



REPORT ON

THE 2010 UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

54th Session

15-Year Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action

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THE AFRICA WOMEN'S REGIONAL SHADOW REPORT ON BEIJING +15



A Regional Analysis on the Status of Women 15 Years after the
Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Compiled by:
The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)

On behalf of:
The Africa NGO Task Force on Beijing +15
and Regional and Sub-regional Women's Organizations and Networks

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Report compiled by

Naisola Likimani
Advocacy Officer, FEMNET

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The UN CSW is a functional commission of the ECOSOC, and is the pre-eminent global policy forum on issues affecting gender equality and the advancement of women. It is particularly mandated to regularly review implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. The Commission is composed of 45 members elected by ECOSOC on a four-year basis. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

The Road to the 54th CSW (Beijing +15 Review)

The year 2010 marked the 15th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and consequently the theme of the 54th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held in New York from March 1-12, 2010, was *15-year Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (1995) and the outcomes of the 23rd Session of the General Assembly (2000)*.

Mobilization of African women

With the recognition that the Beijing PfA review provided an opportunity to hold governments accountable for their commitments to women's rights, African women began mobilizing and organizing to participate in the national, regional and global review processes of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) right from the 53rd CSW session held in March 2009.

The impetus was an NGO consultation held in New York during the 53rd CSW, where the Africa Task Force was set up to coordinate and mobilize NGOs in the African Region towards the 2010 Beijing +15 NGO Forum and CSW. Two coordinators volunteered to take responsibility to leading the review process within the Africa Region, and a Task Force of 10 members was also set up, with members taking responsibility to mobilize women and networks across the Africa region to participate in the national, sub- regional and regional review processes. The list of the Africa task force is attached as **Annex E**.

Each Task Force member was responsible for mobilizing women's organizations and individuals in the four or five countries assigned, to carry out activities at the national level, aimed at raising awareness on the Beijing +15 Review and ensuring that governments take further and appropriate measures and achievable actions to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Norah Matovu Winyi who is the Executive Director of FEMNET was a member of the Africa Task Force and was responsible for mobilizing women activists and organizations in Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. Various FEMNET Board members and staff were also part of the Task Force and took responsibility for mobilizing in several countries in West Africa (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Niger, Burkina Faso), North Africa (Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Morocco, and Mauritania) and the Islands (Madagascar, Comoro, Seychelles, Mauritius, Reunion and Mayotte). In total the team from FEMNET was responsible for 19 countries. This placed a lot of responsibility on the organization to ensure that the whole process succeeds.

In order to effectively mobilize organizations at the national level, FEMNET adopted various strategies and approaches which resulted into a very wide outreach:

1. Mainstreaming the Beijing +15 review into other FEMNET activities e.g. Post-CSW debriefing workshops held in Uganda in April 2009 (for East and Southern Africa) and Burkina Faso in June 2009 (for five French Speaking countries in West Africa); as well as the Gender Mainstreaming in Macroeconomics training workshop held in Cairo, Egypt in August 2009 (for North Africa).

2. Development and timely dissemination of critical information, utilizing 6 list-serves, one-to-one messaging, sharing through other networks and posting it on the FEMNET website.

FEMNET disseminated information about the review process, developed guidelines for national working groups outlining the process and timeline for the review and adapting the review questionnaires developed by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women and UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

3. Liaising with other regional and sub-regional women's networks in Africa such as EASSI, WiLDAF, WLSA, AAWORD, AMwA and SOAWR to disseminate information and mobilize women at various levels.

Concurrently, FEMNET engaged the African Centre for Gender and Social Development at the ECA, which was responsible for compiling the official Regional Beijing +15 report and convening the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) in Banjul, The Gambia. ECA assisted the NGO Regional Taskforce by availing their teleconferencing facilities for Taskforce meetings, providing information about the process, as well as ensuring that all registered CSOs obtain Observer status for attending the 8th Africa Conference on Women held in Banjul. UNECA generously shared information with FEMNET and by extension the Taskforce, to facilitate the review process and preparations for Banjul.

CSO participation in the Africa regional conference on Beijing +15

In November 2009, the ECA convened the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) in Banjul, The Gambia, and created a space for civil society to participate in the Conference, including an opportunity to present to the Experts Meeting their summarized conclusions drawn from the synthesized draft Africa Regional NGO Shadow Report and the discussions of the Africa Women's Consultative meeting.



FEMNET, as part of the Africa NGO Taskforce on Beijing +15, convened a two day Consultative meeting for women's organizations in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women, to discuss the draft African NGO Shadow Report on Beijing +15, to dialogue on the key issues emerging and make recommendations for further action from African Governments. A total of 100 participants from 15 countries attended the Consultative meeting. Civil society subsequently presented the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the Consultative meeting to the Experts and Gender Ministers' meeting, around national and regional issues that should be included and addressed in the final official report. Several CSO recommendations were integrated into the final report of the Experts meetings, and adopted by the Ministers thereafter.

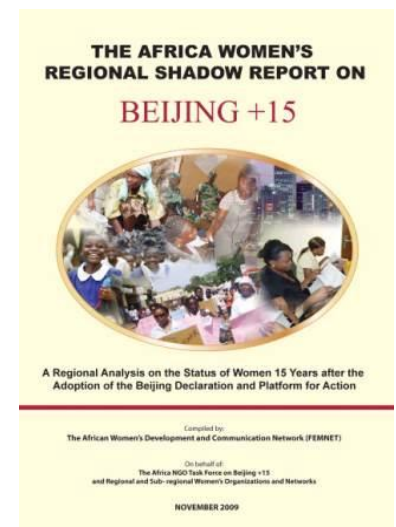
The Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report

FEMNET took the lead in collecting the national reports and compiling the **Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing+15 - A Regional Analysis on the Status of Women 15 Years after the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.**

Largely as a result of the Taskforce members' efforts, thirteen countries submitted shadow reports or filled out the adapted questionnaire to feed into the regional shadow report. Three sub-regional NGO Shadow Reports were also compiled by WiLDAF-West Africa which covered 15 countries under ECOWAS, EASSI which covers 8 countries, and WLSA covering the 14 SADC countries.

As mentioned previously, the preliminary draft of the report was discussed by women who participated in the Africa Women's NGOs Consultative meeting held in Banjul, The Gambia in November 2009, which was held in the margins of the 8th Africa Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15). Their concerns and recommendations were later integrated into the final report.

The Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing +15 provides a summarized analysis of progress, gaps and challenges identified in implementing the BPfA particularly in the West, Eastern and Southern Africa sub-regions, with emphasis on the period since the last review in 2004 (Beijing +10). It also maps out the progress, gaps and challenges under each of the critical areas of concern, providing country-specific examples and some of the significant contributions that have been made by women's civil society organizations in Africa. Finally, the report gives actionable recommendations to African governments in order to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA over the next 5 years and translate the many commitments to the women of Africa into concrete actions. The Shadow Report is available in English and French on [http://www.femnet.or.ke/documents/Africa NGO Report Beijing +15.pdf](http://www.femnet.or.ke/documents/Africa_NGO_Report_Beijing_+15.pdf)



Final Preparations for the 54th CSW

Between November 2009 and March 2010, preparations for the 54th CSW Session as well as the Global NGO Forum on Beijing +15 were in full gear, including:

1. Resource mobilization - for the participation of African women's organizations and individual activists including grassroots and community leaders to participate in the Global NGO Forum and the 54th CSW.
2. Planning for the African Women's Caucus - This included the formation of a committee to organize the sessions of the African Women's Caucus during the CSW. The committee consisted of FEMNET, AAWORD, WiLDAF-West Africa, WLSA, and EASSI
3. Sharing of information utilizing FEMNET's CSW list serve and other channels, to facilitate African women's timely and informed preparations for participation in the CSW 54th Session (see **Annex D** for a sample update used for information dissemination during this period). In total 10 updates were developed, and disseminated to over 250 organizations and individuals in both English and French.
4. Summary of the Regional Shadow Report - A one page handout was developed that summarized the highlights of the regional shadow report, in order to disseminate the key concerns and recommendations to African women at the CSW, governments and other stakeholders, as an advocacy tool.

With the support of the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), the shadow report and highlights handout were produced in English and French in time for the CSW. UNIFEM Horn and East Africa and the Africa-Spain Network of Women for a Better World supported FEMNET representatives and member organizations to participate in the proceedings at the Global NGO Forum, the 54th CSW and the parallel events.

Other Key Pre- CSW 54th Session Events:

FEMNET supported several member organizations working with grassroots women to send a representative to the CSW 54th Session in New York. One of the organizations supported is GROOTS - Kenya which was also celebrating its 15th anniversary. GROOTS - Kenya was formed immediately after the Beijing Conference on Women in 1995. The leaders decided to document their 15 years experience by producing a documentary capturing inspiring stories of several women leaders in Kenya working at the grassroots that had successfully transformed their lives and communities after they were exposed to the powerful stories of Beijing that their leader Esther Mwaura shared with them. The documentary was launched in Kenya on the 23rd of February 2010 and the Executive Director of FEMNET had the opportunity to make a presentation on key elements of movement building that had kept the torch lit in Beijing burning.

On the 24th of February 2010 UNIFEM convened a Ministerial/ Experts meeting in Nairobi, Kenya which brought together ministers from the national women machineries from Southern Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia. It was a critical meeting where the participants were briefed about the preparations for the 54th Session of CSW and harmonized positions on various issues that ministers wanted to present during their interventions in the sessions. The Executive Director of FEMNET, Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi was invited to this meeting to share with the ministers the experiences of international and regional CSOs in advocating for structural reforms within the United Nations (UN) on the Gender Equality Architecture. The campaign for reforms within the UN to improve how this global governance body addresses issues of gender equality and women's advancement has been on since 1999. Civil society activists have been at the forefront of this campaign and last year at the UN General Assembly a critical resolution was adopted to set up a strong, well resourced and strategically positioned gender entity within the UN.

The ministers and experts at this meeting wanted to learn more about this experience and how the experience can be used to inform the campaign strategies for strengthening the gender machineries in African countries which were all found to have limited influence and capacity to delivery effectively on their mandate. Ministers agreed to have a follow up meeting and to lobby for the change of the dates for the CSW annual session so that they do not coincide with the Women's day celebrations.

