating in the MDG3 Champion Network of prominent individuals who are ready to do something extra for the empowerment of women. Together with the rest of the network, Geeteara Safiya Choudhury has committed to doing something extra by advocating for women's rights all over the world and in Bangladesh.

Choudhury states: "Women constitute 50 per cent of our population. We have to empower 70 million minds and 140 million hands to work side by side with men to take Bangladesh forward. Successive governments in Bangladesh have initiated programs, implemented laws, acts and policies that are pro-women and help to empower them. Unfortunately, the awareness levels about these laws and policies are low.

As a professional in the communication sector, I would like to raise the level of awareness of the rights that women in my country have. I hope to do this by motivating well-known and respected personalities from different sectors to act as champions of the MDG3 goals. We will use the mass media to inform the people of the opportunities and mobilize our citizens in achieving the MDG3 goals by 2015."



Two important torch bearers from Bangladesh, Rasheda K. Chowdhury (left) and Geeteara Safiya Choudhury, hold the torch.



THORAYA OBAID
Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund

UNFPA

23 Improved maternal and adolescent sexual and reproductive health

- UNFPA will address critical issues which lie at the heart of women's empowerment and gender equality. We will intensify efforts to improve women's health and the realization of their human rights, including reproductive rights. We will engage men as partners for equality.
- UNFPA is committed to raising nearly USD 500 million to improve the lives of women through the Thematic Fund on Maternal Health. The Fund focuses on improving adolescent sexual and reproductive health and reducing high levels of maternal death and disability. The Fund addresses the prevention of unsafe abortion, the prevention and treatment of the devastating condition of obstetric fistula and the prevention of HIV infection.
- UNFPA will highlight a critical health and human rights concern – violence against women through two joint programmes. UNFPA will work with the Division for the Advancement of Women to support 10 UN Country Teams in their efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women. Together with UNICEF, we will work on the ground in 17 high prevalence countries to reduce the incidence of female genital mutilation/cutting by 40 per cent by the year 2015.
- UNFPA is committed to working with partners worldwide to guarantee the right to sexual and reproductive health and to advance women's empowerment and gender equality.



Executive Director, Thoraya Obaid with the MDG3 Champion Torch.



**HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
SYLVIA NAGGINDA LUSWATA**
Kingdom of Buganda, Nnabagereka Development Foundation

UGANDA

24 Improving women's access to family planning and safe motherhood services

Her Royal Highness Sylvia Nagginda Luswata reaffirms her commitment towards improving the quality of life of women and children by advocating improved health of women through the promotion of sexual reproductive health rights and family planning. She stresses that we should ensure that no woman or newborn die or incur injuries due to pregnancy and/or childbirth. This can be made possible by providing timely, appropriate and comprehensive quality care during preconception, pregnancy and childbirth. In addition, ante-natal and post-natal services should be provided on a daily basis at all levels of the reproductive health service delivery, while delivery of maternity services should be provided 24 hours every day in units licensed and equipped to provide them.

More specifically she commits to advocate among policy-makers in Uganda to increase allocations towards:

- Enhancing the quality of safe motherhood services thereby reducing maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality in the country;
- Providing guidance to health care providers in the delivery of quality maternal and newborn care services at all levels;
- Providing adequate and accurate information, education and counselling services.



Her Royal Highness Sylvia Nagginda Luswata receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Uganda, Stig Barlyng.



ATUKI TURNER
Executive Director
Mifumi Project

UGANDA

25 Reducing domestic violence and bride pricing

Atuki Turner is Executive Director of the Mifumi Project in Tororo District, East Uganda. Her commitments are as follows:

- To create awareness about the violence women suffer in order to put an end to it.
- To get the government to recognize that violence against women is a human rights issue and that it must stop. Violence can no longer be justified on the basis of religion, culture or poverty.
- To create a domestic violence index that can be used as a yardstick or as a set of minimum standards to measure what the government must do to protect women.
- To fight for laws to be passed on bride pricing and domestic violence.
- To recognize the effort of sister organizations in lobbying for the Domestic Relations Bill, and Mifumi will continue to join their effort in this regard.



Atuki Turner receives a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Uganda, Stig Barlyng.



JOSEPHINE OKOT
Founder and Managing Director of Victoria Seeds

UGANDA

26 Encouragement of Women to unleash Entrepreneurial Talents

As part of the MDG3 Global Call to Action, Josephine Okot has made the following three pledges:

- “To improve what I am already doing: Empower rural women by providing seed technologies, extension service and access to markets in order to increase their efficiency in agricultural production, which is critical for both national food security and human development.
- To continue lobbying and identifying partners willing to adopt innovative financing approaches appropriate to crop farming patterns, which take into account women’s limited control of productive household resources. This will encourage more women to unleash their entrepreneurial talents along the value chain.
- To support the career advancement of Ugandan women from the private sector in agricultural research and development. They take major risks since most career advancement opportunities are channeled through national agricultural research organizations, the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) and universities.”



Josephine Okot receives a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Uganda, Stig Barlyng.



ANGEL GURRÍA

Secretary-General of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECD

ECKHARD DEUTSCHER

Chair of OECD's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC)

27

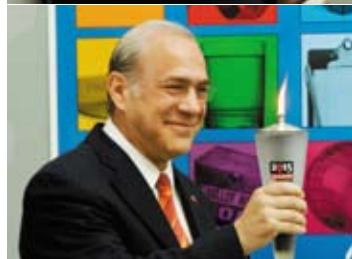
Increased attention and resources to gender equality

Angel Gurría states: "This is an extremely important initiative that I enthusiastically support. My "extra mile" for the MDG3 Global Call to Action is to become the MDG3 Champion in the MDG Africa Steering Group created by the UN Secretary-General. I will use my participation in the Steering Group to raise attention to gender equality and women's empowerment and, more particularly, in the Gleneagles' scenarios for investments to achieve the MDGs in the lead-up to the 25 September High Level Meeting on the MDGs. I hope that this will help in ensuring that all countries give the necessary attention and resources to promoting women's empowerment and gender equality."

Champion of gender equality at important international conferences

Eckhard Deutscher commits: "I am deeply honoured to be invited to contribute to this high-profile campaign initiated by the Danish Government to increase investments in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. My commitment is to be a Champion of gender equality at the Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and at the Doha meeting on Financing for Development. Specifically, I will include a special report in the 2010 Development Cooperation Report which assesses progress made in the levels of aid focused on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment."

PHOTO: OECD



The Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson, hands over torches to Eckhard Deutscher (above) and to Angel Gurría (below).



MADHU PURNIMA KISHWAR

Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, and Founding Editor of MANUSHI Magazine, New Delhi

INDIA

28

Women's rights and accountable governance

After more than three decades of tireless work for strengthening women's rights in India, Madhu Purnima Kishwar is ever more convinced that one can bring about genuine empowerment of women only in societies where violence and crime are kept under tight control and where the state machinery is genuinely committed and equipped to providing accountable governance based on just, fair and humane laws.

Madhu Purnima Kishwar will work for building a widespread social consensus to:

- Outlaw war as a means of settling disputes between nations and communities and build far more effective means of conflict resolution through peaceful means and dialogue than available at present;
- Strengthen the roots of democracy in India through far reaching police, judicial and electoral reforms, which enforce principles of genuine accountability and transparency in the functioning of the government and make the state machinery truly capable of providing security of life and liberty to all citizens, especially women;
- Provide quality education, health care and enhanced opportunities for self-advancement for all, with special focus on bridging this deficit for women of the hitherto marginalized communities;
- Strengthen the rights of women in the family by ensuring inalienable inheritance rights and decision making powers for women as daughters, mothers, sisters, grandmothers and single women;
- Strengthen the culture of recognizing and honoring the special role that women play as creators and nurturers of new life and honoring the special power nature has bestowed on women instead of treating it as a disability and a source of weakness.



Madhu Purnima Kishwar accepted the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to India, Ole Lønsmann Poulsen.



BENITA FERRERO-WALDNER
European Commissioner for External Relations
and European Neighbourhood Policy

EUROPEAN UNION

29 **Develop the international leaders' network on women in political processes**

The MDG3 highlights the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment. It reminds the international community that extra efforts are needed if we are to attain the Millennium Development Goals by 2010.

The European Commission is determined to work to promote women's rights in third countries, to discuss gender equality issues with our partner countries and to mainstream gender issues into all its external actions.

As a woman politician, I am glad to contribute to a dynamic which is developing rapidly among women leaders worldwide. Over 40 high-level women leaders joined me in Brussels on 6 March 2008 for the international conference "Women: Stabilising an Insecure World". We discussed the link between women's empowerment and the promotion of human security. We also discussed how women's potential as peacemakers, mediators and re-builders of shattered communities is often not fully harnessed. We agreed to call on the UN Secretary-General to convene an international conference in 2010 on reinforcing commitment to the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

As a follow-up, I hereby pledge to work to develop the international leaders' network on women in political processes. I also wish every success to the 'International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership, Development, International Peace and Security', which is being organized in March 2009 by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia.



Benita Ferrero-Waldner (right) receives a torch in Bruxelles from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



LOUIS MICHEL
European Commissioner for
Development and Humanitarian Aid

EUROPEAN UNION

30 **European Action Plan to achieve MDG3**

If 50 per cent of the population is not participating on equal terms in the political and economic development of their countries, then these countries cannot develop in a sustainable way.

An active participation in the national development is based on a strong representation of women at the political and administrative levels. This is fundamental since politics should reflect the entire population of a country.

Unfortunately, this is far from the case in many countries. This calls for a strong mobilisation and a visible campaign such as the one initiated with the MDG3 Global Call to Action.

Today, we know how important the education of women is to society. It improves the health, nutrition and education of children and it strengthens economic growth and the development of a country.

By receiving the MDG3 Torch, I commit together with my colleagues in the EU Member States to promoting the European Action Plan to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

This plan envisages to:

Firstly; contribute to ensure that additional 15 million girls can attend school by 2010.

Secondly; by 2010 ensure that 21 million births are assisted by qualified health personnel, and by 2010 ensure that 50 million women have access to contraceptives.

Thirdly; appeal to our partner countries to engage women in the political and development work of their countries.



Louis Michel commits to strong mobilization.

**ALBERT TEVOEDJRE**

President of the Ombudsman institution

BENIN**MEMOUNA BABONI SINIMBOU**

Women's Activist

MARIAM YAYA NADJO

Donga Women Micro Finance

31

Albert Tevoedjre commits to placing women in strategic positions within the ombudsman institution to achieve additional visibility and efficiency. He pledges to work for the establishment of a Women's Institute before the end of 2011, as foreseen in the government's programme, and he commits to initiating actions, which will improve conditions for women in jail.

Memouna Baboni Sinimbou commits to assisting women in cases of social, economic or religious problems in the department of Borgou. "Wherever there is a problem, there is darkness. The torch will chase out darkness from the households". She will draw attention to the insufficient and incomplete schooling in the department of Borgou and commits to contributing to improvements – particularly for girls.

Mariam Yaya Nadjo commits to contributing to a decrease in the female rural migration from the department of Donga, through granting micro credits to women's income generating activities. She further commits to supporting specific loans for the schooling of girls and the improvement of women's socio-economic and legal status through guidance, counselling and literacy campaigns.



The torch bearers are from the top: Albert Tevoedjre, Mariam Yaya Nadjo (left) and Memouna Baboni Sinimbou. They received the torches from the Ambassador of Denmark to Benin, Gert Meinicke.

**LÉON BIO BIGOU**

Former Vice-President of the National Assembly

BENIN**LÉONTINE KONOU IDOHO**

President of the NGO RIFONGA

GENEVIÈVE BOKO NADJO

WILDAF Benin Network

32

Léon Bio Bigou, an active advocate of legislation that protects the integrity of women, commits to working for continued improvement of legislation protecting the integrity of women, to disseminating information on laws that influence women's life and to raising awareness on issues related to the rights of women, including female circumcision. Furthermore, he commits to encouraging policy makers to effectively making schooling free of charge in Benin until the age of sixteen.

Léontine Konou Idohou commits to encouraging women's involvement in the political life in order for more women to access decision-making bodies in Benin as well as on the continent. Furthermore, she commits to encouraging the schooling of girls with the overall goal of getting 50 per cent women in parliament, 50 per cent women ministers, 50 per cent women in governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as more women in central roles in civil society by 2015.

Geneviève Boko Nadjo, an advocate of women's legal rights commits to work for women's increased knowledge of their rights and duties according to the new family code with a view to ensuring their right to physical and moral integrity.



The torch receivers are from the left: Léontine Konou Idohou, Léon Bani Bio-Bigou and Geneviève Boko Nadjo.



SHALINI WADHWA

CEO and Managing Editor, The Boss and VOW magazines

NEPAL

RITA THAPA

Founder and Member of Tewa and Founder and CEO of Nagarik Aawaz

PUNYA P. NEUPANE

Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

33

Shalini Wadhwa, in her capacity as Managing Editor of VOW magazine, commits to creating a new magazine section called VOW ALERT that highlights women's capacity building, entrepreneurship, legal rights and issues of ethnicity, rape, living with AIDS, displaced persons and the importance of education and economic empowerment. Further to this, the Boss and VOW magazines will promote women's economic freedom through micro credit programmes, access to loans, property and citizenship rights. She also commits to hosting a national conference for women from different walks of life called "Inspiring women to take on leadership roles." At the conference five women will become new torch bearers. Finally, she also commits to lobbying for a revolving fund and forum especially to provide rural women exposure in areas of their interest.

