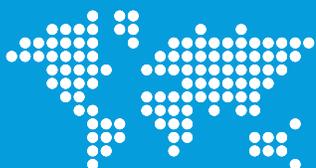


TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY:

TWENTY YEARS ON

A review of how training for gender equality has evolved
from Beijing Platform for Action in 1995



UN WOMEN TRAINING CENTRE
JUNE 2015



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Chief of UN Women Training Centre 5

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FOREWORD

**BY CLEMENCIA MUNOZ-TAMAYO,
CHIEF OF UN WOMEN TRAINING CENTRE**

This paper was commissioned to contribute to the UN Women Training Centre's work on improving training for gender equality through evidence-based practice. Using the Beijing review process as its central theme, this report explores the key developments in training for gender equality since 1995. We consider this paper to be a first step in mapping training for gender equality and identifying remaining gaps in knowledge.

Through close analysis of a range of relevant documents, the paper maps out key developments and issues in training for gender equality. The overall aim is to advance knowledge and understanding on training for gender equality in order to develop strategies for moving forward in this field. This involves reflecting on what has worked well and what challenges remain, based on substantive empirical evidence and rigorous analysis.

The findings of this report demonstrate the importance of training to the wider gender equality agenda. Training is highlighted as an essential tool for achieving each of the twelve Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. It has been conducted in some form in almost every critical area during each review process (+5, +10, +15 and +20). At the UN Women Training Centre, we believe that training is an essential component of a transformative approach to gender equality. With this paper, we hope to offer a broader contribution to the field of training for gender equality with the aim of improving standards and effectiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Training Centre gratefully acknowledges the valuable inputs received from Lucy Ferguson on the development of this paper.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PRESENTATION

This paper provides a preliminary review of how training for gender equality has evolved from the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 to the present day. It can be considered a first step in surveying training for gender equality in the Beijing review process and broader literature. The overall aim of the paper is to advance knowledge and understanding on training for gender equality in order to develop strategies for moving forward in this field. This is done by reflecting on what has worked well to date, and what challenges still remain, based on substantive empirical evidence and rigorous analysis.

Training for gender equality in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

A range of types of training are envisaged in the PFA across the twelve critical areas of concern. In some areas, the focus is predominantly on skills training for women – namely poverty, the economy and the environment – without an explicit discussion of the role of training in gender mainstreaming within these fields. Other areas – notably education and the girl child – are concerned with non-discriminatory training. In the remaining critical areas, greater attention is given to

‘gender sensitive training’, more closely in line with the Training Centre’s focus on training for gender equality. Health, violence and human rights particularly highlight the need for gender sensitive training for personnel. In institutional mechanisms, proposed measures include staff training in designing and analysing data from a gender perspective, alongside training and advisory assistance to government agencies to help integrate a gender perspective in their policies and programmes.

Training for gender equality in Beijing +5 (2000)

Training features frequently in the Beijing +5 Secretary-General’s report. In terms of achievements in implementation, it notes that a number of countries introduced awareness-raising and gender awareness

training in an effort to change institutional culture in agencies and departments. The report’s section on conclusions and further actions calls for the expansion of gender training.

Training for gender equality in Beijing +10 (2005)

The Secretary-General's report on Beijing +10 underscores progress made in resource allocations for training, as well as a wide variety of training activities for government institutions, civil society, women's organisations and individual women. Its section on institutional arrangements and mechanisms for the advancement of women, notes that governments were urged to promote gender training for both women and

men in government ministries. Several states instigated training on gender-sensitive budgeting and responses from countries in all regions included information on capacity-building workshops and training programmes. These developments demonstrate the widespread use of training as a tool for gender mainstreaming by 2005, with training in several critical areas seeming to peak during this period.

Training for gender equality in Beijing +15 (2010)

Training features strongly in the reports and analysis of Beijing +15. The Secretary-General's report concludes that many national machineries expanded their capacity-development and training functions for all members of government; that the availability of gender mainstreaming tools – including guidelines, checklists,

manuals, and guidance for conducting gender impact assessments – increased; and that specialised training, workshops and seminars were provided for staff in different ministries and government agencies, including for senior managers.

Training for gender equality in Beijing +20 (2015)

Training in the (draft) Secretary-General's report is not discussed beyond its analysis of the critical areas of concern, with the most detailed reflection relating to institutional mechanisms. While some countries developed training to strengthen staff skills in gender analysis, the +20 report – as in previous years – underlines remaining challenges, in particular staff capacity in national gender equality machineries due to a lack

of training and investment. Emphasising that much more needs to be done in this area, it highlights the particular need for greater knowledge and capacity in gender responsive budgeting, especially in the context of shrinking budgets. It is important to reflect on these on-going challenges for training as an institutional mechanism at this critical juncture.

Analysis and Implications for Practice

The evolution of training for gender equality has been accompanied by a proliferation of critical reflection on its theory and practice. Much feminist research since 1995 has been sceptical of the relationship between feminist movements and emerging training activities, drawing special attention to structures and power dynamics; the world views embedded in training methodologies; the

lack of critical reflection on pedagogical themes; and the dilemmas and challenges involved in feminist knowledge transfer. Discussion and debate on such topics has flourished through conferences and virtual dialogues, while understanding of training for gender equality has been furthered via key research projects, in particular in the European Union.

Key Findings

1. Training has been an important tool for increasing gender equality, and has flourished substantively, beyond the original expectations set out in the Platform for Action.
2. Despite the proliferation and institutionalisation of training for gender equality in many areas, there is a concerning lack of information on the impact and evaluation of such training.
3. The development and institutionalisation of training for gender equality has been uneven across different critical areas of concern.
4. Training for gender equality since Beijing has not always addressed the structural aspects and power relations which perpetuate inequality.
5. The provision of training for gender equality has often involved collaboration between different actors, expanding beyond a focus on the public sector to encompass the private sector, civil society and numerous other key-players.
6. While training for gender equality has developed, evolved and expanded consistently since Beijing, there appears to have been a decline in focus on training and a reversal in its scope in recent years.

Recommendations

1. Raise awareness of the important role played by training for gender equality in increasing equality between women and men since the Beijing Conference.
2. Continue to develop adequate systems for the monitoring and evaluation of training for gender equality in order to measure outcomes and impact more systematically.
3. Explore the possibilities for expanding training for gender equality in critical areas of concern which have received less attention to date.
4. Promote the value and role of training for gender equality as a tool for transformation in gendered power relations.
5. Encourage collaboration between a range of actors to expand and enhance the provision of training for gender equality while supporting the UN to be a world leader in this field.
6. Work to reverse the trend of a declining focus on training.

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a preliminary review of how training for gender equality has evolved from the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 to the present day. It can be considered a first step in surveying training for gender equality in the Beijing review process and broader literature. It also serves to highlight the main gaps in empirical knowledge on training for gender equality. Key issues that merit further investigation include: a substantive mapping of training for gender equality across all world regions; a detailed examination of the response of UN agencies; a complete survey of manuals, tools, literature and research on training for gender equality; an exploration of how training for gender equality has developed in each critical areas of concern of the PFA; and more evidence on the provision of training for gender equality by actors not included in the Beijing review process.

Four sets of documents have been reviewed in the development of this paper: the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) and the Reports of the Secretary General from Beijing +5, +10, +15 and +20 (the latter is currently in draft form); reports and research on training for gender equality; critiques from feminist academic literature; and online discussions by the UN Women Training Centre Community of Practice. This represents a first step towards conducting a comprehensive analysis of the current situation of training for gender equality. The limitations of the current study mean that other important actors in the provision of training for gender equality have not been analysed – for example NGOs, women’s organizations and development donors – and warrant further attention in future research.

In this paper, we use the term training for gender equality, defined by the UN Women Training Centre as:

A transformative process that aims to provide knowledge, techniques and tools to develop skills and changes in attitudes and behaviours. It is a continuous and long-term process that requires political will and commitment of all parties in order to create an inclusive, aware and competent society to promote gender equality.

It is a tool and a strategy to effect individual and collective transformation towards gender equality through consciousness raising, empowering learning, knowledge building, and skill development. Training helps men and women to build gender competence and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for advancing gender equality in their daily lives and work. Training for gender equality is part and parcel of delivering our commitments to equal human rights for all.