Participation in the 2010 CSW 54th Session

FEMNET was able to support 15 representatives to participate in the 54th CSW in New York:

- i. Ms. Mama Koite Doumbia - Syndicat National de l'Education et de la Culture (SNEC) - Mali
FEMNET Chairperson
- ii. Ms. Astou Ndeye Sylla - FEMNET Senegal
- iii. Ms. Imane Belghiti - Association Nationale AL HIDN - Morocco
- iv. Ms. Mercy Siame - NGO Coordinating Council (NGOCC) - Zambia
- v. Ms. Mary Okioma - Women for Justice - Kenya
- vi. Ms. Elize Muhimuzi - Comité National Femme et Développement (CONAFED) - DRC
- vii. Ms. Homa Mungapen - Bahai National Council of Mauritius - Mauritius
- viii. Ms. Matrine Chuulu - Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) - Zambia
- ix. Ms. Gifty Dzah - Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) - Ghana
- x. Ms. Esther Mwaura Muriu - GROOTS - Kenya
- xi. Ms. Florence Annan - Young woman activist (Girl Child Network) - Kenya
- xii. Ms. Damaris Karimi - 15-years old, Girl Child Network - Kenya
- xiii. Ms. Marceline Fwaja - Widows organization in rural Tanzania
- xiv. Ms. Norah Matovu Winyi - Executive Director, FEMNET
- xv. Ms. Naisola Likimani - Advocacy Officer, FEMNET

FEMNET also worked closely with GenderLinks and Ms. Linda Odhiambo from the UN Millennium Campaign in Africa to hold cyber dialogues.

FEMNET engaged a New York based liaison, Ms. Dunstanette Macauley, for a period of one month to facilitate on-the-ground preparations, provide advisory services to the coordinating team, identify suitable interpreters, hire public address equipment and organize passes for all personnel that were involved in facilitating the work of the Africa Women's Caucus during the 2010 CSW Session.

Global NGO Forum for Women: Beijing +15

The NGO Forum took place on February 27-28, 2010, to provide women's NGOs an opportunity to share regional perspectives on the implementation of the BPfA, and discuss the state of women's rights and empowerment particularly since Beijing +10. Women leaders from across the globe assembled to share best practices, emerging issues, progress and challenges faced by women in their countries/regions, and give a joint call to action to the UN member states particularly those represented by the CSW 54th Session.

Some of the recurring themes at the Global NGO Forum include:

- The energy, hope, and enthusiasm the world leaders and women from all corners of the world left with after the 1995 Beijing Conference had not resulted/translated into transformation of women's lives fifteen years after this historical world conference on women. Majority of women in the world are still living in poverty and the commitments made in Beijing are wait to become reality in their lives.



- Women are contending with multiple crises - including food, energy, terrorism - that were not as pronounced at the time the Beijing Conference took place as they are today.
- Women leaders who were in Beijing need to pass the torch to young women to begin to set a new agenda, including the organizing of a 5th World Conference on Women
- Women have a better perception of who are their allies, are less starry-eyed about microfinance and are going beyond gender mainstreaming as a panacea for achieving gender inequality and the advancement of the women's development agenda
- The women's movement can no longer work in a generalized way around women with disability, those with HIV/AIDS, and other marginalized groups. They need to acknowledge and work with the diversities that exist in any particular grouping.
- Transformation of culture is required to end all forms of violence against Women and girls



"The Candle we lit in Beijing has not been blown out. We have kept it alive" - Gertrude Mongella

On Day 2 of the Forum, regional meetings were held to synthesize a common position and call for action from the regions. FEMNET, AWDF and the Africa NGO Taskforce on Beijing +15 coordinated the regional meeting for Africa, and, using the Highlights handout based on the Africa Women's NGOs Shadow report as a starting point, came up with 5 priority areas for action by African governments. The statement from the Africa meeting was presented with verve to the general Forum by Ms. Florence Annan, one of the young upcoming leaders from the Girl Child Network. This statement was later presented by Mama Koite Doumbia to the CSW Session on Friday the 5th of March 2010. (**Annex A**).

The African Women's Caucus (AWC)

The AWC held 4 meetings over the course of the 54th CSW Session, specifically held on March 1st, 3rd, 5th and 10th 2010. About 220 women participated in the sessions (**Annex C** contains a list of participants).

AWC Session 1: Launch of the Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing+15

March 1, 2010

UN Church Centre

Chair: EASSI - Ms. Marren Akatsa Bukachi, Executive Director

After a welcome by Ms. Marren Akatsa Bukachi, Ms. Chigedze Chinyepi, Regional Coordinator for the African NGO Taskforce on Beijing + 15 explained the process of compiling the report and introduced the members of the Task Force who were present. She specifically recognized the central role that FEMNET had played as a regional organization to sustain the review process throughout the one year period. Nothing could stop the task force moving forward even when it was faced with limited

resources to undertake such an enormous task of mobilizing throughout the region across four official languages commonly used in Africa.

Ms. Bisi Adeleye- Fayemi, Executive Director of AWDF gave an overview of some of the highlights of the Shadow Report. She described the report in 4 words: Celebration, Despair, Urgency and Hope.

Celebration: The Report begins with highlighting some commendable achievements made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), providing examples of success stories from different countries. These include among others the improved legal and policy frameworks for the protection of women's rights, increased space for women to speak out on the issues that negatively impact their lives, increased demand for accountability and appropriate responses evident at many levels, great strides in access to education for girls and training for women, agency building and awareness creation.



Despair: The feeling of despair about the report stems from the difficulty in sustaining the gains made in the face of economic and political instability and violent conflicts that have persisted in various parts of the continent; impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa's economic growth and social development; struggles with religious and cultural fundamentalism; increasing poverty among the urban and rural settings, the escalating violence meted out against women and girls, the increase in the trafficking of women and girls and female economic refugees, corruption which undermines human rights realization and impunity.

Urgency: The sense of urgency that the Report raises is the heightened demand for a fundamental change. The status quo is a recipe for disaster. Africa will not and cannot achieve its development goals if more than half its population is living in poverty, in a state of desperation and deprivation. The situation and status of the majority of African women must and has to change. The time for tokenism, rhetoric and empty promises is past. African women are ready to take charge of their destiny and they demand accountability from African leaders and governments and other key stakeholders. Moving forward, they will leave no stone unturned to utilize all spaces to articulate their concerns and propose solutions that are gender responsive.

Hope: In spite of all the challenges and gaps, there is hope in the power of the women's movement in Africa; in the strengthened spaces for development; hope in the present wiser and the younger generation that may not have the hangover of Beijing; hope in the capacity of women to work together and move mountains; and respect for diversity and the ability to hold one another accountable.

She concluded her comments by calling upon all those present to look to the future with determination to write a different story. We cannot change what is past. Our strength lies in our actions in the future. Aluta Continua!

Mama Koite Doumbia, the Chairperson of FEMNET appreciated the collaborative initiative of the one year April 2009 - March 2010 that made it possible for African women to come up with the Shadow

Report. She appreciated the contributions of various persons and organizations that played a lead role in the review process.

She ended her remarks by introducing Honorable Gertrude Mongella, MP Tanzania, who delivered the keynote address. The highlights of Hon. Mongella's remarks were that the African Platform for Action adopted in 1994 in Dakar, Senegal was the strongest document that contributed to the Beijing Platform for Action. Africa brought in the 12th critical area for action, which is "The Girl Child". Hon Mongella said emphatically that African women are not victims but solutions to problems. It is our resilience and creativity that keeps us on the move. She noted one big mistake made in the 1995 Beijing document as the lack of a timeframe and sanctions for member states that are not progressively implementing the commitments made by leaders from 189 countries. She also noted that the need for clear commitments for resources from governments was not clearly defined. This has probably been partly responsible for the slow pace of implementation.



Hon. Mongella recalled what she said at the end of the Beijing Conference in 1995. "I said a revolution had begun and there was no going back." Hon. Mongella was glad to see many young faces at CSW 54 and she expressed hope that by Beijing + 20 there would be many younger women and girls well seasoned and ready to take up the baton.

She called on all women present to use the Beijing PfA as the election campaign manifesto and demand from political parties and candidates what plans they have to implement it. All leaders with no clear plan and agenda to deliver on the commitments made to women through the BPfA should be voted out of office. She concluded with an appeal to the women at the AWC session, "Let us have the right people in politics in order to have the BPfA implemented faster." She launched the Shadow Report and pleasantly signed many copies for all those present to take as a souvenir back to their respective countries.

Norah Matovu-Winyi, FEMNET Executive Director gave the vote of thanks. She thanked all the organizations who facilitated the process of producing the Shadow Report and supporting many women and men to be at the Launch ceremony including UNECA, UNDP, AWDF, UNIFEM Regional office based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, UNIFEM- Eastern and Horn of Africa Office, the Africa-Spain Network for a Better World, and Oxfam NOVIB and Sida, partners of FEMNET. She also thanked all the members of the Africa task force for a job very well done. Last though not least she appreciated the Coordinating team that organized the Launch session in the first session of the African Women Caucus: WiLDAF, EASSI, AAWORD, WLSA, and FEMNET.

The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) immediately after the launch function took the opportunity to re - launch a coffee-table book titled "Voice, Power and Soul: Portraits of African Feminists". To obtain a copy go to the AWDF website <http://www.awdf.org/browse/1076>

AWC Session 2: African Voices: How Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action is Impacting Women's Lives
March 3, 2010
Uganda House
Chair: AAWORD - Ms. Odile Ndoumbe Faye, Executive Secretary

Due to the need for a bigger space to accommodate the large number of African women and others from different regions participating in the Caucus, the second session of the AWC was held in the Uganda House.

Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah of the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance presented to the Caucus about the experiences of the women's organizations that led to the adoption of the SADC Gender Protocol in 2008. She noted that the Gender Protocol was a mechanism of domesticating the BPfA at the sub-regional and national levels in Southern Africa, and could be a good model for other sub-regions to consider. The key strategies adopted included drafting a model Protocol; mobilizing throughout the sub-region to form a formidable force for lobbying and advocacy; amplifying women's voice through a rigorous media campaign.

Naisola Likimani, FEMNET Advocacy Officer then shared with the participants at the Caucus session on progress made in establishing the new UN gender entity, including the key lobbying points to use at the CSW session, which included: the need for the General Assembly to adopt a resolution to appoint an Under Secretary General to head the entity; the urgent need to lobby member states to support the establishment of the new entity sooner rather than later; the need to address the concern raised by some African countries like Namibia, Egypt, Uganda about the budget of the new entity. Many were blocking progress demanding that the bigger part of the budget of the new gender entity should be provided through core funding. Their main fear is if the budget is funded mainly from voluntary contributions, it will give a lot of power to those countries making the contributions to influence its agenda and funding priorities. A participant from Zimbabwe also shared that Zimbabwe would be supporting Ms. Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda for the position of Under Secretary General. The Caucus discussed whether African women should rally behind one candidate for the USG position. However after an extended debate it was agreed that the criteria developed by the GEAR campaign group would be circulated and used by different countries to support any African woman whose qualifications and experience were in line with the criteria.