Rita Thapa commits to making grants available for rural women's groups via Tewa. "Through Nagarik Aawaz, I will work on mobilising and expanding Peace Ambassador networks for conflict-affected youths in Nepal. I also commit to lobbying women's human rights and advancement – via Women's Alliance for Peace Power Democracy and the Constituent Assembly (WAPPDCA)."

Punya P. Neupane states after receiving the torch: "I have felt my responsibility towards gender equality further increased and I am now inspired to put "extra" energy in bringing about meaningful changes in the lives of girls and women. I will firmly stand for the cause of gender equality and push this issue by all possible means."



From the left: *Punya P. Neupane*, *Rita Thapa*, the Ambassador of Denmark to Nepal, *Finn Thilsted* and *Shalini Wadhwa*.





FAYZA ABOUL NAGA
Minister of International Cooperation

EGYPT

34 The Link between food safety and women and children

Egypt's Minister of International Cooperation, Fayza Aboul Naga, has a long and prominent record in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. In accepting the torch, she committed herself to doing something extra in this important field.

She stated, when receiving the torch, that she will undertake special efforts to link the issue of food safety more closely to the issue of empowerment of women, as it is most often women and children who are adversely affected by shortages and increasing prices of food.



Egypt's Minister of International Cooperation, Fayza Aboul Naga, receives a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Egypt, Christian Hoppe.



WU QING
Professor and Chair of the Board of
Chanping Practical Skills Training Center for Rural Women

CHINA

35 Empowering rural women through practical skills training

Wu Qing and Luo Zhaohong are actively contributing to economic empowerment of rural women in China through their work at the Chanping Practical Skills Training Center for Rural Women.

The Training Center, founded in 1999, is the first non-profit school specifically empowering rural women and adolescent girls in China. The students, individually selected from the poorest rural areas of China, receive short-term practical skills training in order to achieve socio-economic independence. Programs include training in computing, sewing, waitressing, hairdressing and assistant kindergarten teacher training. The Training Center also emphasizes self-empowerment skills, for example through music lessons.

When receiving a torch, Wu Qing stressed that it is important to increase the training center's efforts to reach out to men in relevant projects: "It takes two to tango. It takes both women and men with gender perspectives and human rights sensitivity to change this world and make it a better place for future generations. But it will take time. We have the patience, will power and perseverance to make it happen with our sisters and brothers from different countries, different governments, multinationals and businesses and the civil society. We have to dialogue and join hands. In unity, there is strength".

Luo Zhaohong commits to continuing to work together with people at home and abroad for the training rural women, and she commits to further contributing to the economic empowerment of rural women and laid-off women workers.



Director Luo Zhaohong (left) and Professor Wu Qing received the MDG3 Champion Torch at the Changping Practical Skills Training Center.



KNUD LARSSON
 Trading Director
 AarhusKarlshamn (AAK)

DENMARK

36 More shea to AAK and more money for the women

“AAK is indeed a proud recipient of the MDG3 Torch. We see it as recognition of the work AAK is already doing to empower women in Burkina Faso”, Knud Larsson said, when he received the torch, and added: “We have realized that our need for security of supply goes hand in hand with the women’s need for a secure source of income from their farm work. Therefore, our aim is to create growth and development among West African women”.

AAK has been present for several years in West Africa, where they buy shea, which is an important raw material for production of vegetable oil. AAK’s core business is vegetable oil solution. In Burkina Faso, AAK – in partnerships with UNDP – has initiated activities to benefit the rural women collecting shea, and the extra efforts will add on to those activities. AAK and UNDP have installed so-called multi-functional platforms, consisting of a simple diesel engine which can provide various tools with power making grinding, husking and pressing of shea nuts faster and more efficient. In short: Reducing women’s everyday workload and allowing them to collect more shea. 200 out of 400 platforms have been installed, and a halfway evaluation documented positive impact on the living standards: The women had increased their earnings, had savings and the literacy rate had increased by 25 per cent.

By receiving a torch AAK commits to:

- Increasing the number of women groups in Burkina Faso that AAK trades with directly by means of transferring knowledge within storage management, quality education and by offering micro credits;
- Supporting and optimising local processing of organic shea butter in Burkina Faso by means of transferring knowledge and technology.



AAK’s Trading Director in Denmark, Knud Larsson, receives the torch from Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, Ulla Tørnæs.



ANN VENEMAN
 Executive Director
 United Nations Children’s Fund

UNICEF

37 UNICEF is committed to the Millennium Development Goals - including the important goal of making gender equality a reality

UNICEF commits to increasing resources to combat violence against girls and women. We have just entered into a new partnership with V-Day to combat extreme sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This will be a new investment of USD 2.5 million. UNICEF will also scale up programs to combat sexual violence, which is widespread in many countries and often perpetrated with impunity.

UNICEF will strengthen our programs to fight harmful practices such as Female Genital Cutting and child marriage – both extreme forms of violence against girls.

UNICEF will scale up programs to support girls’ education, which is critical to development and empowering women.

Through the Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS initiative, UNICEF will further increase efforts to fight the feminization of HIV and AIDS with programs of education for protection and testing and treatment for prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

UNICEF will increase support for community-based integrated health care to improve the health of mothers and children.

PHOTO: UNICEF



UNICEF Executive Director Ann Veneman embraces two girls from the UNICEF-supported Bandar Girls’ Primary School in Southern Sudan.



NEBAHAT AKKOÇ

President of the women's organisation KAMER

TURKEY

38

Working to eliminate violence against women

On behalf of the KAMER Foundation I pledge to further the KAMER Foundation's work to eliminate violence against women and to support the Foundation's work on early childhood education.

The KAMER Foundation commits to empowering the women's centres that have been opened as part of a large organizational project in the 23 provinces of Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia regions with the goal of contributing to the creation of a non-violent, non-discriminating, participationist and egalitarian dream world.

The KAMER Foundation also commits to expanding the reach of women's centres into districts and villages, and to ensuring their economic sustainability by assisting them in securing their own resources.

Finally, I pledge to compile the experiences I have gathered through my work since 1994 into a book, to be shared by all women.



Nebahat Akkoç (to the left) received the MDG3 Torch on behalf of KAMER. Here seen together with Jülide Aral, also from KAMER.



SONJA LICHT

Founder of Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE)

SERBIA

39

Empowering young women in politics

"By receiving this torch, I pledge to continue educating and further empowering young women in politics at both national and local levels, through all our programs. Building capacity for European integration especially by fighting the poverty and strengthening the women's capacities to fight poverty in Serbia, is emphasized in BFPE's programs."

As part of implementing her commitment Sonja Licht has passed on the torch to seven more torch bearers, who have pledged to do the following:

Aida Corovic, Coordinator Urban-in, Novi Pazar: "To establish a Forum of Women in Sandzak focusing on the issues related to conditions of women in non-urban areas of Serbia";

Aleksandar Radosavljevic, CEO, Carlsberg Serbia: "To establish a program of internal education for all women employed in Carlsberg Serbia, as well as their spouses";

Gordana Comic, MP, vice President of Parliament: "To present the MDG3 Call to Action in the Parliamentary Committees on Gender and on European Integration and to arrange a roundtable focusing on the MDGs";

Marijana Pajvancic, Professor, Law Faculty Novi Sad: "To work on effective implementation of gender equality standards and their protection in Serbia's legislative and the legal system in general";

Tanja Miscevic, Director EU Integration Office, Deputy Prime Minister's Office: "To establish a regional network of women resource persons involved in European Integration and Security Politics";

Veran Matic, Director B92: "To open a continuous blog with various people on women issues edited by Gordana Comic and B92" in addition to strong corporate responsibility on women's issues;

Vojislav Tufegdžic, Blic newspaper: "To conduct a series of focus features over summer on empowerment of women/women issues".



Sonja Licht from Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (left) received a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Serbia, Mette Kjuel Nielsen.



BJARNE B. CHRISTENSEN

Executive Director

The Danish Family Planning Association (Sex & Samfund)

DENMARK

40 An extra effort for women's sexual and reproductive rights

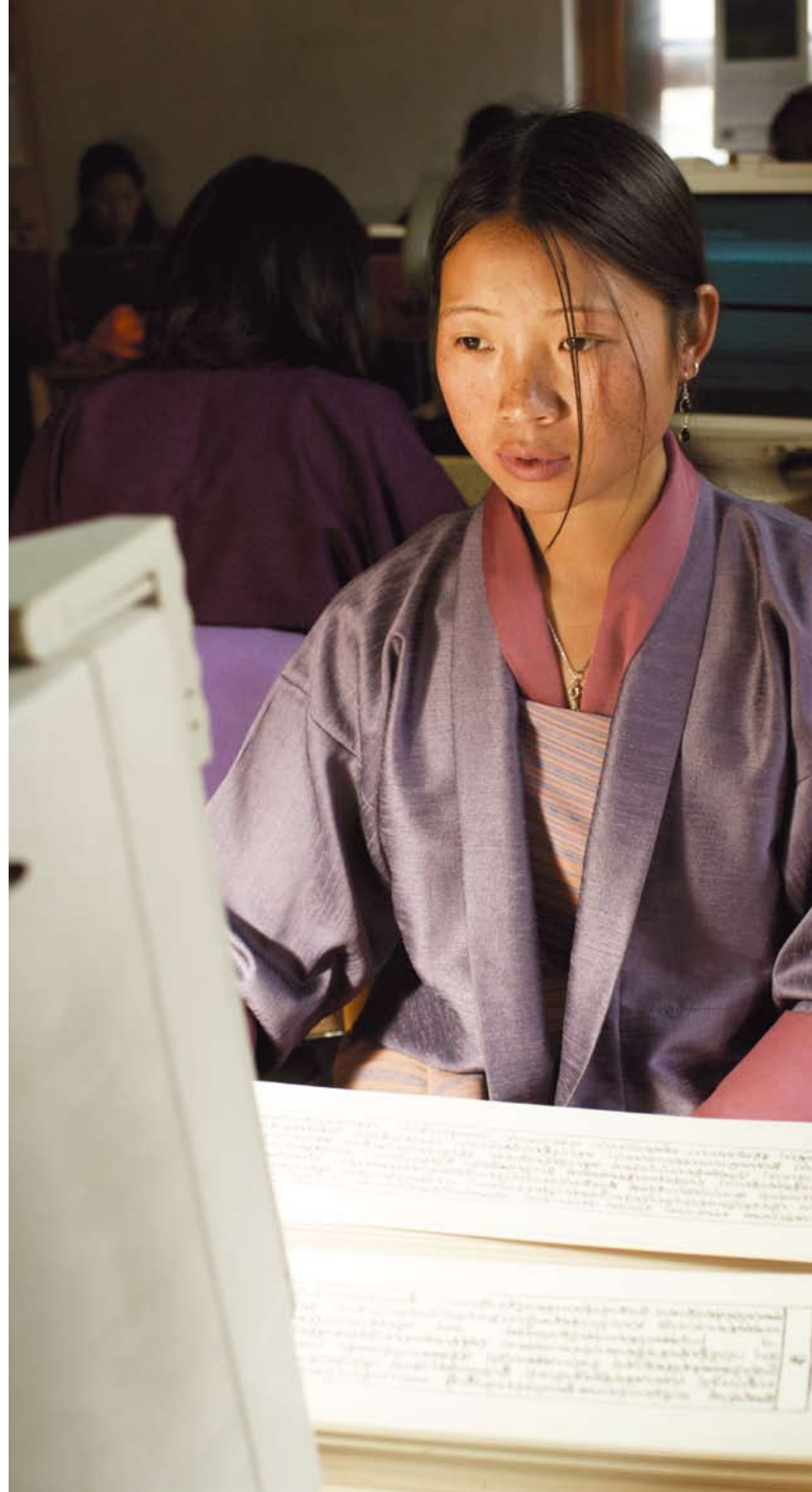
The Danish Family Planning Association makes an extra commitment to MDG3 by using its partnerships and network in South Asia and Europe to make an extra effort for women's sexual and reproductive rights.

The activities include:

- Together with our partner in Uganda, "Reproductive Health Uganda", we will incorporate an intensified focus on women and the MDG3 in the project 'HIV prevention among vulnerable young people' in Mbarara District;
- Together with other Danish and European partners, we will implement specific awareness raising activities in Denmark about sexual violence and rape as a specific military strategy targeting women in areas of armed conflict;
- Together with the secretariat for our regional programme in South Asia, "Women's Health and Rights Partnership" (WHRAP), we will hand over the MDG3 Torch to a Pakistani CBO, which is part of our South Asian network. The selected CBO will commit to making a specific MDG3 effort.



Executive Director Bjarne B. Christensen receives a torch from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.





ISSAKA MAÏGA
Deputy Minister of Agriculture

BURKINA FASO



VALÉRIE KABORÉ
Film Producer, Instructor and Founder of
Media 2000

BURKINA FASO

AWA SISSAO
Songwriter, Composer and Singer

41 Promote approval of an act on women's land rights

By receiving a torch, the Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Water underlined the active involvement of this central ministry in promoting gender equality. Around 80 per cent of the population work in the agricultural sector, and women's lack of rights to land has a great impact on the development of the country.