Throughout the paper, a range of other terms are also used –primarily ‘gender training’– to describe the same process, depending on the language used in the

documents and literature consulted. For a full range of the terms used in the PFA and review process, see **Figure 1**.



FIGURE 1 – TERMS USED INDISTINCTIVELY TO DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY. THESE TERMS ARE NOT SEPARATELY DEFINED AS NO SPECIFIC DEFINITIONS ARE PROVIDED IN THE DOCUMENTS REVIEWED.

This main body of the paper is made up of three key sections: [training in the Beijing Platform for Action](#); [training in subsequent reviews of the PFA](#); and [training for gender equality in 2015](#). Each section provides an overview of training for gender equality in the PFA and

review process documentation, followed by a critical analysis from reports and academic literature. The final part of the paper sets out the Key Findings of the current study and a number of Recommendations for the future development of training for gender equality.

TRAINING IN THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995)

Training for gender equality as a development practice proliferated in the 1990s.⁴¹ Oxfam, for instance, published its Gender Training Manual in 1994, noting that when its “Gender and Development Unit ... was established in 1985, training in gender awareness was the

first and most urgent demand from the field offices for its services”.²¹ Despite this evident demand, however, gender training does not appear to have come to the fore until the lead up to the Beijing Conference:

In spite of decades-long activism for women’s rights, particularly the long struggle for civil and political rights and for the reform of the religious family code, learning on gender only seems to have come centre-stage around the United Nations (UN) Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, China, in 1995. Many women’s rights activists in the region recall attending their first gender training or seminar in the early 1990s as part of the preparations leading up to the Beijing Conference.³¹

Training features across the board in the critical areas of concern in the PFA⁴¹, which we outline in more detail below:



A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

The focus here is on skills and vocational training for women, geared towards improving livelihoods and lifting women out of poverty. There is little discussion of the structural gendered issues related to poverty and the kinds of training that may be appropriate for addressing these. As shown below, this kind of analysis was developed more clearly in conjunction with the Millennium Development Goals.



B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

Again, there is ample focus on skills training for women in this critical area. However, some attention is paid to training more broadly in strategic objective B.4, which calls for the development of non-discriminatory education and training. The associated actions to be taken in this regard are: to develop training programmes and materials

for teachers and educators that raise awareness about the status, role and contribution of women and men in the family and society; to develop training programmes and materials for teachers and educators that raise awareness of their own role in the educational process, with a view to providing them with effective strategies for gender-sensitive teaching; to introduce and promote training in peaceful conflict resolution; and to develop leadership training and opportunities for all women, so as to encourage them to take up leadership roles both as students and adults in civil society.



C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

Training in this area focuses primarily on gender training for health professionals. Recommendations include: redesigning health information, services and training for health workers so that they are gender-sensitive and reflect the user's perspectives with regard to interpersonal and communications skills, as well as the user's right to privacy and confidentiality; and ensuring that medical school curricula and other health-care training include gender-sensitive, comprehensive and mandatory courses on women's health.



D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In this critical area there is an acknowledgement that women may be vulnerable to violence perpetrated by persons in positions of authority in both conflict and non-conflict situations. As such, the PFA proposes training all officials in humanitarian and human rights law. So too does it advocate for the punishment of perpetrators of violent acts against women, which would help to ensure that violence does not take place at the hands of public officials in whom women should be able to place trust, including the police, prison officials and security forces.

The corresponding recommendation is to create, improve or develop, as appropriate, and fund training programmes for judicial, legal, medical, social, educational, law enforcement and immigration personnel. This is envisioned as a means of avoiding the abuse of power which leads to violence against women, while sensitising such personnel to the nature of gender-based acts and threats of violence so that fair treatment of female victims can be assured. As such, the coverage of training in this critical area is quite broad, and it is clear that training has a key role to play in combating violence against women.



E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Training here focuses on strategic objective E5 – provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women. The corresponding action is to develop awareness of women’s human rights and provide, as appropriate, human rights education and training to military and police personnel operating in areas of armed conflict and areas with refugee populations.



F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

As with women and poverty, this area focuses primarily on skills and vocational training for women in order to improve their position in economic structures. However, little attention is paid to training for policy-makers and officials on how to address gender inequalities in economies and labour markets, an issue discussed in more detail later in this paper.



G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

Here the focus is on training women in leadership skills, as opposed to addressing the constraints to women’s leadership and how these might be addressed through training. There is some attention to gender-sensitive training in terms of promoting non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles.



H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Training is a fundamental component of this critical area. In the section’s preamble, the PFA notes that national machineries for the advancement of women have been established in almost every Member State. However, it also acknowledges the marginalised nature of such mechanisms and clearly states the lack of adequate training. As such, strategic objective H1 – create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies – includes two specific objectives on training: provide staff training in designing and analysing data from a gender perspective; and provide training and advisory assistance to government agencies in order to integrate a gender perspective in their policies and programmes.



I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Training also features strongly in terms of the human rights of women, under strategic objective I2 – ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice. This area includes three action points: provide training in the human rights of women for all UN personnel and officials to promote their understanding of the human rights of women; provide gender-sensitive human rights education and training to public officials; and include information about international and regional instruments and standards in their public information and human rights education activities, as well as in adult education and training programmes.



J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

The training component of women and the media involves gender-sensitive training for media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and diverse images of women in the media.



K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Training is noted as a means of helping women living in rural areas and those working in the agricultural sector to increase their participation in sustainable development. Objectives in this critical area include the development of training programmes for girls and women in the fields of science, environmental management and technical, administrative and clerical work; as well as rural and urban training, alongside research and resource centres to disseminate environmentally sound technologies to women.



L. THE GIRL CHILD

Training is addressed in two areas in relation to the girl child. Strategic objective L4 – eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training – includes the development of training programmes and materials for teachers and educators, raising awareness about their own role in the educational process, with a view to providing them with effective strategies for gender-sensitive teaching. Training is also an action point for eradicating violence against the girl child (L7), in which gender sensitisation training should be provided for those involved in healing, rehabilitation and other assistance programmes for girls who are victims of violence, while promoting programmes of information, support and training for such girls.

In addition to these critical areas of concern, the PFA outlines the **role of institutions** in providing training for gender equality. The training service of the UN Office of Human Resources Management should design and conduct regular gender-sensitivity training or include such training in all its activities. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of

Women (INSTRAW) is highlighted as the institution with a mandate to promote research and training on women's situation and development. International financial institutions are encouraged to increase staff training in gender analysis and the international community is urged to commit sufficient resources to training and information activities for the advancement of women.

UN-INSTRAW

The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) was created by ECOSOC in 1976 to carry out research, training and knowledge management activities aimed at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Working in partnership with governments, the UN System, civil society, academia and the private sector, the Institute sought to strengthen stakeholder capacity to address and effectively integrate gender issues in all policies, programmes and projects. As of December 2003, in line with the UN reform agenda, UN-INSTRAW underwent a revitalisation process which focused its operations on four strategic areas: (i) action-oriented research; (ii) knowledge management; (iii) capacity-building; and (iv) institutional development. It specifically focused on such issues as women's political participation at the local level; gender, peace and security; women in conflict-affected areas; and development and migration. Throughout, its efforts were guided by relevant international conventions, including CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and the Security Council, notably Resolution 1325 (2000) on women peace and security. In January 2011, UN-INSTRAW became part of UN Women.

Analysis and Implications for Practice

A range of types of training are envisaged in the PFA across the critical areas of concern. In some areas, the focus is predominantly on skills training for women – namely poverty, the economy and the environment – without an explicit discussion of the role of training in gender mainstreaming within these spheres. Other areas – particularly education and the girl child – are concerned with non-discriminatory training. In the remaining critical areas, further attention is given to 'gender sensitive training', more closely in line with our focus here on training for gender equality. Health, violence and human rights highlight the need for gender

sensitive training for personnel. In terms of institutional mechanisms, proposed measures include staff training in designing and analysing data from a gender perspective, alongside training and advisory assistance to governments with a view to integrating a gender perspective into their policies and programmes. However, as outlined throughout this paper, there is little discussion in the PFA of the rationale and expected impact of these training activities. Nor is there a clear definition of how the impact of training on gender equality will be monitored and evaluated.