AWC Session 3: African Voices II: How Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action is Impacting Women's Lives
March 5, 2010
Uganda House - Chair: Association Nationale AL-HIDN, Ms. Imane Belghiti
UN Church Centre - Chair: WLSA - Ms. Matrine Chuula, Executive Director

A decision was taken by the coordinating team organizing the sessions of the AWC to have the sessions in two locations due to the large number of African women wanting to participate in the sessions. Therefore, the third session of the AWC was split in two and those who remained at the Church Centre had an opportunity to share and learn from the stories and experiences from the grassroots women on their initiatives to contribute to the implementing the BPfA and take leadership to transform their lives.

GROOTS-Kenya shared their experiences in the power of grassroots women organizing and building trans-generational movements. Grassroots women in Kenya have pioneered a home-



based care alliance and are currently using different strategies to ensure that home based care is accounted for in the economics of the country and recognized by government. Participants then watched a section of the GROOTS-Kenya documentary on grassroots women organizing in Kenya and were generally very inspired by the presentation, with one woman calling the session 'the most refreshing' she has been to at the CSW. GROOTS was born out of the Beijing Conference. It was therefore celebrating and sharing with the world the successes of grassroots women transformative leadership experiences.

To give the participants another inspirational experience Ms. Marcelina Fwaja, a representative from a widow's community based organization for economic empowerment, shared her story and the success of the Village Savings and Loan scheme they initiated in her community. Participants were interested with the case study as they recommended that empowering women with financial services which are accessible and applicable at grassroot level population especially women, automatically it is easy to empower them in other fields such as economy, health, education, gender issues and all other fields targeted in the Beijing PfA.

"Thank you so much FEMNET and TGNP staffs! You really did wonders to me! I will make sure with God's help and with support of you committed people, we plant an ever growing seed to our poor people! May God bless you and keep you well so that in collaboration, we make the local community enjoy this world!" - Marceline Fwaja

The second session took place at the Uganda House and it was mainly attended by African women from the French speaking countries. At this session Damaris Karimi a young girl from Kenya living with her mother and two siblings shared the experience of a young African girl born in a slum dwelling in Kenya. The issues raised included lack of privacy, the very poor housing conditions, lack of proper sanitation and toilet facilities; the ever present stench of rotting rubbish and dirty, filthy drains; the constant exposure to drug abuse, violence from peers and parents who cannot afford to feed their families; and for the girl child the fear of sexual violence from virtually every male in the community.

Damaris appealed to all the participants to support girls education. This is their main ticket to a better life. The most encouraging aspect of Damaris' story is that her present circumstances which are not her own making have not limited her vision of what is possible in life.

After the presentation there were many thought - provoking interventions from the participants. It was stated that the next five years must see an increase in focus on the transformation of urban slums as the conditions therein subject people to a whole range of human violations.

After both sessions, the HIV/AIDS draft resolution from the CSW was shared and one working group was formed to work on the language of the resolution. Additionally the GEAR selection criteria for the USG were distributed.

AWC Session 4: Beyond Beijing +15: Strategies for the African Women's Decade
March 10, 2010
UN Church Centre
Chair: WILDAF-WA - Ms. Kafui Kuwonu

The final session of the AWC attracted about 100 participants, which is more than double the number of participants in the last session of the AWC at the 53rd CSW. Mary Wandia of the Solidarity for



African Women's Rights Coalition (SOAWR) shared highlights from a policy brief by SOAWR on how best to utilize the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) to accelerate realization of women's rights in Africa. The brief is available in English and French on www.soawr.org

She also shared that the AU Gender directorate is working on a plan to launch the Decade regionally. This involves the creation of national committees by May 2010; from May - July 2010 national launches of the Decade will take place; and from July to October 2010 launches by the sub- regional economic communities (ECOWAS, EAC, SADC and North Africa League of Nations). Finally, the regional launch of the Decade will take place in October 2010. Wandia encouraged Caucus participants to be involved in these various stages of building up the momentum for the launch and also be engaged with national gender machineries around priority setting for the Decade.

Thereafter Micheline Ravololonarisoa of UNIFEM made a brief presentation on the Africa UNITE to End Violence Against Women Campaign, its origins and objectives which include States developing national laws and policies on VAW, data collection on the status of VAW/Gs in each country, national campaigns involving CSOs, the private sector, and religious groupings to end VAW/Gs, and put an end to impunity for the perpetrators. In response to questions from participants, Micheline emphasized that the Campaign will be based on strengthening existing initiatives to end VAW/Gs at national level, rather than creating new ones.



At the end of the session, Naisola Likimani, FEMNET Advocacy Officer, announced that there is an open letter authored by WEDO to SG Ban Ki Moon protesting that his recently appointed High Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing consisted of 19 men and no women at all. Participants were asked to suggest names of High Level women leaders to propose to the Secretary General to address this situation. A total of 6 African women were added to the list. FEMNET Chairperson Mama Koite then gave a vote of thanks to all the organizers and participants and closed the last session of the African Women's Caucus.

Participation in Key Main and Parallel Events during the 54th CSW

"I applaud women's groups at global, regional and national levels for doing majority of the work on Beijing Platform for Action implementation" - UN Deputy Secretary General, Asha-Rose Migiro, at the opening of the 54th Session of the CSW, March 1, 2010.

1. The Global Strategy Meetings and Parallel Events of the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign

The 2010 Global GEAR Strategy meeting took place the evening of Sunday, February 28, 2010. Over 40 individuals gathered for the four hour meeting to discuss successes in the last six months, strategies for the CSW and to catch up on the GEAR campaign processes in the regions. Participants shared global and regional updates and various activities that they planned for the CSW. The meeting offered a strategic space for brainstorming and addressing serious concerns about the new gender entity.

In addition to the strategy meeting, the GEAR Campaign also hosted two public parallel events to engage with the larger group of CSW delegates, one on Monday, March 1st and the other on Thursday, March 11th. The events were informative and raised awareness about the UN reform process to date.

At the 54th session of the CSW the GEAR Campaign focused on raising awareness and attracting media to highlight the successes of GEAR and the crucial next steps for advocacy. On March 1st, GEAR campaigners distributed thousands of copies of the spoof newspaper that announced the creation of the new UN women's entity, *The New Times for Women* in the UN headquarters. The distribution team ensured that ministers and ambassadors entering the opening session of the CSW got their copy. After UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke at the UN's official observance of International Women's Day on March 3rd, NGO representatives held up signs that read "GEAR UP NOW!" in the balcony. The action was greeted with enthusiastic applause and strong support.

On Friday, March 5th GEAR representatives including Naisola Likimani, FEMNET Advocacy Officer, spoke at the Youth Caucus and discussed how young people can become involved in the GEAR Campaign and how to integrate youth leadership into the new gender equality entity. On Thursday March 11th FEMNET once again participated in a GEAR side event as a Regional Focal Point for Africa, particularly on advocacy efforts thus far and advocacy beyond the CSW.



Finally, Governments initiated a resolution that was co-sponsored by 180 countries and introduced by the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement and Group of 77/China (JCC) supporting the creation of the entity - reinforcing the widespread assumption that the new gender equality entity will indeed be established.

The Commission on the Status of Women, Recognizing the significant role of the United Nations system in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide, Welcomes General Assembly resolution 63/311 of 14 September 2009, in particular the provisions on strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women by consolidating the four existing offices into a composite entity led by an Under-Secretary-General, and looks forward to its full implementation. (E/CN.6/2010/L.7)

GEAR is currently focused on four critical arguments that will strengthen and make the new gender entity operate at its optimum level.

- Ensure that it is the driver in the UN system for women's empowerment and gender equality and has a strong, country- level operational capacity.
- Ambitiously fund the new gender entity with stable and predictable resources from the core budget of the UN as opposed to voluntary contributions which in some instances are loaded with conditions
- Guarantee that the entity has meaningful, systematic and diverse civil society participation at all levels which contributes to its decision making and programming
- Begin a transparent recruitment process for the Under Secretary-General taking into account the criteria developed by the GEAR campaign team and shared with the UN Secretary - General's office.

2. Making IT work for gender justice: An African women's NGO initiative at Beijing + 15

Gender Links, the Gender and Media Diversity and media Southern Africa Network and the African Women and Child Feature Service in collaboration with UNIFEM and the World Bank jointly organized Beijing + 15 cyber dialogues that were held every morning in three chat rooms in French, Spanish and English. Expert panelists were on hand to debate the issues with those who joined from across the world and the highlights of the discussions were reflected in a daily newspaper that was produced by the team.

The Executive Director, FEMNET together with Marren Akatsa of EASSI and a representative from International IDEA were panellists on the first dialogue held on 2nd March 2010. The topic was Governance and the theme was "The best man for the job is a woman." This provoked a lot of discussion and some of the conclusions included among others the need to provide more support to women in leadership as they are faced with daily resistance, discrimination, marginalization, and perpetual stress as they work hard to balance their multiple roles and responsibilities. Other topics included equality in and through the media, Gender and Soccer 2010: Score a goal for gender equality; HIV/AIDS and care work: making care work count and Gender violence: Yes, we can end gender violence.

3. Launch of the UNAIDS Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV

The agenda for accelerated country action was launched by UN Deputy Secretary General Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, Mr. Michel Sidibe, Executive Director UNAIDS, H.E. Ms Melanne Vermeer, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women Issues and Ms. Annie Lennox, Musician and Activist, among others. The agenda for accelerated action provides guidance for UN agencies at the country level on actions to be taken in collaboration with governments, CSOs and development partners to make national AIDS policies and programmes more responsive to the needs, and more protective of the rights, of women and girls.

Discussions during the launch included the need for an integrated approach that does not silo issues of SRHR, family planning, access to healthcare, linkages between violence against women and HIV, women's rights and literacy, among others. CSOs and government delegates (such as Zambia) at the meeting urged UNAIDS to universally implement this new action plan rather than implement a pilot programme first, as this issue was urgent and needed urgent action.

UNDP representative Helen Clark shared that on their part they would be supporting leadership development for girls/young women with HIV, and pushing for integration of HIV AIDS reporting under CEDAW. The International Labour Organization (ILO) shared that they are working on producing an international labour law on HIV AIDS in the workplace.

4. The Africa Unite Campaign

The presence in New York of UNIFEM's partners from African Government and CSO attending the 54th session of the CSW provided an opportunity for the UNIFEM Africa Section to organize a breakfast meeting on the March 5th 2010. At this two hour meeting UNIFEM was able to brief the partners on the UNIFEM programme in Africa, the changes that may happen with the setting up of the new gender entity in the UN, the challenges that impact progress on gender equality and women's human rights in Africa. The most important briefing was on the Africa Unite Campaign against VAW/Gs.