Issaka Maïga committed to:

1. Promoting approval by Parliament of an act on women's land rights;
2. Promoting integration of the special needs of women in the strategy for agricultural development;
3. Promoting sex disaggregated data in the agricultural sector.

Furthermore, the Minister for the Advancement of Women Celine Yoda-Konkobo and Pascaline Tamini, Minister of Social Affairs, attended the torch-ceremony and reinforced the continued dedication of the Government to promote Millennium Development Goal 3 on gender equality and empowerment of women.

42

Valérie Kaboré is working with communication in development and is widely known from a TV-series on the young girl Ina and the many challenges she faces to get an education and be independent. Gender inequalities, the unequal possibilities for women and men in Burkina Faso, still prevail. Valérie Kaboré has committed herself to:

1. Producing a TV-documentary on successful women in West Africa in order to make the independent women role models;
2. Producing a continuation of her first TV-series on the girl named Ina and her battle to be a lawyer and to achieve independence. The continuation will focus on Ina's court cases on human rights and not least women's rights.

Awa Sissao, who is a popular singer and composer of more songs on women's rights, has committed herself to:

1. Promoting women artists and their opportunities to perform;
2. Establishing a telephone hotline for women, where they can get guidance and advice to pursue their aspirations.



The torch bearers and ministers are from the left: torch bearer Issaka Maïga, torch bearer Valérie Kaboré, Minister Céline Yoda-Konkobo, torch bearer Awa Sissao and Minister Pascaline Tamini. To the far right the Ambassador of Denmark to Burkina Faso, Mogens Pedersen.



NANA OYE LITHUR
Human Rights and Gender Activist
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

GHANA

43 Mentoring programme for girls to increase their enrolment in secondary education

Nana Oye Lithur has worked with women's rights with the International Federation of Women Lawyers and the African Women Lawyers Association and is currently working on Human Rights with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.

With the MDG3 Champion Torch in hand, she committed to focusing on helping to eliminate gender disparity in secondary education in three districts in Ghana.

"I believe that focusing on increasing female enrolment in secondary education in Ghana will ultimately lead to economic benefits for women and the society as a whole. Women would get better employment with higher education, and would have more opportunities to participate in public life. It will also positively affect the health and nutritional status of their children, should they decide to marry and bear children in future. It will increase the selfworth and dignity of women in Ghana and improve our values as Ghanaians."

Nana Oye Lithur will facilitate her commitment by setting up a mentoring programme for girls who show promise and are committed to staying in school to learn. She will also start a programme to encourage girls to take up education more seriously, called 'Show by example'. An advocacy monitoring programme will be established to assess performance and the quality of education in the three chosen districts.



Nana Oye Lithur when receiving the MDG3 Champion Torch in Ghana together with colleagues from the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.



INÉS ALBERDI
Executive Director
United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNIFEM

44 Who answers to women?

Inés Alberdi states that "MDG3 is pivotal to all other Millennium Development Goals and at the heart of all the work of the United Nations Development Fund for Women." UNIFEM specifically commits to the following:

- "Build on initiatives that we are currently undertaking and step up our advocacy and support to enhance African women's economic security and rights. By the end of 2008, UNIFEM will launch an initiative in support of Women Informal Cross Border Traders in Africa in order to strengthen the policies, capacities and infrastructure that they need to build their assets – including property and inheritance rights.
- In September 2008, we will launch an edition of the UNIFEM flagship publication focusing on the question: "Who Answers to Women?" With women's political participation as a core indicator for MDG3, UNIFEM will strengthen its work on supporting women to act as an effective constituency, to achieve a high-level political position.
- As the manager of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women UNIFEM will make every effort to ensure that this Fund will grow from some USD 5 million in grants in 2007 to USD 100 million by 2015. Reaching out to men in all walks of life will be central to our efforts.
- Encouraging more governments to publicly commit to ending violence against women.
- Joining UN colleagues to achieve a more coherent and stronger voice on gender equality within the UN and more easily accessible support from the UN system in countries worldwide."



Executive Director Inés Alberdi received the torch at Denmark's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York.



LYONPO KHANDU WANGCHUK
Minister of Economic Affairs

BHUTAN

45

Gender issues in all policies and legislation

“I am honored to join the MDG3 Global Call to Action. I am pleased to note that the Millennium Development Goals are in consonance with Bhutan’s development philosophy of Gross National Happiness and in line with national development priorities. The Government of Bhutan is committed to poverty reduction as the main theme of our Tenth Plan (2008-2013) and the MDGs stand as a top priority. Bhutan is on track towards achieving the third MDG. However, there are some significant gaps and challenges that need to be addressed by all stakeholders. The scarcity of resources amongst others is a significant constraint for the full realization of this goal.”

Minister Wangchuk will ensure that within his sphere of influence, gender issues are addressed and mainstreamed effectively into all policies and legislation. This will be done through proper allocation of resources to promote greater access for women to economic opportunities, promote women’s entrepreneurship, promote cottage and small rural-based enterprises, promote female participation in training programs and human resource development.



From the left, Minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Managing Director Dago Beda and Chief Executive Officer Palden Dorji are showing their MDG3 Champion Torches.



PALDEN DORJI
Chief Executive Officer, G4 Security Services

BHUTAN

DAGO BEDA
Managing Director, Etho Metho Tours

46 More female security guards in Bhutan

Palden Dorji is CEO in one of the first multi-national joint-venture companies in Bhutan providing security related services and pledges to generate awareness of gender equality in the Bhutanese society by recruiting more female security guards.

Palden Dorji will have at least a number of female security guards in all up-coming contracts and thereby change the perception of the society of security as being a male-oriented job. He will show that women can perform as well as men given the proper training, guidance and equipment. By recruiting more female guards and by advocating for policies to encourage and support equal employment opportunities for women, Palden Dorji will contribute to promote gender equality in Bhutan.

Accelerate Gender Equality in the private sector

Dago Beda states: “I pledge to ensure that more women are trained or employed as tour guides and in our corporate office. This will increase their income, thereby improving the living conditions of the entire family.

I commit to support women weavers with financial assistance and also market their products so that direct benefits are reaped by these hard workers. This will not only enable them to increase their income, but would also keep weaving traditions alive in our country.”



Two female security guards from G4 Security, who will have more female colleagues.

Dago Beda (left) and Palden Dorji (right) are standing with their torches.



SADHANA SHRESTHA
Founding member
South Asia Network for Widows in Development (SANWED)

NEPAL

47 Empowering widows and securing women’s rights

“I commit to supporting the MDG3 Global Call to Action and commit to being “my sister’s keeper” – to do my utmost to create spaces for women in their homes, families, communities and societies through the organizations, I work with; and through various networks in the civil society, media and private sector.

I pledge to empower widows through my work with Women for Human Rights (WHR) and South Asian Network for Widows in Development (SANWED), so they can live dignified lives as human beings, are respected and given their due rights to land, property, inheritance, education, citizenship and employment.

This is a historic moment for Nepal where a new Constitution will be written. Women must secure their rights NOW. A concerted effort is required at all levels to turn rhetoric into action. I commit to empowering men and women to be agents of change, since only if men are sensitized, can we have equality.”



Sadhana Shrestha receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Nepal, Finn Thilsted.

PHOTO: STEPHEN FREHEIT



PETER POWER T.D.
Minister of State for Overseas Development

IRELAND

48

Ireland commits to increasing resources and promoting Security Council Resolution 1325

Ireland recognizes that without gender equality none of the MDGs are really achievable or sustainable. Ireland commits to increasing resources for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment; intensifying action on the prevention of gender based violence (GBV); and promoting and implementing Security Council Resolution 1325.

As well as mainstreaming gender equality across the Irish Aid development programme, Ireland will increase spending on specific activities aimed at addressing inequalities and empowering women, including in the next 2 years allocating EUR 450,000 to a fund for women's organizations, EUR 3.1 million towards supporting women entrepreneurs, and EUR 1.1 million to promote and support women's participation in parliaments.

With regard to gender based violence (GBV) Ireland will intensify programming in bilateral programmes in South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia; scale up support for international efforts; increase its budget for GBV initiatives to over EUR 4 million per annum by 2009; host a conference on Security Council Resolution 1325 in November; and develop its own action plan for Security Council Resolution 1325 by 2009.



Peter Power T.D. (left), passes on the torch to Namirembe Bitamazire, Minister for Education and Sports in Uganda (right).



IRYNA VIDANAVA
Journalist
Youth Multimedia Magazine "34"

BELARUS

49

Information campaign on politically active women in Belarus

By receiving a torch, I pledge to launch an information campaign that focuses on women in Belarus who are imprisoned, expelled or fired due to their activities as politically active in a party or a union – or just because they have been participating in a demonstration.

I will team up with the Solidarity Committee and use my background and present activities related to media to focus more on e.g. informational campaigns – both in Belarus and abroad.

Through a series of interviews with oppressed women, I will focus on why they are risking their lives and freedom in their fight for democracy in Belarus. Some of the women wrote diaries while in prison and as far as possible, these will be translated and published. The information campaign will try to link up with international freedom of expression and women organizations.



Iryna Vidanava receives a MDG3 Champion Torch from State Secretary, Ambassador Michael Zilmer-Johns.



HAUWA IBRAHIM
Human Rights Lawyer

NIGERIA

50 Working pro bono for women

Hauwa Ibrahim is a senior partner and Pro Bono Legal Aid Counsel in the General Law Practice of the Aires Law Firm, located in Abuja, Nigeria. She serves as a consultant to many human rights and non-governmental organizations. Since 1999, Hauwa Ibrahim has served as Defence Counsel in over 100 cases implicating the Sharia law, many of which have involved women accused of adultery and being subject to death by stoning. Prior to launching her practice in 1999, she was prosecutor in the Ministry of Justice in Bauchi State. Hauwa Ibrahim is winner of European Union Parliament's 2005 Sakharov prize.

Upon receiving the torch, Hauwa Ibrahim committed herself to advocating further on behalf of the poor and the marginalized by focusing on the following activities:

- 1) Networking with Ghanaian torch bearers, especially the Acting Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, to foster collaboration between the Ghanaian and Nigerian human rights institutions;
- 2) Presenting the torch to the Ministries of Justice and Education in Nigeria and solicit their support for a nationwide gender equality drive;
- 3) Letting her law firm take up additional 30 pro bono cases of marginalised people, especially women, from July to December 2008.



Hauwa Ibrahim is receiving a torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Ghana, Flemming Bjørk Pedersen.





PETER PIOT
Executive Director
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS

51 Ensuring that global financial commitments benefit women and girls

UNAIDS will make the money for the “AIDS response” work for women and girls by working with the major financing mechanisms for the response (meaning the Global Fund, PEPFAR and the World Bank), to ensure global financial commitments make a difference at the country level.

In Asia, we will give more focus to prevention of spousal transmission. We will highlight the hidden vulnerabilities and expose vulnerabilities that have so far been neglected. In particular, our focus will be on the spouses of injecting drug users and men that also have sex with men – women, who are potentially exposed to infection without knowing it.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, we will focus on young women and draw attention to the complexities that make young women of this region so much more vulnerable to HIV than any other population anywhere else in the region. We seek to gain a better understanding of why these young women are more vulnerable and then to translate this understanding into action where it matters most: At the country level.

UNAIDS also commits to building more robust data around the link between violence against women and HIV. At the same time, we will call for action on what we know can be done in this area, such as provision of post-exposure prophylaxis and counseling for survivors of rape.



UNAIDS’ Executive Director, Peter Piot, receives a MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to the United Nations in Geneva, Marie-Louise Overvad.



JULIAN LOB-LEVYT
Executive Secretary
Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization

GAVI

52 The GAVI Alliance commits to promoting gender equality in its work

The strong correlation between women’s socioeconomic status and their own health, as well as their children’s health has been rigorously demonstrated. The glaring reality is that in many of the poorest countries, women and girls are denied adequate access to health care and basic services; because they are women. We know that women’s health has been shamefully neglected.

The GAVI Alliance fully commits to promoting gender equality in its work. We will accelerate the delivery of vaccines and basic health services to ensure that women and men, girls and boys in the poorest countries have equal access to new and life saving technologies.

It is simply unacceptable that around 250,000 women in poor countries are dying each year from cervical cancer because they don’t have screening services and the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccines that are available in wealthy countries.

We will work with our partners to accelerate the availability of vaccines to prevent diseases that cause suffering and death for girls and women, such as HPV vaccine against cervical cancer.

The GAVI Alliance commits to supporting the development of health services that enhance gender equality and focus on the well-being of girls and women.

The GAVI Alliance will exercise leadership, raise awareness and promote country-level and global efforts towards gender equality in health.



Julian Lob-Levyt with the MDG3 Champion Torch.

PHOTO: GAVI/DUIER CASAGRANDE



GRAÇA MACHEL
International Advocate
Women's and Children's Rights

MOZAMBIQUE

53 Bring together organizations and officials to reduce maternal mortality

First of all, the achievement of MDG5 (Improve Maternal Health) is key to unlocking a huge reservoir of African human resources, protecting and promoting families and enacting a key human right – the right to life. Of 14 SADC countries, 12 have maternal mortality rates classified as 'high or very high' and only two are on course to meet the MDG target of reducing maternal mortality rates by 75 per cent between 1990 and 2015. My pledge is to work with the SADC Foresight Group and other African civil society organizations to bring together a women's network of health professionals, activists, parliamentarians, women in government and others. This network will take country and regionally focused approaches to accelerate the work of governments to reduce maternal mortality in SADC countries.