TRAINING IN SUBSEQUENT REVIEWS OF THE PFA

Since the Beijing Conference, the UN has taken up gender mainstreaming as a key organising frameworks and instrument for achieving gender equality. The ECOSOC agreed conclusions (1997/2) established important overall principles for gender mainstreaming. ECOSOC resolution 2001/41 on gender mainstreaming (July 2001) called on the Economic and Social Council to ensure that gender perspectives are taken into account in all its work, including in the work of its functional commissions, and recommended a five-year review of the implementation of the ECOSOC agreed conclusions (1997/2). Clear intergovernmental mandates for gender mainstreaming have also been developed for all major

areas of the UN's work, including disarmament, poverty reduction, macro-economics, health, education and trade. For instance, Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in October 2000, outlines the importance of paying greater attention to gender perspectives in peace support operations.

This section reviews the development of training for gender equality across the three main Beijing review periods – +5, +10 and +15. It then provides an overview of research on training for gender equality during this period, setting out the key critiques and concerns of academic literature.

Training in Beijing +5

In the five years following the Beijing Conference, the issue of women's human rights gained substantial ground. The period saw the international women's movement follow-up on the momentum of the gathering, heralding a new phase in which feminists forged alliances with political parties and other labour and social justice movements worldwide. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly MDG 3 to promote gender equality and empower women, reinforced the impetus for further action on the commitments made by UN Members in Beijing. Moreover, in the face of increasing globalisation, experts began to highlight the role of multinational forces, private corporations and international financial institutions in creating the economic and political structures that perpetuate gender discrimination.

Training features frequently in the Secretary-General's Beijing +5 report,⁵¹ with 205 mentions. In terms of **achievements in implementation**, the report notes that a number of countries introduced awareness-raising and gender awareness training in an effort to change institutional culture in agencies and departments. In particular, efforts to sensitise the police and the judiciary to gender equality concerns, such as violence against women, were implemented. Training on domestic violence was conducted for health professionals, law enforcement personnel and other officials, including embassy and consular staff involved in immigration issues. In the section on conclusions and further actions, there is a call to expand gender training. Training is also discussed in some of the critical areas of concern, as outlined in more detail below.



A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

The report acknowledges the importance of training for expanding human capabilities so as to further women's empowerment and poverty eradication, calls for the expansion of gender training. Countries reported that the lack of equality in education and training between men and women contributed to poverty among female-headed households, as well as the persistence and growth of poverty among women more broadly. Gender training was conducted by certain countries for policy makers, as in Senegal where gender training for senior decision makers aimed to help mainstream a gender perspective into sectoral development planning. Training of managers on gender consciousness, awareness and needs assessments were also conducted. Other countries used training to enhance economic opportunities for women, such as Mexico, which provided training in managerial aspects, self-administration and leadership in order to improve women's economic performance.



B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

The importance of gender-sensitive training material and non-discriminatory education and training was highlighted at the Beijing +5 sessions. Nevertheless, the vast majority of discussions of training in this critical area focus on skills training, such as literacy training, vocational training, retraining, science and technology, adult education, women in sports and teacher training, etc.



C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

This area focuses predominantly on technical training in the health sector. However, it is noted that some countries introduced gender training in health services or a gender perspective into the training of health workers. In certain cases, the curricula for midwifery and nursing schools were revised, introducing violence against women as a topic.



D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A number of concrete examples of training initiatives are cited in this area, including gender-sensitivity training for a wide range of actors. Efforts were made to sensitise law enforcement personnel, the judiciary, health-care providers and welfare workers to gender concerns. Moreover, services for abused women and children included hotlines and police units with special training.



E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Strategies to ensure that the gendered impact of armed conflict is understood by the armed forces were introduced in a number of Member States, such as Belgium and the Philippines, including training in international human rights and humanitarian law and their gender dimensions. Other countries, such as Canada and the United Kingdom introduced gender awareness training to enhance awareness of the gender dimensions of peace operations and provide participants with the ability to employ gender analysis in the field.



F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

The focus here is mainly on skills training and training for women entrepreneurs, reflecting the priorities established in the PFA.



G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

Training in this area at Beijing +5 was twofold, comprising leadership education and training for women, as well as gender-sensitive training for elected officials and awareness-raising campaigns. This focus on gender-sensitive training represents a development from the primary focus of the PFA on leadership training for women. Good practices cited in this area include: gender training on leadership; publicising the names of the leaders who did not support gender issues; and establishing networks to support those promoting gender equality. The report also reflects on the importance of facilitating gender-awareness campaigns and gender training among men, arguing that women and men together should create a new institutional culture that will be responsive to both and facilitate women's equal participation. This is one of the first mentions of the role of men in successful training for gender equality, a key methodological and political debate that continues in this field.



H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

In this critical area, it is noted that many countries sought to educate the staff of government ministries and agencies, as important partners of the national machinery, about gender mainstreaming and other issues related to improving

the status of women. However, despite advances, a number of serious challenges are highlighted. One country, for example, reported on the national machinery's low status since its inception, noting that its dearth of authority was compounded by a lack of adequate staff training and resources to carry out an important mandate. A further challenge was coordination between the national machinery and other government units and agencies, with highly limited knowledge of and appreciation for gender mainstreaming. In response, many national machineries conducted sensitisation training for line ministries or were planning future training sessions.



I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Numerous examples of training in this area are cited in the report. Several governments launched human rights and legal education programmes, including the training of judges and law enforcement officials on the human rights of women, as well as measures to strengthen the capacity of women to defend their own rights. Belgium is particularly notable for developing a training model for the evaluation of functions in the framework of equal pay for work of equal value. Nonetheless, a number of obstacles to the implementation of action in this sphere are noted, including a lack of adequate training; a lack of training and information materials on women's human rights; and a lack of capacity for gender analysis.



J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

It is reported that significant efforts were made in the area of gender-sensitive training for media professionals in various sectors, including the government, the private sector and other relevant organisations. In spite of such advances, however, the low level of skills in gender-sensitive reporting and the slow institutionalisation of, and low participation in, gender-sensitivity training often made it challenging to promote positive images of women.



K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As set out in the discussion of the PFA, this area primarily focuses on issues such as training for rural women to increase environmental awareness, training for women scientists and training to make and use improved stoves. Structural aspects of training for gender equality are not addressed.



L. THE GIRL CHILD

The primary focus here is on vocational and professional training for girls, with numerous examples given. These include special initiatives to direct girls towards non-traditional fields of study and training, with a particular emphasis on science and technology. Training materials to address issues of sexual and reproductive health of girls also feature prominently, as do literacy training and vocational training as a means to stop trafficking. Alongside these, a number of capacity-building measures are outlined, e.g. leadership and advocacy skills training; peer education and life-skills training, and the training of those involved in education, the defence of children's rights and the media. The report draws attention to the fact that civil society groups have been full and sometimes leading partners in offering training for girls worldwide.

In addition to the Secretary-General's report, document **S-23/3 – further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** – outlines additional points on the role of training in gender mainstreaming for a range of actors. National governments are urged to develop a gender-sensitive curriculum from kindergarten to elementary schools, vocational training and universities to address gender stereotyping as one of the root causes of segregation in working life.

Further actions to be taken at the **national level** by governments, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and other civil society actors include: providing gender-sensitive training to all actors, including police, prosecutors and the judiciary, in dealing with victims of violence, particularly women and girls, including sexual violence; taking further measures to redesign health information, services and training for health

workers in order to make them gender-sensitive; and strengthening gender-awareness campaigns and gender equality training among women and men, girls and boys to eliminate the persistence of harmful stereotypes.

At the **international level**, proposed actions for the United Nations system and international and regional organisations include: ensuring that all UN personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training to mainstream a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, as well as ensuring appropriate follow-up to such training; providing gender-sensitive training to all actors in peacekeeping missions in dealing with victims of violence, particularly women and girls, including sexual violence; and encouraging and implementing curriculum changes in training for public officials to make them fully gender-sensitive.

