

WILDAF WEST AFRICA

Newsletter

Women in Law and Development in Africa

N°23 - July 2005

CONTENTS

SPECIAL MDG -- SPECIAL MDG

The review of the Millennium Declaration and of the Development Goals (MDGs) comes quickly. At the next September General Assembly, States will meet in New York to evaluate progress achieving the goals through a series of predetermined indicators. Read the review by MADRE of MDGs, some progress achieved in the negotiation of the final declaration of the Millennium+5 and what you can do to lobby in your country to make sure women's issues are included in the evaluation of the MDGs. Check out if gender parity in secondary education will be achieved. In addition, read our article *Anticipating the Millenium+5* which details some documents so you can make your own analysis of results achieved in some areas of the MDGs and specific statistics for the West Africa sub region.

This issue has also a good wealth of information on human rights. For instance, some resources are available in the website for West Africa: status of submissions of reports to human rights committees and reports to be submitted to the UN Treaty Bodies during 2005-2006, status of signatures and ratifications of international treaties related to trafficking and a follow-up of reports for CEDAW.

A tribute has been written on the occasion of the death of lawyer **Grace D'Almeida**, a great women's rights activist from Benin. You can consult our latest information on agreements to fight against trafficking in persons in West Africa. And last, read our usual sections, the monitoring of NEPAD and the African Union and ECOWAS Watches.

Have a nice reading!

Colette LELIÈVRE
CUSO Volunteer, Communication Officer

Millennium Development Goals and Women

MADRE critiques the Millennium Development Goals:.....	2
National-Level Advocacy.....	4
Gender Parity in secondary education – are we there yet?	5
Making progress in the negotiation of the final declaration on the Millennium+5.....	6

WEST AFRICA

Trafficking in persons in West Africa.....	7
Multilateral agreement being negotiated.....	7
ECOWAS Watch: agricultural policy, role of Parliaments in security sector	8
Tribute to Lawyer Grace d'Almeida.....	9
Monitoring of official reports submission for CEDAW	9
Resources: Status of official countries report to the UN Human Rights treaty bodies and reports to be submitted during 2005-2006	7
Indicators related to women about MDGs.....	9

AFRICA

Status of ratifications and signatures of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa.....	2
Monitoring the NEPAD's APRM.....	7
African Union Watch: 5 th Conference, gender equality, social policy framework, African Commission on the Human and Peoples' Rights, monitoring by civil society of the AU	10

INTERNATIONAL

Anticipating the Millenium+5.....	9
Follow-up on CEDAW <i>and al</i>	9

Sections

<i>Woman of Honour</i>	3
<i>Financing</i>	3-4
<i>Network News</i>	8
<i>News Flash: African and international news</i>	11-12

Also available on our website:

www.wildaf-ao.org/eng



MADRE Critiques the Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, world leaders representing all 191 countries that belong to the United Nations pledged to achieve these eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Since then, the goals have become the main framework for development policy worldwide. They have even been adopted by many of the international agencies and banks that control the budgets of most poor countries, giving the MDGs real currency in the political economy of UN declarations. The MDGs create opportunities for advancing women's human rights, but only if we are able to participate effectively in the process of realizing the goals.

Governments' commitments to the MDGs appear to be an extraordinary step forward, but when we scratch the surface of the goals, we find that their progress is measured by a set of technocratic "targets" and "indicators" that are limited in scope, contradictory in approach, and more concerned with statistical change than with creating the structural change that is crucial to improving the lives of women and their families worldwide.

Take Goal 3, for example (promoting gender equality and empowering women): its "target" is to eliminate gender disparity in education. Yet it will take much more than girls' education to combat the deeply entrenched violence, discrimination, stereotypes, laws, and customs that generate grave violations of women's human rights in every country of the world. The indicators intended to measure progress towards this goal are equally problematic. They include:

They include:

1. the ratio of girls to boys at all levels of schooling (with no regard for the quality or content of education and without addressing the social forces that keep girls out of school);
2. the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (without regard for the more crucial question of whether these women respect human rights);
3. the share of women in non-agricultural sectors of the workforce (without recognition of the need for decent wages, working conditions, and public services such as day care, health care, clean water, and transportation that ease the time burden of women who are expected to work outside the home and fulfill their responsibilities within the family).