Secondly, the Mozambican government aims to reduce the country's high maternal mortality rate from 408 to 250 per ten thousand. In two specified Mozambican provinces with higher maternal mortality rates, FDC and its partners will build women's coalitions to work with government and local health services to mobilise women and provide information, encouragement and facilitate additional resources to reduce maternal mortality rates by increasing access to and use of ante natal and birth services in local and national health facilities.

Thirdly, women's leadership is crucial to the achievement of all MDGs and to the fulfillment of African social, economic and political attainment. To accelerate the building of a cadre of educated, experienced and skilled women leaders, in the next five years, the Graça Machel Scholarship Fund will offer 100 tertiary and post-graduate scholarships, plus mentorship, to Southern African women, particularly those from rural areas, economically deprived backgrounds or whose educational potential have been blocked for social, political or economic reasons.



PHOTO: GAVI/DUIER CASAGRANDE

Graça Machel with the MDG3 Champion Torch.



MARY ROBINSON
Former President of Ireland and President of Realizing Rights:
The Ethical Globalization Initiative

IRELAND

54 Leadership, inequalities in health and human rights

Mary Robinson pledges to promote gender equality and women's empowerment by:

Supporting women's leadership

Through the Women Leaders Intercultural Forum, Realizing Rights promote the vital role which women leaders around the world play in helping to resolve conflict and foster peaceful and prosperous societies. It is important to break down the silos and boundaries separating women leaders at the local, national and international levels. Until this happens on a consistent basis, progress towards MDG3 will remain limited.

Addressing gender inequalities in health

Gender inequality is a powerful determinant of health: it shapes the distribution of diseases, access to and use of health services. Through a new gender policy, the GAVI Alliance will promote increased coverage, effectiveness and efficiency of immunisation by ensuring that all people receive equal access to these services. As a member of the GAVI Board, I pledge to support the full implementation of the GAVI gender policy as an important step towards equity in global health and promoting better health outcomes, particularly for women and girls.

Promoting women's rights as human rights

As part of the Elders' Every Human Rights Campaign, I pledge to support their efforts by speaking out against acts of violence and discrimination, promoting the human rights of women, and calling on all governments to deliver on their commitments to promote and protect the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration.



PHOTO: RELIGIONS OF PEACE

Mary Robinson is discussing gender issues with Zia Labidi-Maiza, Coordinator, Global Women of Faith Network at the WFDA Breakthrough Summit in New York.



MARGARET CHAN
 Director-General
 World Health Organisation

WHO

55 Crucial to improve maternal and reproductive health

WHO highlights the following commitments:

- Conducting gender analysis and develop responsive actions: Providing technical support and guidance to the Member States.
- Continue efforts to develop strategic ways to enhance investments in women and girls by making available tools to assess the integration of human rights and gender equality perspectives in Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPs).
- Measuring the burden of disease in women and tracking changes in women's health: Produce a Women and Health statistical report as part of the Global Health Observatory.
- Provide political support and resources for the integration of gender equality dimensions in internal management mechanisms.
- Improving maternal and perinatal health: Work with country partners to scale up interventions to reduce maternal, newborn & child mortality as well as to contribute towards achievement of universal access to reproductive health.
- Addressing sexually transmitted and reproductive tract infections (STIs/RTIs) and HIV: Strengthen the links between sexual and reproductive health and HIV and AIDS.
- Promoting vaccines specifically intended to improve the health of women: Contribute to women's health by supporting activities to raise awareness on HPV vaccine.
- Strengthen work on ageing and the life course programme, which takes a gendered approach to improve the quality of life for ageing people.
- Addressing violence against women: Work towards elimination of female genital mutilation in one generation.

PHOTO: GAVI/DUIER CASAGRANDE



Daisy Mafubelu, (right) Assistant Director-General, WHO, on behalf of Director-General, Dr. Margaret Chan, received the MDG3 Champion Torch together with Mary Robinson (left).



JEAN PING
 Chairperson
 African Union Commission

AFRICAN UNION

56 African Women Trust Fund before December 2009

As Champion No. 1 of Gender Equality in the African Union Commission, I received the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 Torch from H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, on 1st of July 2008 during the closing Ceremony of the 11th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. During the meetings of the Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of States and Government in Sharm-El-Sheikh, important decisions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment were taken, including Executive Council Decision No. EX.CL/Dec. 445(XIII) on the establishment of the African Women Trust Fund. In recognition of this honour and the responsibility attached to it, I commit myself to ensure that the African Women Trust Fund is launched before December 2009. I also commit myself to the faithful implementation of other Executive Council and Assembly decisions on Gender Equality.



Jean Ping participated in the first session of the Danish government's Africa Commission in Copenhagen in April 2008. He was welcomed by Prime Minister of Denmark, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



GRACE DATIRO
Minister for Education
Western Equatoria State, South Sudan

SUDAN

57 Girls' education crucial for empowerment

Girls' education is the starting point for women's empowerment, and Grace Datiro has long worked to ensure that all girls can fulfil their right to attend school. She is also the chair of the Sudan chapter of the Forum for Women Educationalists (FAWE), a Pan-African Organization which promotes girls' and women's education in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the end of Sudan's civil war in 2005, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of children enrolled in school, from around 343,000 during the war, to 1.2 million in 2007. As the Minister for Education in Western Equatoria State, Grace Datiro has been part of this change. 46 per cent of all children attending school in Western Equatoria are girls, the highest figure for any state in the South Sudan.

Grace Datiro has promised through her work to:

- Hold a discussion forum with members of South Sudan's Parliament and Executive to identify solutions to the difficulties that hinder female education and retention at all levels;
- Promote university scholarships and skills training for adolescents who missed schooling due to the war, dropouts and illiterate women;
- Lobby in government for gender sensitive budgets and for policies that will enable the advancement of women so as to achieve the Government's affirmative action target of a minimum of 25 per cent representation at all government levels.



From the left: Housing, Land and Public Utilities Minister, Martin Ohuro Okerruk, Head of Unicef South Sudan, Peter Crowley, Grace Datiro with the torch, Minister for Regional Cooperation, Barnabas Marial Benjamin, and Head of the Danish Embassy Office Khartoum, Karin Sorensen.



JOHANNE M. SØRENSEN
International Coordinator
Project Five-O

DENMARK

58 Support to UNIFEM project in Afghanistan

Project Five-O is a partnership of five international women's organizations, Business & Professional Women International (BPWI), International Council of Women (ICW), International Federation of University Women (IFUW), Soroptimist International (SI) and Zonta International (ZI).

It was founded in 1980 during the Second Women's Conference in Copenhagen for the purpose of offering education and vocational training to women and girls in development countries with a curriculum comprising income-generating skills and education in health, nutrition, hygiene, child care, literacy and women's rights.

Project Five-O has offered training and education to thousands of women and girls at more than 30 projects in nearly as many countries.

Project Five-O has become a recognized and respected voice which is heard in particular at the UN Commission on the Status of Women and has close cooperation with UNIFEM.

Since 2002, UNIFEM has been supporting the efforts of the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs to restore the rights of Afghan women and girls and to improve their legal, economic and social status.

Project Five-O is ready to do something extra and does not hesitate to contribute to the MDG3 Global Call to Action. This something extra will be support to the UNIFEM project in Afghanistan to set up women's centres where women can come together to access services and mobilize around key governance issues. Project Five-O will donate USD 20,000 to this project which is outside the general purpose of Project Five-O's mission.



Johanne M. Sorensen (right) receives a MDG3 Torch from Danish State Secretary, Ambassador Ib Petersen.



AÏCHATOU MINDAODOU
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration

NIGER

BIBATA BARRY NIANDOU
Minister of the Advancement of Women and Child Protection

59

Implementing the national gender policy

At the torch hand-over in Niamey Minister of Foreign Affairs Aïchatou Mindaoudou and Minister of the Advancement of Women Bibata Barry Niandou – on behalf of the Government of Niger – vowed to support efforts to achieve the MDG3.

The ministers underlined that women's participation in decision making through improving their capacity for leadership is important for sustainable development, and that women's economic power needs to be strengthened by promoting opportunities for income generating activities as well as by increased micro credit facilities for rural women. The ministers further referred to the need for strengthening the institutional capacity of the government to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women and to support non-governmental organizations for the advancement of women.

The Government of Niger commits itself to:

- Approve and implement a national gender policy to ensure gender equality;
- Establish and strengthen relevant government mechanisms to implement all international conventions for achieving MDG3 on gender equality and the empowerment of women.



Five ministers highlighted their commitment to MDG3: From the left, Minister of Foreign Affairs Aïchatou Mindaoudou, Minister of Urbanisation, Housing and Land Registry Aïssa Diallo Abdoulaye, Minister of National Competitiveness Abdou Daouda, Minister of the Advancement of Women Barry Bibata Niandou, and Minister of Agricultural Development Ahaman Moussa.



MAGDALENA CAJÍAS
Minister of Education and Culture

BOLIVIA

ANTONIA MOSCOSO DE RODRÍGUEZ
Executive Director of the Artisan Association
of Bolivian Women Señor de Mayo

60 USD 67 million to student hostels and school transport

Magdalena Cajías states: “It is necessary to change the levels of gender inequality for girls, adolescents and young women in their access to and possibilities to stay in the education system, as well as to improve the quality of the education, especially in the rural and poor areas of Bolivia. This will be done through implementation of the project “Access and school permanence” with a budget of USD 67 million to be executed over the coming 4 years. This project will establish numerous student hostels and a school transport system, which will cover all of the rural areas in the country.”

Incorporating two new groups of women in Artisan Association

Antonia Moscoso de Rodríguez adds: “I am committed to incorporate two new groups of women offering them technical, productive and commercial support. This will facilitate not only the incorporation of these women in the labour market, but also ensure a better economic position for the women within their families and homes. Furthermore, the practical commercial experience will give them a greater self esteem, empowerment and some basic education, which will enable them to participate in the political life of Bolivia.”



From the right: Minister for Education Magdalena Cajías, Vice-minister of Gender Miriam Evelin Agreda Rodriguez, Executive Director Antonia Moscoso de Rodríguez, and Ambassador of Denmark to Bolivia, Charlotte Slente.



MARIA EITEL
President
Nike Foundation

NIKE FOUNDATION

61 Accelerating the Girl Effect

The girl effect is the ability of adolescent girls in developing countries to bring unprecedented economic and social change to their families, communities and countries.

The Nike Foundation commits to empowering the women of the future by accelerating the girl effect:

We will build awareness of the girl effect with our internet platform (www.girleffect.org) which is an online destination that helps people to understand girls’ untapped potential and engage in unleashing it.

We must mobilize far greater resources than our own. The Nike Foundation pledges to persevere in its efforts to engage corporations, governments, foundations and others in directing resources to adolescent girls in the developing world.

The Nike Foundation will find, fund and refine the best models for girls. These investments cover three of her basic needs for physical, education and social well-being; her community’s norms and opportunities that influence the options available to her; and her financial opportunities and ability to provide economic value beyond that of an unpaid domestic laborer.

We will invest in “girl expertise” and help bring girl-centered infrastructure design to governments, institutions and large NGOs. In this spirit, we will encourage the community of MDG3 Torch recipients to take concrete action to specifically address the needs of adolescent girls in their work.



Maria Eitel receives the torch from Ambassador Ib Petersen, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.



BERT KOENDERS
Development Cooperation Minister

THE NETHERLANDS

62 MDG3 fund to support activities, which improve rights and opportunities for women

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently launched the MDG3 fund to support activities that will lead to concrete results with regard to improved rights and opportunities for women.

‘Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women’, the third Millennium Development Goal is a priority of the Dutch government. More action is needed to truly create a society where men and women are equal and enjoy the same rights and opportunities. Women struggle for equal rights, economic justice and a safe environment – often with limited financial means, but with a strong commitment and interest. For themselves, their families and their communities. Worldwide there is a fight against poverty, but special attention needs to be given to violence and discrimination against women.

The main objective of the MDG3 fund is to support activities that lead to concrete results with regard to improved rights and opportunities for women. The fund will put emphasis on:

- Property and inheritance rights for women;
- Gender equality in employment and equal opportunities on the labour market;
- Participation and representation of women in national parliaments and political bodies;
- Combating violence against women.

Priority target groups are: women and girls in situations of conflict, marginalized women and adolescents.

A total budget of EUR 50 million is available for the period 2008-11.



Development Cooperation Minister, Bert Koenders (right), receives the torch from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



DOUGLAS ALEXANDER
Secretary of State for International Development

UNITED KINGDOM

63 GBP 46.3 million for gender equality and women’s empowerment programmes in Ghana and Yemen

Just over seven years ago, world leaders came together at the Millennium Summit to pledge that they would “spare no effort” to free men, women and children from extreme poverty. Today, with seven years remaining to 2015, some lives have changed for the better. However, overall progress has been too slow and we know that above all, the world is failing women and girls. Gender equality and women’s empowerment is vital to delivering the MDGs, as it cuts across them all. The UK Government is proud to be an MDG3 Torch Champion.