Training in Beijing +10

Major global and regional trends, including globalisation, trade liberalisation and privatisation, alongside the rapid development of information and communication technologies (ICT), yielded both positive and negative impacts on gender equality and women's empowerment in the ten years following the Beijing Conference. Women came to participate to a much higher degree in public life, especially in the economy, including as migrants, and in terms of access to knowledge. Child and maternal mortality was reduced and access to education and literacy of women and girls improved worldwide. However, despite overall global economic growth, women often experienced increased poverty, particularly in rural areas; as well as decreased social protection and basic services; increased violence, notably in situations of armed conflict; decreased participation in political

decision-making; and the emergence of a 'digital divide' between women and men.

The Secretary-General's report on Beijing +10⁶¹ in 2005 highlights that progress was made in resource allocation and capacity-building, including training. It also observes that a wide variety of capacity-building activities took place for government institutions, civil society, women's organisations and individual women. Training, mentioned 178 times in the report, is discussed in key achievements in relation to training and awareness-raising on harmful practices in the framework of health programmes and in the education sector. The report also details progress made in the critical areas of concern, outlined in turn below.



A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

Training in this area focused on capacity-building for women living in poverty. One of the two main strategies cited by governments to reduce poverty among women involved building human capital through training. States such as Malaysia offered training to impoverished women, while others, including Barbados, Belize, the Central African Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran, focused on the importance of education and training to equip women with the necessary technical and social skills for gainful employment and entrepreneurship.



B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

While progress was made in the education sector, the report acknowledges the persistence of gender stereotyping. Gender-sensitive training was incorporated into curricula development in many countries and training for women was conducted in the areas of ICT and literacy. However, training for women in general concentrated on the service sector, while apprenticeships in technical and science areas remained dominated by men and boys.



C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

The report discusses programmes focused on training health personnel, doctors and the general public on violence as a health problem. It further outlines ways to provide adequate care and support to women and girl victims of violence or those at risk.



D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The report details that priority was given to building capacity among professionals dealing with violence against women in many countries. This involved, for example, seminars and continuing education for government officials and training for journalists to improve news reporting on violence against women. Other countries developed manuals, guidelines and other education materials for training and self-study. In some cases, gender sensitivity training was also included in the rehabilitation of offenders.



E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Peacekeeping personnel from Argentina, Finland, Norway and Sweden received training in gender sensitivity and awareness. In addition, Canada and the United Kingdom collaborated with United Nations entities in the development of web-based training materials to mainstream gender issues in peacekeeping. This is one of the first mentions of the role of new technologies in training for gender equality, a phenomenon that has been critical to the on-going development of learning tools and methodologies, as discussed in more detail below.



F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

As set out in the discussion of the PFA, training in this area is limited to skills training. In 2005, this included financial services, business training, and vocational and technical training for women entrepreneurs. The report offers very little information on training for economic empowerment. Nevertheless, it notes that some countries attempted to challenge gender stereotypes in education and training and to influence workplace culture, while others collaborated with the private sector to promote a change of attitude and management. One notable exception to the focus on skills training in this area is the provision of gender-sensitive business training to trade fair exhibitors and visitors in Colombia.



G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

As with area F, the focus here is primarily on leadership and self-esteem training for women. There is little discussion of the structural barriers preventing women from reaching leadership positions or the training required to redress this.



H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

The report notes that governments were urged to promote capacity-building, including gender training for both women and men in government ministries. It is noted that several countries instigated training on gender-sensitive budgeting (Botswana, Malaysia and Tanzania, among others). Responses from countries in all regions included information on capacity-building workshops and training programmes, demonstrating the widespread use of training as a tool for gender mainstreaming by 2005. A specific section of the report is also dedicated to capacity building, featuring many examples from Member States, as seen in Figure 2 below. Interestingly, the +10 report is the only one of the four review reports to feature an extensive focus on training and capacity building. This reinforces the tentative conclusion that training for gender equality reached its peak in this period..



I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

It is reported that the general public, civil society and government officials were made aware of women's human rights through training, education and outreach. Many of these activities were implemented through partnerships between governments, national and international NGOs and women's groups. Activities were also conducted to increase women's legal literacy and understanding of their rights, as well as general awareness of women's rights. Governments and NGOs organised national or local activities, such as capacity-building and training initiatives, workshops, seminars and conferences.



J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

The report acknowledges the vital role of the training of media professionals for combating gender stereotypes and producing gender-sensitive material and programmes. In this regard, it outlines a range of training activities across the sector. It notes that without comprehensive educational and training programmes, social and cultural constraints

will continue to be an impediment to women's access to media career opportunities and equal participation in the media. The report underscores the need for concerted efforts to educate media policy makers on women's rights to equal participation, as well as to eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all aspects of the media.



K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As set out above, the focus of training in this area is predominantly about making women aware of environmental and sustainability issues. However, the report notes that several countries developed institutional mechanisms to facilitate gender mainstreaming within ministries of the environment and other line ministries dealing with sustainable development. Some governments established special offices within ministries to promote gender equality, including the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala and Thailand. Others prepared guidelines, manuals and training handbooks on gender mainstreaming in the environment and conducted workshops and training for technical staff in ministries, NGOs and the general public.



L. THE GIRL CHILD

A number of states reported encouraging girls to take on leadership roles through programmes such as youth workshops and projects on equal opportunities for boys and girls.

As well as the critical areas of concern, training is also discussed in relation to two emerging issues in the +10 report which were not explicitly addressed in the PFA – trafficking in women and girls and HIV/AIDS. In terms of **trafficking**, it is suggested that border police and law enforcement officials need training to enable them to recognise and assist trafficking victims. It is noted that several countries trained and added to the skills of government officials, consular personnel, law enforcement agents, police officers, social workers, health workers, teachers and other professionals. Some donor countries such as the United States also supported training for

government officials, prosecutors and judges in developing countries. The lack of gender sensitivity among professionals working on trafficking issues is identified as a key challenge in this area.

Training was also conducted in several countries in relation to **women and HIV/AIDS**. Malawi trained 80 focal points from the government and civil society on the gender and human rights dimensions of HIV/AIDS; Cameroon's HIV/AIDS programme trained women leaders in civil society and the government; Barbados trained staff on gender relations and the gender

dynamics of HIV/AIDS; and the Dominican Republic designed training strategies for women leaders and the staff of provincial and municipal offices for women. In addition, training programmes were designed to involve male participants. For example, in Barbados, the Bureau of Gender Affairs joined with men’s organisations to support self-development and counselling programmes. Honduras hosted a men’s workshop on delivering sexual and reproductive health services and Bulgaria raised

awareness among doctors through training in reproductive health, gender equality and HIV/AIDS.

Training also features in two specific action points of **Resolution 49/4: Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all national policies and programmes**. The first concerns developing and using frameworks, guidelines and other practical tools and indicators to accelerate gender mainstreaming, including gender-based

