Commemoration of Beijing+20

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15 September 2014
Beijing +20 occurs at the conjunction of major historic processes – deadline of the MDGs, elaboration of the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda.

It is essential that Member States renew their commitment to what remains the defining policy framework for the achievement of gender equality and women’s rights.

Beijing Platform for Action

- It is a pleasure to update you on the work and activities undertaken by UN-Women in order to mark the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing declaration and platform of action.

- I would like to emphasize that Beijing+20 takes place at a historic and strategic moment. The global community is intensifying efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the elaboration of a post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals.
(SDGs) is underway. The alignment of these two processes – Beijing+20 and the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda – provide a once-in-a-generation opportunity to position gender equality and women's empowerment front and center on the global agenda.

- Beijing+20 is envisaged as a highly visible, dynamic, and engaging process. Beijing +20 process is a key priority for UN Women for this and next year. It is an excellent opportunity for the Member States to express their political re-commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which remains the defining policy framework for the achievement of gender equality and women’s rights.
Objectives

- I would like to remind you of the four objectives of the Beijing+20 process:

1. Renewed political will and commitment of Member States, as well as concrete actions, for the accelerated implementation of the Platform;

2. Enhanced social mobilization, awareness-raising and revitalized public debate across all sectors of society on achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's
empowerment;

3. Strengthened evidence-base to increase knowledge and enhance understanding of structural underpinnings of gender discrimination and inequality, and of effective responses for creating more equal societies;

4. And enhanced and sufficient resources allocated to, and investment for achieving gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment.

In general, the main focus of Beijing+20 must be on accelerated and effective implementation of the Platform.
Key Activities

- National, regional, global review and appraisal
- High Level Events and Global thematic events
- Communication and social mobilization campaign

Key Activities

- **UN-Women will carry out the following activities**, on which I will provide you further details during my presentation:

  - National, regional, global review and appraisal

  - High level events and a series of global thematic events on the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action

  - Communication and social mobilization campaign,
targeting both traditional and new audiences, including the Youth and men and boys, and aiming also at mass mobilization and recapturing the spirit of Beijing.
Review Process - National Level

- Countries were invited to submit national reports outlining opportunities, challenges and achieved results since 1995.

- Record achievement: 150 national reports were submitted, out of the 193 UN Member states.

- The reports are currently being comprehensively analyzed.

National Reviews

- At the national level, UN-Women has worked with national partners to conduct comprehensive national-level reviews and consultations.

- The review and appraisal process has engaged all sectors and levels of government, as well as other stakeholders, in particular civil society and the UN system, to assess progress made, identify remaining gaps and challenges, and establish a way forward to accelerate progress.
• I am pleased to announce that, out of the 193 UN Member states, 150 have submitted their national report. This is a record achievement and demonstrates the strong commitment of the Member States to this process.

• The preliminary findings from the national reports indicate, that over the last 20 years, a lot of progress has been made in areas such as girls’ education and women’s labour market participation. At the same time, women’s increased educational attainment and rising participation in the labour market has not been matched with better employment conditions, prospects for advancement and equal pay.

• The data also shows that in many countries, women are still concentrated in low paid vulnerable jobs with limited access to social protection and other entitlements. The disproportionate share of unpaid care work continues to limit women’s and girls’ ability to access education, decent employment and participation in politics. Violence against women and girls persists in many forms and violations of women’s sexual and reproductive rights continue. Women continue to be excluded from decision-making at all levels.

• While our analysis of the national reports is ongoing, the reports point out towards the following policy measures:
- reaching out for the most marginalized women and girls by tackling stark and rising inequalities and multiple forms of discrimination;

- Strengthening and supporting feminist and women's movements to exert greater influence in policy decisions;

- exponentially increasing investments in gender equality and women's rights; and

- for governments to demonstrate strong leadership and commitment to advance women's rights and counter conservative agendas that are inimical to women's rights.
UN Regional Commissions, together with UN Women, will organize regional reviews and intergovernmental meetings to identify regional trends in the implementation of the BPfA on the following dates:

- **6-7 Nov**: Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva
- **11 and 14 Nov**: Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa
- **17-20 Nov**: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok
- **18-20 Nov**: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago
- **Tbd**: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Cairo

**Regional Reviews**

- Regional reviews are well under way in the five UN Regional Commissions. Inter-governmental meetings are scheduled to take place in November and December 2014. The process will result in the identification of regional trends, common concerns among countries and sub-regions, and successful solutions and strategies for addressing the challenges.