As part of this commitment the UK’s Department for International Development will build on our ongoing efforts to promote gender equality and empower women and will spend an extra GBP 46.3 million on gender equality and women’s empowerment programmes in Ghana and Yemen. In Ghana up to GBP 3 million will be spent on the LEAP social grants scheme benefiting 164,000 chronically poor households. These households will receive cash transfers in exchange for a commitment to ensure children attend school, enrol family members on the National Health Insurance Scheme, register births of all children, and eliminate child labour. In Yemen, a further GBP 43.3 million will go to the Social Fund for Development (SFD), taking the UK’s total commitment for the SFD until 2010 to GBP 63.1 million. The SFD benefits women and girls in a wide variety of ways. In SFD-supported rural schools for example, enrolment rates for girls have improved by 122 per cent since 2003, compared to 91 per cent for boys.



Permanent Secretary of Department for International Development, Nemat Shafik (right), receives the torch on behalf of Douglas Alexander from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.



ERIK SOLHEIM

Minister of the Environment and International Development

NORWAY

64

Enhanced focus on women's rights and gender equality in development policy

In 2008 the Norwegian Government presented the first White Paper to Parliament ever entirely focused on women's rights and gender equality in development policy. In particular, we pledge to make an extra effort to:

- Ensure a steady increase in the percentage of development funding allocated to women's rights and gender equality as an objective in its own right and an integral dimension of other development goals.
- Work hard to promote women's equal participation in peace and reconciliation efforts. Norway is committed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. During the donor conference on Sudan in Oslo May 2008, we initiated a parallel women's forum to enable women from all parts of Sudan to come together, identify joint priorities and present them to the donors and the Sudanese government. We will make an extra effort to enhance Norwegian support for women in Sudan.
- Be a strong advocate for women's empowerment and gender equality in key international processes, particularly Aid Effectiveness up to and beyond the international forum in Accra (September 2008) and Financing for Development up to and through the international conference in Doha (November/December 2008).

The purpose is to promote women's empowerment and gender equality as a matter of fairness and rights in accordance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Investing in women is investing in economic growth and sustainable and inclusive development and peace.

PHOTO: LONNEKE VAN GENUGTEN



Erik Solheim gives ambitions commitments to women's rights.



PHOTO: MIKKEL ØSTERGAARD ▷



DONALD KABERUKA
President
African Development Bank Group

AfDB

65 Gender-responsive budgets and additional allocations

On behalf of the AfDB Donald Kaberuka makes the following commitments towards achieving MDG3:

Higher education: Contribute to increasing women's attendance and certification, particularly in science and technology, to at least 50 per cent by 2015, and provide UA 180 million in support.

Health and education: Contribute to increasing the attendance of girls and women in education, improving women's health, and reducing maternal mortality by improving basic infrastructure, schools, hospital, clinics, access roads, and by providing water and sanitation. Provide an estimated UA 920 million for these purposes by 2015.

Employment generation: Increase access to micro finance to at least 60 per cent female entrepreneurs and to rural finance to at least 70 per cent female farmers; increase support to at least 50 per cent of female entrepreneurs in at least five African countries in private sector operations; and institute an annual prize Innovative African female entrepreneur in business. Provide UA 230 million for these purposes by 2015.

Gender budgeting: Step-up work on gender-responsive budgets and auditing, in particular in the context of AfDB's policy dialogue around budget support and commit additional resources for this purpose (estimated at UA 12 million over the next six years).

Improving the gender balance within AfDB: Fast track action to bring AfDB to international best practice by the end of 2009 in the recruitment, retention, and career development of women. Establish an annual Award for a Bank project, which demonstrates best practice or innovation in promoting gender equality.



Bert Koenders, Development Cooperation Minister of the Netherlands (left), hands over a torch to Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank (right).



AMINTA GRANERA
Chief
National Police

NICARAGUA

66 Stronger focus on women in the Nicaraguan police force

Chief of the National Police Aminta Granera expressed her commitments to do something extra to achieve MDG3:

- Increase the participation of women in the National Police to 31 per cent. This figure will gradually be increased up to 50 per cent.
- Ensure women's and girls' rights by granting access to justice through quality specialized legal and psychological services in the Women, Children and Adolescent Division (Comisarias de la Mujer).
- Promote equal rights and empowerment of women in the National Police through the institutional gender policy.



Chief of the National Police in Nicaragua, Aminta Granera (left), raises the MDG3 Torch together with Rebeca Moraga Garcia, 3rd year student of Police Science at the Police Academy in Nicaragua (right).



H.E. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE
President of the United Republic of Tanzania
and current Chair of the African Union

TANZANIA

67

Violence against women to be addressed as a special target

The President of Tanzania and Chairperson of the African Union accepted the MDG3 Champion Torch on 24 July at a ceremony in the State House, Dar es Salaam. President Kikwete affirmed his personal commitment and that of his party, Chama cha Mapinduzi, and the Government to work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 3 on gender equality and empowerment of women in Tanzania as well as globally.

Among the initiatives set in motion by President Kikwete are giving access to education for girls and women, increasing the number of women in parliament and other positions of decision making, and empowerment of rural women through creating an enabling environment for women's participation in economic life of Tanzanian society. However, there is still a long way to go before gender equality has been achieved in Tanzania.

As President Kikwete underlined: "I know it is not easy given the longstanding cultures, traditions and idiosyncrasies of men in our society. But we cannot give up nor should we resign to failure. We should keep on fighting till success." The other daunting challenge, according to President Kikwete, is that of economic empowerment of women. He said: "There is no argument that economic life of Tanzanian women remains difficult. Generally, Tanzanians are poor but Tanzanian women are much poorer."

As a torch bearer, President Kikwete pledges to

- Ensure political commitment and leadership in implementing the MDG3 as well as the other seven MDGs;
- Work harder to further reorient government policies, plans and actions towards intensifying the fight against poverty among Tanzanias women. This will include reviewing a number of laws related to marriage, inheritance, rights of the child, land and property ownership with a view of enhancing legal and social empowerment as well as protection of women;
- Empower rural women and create enabling environment for women's participation in economic life of the society. We commit to doing much more to enable women to develop and benefit from their entrepreneurial acumen through education, training, micro-finance schemes and legal protection;
- Do more to address violence against women, which includes sexual exploitation of girls and women. It is, for me, a missing MDG3 target.



President Kikwete received the torch from Bjarne H. Sørensen, Ambassador of Denmark to Tanzania. Present at the ceremony were Margaret Sitta, Minister for Community Development, Gender and Children (left) and Bernard Membe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (right).





URSULA PLASSNIK
Minister for European and International Affairs

AUSTRIA

68 Strengthening women in conflict and post-conflict situations

Women can make a difference – they are often agents of change in their societies. The achievement of the third Millennium Development Goal is thus an important tool to achieve the other UN Millennium Development Goals. No society can afford to disregard the potential of women, who constitute 50 per cent of its population. Empowering women and making their contributions more visible is therefore a special focus of Austrian Development Cooperation.

Women, Peace and Security – strengthening women in conflict and post-conflict situations is one of my personal priorities as foreign minister. Austria's activities are firmly based on a national action plan. The number of female military observers, civilian police, envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in UN peacekeeping missions is still disappointingly low. We thus welcome recent efforts by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to counter this imbalance and expect that further actions will be taken.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted in the year 2000. We have achieved some progress but much more is necessary. The resolution needs to be fully translated into practice. I therefore advocate a thorough 10 year review of the implementation of Resolution 1325 in 2010. We have to define future priorities to achieve long lasting results.

Let us work together to achieve the third Millennium Development Goal: Gender Equality – equality not in nature, not even in capacities or talents, because we are different. But equality in responsibilities, equality in opportunity, equality in rights and equality in respect!



The Austrian Minister for European and International Affairs, Ursula Plassnik, signs up to UNIFEM's initiative to end violence against women.



ELSA BALLAURI
Executive Director
Albanian Human Rights Group

ALBANIA

69 The empowerment of women for the creation of a stronger Women's Movement in Albania

Albania needs women - their work and passion, their creative spirit, their ideas and visions. The power of Albanian women is still at the level of individual talent and strength. This means that though we have successful organizations and individuals, we don't have a proper Women's Movement which would make possible the true development of an emancipated society.

I commit to empowering women towards the creation of a stronger Women's Movement in Albania and to passing on the MDG3 Champion Torch to other women that contribute to the process of building an Albanian Women's Movement. To do so, I commit to raising awareness in Albania by:

- Creating discussion platforms for women in the electronic media. Within the year, I will be the director of a weekly TV series that will run for about five months and feature women discussing their problems and aspirations. I think this program will have a positive impact as it is still an unknown type of program in Albanian media;
- Establishing Women's Clubs in major cities to initiate fora for women to freely discuss their work, exchange experiences, powerful ideas and new ways of thinking;
- Lobbying for the establishment of a Museum on Women to reflect women's history: social, cultural, political and psychological events in Albanian history through the eyes of women.



Advocate for human rights, Elsa Ballauri, receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Albania, Niels Severin Munk.



LUIS ALBERTO MORENO
President
Inter-American Development Bank

IDB

70 Promoting women's empowerment in Latin America and the Caribbean

When receiving the MDG3 Torch, Luis Alberto Moreno committed the IDB to create a new Gender Equality Policy by updating its Women in Development Policy, drafting a Gender Action Plan and enhancing the role of its current Gender and Diversity Unit.

The new Gender Equality Policy will establish the need for IDB borrowing member countries and bank staff to identify gender issues, consult with women and men and ensure that they equally participate in and benefit from bank supported operations. The policy will identify opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment proactively through Bank action, and at the same time, identify areas that may cause harm to gender equality and warrant safeguarding.

To increase the bank's institutional capacity to implement the Policy, the IDB will enhance the role of its current Gender and Diversity Unit. The IDB intends also to significantly increase, in close collaboration with other external donors, the amount of investment, which includes specific actions to promote gender equality. In addition, the IDB will strengthen its support to women's participation in political decision making.

The IDB has stated its readiness to take on its responsibility and proactively contribute to the eradication of inequality based on gender in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Luis Alberto Moreno and members of the IDB Board with the MDG3 Torch.



FADWA KHADER
Director-General
Rural Women's Development Society

PALESTINIAN AREAS

71 Campaign against "honour killings"

Fadwa Khader and the steering committee pledge to increase awareness on "honour killings" and lobby against Article 340 of the penal code which protects perpetrators of this crime. This will be done through the nationwide "Let's Defend Life" campaign, which will focus on the despicable act of "honour killing". The campaign will launch a series of activities aimed at raising awareness and promoting legal change on the issue of "honour killings" in the Palestinian territories. The activities will be implemented by a steering committee of prominent and dedicated Palestinian women – and men. The committee will be expanded throughout the duration of the campaign to ensure even more support. The committee is headed by Fadwa Khader.

The purpose of the campaign is:

- To raise awareness in the Palestinian public and among Palestinian politicians on the despicable act of female killings in the false name of honour;
- To mobilize the public and key representatives of the political elite to act against "honour killings" by changing Article 340 of the penal code that protects the perpetrators of this crime.



Fadwa Khader leads a demonstration against "honour killings" with the MDG3 Champion Torch.



HARUHIKO KURODA
President
Asian Development Bank

ADB

72

Highlighting gender equality as one of main drivers of change for development in Asia and the Pacific

Haruhiko Kuroda accepts the MDG3 ChampionTorch on behalf of ADB and commits to the following new activities to support gender equality and women's empowerment:

1. ADB will implement its new long-term strategic framework or Strategy 2020, which highlights gender equity as one of the five drivers of change for achieving the greatest impact in Asia and the Pacific. Strategy 2020 will stress support for investments in rural infrastructure, covering irrigation and water management, rural roads, and rural electrification services that particularly benefit women.
2. ADB will strengthen the monitoring of its contribution to gender equality results at the country and institutional levels. Its country partnership strategies will include the results frameworks that duly reflect country gender assessments and gender strategies. ADB will increase the number of projects with a gender theme or a gender mainstreaming from a baseline of 37.7 per cent in 2004-06. ADB will annually report on the progress in this regard in its Development Effectiveness Review.
3. ADB will scale up partnerships with the United Nations and multilateral and bilateral agencies to work on improvements in statistical capacity of countries in Asia and the Pacific to collect and update sex disaggregated data and gender equality information, so that these countries can better monitor gender-related targets in the Millennium Development Goals.
4. ADB will strengthen policy research and advisory services on gender dimensions of vulnerabilities associated with looming regional and global challenges, such as food crisis and climate change. In particular, the policy work will identify the patterns of impacts and coping mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific and find ways to reduce vulnerability among women and girls.



President Kuroda (right) receives the torch from Torben Bellers, Temporary Alternate Director in ADB for Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.



GILL GREER
 Director-General
 International Planned Parenthood Federation

IPPF

73 Sexual Rights: An IPPF Declaration

IPPF is a major non-governmental organization contributing to one of the seven strategic priorities to achieve gender equality identified by the Task Force of the Millennium Project. In 2007, IPPF provided 46 million sexual and reproductive health services of which 24.8 million were family planning services.

With the adoption of “Sexual Rights: An IPPF Declaration” in May 2008, IPPF intensified its efforts to promote the sexual rights of all women, men and young people as a universal human right. The Declaration provides an inclusive vision of sexuality based on equality and non-discrimination. While the Declaration recognizes particular areas to promote women and girls’ sexual rights, it underscores the necessity of including men and boys to ensure real women’s empowerment.