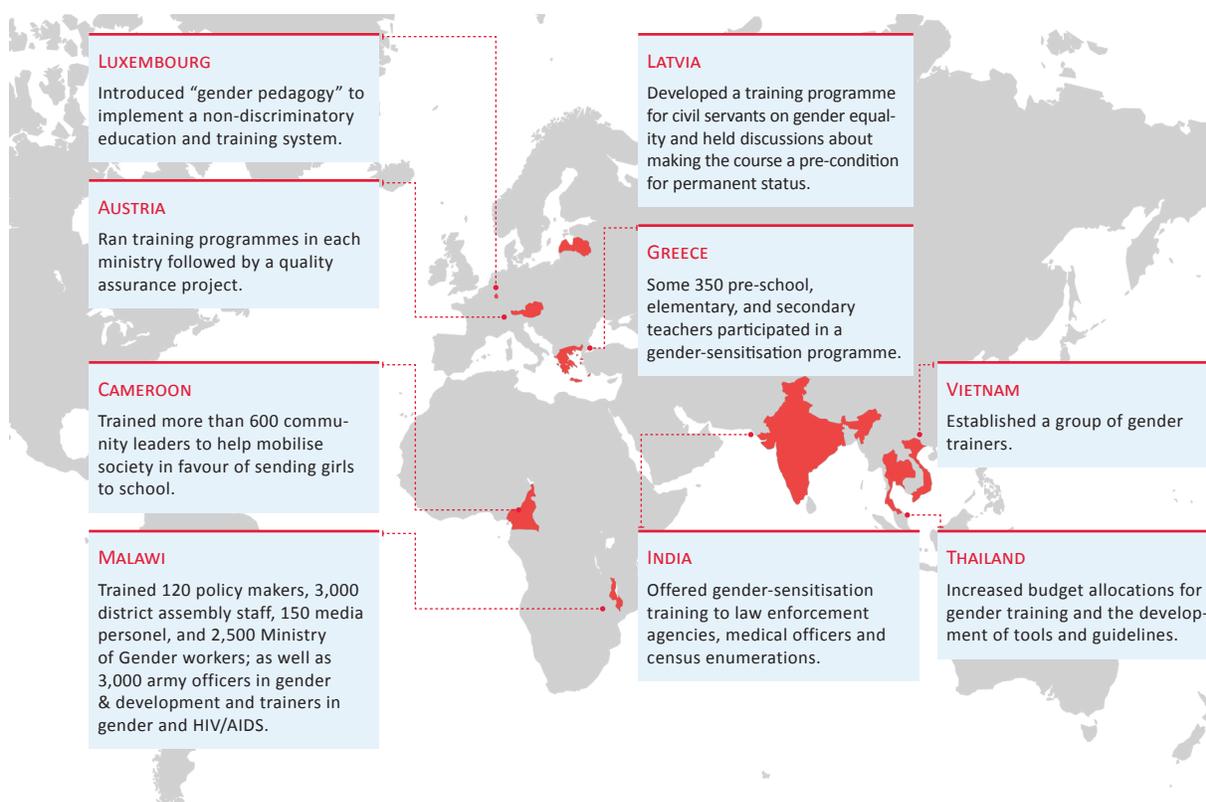


FIGURE 2: EXAMPLES OF TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN BEIJING +10

research, analytical tools and methodologies, training, case studies, statistics and information, in planning and evaluating all policies and programmes. The second is to support the provision of training on gender mainstreaming and promote awareness, information

campaigns and capacity-building, including gender training, to governmental bodies at all levels, the public sector and the judiciary, so as to ensure understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as to facilitate implementation.

Training in Beijing +15

Fifteen years after the Beijing Conference, multiple global crises, including the economic and financial crisis, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, food and energy crises, armed conflict and natural disasters, and the challenge of climate change, adversely impacted the achievement of gender equality targets. Several goals experienced significant setbacks, particularly those relating to poverty, hunger, health, education and decent work. So too did the global context impede the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, and raise doubts about contemporary approaches to development. Stakeholders increasingly called for rethinking and modifying policy approaches, strategies and actions to ensure a more equitable, gender-sensitive and sustainable pattern of global growth and development.

Training featured strongly in the reports and analysis of Beijing +15⁷¹ in 2010, with 106 mentions. The Secretary-General's report concludes that many national machineries expanded their capacity-development and training functions for all members of government; that the availability of gender mainstreaming tools including guidelines, checklists and manuals, as well as guidance for conducting gender impact assessments, increased; and that specialised training, workshops and seminars were provided for staff in ministries and government agencies, including senior managers. The extent and nature of training was also reported across the critical areas of concern, as outlined below.



A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

Training activities on gender equality and gender analysis in many states targeted key policy decision makers and programme implementers in a number of countries to help raise awareness of the gender dimensions of poverty. The report notes that women's groups and networks were especially instrumental in promoting land and property rights for women through advocacy and training activities.



B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

In this area, measures were increasingly taken to mainstream gender perspectives in the education sector. Capacity was strengthened through the increased involvement of gender equality experts; the establishment of gender units or focal points in ministries of education; and the development of gender mainstreaming manuals. There was also a move towards enhanced action to promote gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory education, including in vocational training and adult education.



C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

The report states that progress was made in strengthening capacity to develop gender-sensitive health policies. Countries increasingly implemented training for staff, including gender focal points, in health ministries and agencies to enable them to better carry out their responsibilities for gender mainstreaming. Institutional mechanisms for gender equality worked in collaboration with ministries of health to provide staff training, sometimes with the support of international organisations. Some countries reported on the development of tools, such as guidelines and manuals on gender mainstreaming as well as gender analysis, especially with regards to violence against women. Training of relevant officials increased since 2005 and, in some instances, was institutionalised. As such, we can highlight a growing use of training for gender equality in this sector, perhaps beyond what was envisaged in the PFA.



D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In several states, training of relevant officials increased and, in some instances, was institutionalized. Training of health professionals, social workers and others on a victim-centred approach to violence against women increased and the subject was incorporated into the training curricula of medical and paramedical personnel. Other states trained journalists to report on violence against women in a gender-sensitive manner and trained teachers to equip them with the knowledge necessary to discuss the subject with their students. Specialized training for statisticians was also conducted to enhance accurate data collection on gender-based violence.



E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

It is reported that increased recognition of the important role of peace support and security sector institutions in promoting gender equality led to enhanced attention to gender mainstreaming and capacity development. A range of stakeholders, including Member States, United Nations entities, regional organisations and civil society, provided training to military, police and civilian peacekeeping personnel on issues such as the principles of women's human rights and gender equality; the prevention and response to gender-based violence; human trafficking; and sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping and humanitarian staff. Some countries produced training packages and courses based on Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) for national police and military personnel serving in international peacekeeping operations. These were broadly disseminated to UN entities, other Member States and multilateral organisations.



F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

In contrast to previous reviews, training in +15 focused on broader issues than vocational and skills training for women. For example, countries sought to improve women's access to the labour market through training programmes and public works programmes. To reduce gender-based occupational segregation in the labour market, some governments encouraged women to enter male-dominated occupations and eliminated gender stereotypes in the classification of occupations. Mentoring programmes were also used to increase the representation of women in economic decision-making positions.



G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

In addition to training and capacity development activities for women, gender equality training was also increased for both female and male government officials and parliamentarians, especially in the area of gender-sensitive policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation.



H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

The report notes that the availability of gender mainstreaming tools increased, including guidelines, checklists and manuals, as well as guidance for conducting gender impact assessments. Specialised training, workshops and seminars were provided for staff in different ministries and government agencies, including senior managers. Importantly, it is noted that there remained insufficient training and guidance available on gender equality and particularly on gender mainstreaming. Moreover, the quality and impact of capacity-development activities and results achieved were rarely evaluated. Some countries also expressed concern that a lack of expertise in new areas, such as gender-responsive budgeting, hindered progress, and that its systematic application was constrained by this lack of knowledge. These issues are discussed in more detail in the analysis below.



I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

By 2010, training programmes to sensitise public officials to women's human rights and ensure an adequate response to discrimination against women had increased and become more systematic. Manuals and guidelines on human rights principles and non-discrimination were developed for civil servants, judges, police and others. Training activities on women's human rights for unions, non-governmental organisations and professional groups also became more common. The report notes an increase in collaboration between governmental and non-governmental actors in training and awareness-raising activities at the national and local levels, including workshops, seminars and conferences on women's rights.



J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

The report identifies capacity development for journalists as an essential tool to combat gender stereotypes and discrimination against women. A range of training programmes were developed in this sphere, concerning, for instance, gender-sensitive interviewing techniques for journalists, as well as script and scenario writing and commentary. Training also included support for gender-sensitive reporting on issues concerning women's human rights, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, rape and other forms of violence, such as violence against women in armed conflict situations.



K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As with the economy, training by 2010 evolved to encompass programmes for staff in the environment, agriculture and other relevant sectors, including through national machineries on gender equality. These included training and awareness-raising campaigns for policymakers and technical experts in the public and private sectors on the design and implementation of gender-sensitive integrated water management, in particular access to drinking water and sanitation.



L. THE GIRL CHILD

Measures taken in this area included the increase in gender equality and gender-sensitive pedagogy in teacher training.

The +15 report outlines a number of **remaining issues**, with respect to which training is mentioned twice: in relation to violence against women and the training of journalists and other media professionals.

Training also features in the final report of Beijing +15 and is a key action point for HIV/AIDS, as well as girls' and women's human rights.