(Continued p.3)

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa				
Only 37 States parties have signed it and ten (11) have ratified as of March 8 th 2005				
WEST AFRICA	EAST AFRICA	SOUTHERN AFRICA	CENTRAL AFRICA	NORTH AFRICA
Benin	COMOROS	LESOTHO	Burundi	Algeria
Burkina Faso	DJIBOUTI	Mozambique	Congo	LIBYA
Côte d'Ivoire	Ethiopia	NAMIBIA	Democratic Rep. Of Congo	
Gambia	Kenya	SOUTH AFRICA	Chad	
Ghana	Madagascar	Zimbabwe	Equatorial Guinea	
Guinea	RWANDA	Swaziland	Gabon	
Guinea Bissau	Tanzania	MALAWI		
Liberia	Uganda			
MALI	Mauritius			
Niger				
NIGERIA				
SENEGAL				
Sierra Leone				
Togo				
14	9	7	6	2
Number of countries for each region				
16	13	10	9	5
Number of countries which have ratified for each region				
3	3	3	0	1

To keep up to date on signatures and ratification, go to www.africa-union.org and check *Treaties, conventions and Protocols* etc. under **Official Documents** section.

(Continued from page 2)

MADRE Critiques the MDG

As we can see, the MDGs call for change, but not for creating the conditions to make real change possible. To address the root causes of the problems that the goals are supposed to rectify, we need to grapple with precisely those phenomena that the MDGs take for granted. These include policies that have increased poverty and inequality around the world (such as free-trade agreements, wage freezes, and hostility to worker organizing) and subordinated human rights to "national security" as defined by the Bush Administration. In fact, at a moment when the rights of both women and men have been badly eroded by such policies, we can see clearly the limitations of pursuing gender "equality." To whom should women be equal? Should women in Colombia demand "equality" with male co-workers who are being killed for union organizing? Should Rwandan women who are HIV-positive seek "equality" with Rwandan men who are denied high-priced AIDS medications? The real goal is not equality, but justice; and one of the best ways we have of ensuring justice is the fulfillment of human rights.

But the MDGs fail to even mention sexual and reproductive rights, women's labor and property rights, or one of the most fundamental obstacles to ensuring these rights, namely, violence against women. The glaring absence of these issues from the MDGs reflects the powerful role played by right-wing and fundamentalist governments such as the United States in their negotiation.

Reproductive rights, in particular, have been under fire by the US since 2000, when Bush took office and began defunding international family planning programs and revamping US reproductive health policy to placate his religious fundamentalist base. Women's human rights advocates have pointed out that sexual and reproductive rights are central to achieving at least four of the

MDGs: women's equality and empowerment (Goal 3); reducing child mortality (Goal 4); improving maternal health (Goal 5); and combating HIV/AIDS (Goal 6). Moreover, since human rights are indivisible, empowering women is crucial to realizing all of the goals. Conversely, none of the goals can be realized without ensuring that goal.

One way to gain insight into any policy is to look at its authors. The MDGs are sponsored jointly by the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). While the United Nations operates within a human rights framework, the missions of the World Bank and IMF are to advance a set of economic policies that are often at odds with human rights. In fact, the MDGs infuse neoliberal priorities into development policy using the language of human rights. They seek to "eradicate extreme poverty and hunger" (Goal 1), but rely on the discredited notion that economic growth at the national level (GNP) can eliminate poverty; and they assume that privatization of services is a strategy for—rather than an obstacle to—economic development. At the heart of the MDGs beats a fundamental contradiction: poor countries are expected to meet the MDGs by implementing the very neoliberal economic policies that have, in large measure, caused the crises that the goals are intended to address. These policies include cutting government spending, privatizing basic services, liberalizing trade, and producing goods primarily for export.

As we have seen, the methodology and assumptions of neoliberal economics inform the MDGs, which rely heavily on the indicator of "absolute poverty" (which measures the proportion of the population surviving on less than a certain amount of income each day).

The MDGs use the World Bank standard of an income of US \$1 per day to indicate extreme poverty.