Through this commitment, IPPF’s 152 Member Associations working in 168 countries will be better equipped to begin or extend their work on improving access to all, and thereby enable their clients to fully realize their sexual and reproductive rights.

IPPF will use the Declaration as a framework for advocacy particularly in the run up to completion of ICPD Programme of Action by 2015. IPPF believes advocacy on the basis of the Declaration will help governments understand and make lasting commitments on the basis of the link between sexual rights, public health and development.



Chargé d’Affaires Michael Borg-Hansen hands over a torch to Director-General of IPPF, Gill Greer.



WINNIE KATHURIMA IMANYARA
 Chief Executive, Equity Group Foundation

KENYA

CAROLINE MUTOKO
 Radio host, KISS100 FM

74 Mentoring and educating young girls

Winnie Kathurima Imanyara personally commits to mentor and offer support and guidance to girls and young mothers in Kenya by using the concept of multilevel networking, establishing cells for support. She will recruit mentors, each of whom will have two mentees and recruit two new mentors. The mentorship program will cover personal well-being, pursuit of knowledge, career progression, economic empowerment and positive living.

On behalf of Equity Bank, Winnie commits to facilitate easy, flexible and affordable access to financial services for women’s economic empowerment at all levels and develop innovative products and services specifically targeting women in all levels of society. The products and services developed take the disadvantaged status of women in terms of ownership of resources of production into account. The bank also commits to equip women with business management skills thereby enhancing the survival and growth rate of enterprises owned and managed by women.

Caroline Mutoko commits: “My pledge stems from my mother, who raised me to believe that anything is possible, and from a school system, which equipped us to be amazing ladies. Who I am today and what I have been able to achieve is based purely on the education I got and the women who along the way pointed me in the right direction.

I pledge to pass on that great spirit, and great tradition of women. I commit to educate no less than 20 girls every year. I commit to spend one-on-one time with them to shape their opinions and their thinking, so that they too may believe that it is possible and with that belief, make this a better, brighter world for other women.”



Winnie Kathurima Imanyara (left) and Caroline Mutoko promote gender equality from different platforms.



SANDRA RAMOS

Leader of the women's rights group
Maria Elena Cuadra

MODESTA GONZALEZ

Farm worker, Femuprocan

NICARAGUA

75

Promoting women's rights

Sandra Ramos commits to continuing to work on the launch of a political advocacy campaign to influence the decision making process in the country to promote women in non-traditional vocational education. It will facilitate the incorporation of women in the labour market as well as contribute to improve women's economic position and a higher self-esteem that will improve their economic and political independence.

The women's grassroots movement will create a Young Women's Leadership Academy with the goal of training 100 young women each year.

To break the vicious cycle of the no respect of the fundamental rights of women in Nicaragua, a Conflict Resolution and Mediation Centre in the City of Managua will be established. It will promote a culture of compliance with women's rights and promote more effective women empowerment and gender equity.

Rural women of Nicaragua are key to the development

Modesta Gonzalez stresses that Nicaraguan rural women are producers and contributors to the GNP as well as to food security and sovereignty of the country.

"We commit to developing programmes aimed at buying land benefitting women, and work for women's legal access to land. *We work* specifically on issues where public policies and programmes are ignoring rural areas, and in particular, issues concerning women's rights and working conditions. *We address* political actions to promote gender equity, a key factor in the overall development of the Nicaraguan family".



Sandra Ramos (left photo) and Modesta Gonzalez (center in right photo) received the MDG3 Torch in Nicaragua from Ambassador Søren Vøhtz. Martha Heriberta Valle holds the torch for Modesta Gonzales (right photo).



RAMTANE LAMAMRA

AU Commissioner for Peace and Security

AHMED BEN BELLA

AU's Panel of the Wise and former President of Algeria

AFRICAN UNION

76

More women to mediate African conflicts

"With the MDG3 Champion Torch in hand, I commit to ensuring that the African Union Commission will facilitate to have more women to mediate African conflicts to bring to bear their comparative advantage inherent to their specific instinctive and sensitive intelligence."

Ramtane Lamamra passed on the MDG3 torch to Ahmed Ben Bella, Chairperson of AU's 'Panel of the Wise', who made the following pledge:

"I hereby undertake to actively draw on the wisdom of our Africa's women to meet the challenges of peaceful resolution of conflicts throughout the continent."



Ramtane Lamamra (right) receives the MDG3 Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Ethiopia, Pernille Dahler Kardel.



MADS KJÆR
CEO and co-founder
MyC4

DENMARK

77

Invest in women's businesses

Mads Kjær has made a deep commitment: “to expand MyC4’s marketplace with more African partners with a specific focus on women and thereby ensure women access to capital and competences on fair and transparent terms.”

MyC4 sees the support of gender equality and women’s economic empowerment as crucial elements in the ongoing development of Africa. Therefore, MyC4 is strongly committed to providing the best possible means for African women to lift themselves out of poverty and create healthy economic growth through micro and small businesses.

An example of one of the many female entrepreneurs who has received loans through MyC4 is Catherine Akwir, who sells vehicle parts at Uganda’s biggest market for spare parts. In 2007, she received her first loan of EUR 250 enabling her to improve the quality of the spare parts and increase the stock to meet customers’ demands. Hereby, she increased her monthly income by 30 per cent making it possible to support her household and send her children to school. In spring 2008, Catherine received her second loan of EUR 700 to expand and develop her business.

An important part of Catherine’s business is her membership of a group of six women who help each other to do business, give each other advice and provide acute financial support. This is a women-only group that calls itself “Women Development.” Catherine is setting an example to other women to be open-minded about investing and engaging in businesses dominated by men.



Catherine Akwir (right) is one of the beneficiaries from MyC4, co-founded by Mads Kjær (left).





AZEB MESFIN
 Vice President
 Organization of African First Ladies Against HIV/AIDS

ETHIOPIA

78 Ethiopia is committed to achieving gender equity and empowerment in all sectors

We would like to acknowledge the commitment of the Danish government to the MDGs. Furthermore, we appreciate the recognition of Ethiopia's efforts to meet the MDGs. In particular, the empowerment of women as a critical component to achieve the MDGs has been addressed through legislation, policy and programs. Significant numbers of women have mobilized their resources, which have resulted in meeting some of these challenges. However, Ethiopia's agenda to achieve equity in all sectors will continue through various forms. We are committed to eradicating Female Genital Mutilation, early marriage, HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. We are also committed to caring for orphans and vulnerable children and to providing access for girls to continue their education. We have supported 485 poor rural girls this year to attend high-schools and we hope to triple this number by the next school year.



Azeb Mesfin (right) receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Ambassador of Denmark to Ethiopia, Pernille Dahler Kardel.



BARBARA STOCKING
 Chief Executive
 Oxfam GB

OXFAM

79 Efforts to achieve gender justice

Oxfam International is a confederation of non-governmental organizations, dedicated to fighting poverty and injustice around the world. We believe that achieving gender justice is essential to achieving a vision of a just world without poverty. This is not exclusively the responsibility of women; men should participate in challenging women's subordination, including through changing their own attitudes and behaviour.

Considerable progress has been made towards equal rights for women and men.

But gender inequality and violence persist. In most parts of the world men still disproportionately own and control resources. Women – especially those belonging to marginalised groups – have less legal protection and less decision-making power. They have little control over their fertility and sexuality and are more vulnerable to HIV infection.

In partnership with others, we are working to increase women's access to and control over resources and decision-making; change institutions, laws, and policies; and address the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of women and men that discriminate against women.

Oxfam International pledges

- To renew its efforts to achieve gender justice so that many more women will gain power over their lives and live free from violence.



Barbara Stocking (left) talking with Mwashi Kapaya and other teachers at Ikingwamanoti Primary School in Shinyanga, Tanzania.



THOMAS MIROW
President
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EBRD

80

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as part of its transition mandate, commits to launching and implementing a Gender Action Plan in its countries of operation, which range from Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and Mongolia, to actively promoting greater opportunities for women and to mitigating gender inequalities in the region.

Specifically, the Bank's objective will be to increase the economic participation of women in the private sector, including in decision-making roles, through its projects, staff and clients. The Bank will also increase its investments in basic infrastructure to increase access to clean water and sustainable energy, which has been shown to have an important positive impact on the health and well-being of families. The Bank has included gender equality into the new Environmental and Social Policy as one of the important objectives to be achieved through its projects.



President Mirow (right) receives the MDG3 Torch from Eva Leisner (left) at the Embassy of Denmark in London.



ALAIN JOYANDET
Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophony

FRANCE

81

Gender responsible to be nominated and EUR 10 million

Becoming part of the MDG3 Torch Initiative, Mr Joyandet – a strong supporter of the need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women – underlines his strong belief in women as key actors for development, not least in Africa. He highlights the crucial role played by women in promoting economic growth, health, education as well as protecting the environment.

Alain Joyandet has made gender equality and the empowerment of women a key issue of the new French cooperation policy with Africa.

In this respect, he has committed to nominating a high level personality responsible for integrating gender in all French cooperation programmes and projects, supported by the necessary human resources and a budget of EUR 10 million for projects to promote gender equality and empowerment of women to be implemented by the French Development Agency (AFD).



Alain Joyandet (left) strongly believes in women as key actors for development.



JENERALI ULIMWENGU
Journalist and publisher

TANZANIA

NAKAAYA SUMARY
Songwriter and singer

82 More women to be interviewed in TV and more women writers

Jenerali Ulimwengu, active in human rights groups and known for his talk shows on television and his weekly column in Kiswahili newspaper, Raia Mwema, commits:

“To a continued and reinforced contribution to awareness raising among the Tanzanian public on issues related to MDG3 and gender issues generally.

To this end I will use the space available to me, in print as well as electronic media, to highlight the pressing problems facing women in our country, and what can be done to alleviate them. It will be necessary to engage an increasing number of women participants in the awareness raising activities, by getting more female writers to contribute articles bearing on the plight of women and to have more women interviewees in my weekly television programme, Jenerali on Monday.

I strongly believe that a country is only as good as its womenfolk and that there can be no real development unless women’s issues are addressed squarely and barriers to women’s emancipation and development are done away with.”

A song for gender equality and women’s empowerment

Nakaaya Sumary states: “I commit to writing a song in support of gender equality and women’s empowerment. I will use my music to educate Tanzanians in particular and the world at large about women’s issues in Tanzania and the importance of MDG3. I will work hard to promote this song about women’s empowerment through video, radio and live performances. I reaffirm my commitment to promote positive messages in my music and will encourage others to do the same.”



Nakaaya Sumary (left) and Jenerali Ulimwengu (right) with their MDG3 Torches.



REGINALD A. MENGI
Owner and Executive Chairman of IPP Limited and
Chairman of Tanzania Industries

TANZANIA

JESCA MKUCHU
Chairperson, Feminist Activist Coalition (FemAct)

83 Initiate and finance projects that empower poor women

IPP Limited is a holding company with subsidiary companies engaged in mining, manufacturing, bottling and in media, which includes television, radio and newspapers.

Reginald A. Mengi, Chairman of a number of enterprises and institutions, including Confederation of Tanzania Industries, Media Owners Association Tanzania and International Chamber of Commerce Tanzania and Director of the Board of Commonwealth Business Council pledges to:

- Initiate and finance projects that empower poor women;
- Support and empower physically challenged poor mothers who have been abandoned by their partners;
- Continue to promote women employees to senior positions within my group of companies.

To engage and organize for change at all levels

Jesca Mkuchu, FemAct is a coalition of more than 40 like-minded progressive civil society and women’s rights organizations in Tanzania. The coalition started in 1996 to promote transformative feminism based on the understanding that women’s rights are human rights and are intricately tied to the obtainment of the rights of all other marginalised groups and the fight against all other forms of discrimination based on class, sex, age, north/south, urban/rural and disability.

FemAct believes that collective action is vital to create a vibrant movement for social change and a key strategy for effective organizing.

FemAct commits to:

- Doing something extra for the realization of MDG 3 through building and promoting transformative movement that is able to engage and organize for change at all levels.



Jesca Mkuchu (left) and Reginald A. Mengi (right) are representatives from civil society and private sector in Tanzania.



RASHEDA K. CHOWDHURY
Adviser, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

BANGLADESH

FAKHRUDDIN AHMED
Chief Adviser, Head of Interim Government

84

Rasheda K. Chowdhury states: “As a torch bearer of Bangladesh for this Global Call to Action for the MDG3, I commit to continuing my efforts to support the process of empowering women in Bangladesh. I believe women can be empowered by uplifting their economic and socio-political status. The Ministry of Women Affairs is already undertaking a lot of work to promote women’s empowerment. Being in charge of the Ministry, I commit to continuing this work and I also commit myself to promoting the MDG3 campaign in Bangladesh and providing all possible support from the ministry”.

Fakhruddin Ahmed commits: “The success of the MDG3 Torch depends on the empowerment of women across different sectors and on progress of their position within family, within society and as individuals. As a torch bearer representing 145 million citizens of Bangladesh for this global call to action, I commit my complete and total support to ensure the participation of women in every aspect of Bangadeshi society. Empowering women to contribute their fullest potential will not only support the cause of women, but will also expedite the socio-economic progress of the entire country. Recognising social and economic progress is not possible if we leave out half of our population from mainstream activities, the Government of Bangladesh has placed special emphasis on the importance of women’s development and education. We pledge ourselves to continue to change any negative attitude that may remain around women’s education, and to ensure that women’s rights in the workplace and everyday are protected at any and all costs”.