Analysis and Implications for Practice

Following the PFA in 1995, a number of feminist researchers and activists began to reflect critically on the role of training for achieving gender equality. Much of this work was sceptical of the relationship between feminist movements and emerging training activities in the context of gender mainstreaming. Sexwale, for example, argued that "one of the most disturbing aspects of dominant 'gender training' is the utter refusal and lack of responsibility in adhering to any ethics and a complete

disregard for ethical questions which have been debated, negotiated and by now broadly established within Women's Studies".⁸¹ This paints a somewhat negative picture of the conduct of trainers. Other reflections focused not specifically on gender trainers but rather the pedagogical and methodological approach of training for gender equality. For instance, Kabeer demonstrated how certain 'world-views' are embedded in gender training methodologies, which in turn delineate who

and what are considered to be important.⁹¹ Porter and Smyth's contribution to these debates highlighted a lack of critical reflection on the pedagogy of teaching gender 'frameworks', in addition to the misunderstandings resulting from this.¹⁰¹

The 'flurry of gender training' conducted after Beijing +10 offers additional opportunities for critical reflection on training since 2005. As argued by Mukhopadhyay and Wong, in spite the dramatic growth in training for gender equality, "the nature of the tool (i.e. training) and the thinking behind the tool are not being questioned. Recommendations just focus on a bigger tool."¹¹¹ Their critique of training centres on concerns about the power dynamics involved in gender training in a range of institutional contexts, and the implications this generates for feminist outcomes. In particular, the authors acknowledge that "far from being a neutral activity, gender training, in fact all forms of training, reflects a certain understanding of the nature of knowledge, knowledge production and power." As such, it is important to reflect on the power relations involved in conducting training for gender equality, as well as those addressed during training sessions.

A further collection of reflections on training for gender equality was developed through a Virtual Dialogue conducted by INSTRAW in 2008,¹²¹ involving the participation of 114 gender specialists, practitioners and trainers in gender equality. This addressed a number of important issues, with participants identifying training for gender equality as a process of awareness raising that should be conducted over a prolonged period of time. The

final report on the Dialogue covers several key themes, such as curricula; methodologies; the characteristics of facilitators; outcomes; challenges; and monitoring and evaluation. It also offers a series of concrete recommendations for improving the quality and effectiveness of training for gender equality, such as: understanding the term "gender" and using a good definition; adapting the training to the participants; using interactive, transformative and active learning approaches; involving senior management in trainings; and keeping evaluation at the centre of the training initiative.

As evidenced by such debates, it is clear that as training for gender equality proliferated across the different critical areas of concern and a range of institutions and organisations, critical reflection on theory and practice also increased.

TRAINING FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN 2015

In terms of the UN, two key events are particularly important for exploring the changing institutional terrain for training for gender equality – the establishment of UN Women in 2010 and the creation of the UN Women Training Centre in 2011. UN Women was created to serve as the entity primarily responsible for working towards the goals of gender equality and women’s empowerment, merging and building on the work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system.¹³¹ UN Women’s main roles are to support inter-governmental bodies, such as the CSW, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms; to help Member States implement these standards, including through technical and financial support; to forge effective partnerships with civil society; and to hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality. Despite its mandate to promote gender equality, the UN was slow to develop a systematic and mandatory approach to training for gender equality. Since the introduction of the UN SWAP in 2012, UN bodies must provide

“on-going mandatory training for all levels of staff at HQ, regional and country offices.” The development of the “[I Know Gender](#)”¹⁴¹ course by the UN Women Training Centre is another aspect of the UN’s approach to training. Launched in 2014, the introductory online course on gender is available to all UN personnel and the general public.

This section reviews the extent of training for gender equality in the draft Beijing +20 report of the Secretary-General,¹⁵¹ wherein training is mentioned 75 times, reflecting on changes in each critical area of concern since 1995. It should be noted that this is the lowest number of mentions of training over the whole review process, less than half of the figure for the Beijing +5 report. The ‘Analysis and Critique’ section then discusses significant research on training for gender equality in this period and engages with critical debates on gender expertise in academic and practitioner literature.

Training in Beijing +20



A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

Training is discussed in relation to schemes to facilitate women’s participation in paid employment. However, there is little discussion of training for gender equality in terms of macroeconomic policies and poverty reduction strategies despite the widespread provision of training for gender equality in development contexts. As this is conducted primarily under the remit of bilateral donor institutions, it falls outside the reach of the Beijing review process.



B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

In spite of extensive training conducted in the education sector since Beijing, the report notes that gender stereotypes and gender bias in school curricula persist. Some countries took measures to train teachers as part of broader programmes to enable gender-responsive learning environments. These included programmes to increase the capacity of teachers to incorporate a gender equality perspective in teaching methodologies; training for teachers and school counsellors in such issues as gender equality and human rights to facilitate the development of gender-responsive curricula; and content development initiatives for teaching literature that supports gender-responsive perspectives in the classroom. The report also highlights growing attention to the use of mobile technology to expand access to training particularly for women and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds.



C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

Measures to increase awareness of gender issues among current and future health staff were conducted in some countries, including training in child, adolescent and sexual and reproductive health. However, in contrast to previous reviews, there is little discussion of gender-sensitivity training or training to support gender mainstreaming in this critical area. It is possible therefore that the on-going institutionalisation of training for gender equality in the health sector reached a peak in 2010. Ultimately, further research would need to be conducted to explore this idea.



D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

This critical area has been a key field for training for gender equality throughout the PFA and the review processes. It may be considered a leading sector in training and would be a useful case study for further exploration of some of the main issues raised in this paper. In the +20 report, training for judges and law enforcement officers is one notable measure taken to address substantive barriers to progress in this critical area. Other measures include training teachers on issues surrounding violence against women; and engaging men and boys through training and capacity building. The report notes that several states implemented training to increase the capacity of professionals to respond effectively to violence against women and increase the quality of services, while others provided training for teachers, police, justice system and health service professionals. In some cases, training is delivered in collaboration with non-governmental organisations with specialist knowledge of violence against women. Yet, despite the extensive provision of training in this area, the report acknowledges that there is very little information overall on the sustainability, quality or impact of such training, a concern echoed throughout this paper.



E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Training in this area continued to grow in relation to the on-going implementation of Resolution 1325. Many countries reported on basic training and education on gender equality and Resolution 1325 within their peace and security institutions. Thematic training modules were developed in many contexts, focusing on issues such as sexual exploitation and abuse, codes of conduct, crisis management and gender equality in peace support operations. This is another key sector for gender equality training interventions, particularly in the field of security sector reform, which has received much critical attention in the literature on training and gender expertise¹⁶¹. Women's organizations and networks continued to make critical contributions to the provision of training in peace and security efforts at the national and regional levels. The continuing growth and development of training in this sector demonstrates the impact of policy instruments and political will in supporting training for gender equality.



F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

As in earlier years, training in this critical area primarily involved vocational and technical training for women in a range of sectors, notably those where they have been traditionally underrepresented. In an era of global financial crisis, in which women have been impacted substantively more than men in most countries, it seems like a missed opportunity that training for gender equality at the macroeconomic level was not conducted extensively. This raises questions about the dependency of training for gender equality on political will and policy instruments, in contrast to the discussion of women and armed conflict above. That is, training for gender equality can only be developed in response to demand from different policy areas, rendering more complex or controversial areas such as macroeconomic reform more difficult to tackle. This would be an interesting point to explore further as part of a larger research project.



G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

Various kinds of training were conducted in this area within this review period. Countries continued to implement training for political parties to mainstream a gender perspective more effectively into their activities. Training and capacity development opportunities, often government-led and/or supported by civil society organizations, enhanced women's leadership skills areas like campaign management and public speaking. Such activities also increased women's knowledge regarding serving in political institutions and participating in electoral processes. The report

notes that increasing access to training and leadership training programmes can, in turn, provide women with the opportunities to advance in their political careers. As such, this is one area in which training addresses both skills gaps for women and training for gender equality/gender mainstreaming. This demonstrates a clear development from the PFA and early review periods, as over time training for gender equality in this critical area has become more comprehensive and wide-reaching than originally envisaged.