As part of the efforts to reduce the incidences of violence against women and girls UNIFEM launched the Global Virtual Knowledge centre. The setting up of the Centre was co-sponsored by the Government of Spain. The Centre is accessible through the FEMNET website at <http://www.femnet.or.ke/viewcampaign.asp?ID=6> or directly at <http://www.endvawnow.org/>

5. Center for Women's Global Leadership Symposium

In celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the CWGL, a day-long symposium was held on March 6, 2010 to take stock of the global feminist movement, in particular in the context of BODY (defending sexual and reproductive rights and ending gender based violence), ECONOMY (strengthening women's human right to economic justice) and MOVEMENT (sustaining global feminist organizing and building leadership).

The Symposium was an opportunity for feminists to reflect on the three main issues, with the speakers noting with concern that there is currently a backlash on women's rights, using culture, religion and tradition to divide the women's movement. Charlotte Bunch, Founding Director of CWGL, emphasised that "we have to reframe the issue of culture to be able to address the backlash." Later one of the panellists noted that the trend was 'moral policing' disguised as culture/tradition. Another trend discussed was 'criminalization of political dissent' and the fact that 'new ICTs have allowed us to communicate beyond the already converted' however warm bodies are still needed to bring about social change.

Finally on the issue of movement building, Ms. Bisi Adeleye Fayemi of AWDF categorized the challenges the women's movement face as

- Alignment challenge: losing alignment between our vision, our values and our practice
- Leadership challenge: building architecture for the movement has oftentimes led to exclusion
- Sustainability challenge: many women's organisations are on 'life support'

6. Women's Working Group on Financing for Development - Financing Across the Silos

FEMNET Advocacy Officer Naisola Likimani was one of the panellists in this parallel event on March 8, 2010, on financing for development from a gender perspective. It was noted that there is a need for policy coherence between gender equality, trade and development policies, and not only within the framework of the MDGs which should be considered as a minimal standard. One panellist noted that the UN is investing very little on the gender dimensions of climate change for instance, and there is need to increase women's access to climate change mitigation and adaptation funds. Generally, women are not involved in the central discussions around international relations such as the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) under ECOSOC. It was recommended that during this era of global financial reforms, women's organisations should analyze the global financial system and make recommendations from a gender perspective.

The 54th CSW Session ended on a very positive note on March 12, 2010 with a special address from Mrs. Hillary Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State. In her remarks, Secretary Clinton discussed the many ways in which the status of women in the world is of social, political and economic importance. "We must declare with one voice that women's progress is human progress and human progress is women's progress once and for all".

She pledged that the Obama administration would continue to work for the ratification of CEDAW in the U.S., and expressed support for a single, vibrant UN agency dedicated to women. In referencing US foreign policy, she shared the three pillars: Development, Diplomacy



and Defence, and stated unequivocally that subjugation of women is a threat to the national security of the U.S.

"The progress of the last 15 years is not the end of the story. It is, if we're lucky, the end of the beginning" - Secretary Clinton

CSW Outcome Documents

The 54th CSW Session had a one page outcome document which re-affirmed the commitments of the government to the Beijing blueprint. The civil society participants at the CSW in many ways expressed dissatisfaction with the document which virtually ignored the amplified voices of women from all corners of the world that the progress in the implementation of Beijing was extremely slow. If progress on implementation of the Beijing Platform contributes to acceleration of progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which is the world compact to eradicate poverty, then much more has to be done.

This was specifically expressed through the various interventions made by CSOs in the different panel sessions of the CSW. Norah Matovu Winyi the Executive Director of FEMNET made an intervention on the CSW panel on Regional perspectives which focused on the need for government to demonstrate their commitment to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment by strengthening national gender/ women's machineries in terms of financial and personnel capacity and the development of clear indicators of outcomes and impact resulting from gender mainstreaming efforts. These should be indicators that reflect the transformative impact of these processes.

Some of the other statements issued by different groupings at the 2010 CSW included the Joint CSO Statement elaborating concerns on the reduced spaces for participation by women's organizations in the CSW processes (**Annex B**)

Official CSW resolutions on Maternal Mortality, HIV AIDS and FGM are available on the CSW website <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/documentation.html>

Immediate Outcomes from the 54th CSW

Successes:

- Launch of the African women's Regional Shadow report on Beijing +15, a culmination of almost one year's efforts to amplify African women's voices in holding their governments accountable for commitments made to women's empowerment and gender equality
- Many African women and organisations were better prepared for the CSW due to timely and accurate dissemination of information prior to the CSW.

FEMNET Executive Director met an old friend and colleague Fransika Issaka, a former Minister in Ghana and currently based in Northern Ghana, at the Global NGO Forum on the 28th of February 2010, and asked her how she had received information about the session and the review process.

Ms. Issaka said *“When NETRIGHT in Accra, Ghana received information from FEMNET the information was widely shared through their network members.”* Several similar comments were received over the course of the CSW, with many participants thanking FEMNET for sharing information that enabled them to prepare for the CSW.

- Through the African Women’s Caucus and other spaces, African women were able to respond to opportunities for advocacy at the CSW such as being able to submit names of suitable candidates for the High Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing, lobby governments on the new gender entity and input into the final resolution on HIV/ AIDS and Maternal Mortality.
- Media coverage leading up to and during the CSW highlighted African women’s concerns and recommendations on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Media coverage included Inter Press Service and UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS).

Areas for Further Improvement:

- Need to work on new and innovative ways to quickly disseminate information during the CSW, as well as bring African women’s voices and concerns to the CSW other than bringing them physically to New York. The cyber chats / dialogues with GenderLinks and UN Millennium Campaign were a great start, even though they faced a few technical glitches. The Daily Links @ the CSW, a daily newspaper in English and French by CSO media organizations, provided excellent analysis, interviews and information to participants at the CSO. Perhaps FEMNET can link with the organizations to circulate this newspaper widely online during the CSW.

Lessons Learned:

- The informal morning sessions held at the hotel where many FEMNET sponsored participants were staying were a very useful space to strategize for the day and share materials and information from the previous day’s sessions.
- The official outcome documents of the CSW are best accessed through government delegations, so it is imperative that there is a CSO strategy of either being on the government delegations or going to their government morning briefings which are typically open to civil society participants. That relationship is key to access documents, learn about CSW internal deliberations and moments for interventions. The drafting process happens very fast and CSOs have to be working on the latest draft in order not to be left behind.

ANNEXES

- Annex A: Statement from the African Women's Caucus to the 54th CSW
- Annex B: Joint CSO Statement at the 54th CSW
- Annex C: List of Participants at the African Women's Caucus sessions
- Annex D: Update to CSW List-serve
- Annex E: Africa NGO Taskforce on Beijing +15

Annex A: Statement from the African Women's Caucus to the 54th CSW

Oral Statement from African Women's Caucus at the 54th Commission on the Status of Women

We, the representatives of various African women's civil society organizations assembled at the Global NGO Forum for Women on Beijing +15 in New York in February 2010, and representing the voices of millions of African women, youth and girls;

Having widely consulted with different stakeholders prior to and during Global NGO Forum on the progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Africa since the last review (Beijing +10);

Having reflected on the situation of the African woman and girl in the region and reviewed the highlights of the African Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing +15 which incorporates national and sub-regional reviews from women's civil society organisations and networks;

Recognizing that the Beijing +15 Review process is taking place at a time of both great opportunity and challenge for African women in the realization of their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights;

Considering WITH GREAT CONCERN that although the process of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action over the last 15 years has utilized significant resources, progress has remained minimal, slow and fragmented, and has not resulted in fundamental changes in the lives of the majority of women in Africa;

We therefore call upon African leaders, development partners, the private sector and all key stakeholders in the development process to, among others, prioritize the following actions:

1. Ensure ratification with no reservations, domestication and full implementation of all key human rights instruments that secure the rights of women and girls including CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, the African Union Protocol on the rights of women, the African Charter on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Democracy and UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889;
2. Ensure that provisions and policies promoting the achievement of gender parity in leadership and decision making are implemented and that women are sufficiently enabled to influence culture, systems and structures of decision making institutions
3. Ensure that structures established to lead the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda have increased and significant resources as an indication of political commitment to women's advancement;
4. Increase support for African women's economic empowerment as part of the strategy to eradicate poverty;
5. Take action to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls with special attention to harmful cultural and religious practices, violence in conflict and post-conflict situations and human trafficking.

We call upon African leaders to take the opportunity of the **African Women's Decade (2010-2020)** to take leadership to significantly reduce the gaps in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action - specifically in the first three years of the Decade.

Annex B: Joint CSO Statement at the 54th CSW

<p style="text-align: center;">Civil Society Statement Concerning Beijing +15 process Review at Commission on the Status of Women New York, March 4th, 2010</p>
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The Fourth World Conference on Women produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), a comprehensive women's human rights paradigm that envisioned the transformation of power relations. This was a global vision of social justice, equality, development and peace. Fifteen years later, the BPfA would seem to be considered by governments as technical instrument, and its substance has been depoliticised and diluted. The key implementation strategy of gender mainstreaming has lost its critical perspective and transformative purpose in terms of power relations and inequalities.

Women's organizations have been the driving force behind the Beijing process. We note the Secretary General's repeated emphasis on the importance of civil society to the work of the UN, particularly in relation to the achievement of women's rights. As representatives of such organizations we are deeply concerned that the spaces for influencing decision making by women's organizations at the Beijing+15 Review have been significantly reduced. This is manifested by:

- The Declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women having been agreed ahead of time and adopted without consultations with civil society.
- The absence of information on opportunities for civil society to influence the conduct and outcome of the CSW meetings and the Declaration.
- Poor logistics and facilities that have prevented women from participating effectively.

The presence of such a huge gathering of women has been used instrumentally to legitimise an empty Declaration. This is another example of the reduction of the space for critical engagement between governments and civil society.

The 54th Session of CSW was intended to be the opportunity to review progress and promote the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. However, in its failure to strongly reaffirm and commit to renewed and concrete actions and resources to implement the BPfA, the Declaration represents a backward step.

The Declaration appears to overstate the progress made, and to ignore the slow and partial nature of implementation. It underestimates the degree and types of challenges that remain for women in their multiple identities, including the persistence of all forms of violence against women. It fails to take into account changes in the global and local contexts. The current context of multiple crises-- such as the food, energy, climate change, care , economic and financial crises-- new forms of insecurity, new aid modalities, internationalization of conflicts, perpetuation of the feminization of poverty and the ongoing struggle around women's health issues, including Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights and HIV/AIDS, have created challenges not present 15 years ago.