PHOTO: STEPHEN FREHEIT



Rasheda K. Chowdhury (left) passes on the MDG3 Champion Torch to Fakhruddin Ahmed.



BEVERLEY J. ODA
Minister of International Cooperation

CANADA

85

Renewed commitment to women around the world

On the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada is proud to be a champion of MDG 3, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. As part of the Global Call to Action, Canada is renewing its commitment to women around the world. For over three decades, equality between men and women has been a core commitment of CIDA’s development programming.

Women play a vital role in all aspects of their families, communities and nations. They are key catalysts to increasing education, strengthening healthcare and enabling stable societies to flourish. Canada will continue its support for women in developing countries with effective programs, delivering results that will make the meaningful difference they deserve.

PHOTO: RAPHAËLE CASTERA



Minister of International Cooperation Beverley Oda meets young girls in dancing outfits in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

SPAIN

BIBIANA AÍDO
Minster for Equality

86 For full equality, for full citizenship

Full citizenship signifies gender equality which will become a reality when all women are properly included.

Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé: Our responsibility to work for equality in its widest sense regardless of sex, race, political, cultural and religious beliefs is rooted in our ongoing and systematic defense of human rights in our country and in the international community. It is expressed by initiatives and programs to fight hunger and poverty, promote women's access to education, employment or self-employment. Gender equality is the core element mainstreamed in all development initiatives of Spain and it is one of the trademarks of our foreign policy.

Bibiana Aído: Equality and development goes hand in hand. Greater equality leads to better living conditions for all; because all human resources are being used; because women's knowledge and working capacity are not wasted; because it leads to more participation and more sustainable systems in other words – more democracy.

The Spanish Government is committed to actively engage men and women in working for a better future. The new generation will play the leading role in creating a new social model, where there is room for all men as well as women.



Bibiana Aído underlines the importance of gender equality as a means to achieve economic development.



PHOTO: EFE

Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé meets with a participant from Senegal, during the first international forum of Women and Local Politics in Cordoba.



STEVE CHADWICK
Minister of Women's Affairs

NEW ZEALAND

87 Action Plan for women in New Zealand and the Pacific

It is a pleasure to join the MDG3 Global Call to Action on behalf of my Government. New Zealand has always strongly supported women's rights, both domestically and internationally. Gender equality and poverty elimination are inextricably linked and are amongst the most pervasive global challenges. With increased attention to MDG3, not only in its own right, but also as central to the fulfilment of all the Millennium Development Goals, we can create a safe and just world, free of poverty, where we can all live with dignity.

This Government is committed to improving the status of women through its Action Plan for New Zealand Women. The Action Plan goals are to improve the economic independence of women, achieve greater work-life balance for families and improve New Zealand women's quality of life. In many Pacific countries women remain severely underrepresented in parliaments and decision-making bodies, experience high rates of gender-based violence, maternal mortality, increasing HIV infection, and lack opportunities for economic empowerment.

By receiving this torch, I commit the New Zealand Government to 'do something extra' in support of MDG3 in New Zealand, and internationally, particularly in our neighbourhood of the Pacific, through policy and programme engagement.

PHOTO: STEVEN NOWAKOWSKI



Steve Chadwick talks to a new mother at Angau Hospital during a visit to Papua New Guinea.



LISE KINGO
Executive Vice President
Novo Nordisk

DENMARK

88 Women, diabetes and development

As bearer of the MDG3 Torch, Novo Nordisk is committed to creating awareness of how diabetes will impede development and women's empowerment and driving actions to effectively overcome this barrier through collaborative efforts to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Addressing the adverse relationship between the global diabetes epidemic and a healthy, sustainable development is our contribution to the achievement of MDG3.

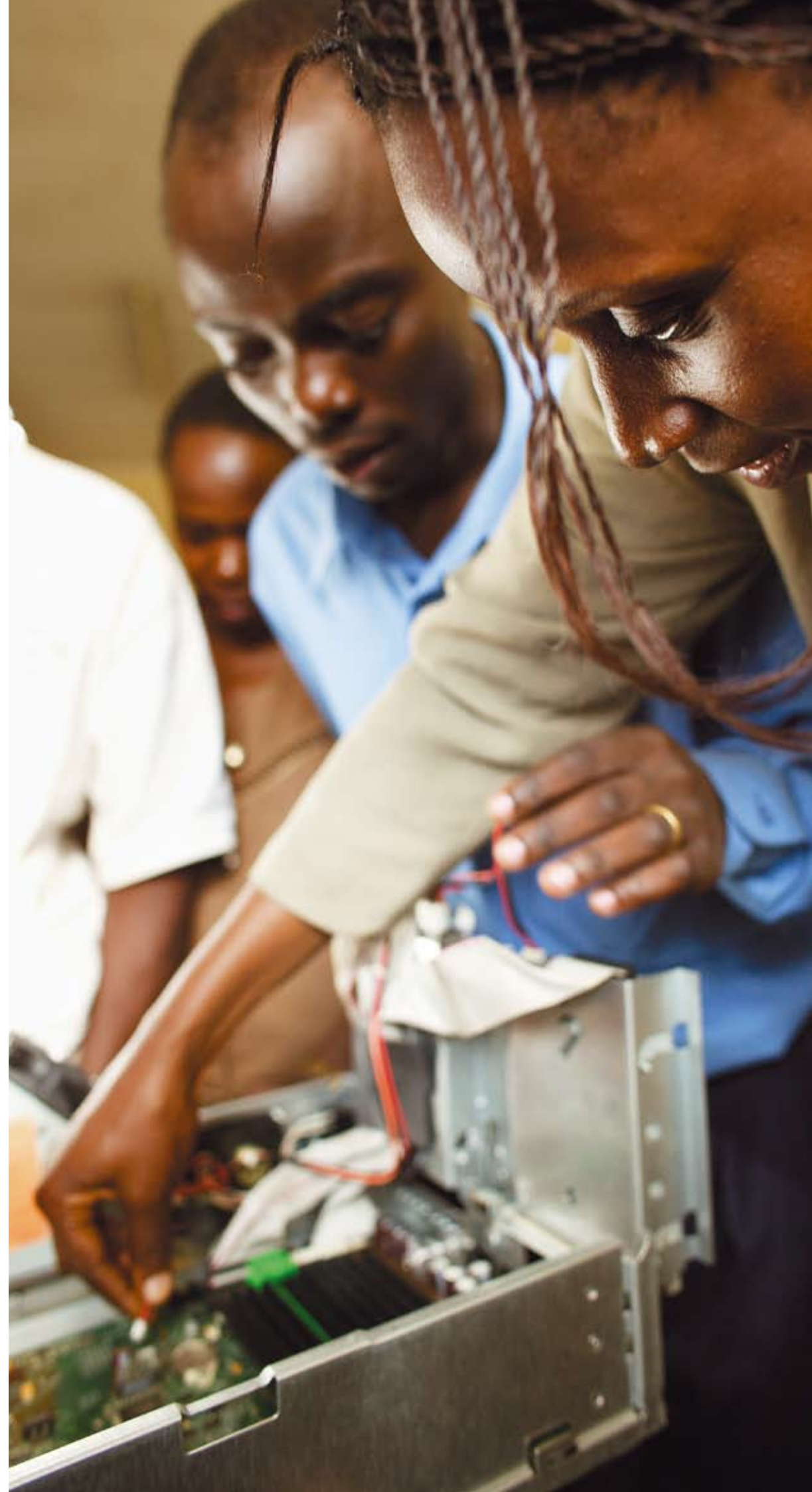
We have a dual goal: we will fight diabetes to empower women and we will empower women to fight diabetes.

Diabetes results in life-threatening complications. Every year, four million people worldwide die of diabetes-related complications. This is one person every 10 seconds. Women are uniquely affected by diabetes.

Due to various biological, cultural and socioeconomic factors women have a higher diabetes-related mortality and if acquired during pregnancy, diabetes will cause serious problems to the mother as well as the child. As primary care givers, women play a key role in the health of the entire family. Moreover, women are often at a disadvantage in being diagnosed and receiving proper treatment.



Lise Kingo receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs.





STEPHEN SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs

AUSTRALIA

89 Australia provides AUD 55.2 million to women empowerment

Australia is strongly committed to advancing gender equality through its international development assistance program. This includes a firm commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals including Goal 3 to promote gender equality and empower women. The Government views gender equality as critical to development effectiveness and is taking steps to ensure that gender is integrated into all aid activities.

In addition, to step up progress, Australia commits to:

- *Increasing support to end violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor*
Australia will scale up its response to violence against women. This will include increased support for victims of violence to access justice and support services. It will also include education and other prevention activities.
- *Promoting women entrepreneurs in the Pacific*
Australia is identifying barriers that disproportionately restrict Pacific women's ability to do business. A new four-year initiative in collaboration with the International Finance Corporation and World Bank to support Pacific women in private sector development will commence in 2008-09.
- *Promoting women's decision-making and leadership in the Pacific*
Australia will provide \$6.2 million over five years for a women's leadership program in the Pacific, in partnership with UNIFEM Pacific.
- *Increasing support to improve maternal mortality rates in Indonesia*
Australia will provide AUD 49 million over four years for a maternal and neonatal health program in Indonesia aimed at making pregnancy and childbirth safer for women in Indonesia's poorest areas. The program will increase the number of mothers who are attended by trained midwives, improve services, and increase community support for new and expecting mothers.



Stephen Smith receives the MDG3 Champion Torch from Susanne Shine, the Ambassador of Denmark to Australia.



LAURA ALBORNOZ
Minister for Women Affairs

CHILE

90 Focus on improving conditions for women in the labour market

Chile's Women's National Service (SERNAM) has joined the MDG3 Global Call to Action with a special focus on improving labour market conditions for women.

On behalf of SERNAM, Laura Albornoz pledges to encourage public and private companies to adopt new guidelines on gender equality and good labour market practice. SERNAM has developed a new set of guidelines for human resource management, comprising planned, verifiable and quantitative activities, which seek to diminish gender gaps and contribute to elimination of inequalities between men and women in the labour market. The guidelines that are voluntary will be introduced in 2009.

SERNAM further commits to developing a system of "Certification of Good Work Practices regarding Gender Equality" that companies can apply to, and which gives those who have implemented the minimum requirements a seal of national recognition. The target is to have 40 companies apply for certification.



Laura Albornoz encourages to adopt new guidelines on good labour market practice.



ELSEBETH GRAVGAARD
Chairwomen
Gendernet

DENMARK

91

1 becomes 29

Gendernet is a Danish Network established in 2006 composed of a broad range of Danish non-governmental organizations, institutions and resource persons. Gendernet includes 29 member organizations.

The network seeks to strengthen awareness and commitment, develop organisational capacity and strengthen joint co-ordination and knowledge sharing on gender and rights issues in development work.

Gendernet has collected commitments to do something extra to achieve MDG3 from the 29 member organizations, and the concrete commitments are of great diversity:

One organization will implement a gender policy focusing on more equal representation of both sexes in all layers of their organization; in all of their programme countries another organization will promote a Village Savings and Loan Association Model that has proven successful in empowering women. A whole issue of an education magazine will be dedicated to the theme of gender equality in the Middle East; a gender and rights audit will be carried out and a new gender component focusing on the empowerment of girls through sports are other examples of the commitments.

PHOTO: DANCHURHAID



Thumbs up for MDG3: From the left Elsebeth Gravgard, Chair woman of Gendernet, Judy Kamanyi, Chairperson of MS Policy Advisory Board in Uganda, Hellen Grace Asamo, Chairperson of the National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda (NUWODU), Mama Koité Doumbia of Mali, Chairperson of the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Franciska Aisbange Issaka, founding Director of Centre for Sustainable Development of Ghana CENSUDI, Signe Yde-Andersen, Coordinator of Gendernet, Denmark.



THORLEIF ENGER
President and Chief Executive Officer
Yara International ASA and chair of Yara Foundation

NORWAY

92

Replenishing Africa's greatest resource: the African woman food farmer

Yara International and the Yara Foundation are committed to acknowledge and support the African women food farmers through the Yara Prize and its different programs in support of small-hold African farmers.

Yara International ASA has responded to the call for an African green revolution made by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in July 2004, launching several African initiatives, among them the establishment of the Yara Foundation. The Foundation awards the annual Yara Prize to recognize exceptional efforts to reduce hunger and poverty in Africa and sponsors the Millennium Villages implementing measures proposed in the UN Millennium Hunger Task Force's action plan.

Yara finds it is incumbent to have a Green Revolution in Africa that not only replenishes the continent's soils – an important resource for Africa – but also replenishes Africa's greatest resource: the African woman food farmer. African women are the backbone of food production on the continent. Their strength, ingenuity and hard work produces 80 per cent of Africa's food. They work 16-hour days and use virtually the same rudimentary tools their great-grandmothers used a hundred years ago. Instead of the African woman being recognized for meeting the basic needs of an entire continent, she has the lowest socio-economic status in all of Africa. Therefore Africa must invest in women food farmers. If Africa is to end hunger and provide food security for its people and achieve a successful Green Revolution, Africa needs to invest in the people who are doing the work that needs to be done.