H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

To a large extent, this area is the key focus point for training for gender equality, as training can be argued to be an institutional mechanism in itself. As noted above, the PFA includes two specific objectives on training: providing staff training in designing and analysing data from a gender perspective; and providing training and advisory assistance to government agencies in order to integrate a gender perspective in their policies and programmes. It is worth reflecting briefly here on the extent to which the concerns raised in previous review periods were addressed by 2015. For example, in the +5 report, the UN was called upon to ensure that all its personnel and officials, both at headquarters and in the field, received training in order to mainstream a gender perspective in their work. This was envisaged to include gender impact analysis, ensuring appropriate follow-up to such training, and encouraging and implementing curriculum changes in training for public officials so as to make them fully gender-sensitive. It would be useful to conduct systematic research to explore whether this has been achieved, and, if not, to ascertain what further steps should be taken in this regard. Similarly, further research is needed on whether other challenges to training underscored by previous reviews have been resolved, for instance the concerns highlighted by the +10 report, including a lack of consistent commitment resulting from staff turnover or changes of government; the need for continuous training and follow-up; and the need for improved coordination and collaboration.

As in previous years, the +20 report reflects on the challenges involved in this critical area, in particular staff capacity in national gender equality machineries being affected by a lack of training and investment. It is noted that *'Staffing national machineries with qualified technical experts, who are committed to advancing gender equality and are able to operate strategically and identify opportunities for change, is essential to their success.'* While some countries developed training to strengthen the skills of staff in gender analysis, the report highlights that much more needs to be done. Gender responsive budgeting is highlighted as a particular sphere in which greater knowledge and capacity are required, particularly in the context of shrinking budgets, as discussed above in relation to critical area F, women and the economy. These on-going challenges for training as an institutional mechanism for gender equality are discussed below in the EU context with respect to the EIGE report. Currently similar information is not available for other world regions, which can thus be identified as a key priority for future research on training for gender equality.



I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Training of professional service providers and community leaders on women’s human rights formed part of broader capacity building programmes in this area. Several states also introduced training for the judiciary, police and justice system personnel. In other countries, education on human rights was integrated into teacher training programmes.



J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

Many countries engaged with universities and media training institutions to encourage greater participation of women and include gender equality within their programmes. States provided gender equality training as one means of addressing gender stereotypes and discrimination in the media. The report also discusses training in relation to increasing women’s access to and use of information and communication technologies. Some governments developed multimedia tools to conduct training and distance learning, while others provided training on ICTs to enhance women’s labour market participation. These initiatives take place within the broader framework of women’s economic empowerment, and perhaps overlap with some of the concerns of critical area F on women and the economy. Persistent gender stereotypes and discrimination in the media were highlighted as one of the major overall challenges to women’s advancement and gender equality by an overwhelming majority of Member States.



K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This sector is an example of how training for gender equality has developed beyond the original provisions set out in the PFA – from skills training to more comprehensive training on gender mainstreaming for environment ministries and other personnel from 2010 onwards. In the context of +20, training is predominantly discussed in relation to the impacts of natural disasters and climate change on women. On first reading, it appears that training in this critical area has returned to its original focus on skills training for women, with less attention to the policy and planning aspects of gender mainstreaming. However, this is an issue that requires additional research in order to explore the question further.



L. THE GIRL CHILD

An increasing number of States across regions are collaborating with private and non-governmental sectors on implementing “empowerment frameworks” that include training and leadership programmes at the local, national and sometimes regional and global levels to encourage girl’s activism. National child and youth advisory boards also facilitated exchange between girls about key issues affecting them.

Analysis and Implications for Practice

In addition to the comprehensive review provided by the Secretary-General’s report, two extensive studies on training for gender equality were published during this period. The first body of work comes from the culmination of the [TARGET](#)¹⁷¹ and [OPERA](#)¹⁸¹ projects, specifically the Transatlantic Applied Research in Gender Equity Training (TARGET) initiative and the OPERA activity which formed part of the EU research project “Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies (QUING)”. These were the first initiatives of their kind to conduct systematic research on training, focusing specifically on the role of training in gender mainstreaming processes. The OPERA project produced three substantive outputs in terms of knowledge on training for gender equality. The first was a [conference](#)¹⁹¹ (Madrid, February 2011) which drew together experts, academics, commissioners and practitioners of training for gender equality, involving 140 participants from 22 countries. Second, as a consequence of the conference, the OPERA project produced the “[Madrid Declaration on Advancing Gender+ Training in Theory and Practice](#)”²⁰¹, a collective statement on quality criteria in training for gender equality. Finally,

the [OPERA report](#)²¹¹ outlines key issues and challenges identified by practitioners and researchers in training for gender equality, such as the role of experiential methods and participatory methodologies in successful training; the political economy of knowledge circulation among practitioners; and dealing with [resistances to training for gender equality](#)²²¹ at different levels.

Following the OPERA project, a 2013 [report commissioned by the European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\)](#)²³¹ provides a thorough review of gender training in the Member States of the European Commission. The Report concludes that ‘*overall, gender training is a low priority for most Member States both in policy and in practice*’. It finds that only a minority of equality strategies or action plans explicitly mention gender training in their priority actions. This is compounded by ‘*limited interest, commitment, or even reluctance towards gender training*’ on the part of many public officials. In addition, training for gender equality is not systematically provided to policy actors in EU institutions, with the exception of a few pioneering policy areas

(Employment, Development and Cooperation, Regional Policy and Research and Innovation). Nevertheless, some examples of good practice are highlighted, for example in Finland, Greece, Portugal and Sweden. The report also notes a policy shift towards diversity and intersectionality in some countries which has been accompanied by a demand for diversity training, often with the result that gender equality is now subsumed within broader anti-discrimination and equality measures. In spite of the rich empirical information provided by these projects, there remains scope for an extensive comparative review of training for gender equality that incorporates all world regions, international institutions and NGOs. As well as these research projects, the [UN Women Community of Practice in Training for Gender Equality](#)²⁴ has conducted a series of Virtual Dialogues on topics related to training for gender equality – on [evaluation](#),²⁵ [knowledge](#)²⁶ and [transformation](#)²⁷.

These reports, which focus exclusively on training for gender equality, fit more broadly into an emerging field of feminist research on the politics of gender expertise. As set out throughout this paper, ‘gender expertise’ has become a growing profession since the Beijing Conference in 1995. This profession has been subjected to extensive critique, with Mukhopadhyay and Wong arguing that “gender training has become a lucrative field that has not only meant that anyone can become a gender expert, but also *a sector primarily concerned with the dissemination of gender knowledge leading to its depoliticization and a loss of creativity and transformative politics.*”²⁸ Recent work engages

more explicitly with the dilemmas and challenges for feminists of participating in such ‘knowledge transfer’ activities. For example, the recently edited collection by Caglar, Prügl and Zwingel on feminist engagement with international institutions raises concerns about the ways in which feminist strategizing “is turned *from a model of resistance to an instrument of power*”.²⁹ Other contributions include Ferguson’s detailed analysis of the compromises and contradictions involved for feminists when engaging with international institutions as ‘gender experts’.³⁰ Taken together, such research suggests a need to promote an on-going process of self-reflexivity and questioning of the assumptions and power dynamics behind training for gender equality. A comprehensive literature review on gender expertise and feminist knowledge transfer is beyond the scope of the current paper, but would be a key component of any future research project on training for gender equality.

KEY FINDINGS

A number of key findings from this paper can be highlighted here:

- 1. Training has been an important tool for increasing gender equality, and has flourished substantively, beyond the original expectations set out in the Platform for Action.**

Training has been conducted in almost every critical area of concern in each of the review periods. In some areas – particularly health, power and decision-making and the environment – training for gender equality has become more comprehensive and wide-reaching than originally envisaged. So too have the kinds of training employed and the terminology used expanded since Beijing (as outlined in Figure 1). Many key new issues which have emerged on the international agenda have been addressed through training for gender equality, particularly the need to involve men in gender equality, the role of new technologies, HIV/AIDS and trafficking in women and girls.

- 2. Despite the proliferation and institutionalisation of training for gender equality in many areas, there is a concerning lack of information on the impact and evaluation of such training.**

The PFA featured little discussion of the rationale and expected impact of such training activities. This is an issue which is raised repeatedly in the different review processes, suggesting that the key issue of monitoring and evaluation in gender equality training has not been substantively addressed over time.

- 3. The development and institutionalisation of training for gender equality has been uneven across different critical areas of concern.**

Training for gender equality has flourished in some areas – for example violence against women, armed conflict and human rights. Policy instruments and political will in these areas have ensured that budgets for training for gender equality have been secured. In contrast, in other areas, such as women and the economy, there has been little investment in training. This suggests that training for gender equality is most likely to be institutionalised in areas in which demand and resources for achieving gender equality are high.