For this reason, we call upon the Secretary General, the Chairperson of the CSW and Member States to take all opportunities associated with the forthcoming global negotiations in relation to Special High Level Meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods Institutions, World Trade

Organization and the UNCTAD and the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit in order to recover the transformative nature of the BPfA by:

- Reaffirming the BPfA both as a comprehensive, critical and human rights framework that requires full implementation as a matter of urgency and as integral to and a prerequisite for the implementation of the MDGs.
- Ensuring that civil society, including women's organizations, is able to participate meaningfully and that young women are empowered to become future leaders of these processes.
- Committing to an accountability framework for the BPfA with concrete benchmarks and timetables.
- Ensuring adequate funding for gender equality policies, programmes and institutional mechanisms and for women's rights organizations through the implementation, among others, of the 2008 Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, which has strong and concrete commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Protecting the policy space of countries so that they will have the flexibility to determine their development pathways consistently with universal women's rights and global commitments.
- Creating in 2010 a strong, well-resourced UN Women's Rights and Gender Equality Entity with strong operational capacity and ability to hold the UN to account as well as strong mechanisms for meaningful civil society participation as supported and articulated by the GEAR (Gender Entity Architecture Reform) campaign.

Signatures:

Organizations:

WIDE Network, Banúlacht, Ireland; AWID, Campana "Muevete por la Igualdad", Coordinadora ONGDSpain, One World Action- UK, Wo=Men the Netherlands, Feminist Task Force of the Global Call for Action Against Poverty, ENLACE, IFOR Women Peacemakers Program, DAWN, Women's Working Group on Financing for Development, Siglo XXIII/SERR, Mujeres en Zona de Conflicto-Spain; African Women's Development and Communication Network/FEMNET; Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, NETRIGHT; REPEM (Red de Educación Popular Entre Mujeres de America Latina y el Caribe); Red de Salud de las Mujeres latinoamericanas y del Caribe, RSMLAC; Red Mujer y Habitat Latinoamerica; Red de Mujeres Afrocaribeñas, Afrolatinoamericanas y de la Diáspora; Consorcio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad (Mexico); Red Nacional de Mujeres, Colombia; Foro de Mujeres y Políticas de Población (México); Confluencia de redes de Mujeres, Colombia; Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres, Colombia; Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia A.C. (México); DDESER/ Red por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos en México ((México); GIRE, Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida, México; Centro de Estudios para la Accion Femenina (Republica Dominicana); Feministas en Marcha (Puerto Rico); Geledés - Instituto da Mulher Negra (Brasil); Articulação de ONGs de Mulheres Negras Brasileiras (Brasil); Mujeres Sonorenses en Acción MUSA (México); Milenio Feminista (México); Programa Feminista Centroamericano la Corriente (Nicaragua); Red de Observatorios de Violencia Social y de Género (México); Espacio Espiral, Promoción Cultural, Desarrollo Sustentable y Equidad AC (México); Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud (México); Forum de Política Feminista -Spain; PPIINA (Plataforma por Permisos Iguales e INtransferibles de Nacimiento y Adopción).- Spain, PLENT (Platform for Equal & Non-Transferable Parental Leave) – Europe; Le Monde Selon les Femmes- Belgique; WIDE Austria; KARAT; Teamsters Canada; Syndicat Canadien des communications, energie et du papier (SCEP); Public Service Alliance of Canada; Canadian Teachers' Federation; Canadian Union of Public Employees; Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec – FIQ; L'Alliance canadienne féministe pour l'action internationale (AFAI), Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL); Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade; NWCI; MATCH International; Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW); Canadian Federation of University Women; Confrontations, Utopia; Human Rights in Democracy Centre (HRDC), Albania; Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND); La Diaspora Solidaria (Latinoamerican women in Europe's fund); Udruženje "Ženski razvojni centar"/Association "Women's development center"; WomanAction; NGO Women's Safe house Podgorica, Montenegro; Feminist Legal Studies, Queen's University (Canada); ALTERO-Association for personal training, education, development and empowerment, Serbia; Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán; HOPE Pakistan; OXFAM International; GADN – UK Gender and Development Network; ITUC – International Trade Union Confederation; Public Services International – PSI; Educational International – EI; UNI – Global Union, The National Council of Women of Canada; FinnWID - Finnish Women in Development; Feminist Think Tank, Poland; Red

Latinoamericana de Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir (RLACDD); TIYE International; K.U.L.U. – Women and Development/WIDE Danish Platform; Canadian Labour Congress - Congres du travail du Canada; PLENT (Platform for Equal & Non Transferable Parental Leave) ; Articulación de Mujeres Brasileras ; Corporación Humanas – Colombia ; Fundac – Colombia ; REPEM – Colombia ; Limpal – Colombia ; Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir – Colombia ; CIASE – Corporacion de Investigacion y Accion Social y Economica ; UNI Global Union; ACSUR Las Segovias; Ad Hoc Coalition for Women's Equality and Human Rights (Canada); DECIDIR Coalición de Jóvenes por la Ciudadanía Sexual Cómplices por la Equidad / MenEngage, México; International Alliance of Women; NAWO (INDIA), South Asia Women's Watch, Women's Resource and Advocacy Centre; The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP); Women Media and Development (TAM) / Palestine; Fundació Isonomia Spain; Programa Comunicacion y Sistematizacion Tierra Viva; S. Mujer CC.OO. Málaga, Spain; El Desarrollo Integral de las Mujeres "Mercedes Machado"; European Women's Lobby (EWL); Consell Nacional de Dones de Catalunya; Xarxa de dones per la salut; Creación Positiva; International Alliance of Women;

Individuals:

Ilse Lenz, Germany; Cindi Foreman; Brita Neuhold WIDE Austria, Mandy Macdonald, Scotland, Monica Sonia – Romania; Prof. Dr. Christa Randzio-Plath, VENRO/Marie-Schlei-Verein, Germany; Carmen Sarasúa, profesora de la UAB, Spain; Gladys Teresa Chamorro Blandón , Nicaragua;

Final Version – Brussels March 17, 2010

Annex C: List of Participants at the African Women's Caucus sessions

African Women's Caucus Participants				
	Name	Org	Country	Contact
1.	Aol Betty Ocan	MP	Uganda	
2.	Abdulai fati Abigail	Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM)	Ghana	ayirimier@yahoo.co.uk womghana2000@yahoo.com
3.	Adekemi Ndieli		Nigeria	+ 234 803 331 1773 kndieli@gmail.com
4.	Adodo Adih-Nuviadenu	GVSSN	Ghana	adodoabla@yahoo.com
5.	Adolf Awuku Bekoe		Ghana	Awukubekoe@yahoo.co.uk
6.	Adwoa Bame	WISE	Ghana	abame@wise-up.org
7.	Affolabi Fernanande		Benin	Fernande_bj@yahoo.fr
8.	Afua Gyapomaa	Abantu for Development		Afua_gyapomaa@yahoo.co.uk abanturowa@4u.com.gh
9.	Aimee Zebeyooy		Cote D'ivoire	zyouy95@yahoo.fr
10.	Amadou Ceesay	African Centre for Democracy & Human Rights Studies	Gambia	Pubs1@acdhrs.com
11.	Amel Gorani		Sudan	agorani@sorosny.org
12.	Amina S. Agbiye		Nigeria	minaagbiye@yahoo.com
13.	Aminata Dieye	Reseau de femmes Africaines – Espagnol	Senegal	Amdieye1@yahoo.fr
14.	Ana Cristina	WLSA	Mozambique	Lucia_6@yahoo.com
15.	Anna Maziga	Nigeria women's Empowerment Network	Nigeria	
16.	Anne Addeh	Director, Issues Coordinator Change Managers International Network		+ 234 803 312 4507 annaddeh@yahoo.co.uk
17.	Anne Coly		Senegal	annecewly@yahoo.fr
18.	Annilath da silva		Southern Africa	acsi@npaid.org
19.	Aouissia Akouete		Togo	akougenevieve@yahoo.fr

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
20.	Assetou Koite	PAWO	South Africa	Cell +27 71 417 6227 dabellebo@hotmail.com panafpw@hotmail.com
21.	Audrey C. Charamba		Zimbabwe	audzi@zol.co.zw
22.	Awomolo Victoria O.	FIDA	Nigeria	
23.	Beatrice Kasimanzira		Zimbabwe	bnzira@hotmail.com
24.	Beatrice Kayi Ajavon	WILDAF-WA	Togo	wildaf@cafe.tg
25.	Bekezela Gumede	National President YWCA Bulawayo Hostel		34 – 9th Avenue/ Lobengula Street, Bulawayo 263 619 79/ 60185 Cell 011 732 186 gumdebranbeke@yahoo.co.zw ywcahosbyo@mweb.co.zw
26.	Bernice Sam	Wildaf Ghana	Ghana	info@wildaf.org
27.	Betty Luma	FIDA Cameroon	Cameroon	bettyluma@yahoo.com
28.	Bisi Adeleye Fayemi	AWDF	Africa-wide	bisi@awdf.org
29.	Bisi Olateru Olagbegi	WOCON	Nigeria	Wocon95@yahoo.com
30.	Blessing Agboala		Ghana	blessingagboala@yahoo.com
31.	Bonne Berry			bonneberry@msn.com
32.	Boogie Khutsoane	CGE	South Africa	khutsoan@mweb.co.za
33.	Brede Eschliman	Ecumenical Women	USA	Brede.eschliman@yahoo.com
34.	Bridget Gochera	International Presentation Association (IPA)	Zimbabwe	Nagle House School P Bag 3804 Marondera, Zimbabwe 0279 232 69 beegochera@gmail.com
35.	Candida Quintano	Nateza – Nucleo Das Associa coes Femininas da Zambezia		+ 258 242 160 51 quintanocandida@yahoo.com.br
36.	Chantal Kambiwa	Servitas Cameroon	Cameroon	+ 237 776 27 817 kambiwa@servitascameruon.or
37.	Charity Binka		Ghana	cbinka@gmail.com meseble@yahoo.com
38.	Chief Mrs. Imo Isemin	Uforo Small Business Owners' Association	Nigeria	No. 26 Iboko Street, Uyo Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria +234 802 303 4338 +234 806 667 3097 Uforo.sboa@yahoo.com
39.	Choji Samson		Nigeria	Samlytasly_68@yahoo.com
40.	Christie Tumi Akogun		Nigeria	nihafund@yahoo.com
41.	Constance Mogale	Land Access Movement of South Africa	South Africa	Connie_lamosa@yahoo.com lamosa@mail.ngo.za
42.	Dakoure H		Burkina Faso	ritadakoure@yahoo.fr
43.	Deborah Ekei Effiong	Gender & Development Action (GADA)	Nigeria	C/o Zonal Empowerment Office Ministry of Women Affairs Marine Base – Port Harcourt River State mamayo74@yahoo.com deborah@gadanigeria-phc.org
44.	Deborah Kaddu - Serwadda	ICON Women & Young People's Leadership Academy	Uganda	+ 256 414 468 126 debbieug@yahoo.com debbie@iconug.net
45.	Diakhoumba Gassama	UNIFEM		
46.	Diallo Assa	Presidente du comite d'Actum pour les droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant		cadf@afrbone.net.ml
47.	Diallo Dieneba		Burkina Faso	Dienebadiallo@yahoo.fr
48.	Diarra Fatoumata		Mali	Fatou.diarra@gmail.com
49.	Dinah Kpodo	Netright	Ghana	