On behalf of the Yara Foundation Thorleif Engers has committed to acknowledge and support the African women food farmers.



VABAH GAYFLOR
Minister for Gender and Development

LIBERIA

93

Economic empowerment of women is the key to realizing women's potentials

My pledge as a torch bearer is to remind myself daily that my life right now is one of service to firstly, the people of my country, and in particular, the women and children. While women have in the ages past been marginalized, I know that their potentials have most often been untapped, and as a result, society and countries at large have been short changed. I am aware that economic empowerment is the key to it all – why do I say this?

At the personal level, I know that market women held up families during our conflict; I too became a market woman due to the circumstances then. With this experience, I pledged even then that I would make contacts, work across all levels of bottlenecks and political divides, coach, mentor and serve as a role model of integrity to women wherever they may be found and ensure that they are given the necessary opportunities to live lives of dignity. Moreover, the opportunity that is availing itself right now through the Danish grant of approximately USD 22 million for the implementation of the MDG3 in Liberia further enhances my own role in this effort.



*Vabah Gayflor, Minister for Gender and Development:
"Market women held up families during the conflict".*





SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

SOUTH AFRICA

94

Assistance to AIDS orphans organizations

We, Soweto Gospel Choir, fully endorse and agree with the aims and objectives of the MDG3 initiative. For the past five years, through our foundation Nkosi's Haven Vukani, we have raised money to support and uplift non-profit organizations, run by women who are supporting our most precious possession – the children of South Africa made vulnerable and orphaned by the devastating AIDS pandemic in our country. South Africa has one of the highest rape statistics and one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world, with our women being the most vulnerable and un-empowered. Through our association with Nkosi's Haven, a long term residential care centre for the destitute HIV/AIDS infected mother, her children and resulting AIDS orphans, we have a strong network which enables us to provide assistance to as many AIDS orphans organizations as we are able.

We pledge, by accepting the MDG3 Torch, to continue to give support to, and raise awareness for, our existing network of organizations, and to further extend this service to assist in enabling our women to stand proud, carrying forward the Torch of hope, strength and a much brighter future.



The Soweto Gospel Choir raises money to support children orphaned by the AIDS pandemic.



DESMOND TUTU

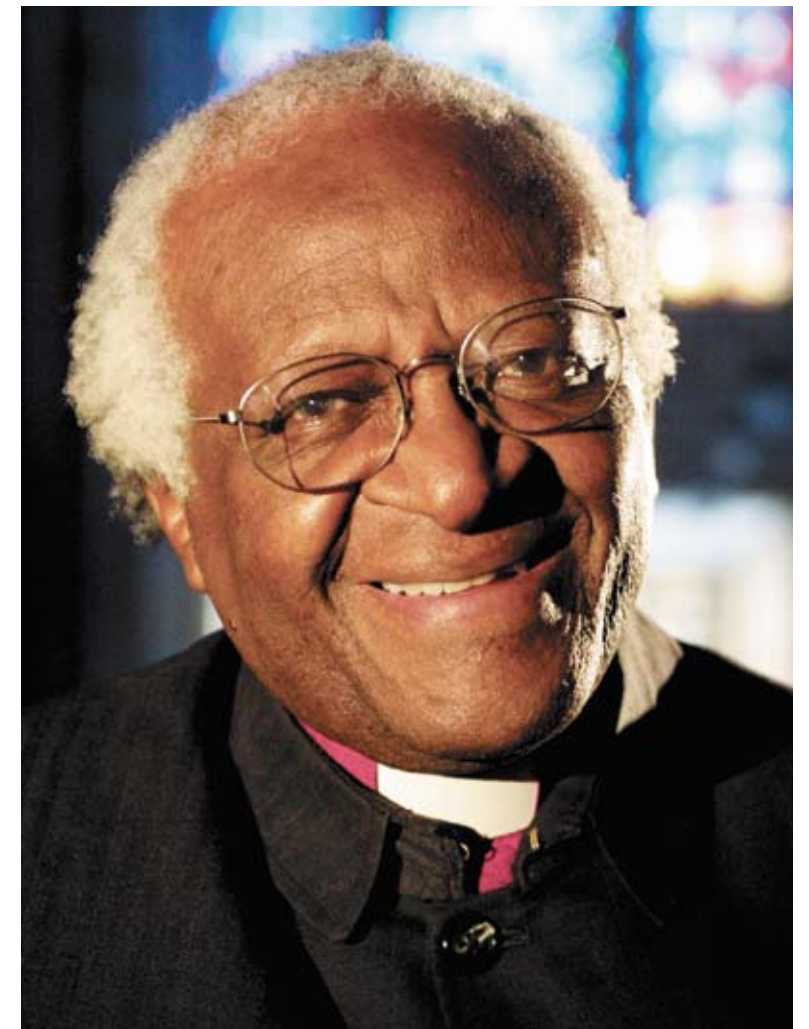
Anglican Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

SOUTH AFRICA

95

Positive Action enables Mothers to Gain some Independence

I am proud to be a patron of the Philani Nutrition Clinic in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. In 2006 in recognition of my 75th birthday the Philani Desmond Tutu Scholarship Fund was initiated, so called because it responds to positive action, rather than being a relief fund. The fund benefits mothers on Philani's Outreach programme who, despite their poverty, have shown great dedication in working with Philani to rehabilitate their malnourished children. Each family (2+ members) receives ZAR 300 a month for six months or one year. This enables mothers to gain some independence and improve the lives of their children and puts them in a position to live a healthy family life less vulnerable to such problems as HIV/AIDS, with the prospect of long term sustainability. Currently 72 families are enrolled in this programme. I pledge to continue my support for this initiative.



MDG3 torch bearer Desmond Tutu commits to continue work for malnourished children.



JENNA CLIFFORD
 Founder and Director
 Jenna Clifford Ltd.

SOUTH AFRICA

96 Pass on top business practices to aspiring female entrepreneurs

I pledge to work towards ensuring that South African women will have access to shared best practices on promoting and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in this country.

I hope that this would have the domino effect – in that other companies and organizations will then commit themselves to including best practices, lessons learnt and models for gender equality and women's empowerment on their websites and in their annual publications. In this way the information will be accessible to the public as well as other organizations wishing to improve in this area.

I pledge that in my own company, I will work to engage prominent SA personalities from all walks of life in a series of seminars or similar programmes - whereby we can participate informally and pass on our top business practices to aspiring female entrepreneurs.

I pledge to empower and educate young South African women by publishing these best practices on my own website – with a link to the MDG3 website so that readers will have a better understanding of how they too can dream big and achieve big.



Jenna Clifford will promote gender equality in companies and organizations.



GUNILLA CARLSSON
 Minister for International Development Cooperation

SWEDEN

97 Promoting women's empowerment, health and security

Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation accepts a torch on behalf of the Swedish Government, and commits to further enhancing efforts to promote women's economic and political empowerment, health and increased security for women and girls:

- To make a special commitment to the work on maternal health in order to fulfil MDG3 – with a focus on Africa;
- To host a conference on Human Rights in national action-plans with a focus on gender issues, to be celebrated in Stockholm in November 2008 together with the Ministry for Integration and Gender Quality and Minister Nyamko Sabuni;
- To work internationally for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in national action-plans;
- To support the World Bank project Gender Equality as Smart Economics – Adolescent Girls Initiative;
- Together with partners conclude studies on women and local democracy in order to identify actions needed to support women's political participation.



Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson, visited the local community in the village Kempung Chenan in Cambodia in May 2008.



PASCAL LAMY
 Director-General
 World Trade Organization

WTO

98 Empowerment of women in the trade and economic field

Pascal Lamy committed to helping gender equality through developing policies that will enable women to play a more prominent role in the economy

The WTO Doha Development Round of trade negotiations can and should increase women's economic participation. Trade related worth can lead to mutually re-enforcing dynamics: An increase in the standard of living of women, leading to more growth generated by women's participation and their investments in the economy.

Women play a key role in many sectors of our economies, including in textiles, handicrafts and other export related activities. And they are also crucial in agriculture. Better market access in goods and services along with progress in the negotiations in agriculture could further integrate women in the economy, in support of MDG3.

However, this will not happen automatically. Governments will need policies to actively ensure that the benefits of trade opening are distributed equally and benefit women. Improved trade rules and better market access will need to be complemented with support measures to address lack of trade related infrastructure, productive capacity and adjustment costs. Aid for Trade and the Enhanced Integrated Framework in favour of the poorest countries will have an important role to play.

In my capacity as Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, I commit to helping WTO members achieve a speedy and ambitious conclusion of the Doha Development Round, complemented by an Aid-for-Trade package, to help empowering women in the trade and economic field.

PHOTO: WTO



Pascal Lamy in the center of the participants of the Round-Table meeting on the Gender Dimension of the Enhanced Integrated Framework at WTO April 2008.



JUAN SOMAVIA
 Director-General
 International Labour Organization

ILO

99 8 initiatives to strengthen women's economic empowerment:

1. Work towards an international labour standard to underpin initiatives against discrimination and abuse of domestic workers.
2. Launch a new programme in Asia on the gender dimensions of forced and bonded labour. Implement programmes in post-conflict areas to protect women from forced labour and trafficking. Pursue a campaign with women business leaders to protect women in high-risk industries and sectors.
3. Strengthen ILO programmes to combat child labour, particularly of vulnerable working girls, and support national child labour plans, policies and programmes to protect them.
4. Reinforce women's organization and dialogue for promoting gender equality and achieving social and economic development goals.
5. Scale-up action to lower barriers to women's entrepreneurship, strengthen institutional capacity and develop relevant tools and support, with emphasis on Africa.
6. Reinforce action to empower women through work and work place action against HIV/AIDS.
7. Promote policy coherence among international organization by strengthening cooperation at country level for more effective and efficient action on MDG3. Continue to share ILO gender equality tools with member States and UN agencies.
8. Reflect these commitments in the Strategic Policy Framework 2010-2015 and approved budgets, and work to attract additional external resources for these areas.

PHOTO: ILO



Juan Somavia speaks at an event about the ILO Programme on Decent Employment for Women in India.



BAN KI-MOON
Secretary-General
United Nations

UN

100

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has accepted the invitation to receive and light the last of the 100 torches at the partnership event on 25 September 2008 in New York, where he will announce his commitment on behalf of the United Nations to do something extra in support of gender equality and empowerment of women.



PHOTO: KLAUS HOLSTING



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IS CRUCIAL

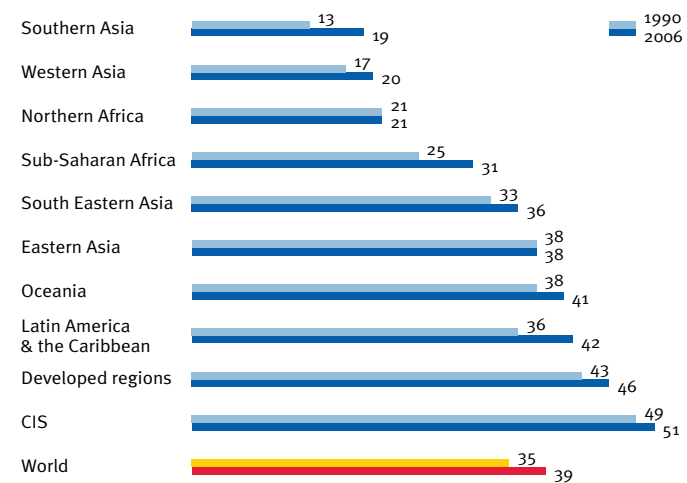
Economic empowerment of women is not only crucial to the achievement of gender equality, but is also essential for pro-poor growth and the eradication of poverty in developing countries. As has been frequently and strongly documented, low investment in women is an unwise and economically inefficient choice.

African women provide more than half the region's labour but lack equal access to education, to land, to legal rights – a clear illustration of Africa's enormous hidden and unutilized potential.

Job opportunities for women are an important indicator of progress. Employment is often described as the most important link between economic growth and poverty reduction, and in this area a greater effort is required. The Millennium Development Report 2008 documents that almost two thirds of employed women in the developing world are in vulnerable jobs as own-account and unpaid family workers.

Job opportunities open up, but women often remain trapped in insecure, low-paid positions

Employees in non-agricultural wage employment who are women, 1990 and 2006 (Percentage)



(Source: UN Millenium Development Goals Report 2008.)

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3 PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Target:

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Progress Indicators:

1. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
2. Share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sector
3. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

The UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2008 on MDG3 shows progress, albeit generally slow progress:

1. School doors have swung open for girls in many regions. Where there is a gender gap in primary education, the gap widens in secondary and tertiary education. Furthermore, drought, food shortage, armed conflict, poverty and HIV/AIDS prove to be especially devastating for girls, who fail to enroll in and stay in school.
2. Job opportunities open up but women often remain trapped in insecure, low-paid positions. Women have more income-earning opportunities than ever before, but almost two-thirds of women in the developing world work in vulnerable jobs as own-account and unpaid family workers. In Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa this type of work accounts for more than 80 per cent of all jobs for women.
3. Women slowly gain ground, but progress is erratic and marked by regional differences. In January 2008 the global parliamentary seats held by women reached nearly 18 per cent. In five parliaments women hold at least 40 per cent of seats, and Rwanda leads the way with 48.8 per cent. But in one-third of all countries, women constitute less than 10 per cent of parliamentarians.