- 4. Training for gender equality since Beijing has not always addressed the structural aspects and power relations which perpetuate inequality.**

This issue is more evident in some critical areas than others – for instance the environment, the girl child, education and the economy. In these areas, the focus of training has been on vocational, leadership or skills training for women, as opposed to training which challenges power dynamics and structural barriers. This finding is echoed in the literature on gender expertise, which questions the transformative potential of training for gender equality.

5. The provision of training for gender equality has often involved collaboration between different actors, expanding beyond a focus on the public sector to encompass the private sector, civil society and numerous other key-players.

While the Beijing review process focuses primarily on actions by governments, it is clear that a range of actors have been involved in the development and provision of training for gender equality. Across the majority of critical areas of concern, governments have worked with national and international NGOs, the private sector, women's organisations, men's organisations, United Nations entities and regional organisations.

6. While training for gender equality has developed, evolved and expanded consistently since Beijing, there appears to have been a decline in focus on training and a reversal in its scope in recent years.

Overall, mentions of training in the reports of the Beijing review process fell from 205 in 2000 to 178 in 2005, 106 in 2010 and 75 in 2015. The 2005 +10 report is the only one of the four review reports to feature an extensive focus on training, suggesting that training for gender equality reached its peak during this period. Moreover, in contrast to previous reviews, there is little discussion of training in the areas of health and the environment in the +20 report. Where training is discussed in these spheres, it is often in relation to skills and vocational training, as opposed to the focus on gender mainstreaming

notable in previous review periods. As such, we may form a tentative conclusion that in recent years we are witnessing a decline and reversal in training for gender equality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Raise awareness of the important role played by training for gender equality in increasing equality between women and men since the Beijing Conference.

Concerted efforts should be made to inform a range of stakeholders of the key role of training in advancing gender equality in order to expand its application, both in identified critical areas of concern and as a response to new issues emerging on the world stage. Further evidence on training for gender equality as set out in Recommendations 2 and 4 would support this process.

2. Continue to develop adequate systems for the monitoring and evaluation of training for gender equality in order to measure outcomes and impact more systematically.

Effective evaluation is vital to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of training undertaken to date. Alongside this, efforts are needed to continue to identify good practices and identify areas in which further training is required. Increased knowledge on the impact of training for gender equality will help contribute to more effective outcomes for gender equality.

3. Explore the possibilities for expanding training for gender equality in critical areas of concern which have received less attention to date.

In areas such as macroeconomic issues, significant effort is needed to secure the political will and develop the policy instruments essential to ensuring that adequate resources are made available for such training.

4. Promote the value and role of training for gender equality as a tool for transformation in gendered power relations.

In order to truly harness its potential for lasting transformative change, it is imperative that training for gender equality move beyond vocational or skills training and address the underlying structural dimensions of gender inequality, as discussed in more detail in the [UN Women Community of Practice Virtual Dialogue](#).³¹ In this regard, quality standards in training for gender equality should be developed, in line with the UN's mandate.

5. Encourage collaboration between a range of actors to expand and enhance the provision of training for gender equality while supporting the UN to be a world leader in this field.

It is imperative to foster on-going collaboration and encourage avenues for future partnerships between a range of actors in order to deliver effective training for gender equality.

6. Work to reverse the trend of a declining focus on training.

This involves encouraging ongoing professional development in training for gender equality through initiatives such as the UN Women Community of Practice in Training for Gender Equality. Further evidence on the impact and role of training in the process of increasing gender equality – as set out in Recommendations 2 and 4 – will support arguments for the relevance of training for gender equality in the work of the UN and other stakeholders.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- 1| Ahikire, J. 2007. 'Gender training and the politics of mainstreaming in post-Beijing Uganda.' In *Revisiting gender training: The making and remaking of gender knowledge. A global sourcebook*. M. Mukhopadhyav and F. Wong (Eds.) KIT (Royal Tropical Institute)/Oxfam, Amsterdam and Oxford.
- 2| Williams, S., Seed, J. and Mwau, A. 2004. *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual*. Oxfam, Oxford: Oxfam.
- 3| Abou-Habib, L. 2007. 'Changing the unchangeable: reflections on selected experiences in gender training in the Machreq/Maghreb region.' In *Revisiting gender training: The making and remaking of gender knowledge. A global sourcebook*. M. Mukhopadhyav and F. Wong (Eds.) KIT (Royal Tropical Institute)/Oxfam, Amsterdam and Oxford.
- 4| UN Fourth World Conference on Women. 1995. 'Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action'. In *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*. 15 September, UN. Doc. No. UN Doc. A/CONF. 177/20, Beijing.
- 5| United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. 2000. 'Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.' Report of the Secretary-General. Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" Third session, 3 March – 17 March, UN Doc. No. E/CN.6/2000/PC/2, New York.
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- 7| United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. 2010. 'Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals.' Report of the Secretary-General. Fifty-fourth session, 1 March – 12 March, UN Doc. No. E/CN.6/2010/2, New York.

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- 9| Kabeer N. 1992. *Triple roles, gender roles, social relations: the political subtext of gender training*. Institute of Development Studies, Brighton.
- 10| Porter, F. and I. Smyth. 1998. 'Gender training for development practitioners: only a partial solution'. *Gender and Development* 6(2).
- 11| Mukhopadhyav, M. and F. Wong (Eds.) 2007. *Revisiting gender training: The making and remaking of gender knowledge. A global sourcebook*. KIT (Royal Tropical Institute)/Oxfam, Amsterdam and Oxford, p. 12.
- 12| UN-INSTRAW. 2008. *First Virtual Dialogue Current Situation in Gender Training*. September 22nd – October 25th 2008. Gender Training Community of Practice, available at http://gtcop.unwomen.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11%3AAla-situacion-actual-en-la-capacitacion-en-genero-oc-tubre-2008&catid=11%3Adialogos-virtuales&Itemid=44&lang=en
- 13| Namely, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).
- 14| <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/course/description.php?id=2>
- 15| United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. 2015. 'Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Report of the Secretary-General.' Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives, 9-20 March 2015, UN Doc. No. E/CN.6/2015/3, New York.

- 16| See for example: Prügl, E. 2010. 'Gender Expertise and Feminist Knowledge', presented at the conference on "Gender Politics in International Governance", Graduate Institute, Geneva, 6 to 8 October 2010, available at http://graduateinstitute.ch/files/live/sites/iheid/files/sites/genre/users/Neil_Williams/public/Lisa%20Pruegl%20Gender%20Expertise%20and%20Feminist%20Knowledge.pdf
- 17| <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/TARGET/aboutus2.htm>
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- 19| http://www.quing.eu/files/opera/conference_programme_final.pdf
- 20| http://www.quing.eu/files/madrid_declaration.pdf
- 21| http://www.quing.eu/files/results/final_opera_report.pdf
- 22| <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08038740.2013.851115#.VGSXYvnF99U>
- 23| <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Mapping%20gender%20training%20in%20the%20European%20Union%20and%20Croatia.pdf>
- 24| <http://gtcop.unwomen.org/?lang=en>
- 25| <http://gtcop.unwomen.org/images/dialogos/2014/virtual%20dialogue%20evaluation%20report%20final.pdf>
- 26| <http://gtcop.unwomen.org/images/dialogos/2014/report%20en.pdf>
- 27| <http://gtcop.unwomen.org/images/dialogos/2014/Transformation/report%20tr%20en.pdf>
- 28| Mukhopadhyay and Wong, p. 24.

- 29 | Caglar, G., E. Prügl and S. Zwingel (Eds.). 2013. *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*. Routledge, Abingdon and New York, p. 5-6.
- 30 | Ferguson, L. 2014. "This is our gender person': the messy business of being a gender expert in international development.' *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Published online July 2014.
- 31 | <http://gtcop.unwomen.org/images/dialogos/2014/Transformation/report%20tr%20en.pdf>

The UN Women Training Centre is dedicated to supporting the UN and other stakeholders to realize commitments to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights through transformative training and learning.

It aims to become the leading UN centre that contributes, through training for gender equality, to building a society that respects and promotes human rights for all women and men.

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