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
50.	Doumbia Salimata	IE Bruxelles	Cote D'Ivoire	daem@afnet.net
51.	Dr. Amany Asfour		Egypt	Asfour2712@yahoo.com
52.	Dr. Angie Dawa	Abantu for Development		Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa Region angiedawa@yahoo.com
53.	Dr. Edith kayogetyaseve			edithyaseve@yahoo.com
54.	Dr. Lydia Umar	Gender Awareness Trust (GAT) F. 3 Barnawa Shopping Complex	Nigeria	Kaduna South, Kaduna State + 234 803 314 65 43 lyumar@yahoo.com
55.	Dr. Mma Wokocha	President, Medical Women's Association of Nigeria	Nigeria	mmangow@yahoo.com
56.	Dr. Wilhemina Jallah	Doctor at JFK Medical Center Monrovia Liberia Representative of ISICC		+ 231 695 6384 sjallah@aol.com
57.	Edina Masiyiwa		Zimbabwe	edinah@wag.org.zw
58.	Ehita Ikoghode	Girls Power Initiative	Nigeria	gpibenin@gpinigeria.org
59.	Ellen Dzah	Abantu for Development	Ghana	abanturowa@4u.com.gh
60.	Emem J. Okon	Kebetkache Women Resource Centre	Nigeria	+ 234 8033 363 172 emembridget@yahoo.com kebetkache@yahoo.ca
61.	Emilia Muchawa		Zimbabwe	Emilia@zwla.co.zw
62.	Esther Agali Nasikyey	ICON Women & Young People's Leadership Academy	Uganda	nasikyey@gmail.com esther@iconug.net
63.	Europa Wilson - Agwu			6, Rudd Place Bronx, NY 10473 718 842 4904 (house) 917 743 3150 (cell) nagwu@bncc.cuny.edu
64.	Ezinwa Okoroafor	International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA – Nigeria)	Nigeria	13 Parakou Crescent Off Aminu Kano Crescent Wuse 2, Abuja ezinwaokoroafor@yahoo.com fidanigeria@yahoo.com + 234 802 303 9678
65.	Fatma Ahmed	Zenab for Women in Development	Sudan	
66.	Fatou Diouf		Senegal	nedewdiouf@yahoo.fr
67.	Fatoumata Bintou		Senegal	fatoumatatabintouyafa@yahoo.fr
68.	Faustina Boakye	World Vision - Ghana	Ghana	+ 233 20 816 2111 faustina_boakye@wvi.org
69.	Felicia Iyore Onibon	Change managers International Network	Nigeria	Iljere Street, Garki 2, Abuja, Nigeria feliciaonibon@hotmail.com cminigeria@yahoo.com
70.	Felicia Lyne O.	Change Mangers Int'l Network	Nigeria	lyumar@yahoo.com
71.	Fijabi Mfuliat			mfuliatfijabi@yahoo.com
72.	Florence Annan	Girl Child Network (Kenya)	Kenya	gcn@girlchildnetwork.org
73.	Fofana Coumba		Senegal	fofanacaumba@hotmail.com
74.	Funke Treasure Durodola	Radio Nigeria/WOCON	Nigeria	sharingwithtreasure@yahoo.co.uk
75.	Gertrude Domfeh	Abantu for Development	Ghana	abanturowa@4u.com.gh
76.	Getrude Frimpomaa			Abantu for Development P. O. Box KD4

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
				Kanda – Accra abanturona@4u.com.gh akodomfeh@yahoo.com
77.	Gifty Baaba Asmah	WiLDAF – Ghana	Ghana	Daasgift Quality Foundation P. O. Box TD 1369 Takoradi, Ghana baabagift@yahoo.com
78.	Gifty Dzah	WiLDAF Ghana	Ghana	info@wildaf.org
79.	Gloria Tetteh		Ghana	Glotet@msn.com
80.	Gogona Rachel	ONG/ONEF	Cote D'ivoire	ongonef@yahoo.fr
81.	Grace Y. Yeanay	Women Movement for Sustainable Development	Liberia	Congo, Town, Old Road Monrovia, Liberia graceyeanay@yahoo.com womsudliberia@yahoo.com
82.	Habibu Dione		Nigeria	Info@gazellegrp.com
83.	Hamida Harrison	Abantu for Development		hamimaal@hotmail.com
84.	Hannah Forster	Executive Director African Centre for Democracy & Human Rights Studies	The Gambia	edir@acdhrs.org hansforster@yahoo.com
85.	Hauwa Shekarau		Nigeria	+234 80 733 750 73 hehekarau@yahoo.com
86.	Homa Mungapen		Mauritius	Bar le Duc, Verdun, Mauritius +230 754 2714 homajoun@gmail.com
87.	Hon. Gertrude Mongella	Member of Parliament	Tanzania	
88.	Hon. Jackie K. Weatherspoon	Representative	USA/New Hampshire	jckweatherspoon@yahoo.com
89.	Hope Mungate	The Salvation Army 77 Mendel Road Avondale, Harare +26346307887	Zimbabwe	
90.	Horlenua Rafael da Goneeicon			+ 258 84 399 4460 horconce@tolm.co.mz
91.	Howlissa Sombugma	Wildaf BF	Burkina Faso	
92.	Imane Belghiti		Morocco	belghitilasiyimane@yahoo.fr
93.	Ivete Mafumdza	AMMCT	Mozambique	lmfundza@hotmail.com
94.	Jemina Benson		Nigeria	jeminabenson@yahoo.com
95.	Jessica Horn		Sierra Leone	akiiijessica@gmail.com
96.	Josephone Ahikire	Makerere University Dept. of Women and Gender	Uganda	jahikire@ss.mak.ac.ug
97.	Joyce Afutu	National Commission for Civic Education	Ghana	jbafutu@yahoo.com
98.	Joyce Mulama			Inter Press Service (IPS) joymulama@yahoo.com
99.	Justina Vrengle			justinavrengle@yahoo.com
100.	Kadidia Toure		Mali	Kadidiatoure01@yahoo.fr
101.	Kassim Alli.Balogun	WOCON	Nigeria	Chalk_b@yahoo.com
102.	Kate Adoo-Akeku	PAD Associates	Ghana	Kadeku2006@yahoo.com
103.	Kathy Wieland			108 Fox Haven LN, St. Albans, VT 05478 Wieland1@comcast.net
104.	Kebedech Ambrye			kebedech.nigussie@unifem.org
105.	Keketso Maema	Commission for Gender Equality CGE	South Africa	Keketsa@cge.org.za
106.	Kemi N	WOCON	Nigeria	kndieli@gmail.com
107.	Khadidja B	President of UNAMA	Algeria	
108.	Kitan Olateru-Olagbegi	WOCON	Nigeria	Wocon95@yahoo.com

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
109.	Konou Idohou leontine	+1 212 755 3000	Benin	
110.	Kudakwashe Dizha	Rozaria Memorial Trust	Zimbabwe	kudadizha@live.com
111.	Kuwonu A. Kafui	WiLDAF Afrique de L'Ouest	Togo	+ 228 261 2679 + 228 999 9518 wildaf@cafe.tg
112.	Laura Roost			3446 S Street Lincoln, NE 68503 roost@huskers.unl.edu
113.	Leonita S. Dos Muchangos			Av. Armando Jivane, 1384 CP 2425 Maputo + 258 21 49 9889 + 258 21 49 3739 Cell: 258 82 32 83670 leontina@cida-psu.com
114.	Les Padare Men's Forum on Gender	+263912962396	Zimbabwe	lwamwanduka@yahoo.com
115.	Linda Fletcher		USA	+ 1 646 875 9346 + 1 718 536 0092 belrivers@gmail.com adelewomen@tripod.com
116.	Linda Osarenren	Inter – Africa Committee (IAC)	Ethiopia	Losarenren2000@yahoo.com
117.	Loice Biiru Bwambale		South Africa	afrigenderm@pluto.co.za
118.	Loveness Jambaya	Assistant Director, Southern Africa Alliance	South Africa	alliance@genderlinks.org.za
119.	Lydia Sasu	Development Action Association	Ghana	P. O. Box DK 18 Darkuman, Accra, Ghana daa@africaonline.com.gh
120.	Mairo Bello	Adolescent Health & Information Project (CAHIP)	Nigeria	270/271 Maiduguri Road, Daurawa Tarauni, Kano, Nigeria mairobello2006@yahoo.com
121.	Majak H H		Nigeria	hwongmajak@yahoo.com
122.	Makoutode adjibodou Jeanne	+1 212 755 3000	Benin	
123.	Mama Koite Doumbia	Chairperson, FEMNET	Mali	dmamakoite@gmail.com
124.	Marren Akatsa – Bukachi	East Africa Sub- regional Support Initiative (EASSI)	Uganda	P. O. Box 24965, Kampala 256 782 425529 256 414 285 163 Eassi.eassi@gmail.com
125.	Martha Karua	MP	Kenya	gichugu@parliament.go.ke
126.	Mary Okioma		Kenya	Okioma-mary@yahoo.com
127.	Mary Wandia	Oxfam GB	Kenya	mwandia@yahoo.com
128.	Mary Yunike Mwale		Zambia	Yunike1@yahoo.com
129.	Mashudu Nefhere	CGE	South Africa	Mashudu@cge.org.za
130.	Matilda Mkunthi		Malawi	ecmhealth@ecmmw.org
131.	Maureen Apata	Change Managers International Network, Abuja	Nigeria	+ 234 803 286 3804 maapata@yahoo.com
132.	Mavis Dontoh	WISE	Ghana	mdontoh@wise-up.org
133.	Mercy Siame	Board of Trustees FEMNET/ ZARD	Zambia	P. O. Box 50239, Lusaka Cell: 260 977 874 385 siamemercy@yahoo.com
134.	Mfanozelwe Shozi	CGE	South Africa	mfanozelwe@cge.org.za