- Regional intergovernmental conferences will be organized on the following dates:
✓ 6-7 Nov: Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva
✓ 11-14 Nov: Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa
✓ 17-20 Nov: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok
✓ 18-20 Nov: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago
✓ To be determined: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Cairo

- UN-Women is also supporting and encouraging civil society to hold consultations in conjunction with regional preparations, so that the voices of women’s organizations are effectively part of the process.
UN Women will prepare:

- **Report of Secretary-General** to be presented at CSW59 - a global assessment of progress made and challenges remaining for each of the 12 critical areas.

- **‘Progress of the World’s Women’** report on women’s economic and social rights.

- **A series of policy briefings** on various issues related to the Beijing Platform for Action and emerging issues throughout 2015.

**Global Review and Knowledge Products**

- Both the national and regional review processes will feed into the global review, which will culminate in the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which will take place from 9 – 20 March 2015. For that purpose, UN-Women will prepare the **mandated Secretary-General report and it** will be submitted to the Office of the Secretary-General by the end of the year.

- The report will provide a global assessment of the state of play of gender equality and women’s empowerment and
provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and subsequent review conferences. It will draw out the lessons for accelerating implementation and advancing gender equality, women’s empowerment and the realization of women’s and girls’ human rights in the post-2015 context.

- An expert group meeting is scheduled for October 2014 to provide additional insights as to how to accelerate implementation of the Platform for Action in the current context.

- We will also publish a flagship report as part of UN-Women’s “Progress of the World Women” series and release, throughout 2015, policy briefings on various issues related to the Beijing Platform for Action and emerging issues.

- All these knowledge products will be extremely valuable for decision-makers to inform policies and actions to accelerate progress towards gender equality, especially in the context of the post-2015.
Global Thematic Events

- More than 50 events around the world aimed at sharing cutting-edge experience and knowledge in each critical area.
- Engaging with a variety of policy makers, political leaders, technical experts and gender advocates.
- Strategy is to mainly capitalize on existing events to achieve wider impact.
- Knowledge products

Global Thematic Events

- UN-Women is co-organizing or coordinating a series of global events focusing on the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action and on emerging issues. We are mainly capitalizing on existing international events, organized by UN entities and other actors, and re-branding them to the purpose of Beijing + 20. Through this strategy we can ensure high-level participation, reach-out for different constituencies and have a multiplier effect with limited resources.

- The events aim at bringing together policy makers, political
leaders, technical experts, and gender advocates to share cutting-edge experience and knowledge in each critical area, and identifying recommendations to accelerate action. As such, the events will provide a forum to have dialogues about lessons learnt and good practices, challenges and set-backs, emerging issues, and most importantly what can be done to improve the status of women and girls in each of the critical areas of concern.

To give you some examples, upcoming events include:

- The **Leader’s Forum on Women Leading the Way: Raising Ambition for Climate Action** hosted by the Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice and UN-Women, in September 2014. With the participation of Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia and the UN Secretary-General, the event aims at demonstrating women’s leadership on climate action and highlighting gender-responsive actions at all levels. The event will also be an opportunity to position gender equality at the center of the discussions on climate change and sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda and the elaboration of Sustainable Development Goals.
- **2nd Global Symposium “Men and Boys for Gender Justice”**, to be held in New Dehli, in November 2014. Organized by the MenEngage alliance in close collaboration with UN-Women and other partners, the Symposium will bring together 800 delegates from South Asia and the whole world, to discuss how men and boys can creatively contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment, including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. UN-Women will commission a background paper that will conceptually frame the Symposium in the context of Beijing+20.