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
135.	Micheline Ravololonarisoa	UNIFEM	Madagascar	
136.	Mme Traore Nana Sissako	Presidente du Groupe Pwot Droit & Citoyennete des femmes au Mali	Mali	gpdcf@cefib.com nsissako@yahoo.fr
137.	Mme Traore Nene	Directrice Promotion Femme Union Economique et Monetaire oust Africaine	Burkina Faso	BP 543 Ougadougou 01 Burkina Faso netraore@uemoa.int netraore@yahoo.fr
138.	Modester Chengahomwe	Rozaria Memorial Trust	Zimbabwe	Modester.chengah@gmail.com
139.	Molly Samakai		Zambia	msamakai@yahoo.com
140.	Monica Tabengwa	CAL		mtabengwa@yahoo.co.uk
141.	Mr H.D. Wago	NCIC	Kenya	hdwago@gmail.com
142.	Mrs. Stella Ugboma	International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA – International)		fidalawyers@yahoo.com
143.	Ms. Adaeze Ikedianya	Disabled Persons Rights Initiative		dezyike@yahoo.com
144.	Ms. Amina Suzanah Agbaje		Nigeria	+ 234 805 502 5036 minaagbaje@yahoo.com
145.	Ms. Ana Komar			65 Punch Brook Road Burlington CT 06013 Duskus.dawn@gmail.com
146.	Ms. Bene E. Madunagu	Girls' Power Initiative (GPI)	Nigeria	mumsybe@yahoo.co.uk
147.	Ms. Betty Luma	FIDA – Cameroon	Cameroon	bettyluma@yahoo.com +237 999 691 36
148.	Ms. Biola Adimula	Chairperson Board of Trustees Women & Child Watch Initiatives (WOCWI)		+ 234 803 473 4901 adimulabiola@yahoo.com biola@salvationchambers.com
149.	Ms. Catherine Odimba Kombe	Reseau Universitaire des chercheurs sur le genre	DRC	odicatho@yahoo.fr
150.	Ms. Charity Binka	Executive Director, Women, Media and Change	Ghana	P. O. Box 14550, Accra, Ghana + 233 21 401 550/ 41 44 94 Cell + 233 20 813 1032 cbinka@gmail.com meseble@yahoo.com charitybinka@hotmail.com womec@hotmail.com
151.	Ms. Dinah Kpodo	Ibis, West Africa	Ghana	P. O. Box CT 5061, Cantonments – Accra + 233 244 641 747 + 233 244 289 682 dinahkpodo@yahoo.co.uk
152.	Ms. Doumbia Salimata		Cote d'Ivoire	06 BP 1514, Abidjan 06 daem@afnet.net
153.	Ms. Esther Mwaura – Muiru	Executive Director, GROOTS – Kenya	Kenya	Esther.mwaura@grootskenya.org
154.	Ms. Joyce Benedicta Afutu	National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)	Ghana	P. O. Box M 214 Accra – Ghana j.bafutu@yahoo.com
155.	Ms. Linda RM Baumann	Project Officer, Human Rights & Media, the	Namibia	P. O. Box 26122, Windhoek, Namibia

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
		Rainbow Project		Tel: +264 61 230 710 + 264 81 252 8259 lbaumann82@gmail.com
156.	Ms. Matrine Bbuku Chuulu	Regional Coordinator Women Law in Southern Africa (WLSA)	Zambia	C/o WLSA P. O. Box 34777 Lusaka, Zambia + 260 211 290 512 + 260 977 774 617 matrinebbukuc@yahoo.com
157.	Ms. Ndeye Sow	International Alert	Senegal	
158.	Ms. Odile Ndoumbe Faye	AAWORD	Senegal	
159.	Ms. Oluyemisi Abimbola	Prime Solicitors, Barrister, Solicitors & Legal Consultants	Nigeria	9, Ring Road, Bedside Vitas Bakery, Ibadan P. O. Box 2177, Dugbe, Ibadan, Nigeria + 234 2 231 7232 + 234 803 507 0437 prime@skannet.com info@primesolicitors.com
160.	Ms. Stella S. Bwimbo	Office of the National Assembly United Republic of Tanzania	Tanzania	P. O. Box 941, Dodoma, Tanzania stellasalhabwimbo@yahoo.co.uk
161.	Mufuliat Fijabi		Nigeria	mufuliatfijabi@yahoo.com
162.	Mukankubito Immaculee		Rwanda	imukankubito@yahoo.fr
163.	Nada Mustafa	UNDP Consultant	Sudan/USA	gender_justice@yahoo.com
164.	Naisola Likimani	FEMNET Advocacy Officer	Kenya	advocacy@femnet.or.ke
165.	Nana Asantgwa Afadzinu	IBIS West Africa	Ghana	CT 5061, Cantonments Accra, Ghana + 233 243 679 331 + 233 262 679 331 nana@ibiswestafrica.com
166.	Nana D. Sekipamah		Ghana	Nana@awdf.org
167.	Ndeye Astou Sylla		Senegal	femnetsenegal@yahoo.fr
168.	Netsai Mushonga		Zimbabwe	nestaimushanga@yahoo.com
169.	Noaria Hafsi	President org Algerie UNFA	Algeria	
170.	Norah Matovu Winyi	FEMNET Executive Director	Uganda	director@femnet.or.ke
171.	Ntombi Setshwaelo		Botswana	Waro@botsnet.bw
172.	Nyager Elizabeth		Nigeria	nyagere@yahoo.com
173.	O. Traore		Niger	traoredo@yahoo.fr
174.	Oswalda Jooma	AMCF	Mozambique	osualda@tvcobo.co.mz
175.	Ouedraogo Amina		Burkina Faso	Amina1_ouedraogo@yahoo.fr
176.	Palmira Jelasco		Mozambique	jelascopalmira@hotmail.com
177.	Patricia Blankson Akakpo	Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)		P. O. Box AN 19452 Accra – North Ghana netright@twnafrica.org
178.	Patricia Ofosua Tweneboah	Head, Women & Gender Desk Health Services Workers' Union of GTUC	Ghana	Hall of Trade unions P. O. Box 701 No. 1 Barnes Road, Accra + 233 21 666 705/ 682 984 patriciatweneboah@yahoo.com hswuhq@yahoo.com Mob: 233 208 169 755
179.	Pauline Vande-Pallen		Ghana	pupallen@twnafrica.org
180.	Priscilla Ikos Usiobaitu	Brave Heart Initiative	Nigeria	scillachrist@yahoo.com braveheartinitiative@yahoo.com
181.	Priscilla Usiobafu	Brave Heart Initiative	Nigeria	ScillaChrist @yahoo.com
182.	Prof. Kate Addi -	Institute of Continuing and		P. O. Box 31

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
	Adeku	Distance Education		University of Ghana kadeku2006@yahoo.com
183.	Prof. Kate Adoo-Adeku	Abantu for Development	Ghana	Kadeku2006@yahoo.com
184.	Quedraogo Amina			Amina1_ouedraogo@yahoo.fr
185.	Rainatou Sow	Peace Women Project Women's International League for Peace and Freedom	USA	+ 212 682 1265 777 UN Plaza, 6th Floor New York, NY, 10017 USA rai@peacewomen.org
186.	Ramatu Ahmed			ramatuma@gmail.com
187.	Revai Makanje		Zimbabwe	revai@hivos.co.zw
188.	Rose Oby Nwosu	FIDA	Nigeria	Obynwosu2004@yahoo.com
189.	Roselyn Musa		Ghana	Musarose_ng@yahoo.com
190.	Rukia A. Subow	Maendeleo ya Wanawake	Kenya	+254 222 6634 +254 223 0508 rsubow@yahoo.com mywo@mywakenya.org
191.	Ruth Aba Grant Antwi	Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT)	Ghana	P. O. Box AN 19452 Accra Ghana netright@twnafrica.org
192.	Saizonou Ghislaine		Togo	bromghis@yahoo.fr
193.	Salumata Yafa	ENTS/Senegal	Senegal	fatoumatalintenyafa@yahoo.fr
194.	Sandra Oder		South Africa/Uganda	soder@issafrica.org
195.	Sarah Georges			georgessarah@yahoo.com
196.	Sarah Mukasa		Uganda/Ghana	sarahm@awdf.org
197.	Sarah Nahalamba	National Planning Authority	Uganda	Snahalamba.npa.ug
198.	Saratu K. Dalyop	+ 803 717 3184	Nigeria	
199.	Sasha Hart	Policy Fellow, Institute for Health and Social Policy		Charles Meredith House 1130 Pine Avenue West Montreal Canada H3A 1A3 Sasha.hart@mail.mcgill.ca
200.	Serine Clemence			Maitrelasme@yahoo.fr
201.	Seynabou Camara		Senegal	Seynaboucamara@hotmail.com
202.	Sheila Matindike	YWCA Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	+ 263 912 343 597 263 4 486 403 Smatindike@ywca.co.zw
203.	Sizani Ngubani		South Africa	sanele@mail.ngo.za
204.	Sombugma H.M.			Soun45@gmail.com
205.	Stella Omiyi		Nigeria	Star_areil@yahoo.com
206.	Stella Ugboma		Nigeria	fidalawyers@yahoo.com
207.	Surinder Kapila		Kenya	surinder@skapila.com
208.	Susan A		Ghana	sampofu@yahoo.com
209.	Sylvia Tereka	National Planning Authority	Uganda	
210.	Taiwo Adeoye	WILPF	USA	
211.	Taiwo Adeoye			taiwoadeoye@gmail.com
212.	Terezinha Da Silva	WLSA – Mozambique	Mozambique	P. O. Box 3202 Maputo Coord.wlsa@tropical.co.mz
213.	Thoko Ruzvidzo	UN ECA	Ethiopia	Truzvidz@uneca.org
214.	Traore Nana Sissako		Mali	nisissako@yahoo.fr
215.	Victoria Diaz Garcia	Dublin City University School of Law & Government	Ireland	Dublin 9, Ireland M + 353 86 856 7978 victoria.diazgarcia2@mail.dcu.ie victoriadiazgarcia@hotmail.com
216.	Violet Shivutse	Shibuye Community Health Workers	Kenya	vshivutse@yahoo.com

	Name	Org	Country	Contact
217.	Yeshi H. Tecklemichael		Ethiopia/USA	yeshi@christensenfund.org
218.	Yeshi TekleMicheal	Grants Associate The Christensen		394 University Avenue Palo Alto California 94301 +1 650 323 8700 + 1 650 323 8713 yeshi@christensenfund.org

Annex D: Update to CSW List-serve

FEBRUARY UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR 2010 CSW 54TH SESSION

Theme: 15-year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the 23rd Session of the UN General Assembly (2000).

What is new and relevant for the in- country preparations for 2010 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 54th Session, scheduled to take place from March 1st – 12th 2010 in New York and the Global NGO Forum on Beijing +15 which will take place on February 27th - 28th, immediately preceding the CSW Session?