- This year, the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (25 November – 10 December)** will also mark the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. Activities will be organized under the umbrella of the United Nations Secretary-General’s **UNiTE to End Violence against Women** campaign, managed by UN-Women on behalf of the UN System.

- **World Health Assembly**: UN-Women together with WHO have identified a politically powerful package of actions to promote Beijing+20 in the context of health, including having “women and health” as one of the key themes of next year’s
World Health Assembly.

In addition, in collaboration with UN partners we are working on knowledge products. An example of this is the launch of the ILO Overview Report on Women at work.
High-level Events

- **March 2015**: Large Public celebration during CSW59.

- **September 2015**: Global Leaders’ Commitment Forum to Achieve Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment - an opportunity for Member States to voice their commitment to achieve gender equality and to launch new initiatives.

Other Major Events

- During the CSW59, UN-Women will organize a major **public evening event**, in collaboration with the City of New York and UN Foundation. The purpose of this event is to create highly visible moment of celebration of the women’s movement and recognize the incredible achievements and gains women and girls have made since Beijing, through the tireless work of women’s organizations and gender advocates. It will be an evening event and we are expecting thousands of participants.
o UN-Women will also organize a "Global Leaders’ Commitment Forum on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment" in September 2015, in order to elicit high-level and concrete commitments by all stakeholders, but especially from the Member States for accelerated implementation of the gender equality and women’s rights agenda.

o We will take advantage of the presence in New York of Heads of State and Government to get political recommitment to the Beijing Platform for Action at the highest possible level.

o The event will be structured as a ‘Commit event’ where participants will be invited to publicly state their commitments to the achievement of gender equality within a timeframe aligned to the post-2015 framework and highlight key initiatives for further action and funding.

o I would like to encourage your governments to start thinking of initiatives to be launched during the Forum. It can take the form of a constitutional amendment, legal reform or new law, a special measure, a programme that will contribute to advancing gender equality and women’s
empowerment at the national, regional or global levels.

- This is not an intergovernmental process and **there will be no negotiated outcome**. A report on the high-level meeting summarizing key elements from the discussions and commitments of Member states and other actors will be prepared and published online.
Communication Campaign

- Year long campaign ‘Empowering Women - Empowering Humanity: Picture It!’

- Online hub available in 3 languages highlighting every month a specific critical area of concern of the Platform for Action.

Communication Campaign

- UN-Women is also undertaking a major communication effort to raise awareness among the general public and make the Beijing agenda one that everybody can own.

- Our campaign “Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity – Picture It!” kicked off on 22 May 2014, through a global online conversation, and was launched physically on 26 June 2014, at the Apollo Theatre in New York as a signal to bring the United Nations to the people. Our event brought together 1,200 participants.
UN-Women also has developed an **online hub for the campaign**. The online site includes information on the Beijing Platform for Action in three languages, and has inspiring multi-media content. The campaign engages a wide range of constituencies on the 12 Critical Areas of Concern of the Platform for Action, putting the spotlight every month on a specific critical area of concern of the Platform. We lead virtual discussions on these topics, using traditional and social media.

Using social media, we especially target youth to fire up a new generation of gender equality and women’s rights advocates as well as men and boys through specific platforms, such as our HeforShe campaign.

I would like to share the following achievements of our communication efforts:

- The campaign hashtag #beijing20 has already reached a total of 72 million unique users.
- Our monthly newsletter with the editorial packages on the 12 Critical Areas of Concern goes to 52,000 subscribers.
- 12 videos produced for the campaign reached 250,000 people.
Conclusion

Key to the success of the Beijing+20 process is the commitment, contribution and action of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

• The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is ‘an agenda for women’s empowerment’. As such, for UN-Women, the Beijing+20 is a critical political process. Member States and partners must enable, empower and resource UN-Women to be the advocate for gender equality and women’s empowerment that it was created to be.

• Key to the success of the Beijing+20 process is the commitment, contribution and action of all stakeholders.

• We need your support also in the form of additional financial...
resources. So far, Iceland, Dutch and Norway has committed or pledges funding towards B+20 process.

- Thank you.
Thank you

Questions and Answers