1. Registration:

Registration for the Global NGO Forum is still open up till the 15th of February 2010. The **registration fee person is US \$ 150.00** and can be done online at <http://www.ngocsw.org/en/events/2010-forum> or by mail. All registration information is available online. **Please note** that you have to personally do the registration for the Global NGO Forum as it requires the payment of the mandatory fee.

For participants intending to take part in the Global NGO Forum you are advised to arrange your travel to get to New York on the 26th of February 2010.

FEMNET as a registered member with observer status to ECOSOC registered 126 persons who were recommended / identified by their respective member organizations.

Please note: FEMNET will not make travel or visa arrangements or pay for any expenses in connection with your participation in the events taking place at the CSW 54th Session. Such arrangements and costs are the exclusive responsibility of each participant intending to be in New York.

Please note that the temperatures in New York at the time of the CSW Session will be very low. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that you have a winter coat, appropriate clothing and winter boots.

Keep your Confirmation Letter from the UN Division of the Advancement of Women carefully as it will facilitate your preparations for travel including the application for a Visa to America. Also include a hard copy of the letter in your travel documents as you will have to present it for immigration purposes and to obtain a UN Grounds Pass upon arrival at the United Nations.

For those who did not submit an application for accreditation by the 31st January 2010 but intend to be in New York, you will only be able to access the side events organized around the venue of the CSW Session, taking place in the Church Centre and other venues that will be announced by the different organizers.

Is your organization planning to host an event? Please inform us and we shall include it in the table of events below. It is one way you can publicize this information to many other organizations in Africa and other parts of the world.

The table below provides information on some events that have now been confirmed by different participants/ organizations

Date/time	Event / venue	Organizers
27 th – 28 th Feb	2010 NGO Global Forum for Women: Beijing +15 <i>Venue: Salvation Army, 120 West 14th Street, NY</i>	NGO CSW Group
1 st March	Opening Session of CSW 54th Session	

Date/time	Event / venue	Organizers
1 st March 4:00 – 5:30pm	Gender Equality Architecture Reform at the UN <i>Venue: Church Center, 10th Floor</i>	Sponsored by the GEAR Campaign Working Group
2 nd March	Launch of Africa Women’s Shadow Report <i>Venue: To be confirmed</i>	Africa Task Force for Beijing +15 Review
2 nd March 6:00 – 8:00pm	NGO CSW NY Reception <i>Turkish Centre, 821 United Nations Plaza (First Avenue at 46th Street) NB: Tickets costs \$35.00 each</i>	NGO CSW Group
2 nd March 9am-6pm	International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women of Burma <i>Venue: Proshansky Auditorium, Graduate Center, City University of New York</i>	Convened by Nobel Women’s Initiative and Women’s League of Burma, New York
3 rd March 4:00-5:30pm	16 Days Campaign Round-Table Discussion <i>Venue: Church Center, 2nd Floor:</i>	Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL)
4 th March 6:00-7:30pm	“Strategies from the South” event at the CSW	FEIM, Argentina
4 th March 5:30-7:30pm	Women Hold the Solutions <i>Venue: Visual Arts Theater, 333 West 23rd Street: NB: RSVP required.</i>	Sponsored by the Global Fund for Women
5 th March 6: 00 – 7: 30 pm	Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa: Contribution to the implementation of Beijing commitments <i>Venue: Church Center – further details to be confirmed</i>	SOAWR Coalition
6 th March 9:30am-5:30pm	CWGL's 20th Anniversary Symposium <i>At the Hunter College Assembly Hall</i>	CWGL
6 th March 9:00pm	International Women's Day Celebration and Dance Party <i>Venue: TBA, NY</i>	CWGL
7 th March	Strategizing meeting for the WWW Campaign <i>Venue: To be confirmed</i>	WWW Steering Committee
8 th March 2010	Join Me on the Bridge <i>Venue: Brooklyn Bridge, NY</i>	Sponsored by Women for Women International
11 th March 2:00 – 3:30pm	Making Gender Equality Architecture Reform a Reality <i>Venue: Salvation Army, Downstairs Room</i>	Sponsored by the GEAR Campaign Working Group

For regular updates: <http://cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/policy/b15/index.html>

We shall continue to fill out this table so that you have more information on who is organizing which event when and where. The information has been slow in coming this year. However, if you have information about your planned side event please inform us at your earliest opportunity.

2. Travel arrangements:

i. Visa

You will need a visa that enables you to enter the United States of America. You are urged to apply for your visa early as the process may take up to a month to complete. You will need:

- A valid passport (with at least 6 months period before expiry date)
- A visa fee (which varies from country to country) Check on the American Embassy website or office in your country (nearest country which has an American Embassy)
- A travel booking (travel itinerary) and accommodation booking (hotel booking) in New York, in most cases you will need a confirmation from the hotel of your booking.
- Yellow fever certificate
- The letter confirming your accreditation for the 2010 CSW 54th Session (Confirmation letter)
- A letter from your organization nominating you to attend a particular side event (in case you do not have the accreditation letter)
- Confirmation of how you will cater for all your expenses for the period you will be in the United States
- Fill in an online form responding to all the information requests and to provide your personal details.

We advise you to submit visa applications to your local United States Consulate well in advance (at least a month before your scheduled travel date), and make your travel arrangements early to avoid disappointments and escalating airline and hotel prices.

3. Accommodation

We advise that you stay within New York City for ease of travel to the CSW Session venue and to facilitate collaboration with representatives from other African women's organizations. The following are hotels in New York that are close to the United Nations and offer reasonable rates:

The Pod Hotel New York

230 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022
+1 212-355-0300

The Tudor Hotel New York

304 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017
+1 212-986-8800

The New York Helmsley

212 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017
+1-212-405-4300

Radisson Lexington Hotel New York

511 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017
+1-212- 755-4400

Bedford Hotel

118 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016
(212) 697-4800

There are also other hotels and guest houses that appear on the CSW 54th Session website <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/NGO.html>

4. Participation:

The theme for the 2010 CSW 54th Session is **“15-year Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcomes of the 23rd Session of the UN General Assembly (2000)”**

- i. The **Global NGO Forum** on Beijing +15 on February 27-28, 2010, will hold panel discussions covering:
- *Advancing Women's Rights 1975-2010*
 - What the World Conferences Have Accomplished
 - *The State of the World's Women*
 - Patriarchy; Climate Change; Violence Against Women; Women's Health
 - *Voices from Around the World*
 - Issues and priorities for achieving women's rights and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in each region
 - *Fulfilling the Promise of Gender Equality, Peace and Development*
 - World economic crisis; Strengthening institutional mechanisms, building women's leadership; Women in armed conflict

The panels will feature experts from around the world, and there will be breakout sessions to discuss issues from the panel events. There will be Regional sessions on day two of the Global NGO Forum and we expect that all those who will be in New York will plan to attend this session. At the Africa Regional Session we shall present a summary of the Africa Shadow Report and discuss the draft Call to Action from the Women of Africa. The outcome of the Global NGO Forum will be a CALL TO ACTION. The purpose is to have a document which we shall use to lobby our government when we return to our respective countries.

- ii. The draft schedule for the **CSW 54th Session** is attached, however is available only in English.

The Africa Women's Regional Shadow Report on Beijing +15 has now been translated into French and will soon be available. The **official launch of the Shadow Report will take place in New York on the 2nd of March 2010.**

African Women's statement: Over 100 women convened at the NGO Consultative meeting in the margins of the 8th Regional Conference on Women (Beijing +15) held in Banjul, The Gambia in November 2009. The key recommendations from that meeting were submitted to the Ministers in attendance, and also formed the draft of the African women's CALL TO ACTION for the CSW. We have received comments from only two persons so far.

Please send all contributions and/or comments to Naisola Likimani at advocacy@femnet.or.ke, and copy to admin@femnet.or.ke.

NB: Civil society organizations (CSOs) are encouraged to liaise and explore sponsorship opportunities (where they exist) within various government/ official delegation for their participation in the CSW 54th Session.

5. Resources

For further information please check out the following websites:

- Overview of the 54th CSW: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/index.html>
- NGO Participation in the CSW 54th Session: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/NGO.html>
- 2010 NGO Global Forum for Women: Beijing +15: <http://www.ngocsw.org/en/events/2010-forum>

6. Additional Information

The full Schedule of parallel events to take place at the CSW 54th Session will be forwarded to you as soon as it is made available by the NGO CSW Committee.

Annex E: Africa NGO Taskforce on Beijing +15

TASK FORCE MEMBERS OF AFRICA SUB – REGIONS

Africa Regional Coordinators – Chigedze Chinyepi cchinyepi@yahoo.com (Botswana),
Dunstanette Macauley dunstanette@yahoo.com (Zonta International)

SUB -REGION	TASK FORCE MEMBER	COUNTRIES
a) SADC (Southern Africa) sub-region	Ms Homa Mungapen, Mauritius homajoun@gmail.com Tel: 230 2103531 Mobile: 230 7542714	Madagascar, Comoro, Seychelles, Mauritius, Reunion and Mayotte
	Ms Emilia Muchawa, Zimbabwe emilia@zwila.co.zw	Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe
	Botswana - Ms Ida Mokerietane idatswama@yahoo.com	Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa and Botswana
b) COMESA (East Africa) sub-region	Ms Deborah Kaddu – Serwadda, Uganda debbie@iconug.net , debbieug6@yahoo.com , dk.serwadda@bushnet.net Tel: 256.772 468126	Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea
	Ms Norah Matovu,(C/O FEMNET)Kenya director@femnet.or.ke , nomir2002@yahoo.com Tel: 254.20 271 2971/2	Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi
c) ECOWAS (West Africa) sub - region,	Ms. Aicha Tamboura, Burkina Faso (for Francophone countries) tambouraaicha@yahoo.fr	Cote D'ivoire, Togo, Benin, Niger and Burkina Faso
	Ms. Bisi Olateru Olagbegi, Nigeria wildafnig@yahoo.com wildaf@cafe.tg +228 222 679	Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Gambia and Guinea
	Ms Adwowa Bame, Ghana ajubam@yahoo.com	Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde and Liberia
d) Central Africa sub- region	Dr Rose-Claire Bitha , Cameroon bithat@yahoo.com	Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, and Central African Republic
	Ms Eeza Julie, Congo (for Spanish and Portuguese countries)	Angola, Equatorial Guinea, DRC and Congo Brazzaville
e) North Africa sub - region	Ms Imane Belghiti , Morocco belghitilasryimane@yahoo.fr al_hidn@yahoo.fr Mobile: + 212 60 32 6111	Morocco, Mauritania
	Ms. Iman Mandour, Egypt iman@mandour.org / info@cewla.org Mobile: +20 10 10 22 608	Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia Libya and Sudan