(continued p.4)

WOMAN OF HONOUR



37 West African women out of 1000 women were nominees for 2005 Peace Nobel prize

37 women from 12 West African countries are among the 1000 women nominees as candidates for the 2005 Peace Nobel Prize. They are:

Benin: Grace Antonia D'Almeida and Grace Aboh; **Burkina Faso:** Katrin Rohde and Chantal Marie Rachelle Ouédraogo; **Côte d'Ivoire:** Lotti Latrous and Dandi Lou Hélène Amanan; **Ghana:** Kate Adoo Adeku; **Guinea:** Joséphine Léno, Cissé Hadja Mariama Sow and Hadja Saran Daraba; **Guinea Bissau:** Macaria Barai; **Liberia:** Mary Brownell and Ruth Sando Perry; **Mali:** Fatoumata Dembélé Diarra, Moussomankan Sakiliba, Dembélé Mariam Sidibé, Hiri Maguiraga, Togo Mariam Baro, Cissouma Korotoumou Traore, N'diaye Korotoumoun Traoré, Fatoumata Kiakite, Mama Koite Doumbia, Fatimata Touré, Aminata Touré Barry, Tahanouma Walet Abeb, Sirandou Bocoum, Henriette Carvalho Kouyate and Maimouna Coulibaly Camara; **Mauritania:** Aïssata Kane and Azza Mint Moma; **Niger:** Souna Hadizatou Diallo, Hadizatou Issa Iyayi, and Mariame Keïta; **Nigeria:** Mariama Kaïta, Limota Goroso Giwa and Dorotheé Cesnabmihlo Aken'ova; **Senegal:** Betty Faye and Christiane Johnson.

For more information:

www.1000peacewomen.org

FINANCING



**FUNDING FROM
URGENT ACTION
FUND-AFRICA**

This fund is available quickly when an urgent intervention is needed.

More information:

www.urgentactionfund.org

**Grants offered by the Panos
Institute West Africa**

Three grants to take part in an international event concerning ICT Policies.

More information:

www.cipaco.org/article.php3?id_article=290&lang=en

Source: [PoliTic] Message of 1 July 2005

MADRE Critiques the Millennium Development Goals

(Continued from page 3)

This income-based measurement of poverty obscures the experience of millions of people, for whom poverty is not primarily a function of income, but of their alienation from sustainable patterns of consumption and production. Indigenous women, for example, assert that their poverty and wealth are determined primarily by access to, and control of, their natural resources and traditional knowledge, which are the sources of Indigenous culture and livelihoods. In Indigenous communities, human rights (namely, governments' recognition of collective Indigenous rights over land, natural resources, and traditional knowledge) are key to fighting poverty.

But the MDGs do not recognize that poverty is a function of human rights violations (such as the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to freedom from discrimination, and the right to development). Indeed, the MDGs posit housing, health care, and access to food and water not as non-negotiable and universal rights, but as "needs" to be met. By extension, the poor are not seen as autonomous subjects demanding that governments meet their legal obligations, but as a passive "target group" of policymaking. Sustainable development-which depends on broad civic participation, social justice, and a fundamental shift in the balance of power-is sidelined by this failure of the MDGs to operate within a human rights framework.

In fact, human rights standards are a useful yardstick for evaluating the MDGs. They reveal that the MDGs are not a spontaneous expression of governmental goodwill. Rather, the MDGs constitute pre-existing international obligations, some dating back more than 50 years.

Ultimately, for the goals to be a tool for advancing women's human rights, they must be treated not as a technical process, but as a political process. MADRE is working with our sister organizations and other women's organizations internationally to push for a rights-based approach to the MDGs that goes beyond improving statistical indicators to addressing root causes of human rights violations.

By YIFAT SUSSKIND,
Associate Director

Source:
www.madre.org/articles/int/mdgcritique.html

LIBRARY

Global report: A global alliance against forced labour

Author: International Labour organisation

Available in PDF (large file):
www.ilo.org

Nigeria: Unheard voices – violence against women in the family

More than a third and in some groups nearly two-thirds of women in Nigeria are believed to have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence in the family.

PDF report:
web.amnesty.org/library/index/eng_afr440042005

Press release of 31st May 2005

Web.amnesty.org
Source: Pambazuka 209, 2 juin 2005

Amnesty International Report 2005

This **Amnesty International Report**, which covers 149 countries, highlights the failure of 11 national governments in West Africa.

Report:
web.amnesty.org/report2005/2af-index-eng

National-Level Advocacy

Over the coming months, national-level advocacy will play a critical role in ensuring that sexual and reproductive health remains in the Millennium+5 Summit political declaration. We need to lay the groundwork at the national level to ensure that governments make sexual and reproductive health and rights one of their priorities and take strong and clear positions on these issues in negotiations moving forward.

Some aims of national-level advocacy may include to:

- **raise awareness and mobilize NGOs** at the national level to advocate around these issues;
- **influence government delegations** to the meeting to take a progressive stance on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues;
- ensure the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health in **country reports** on implementation of the Millennium Declaration and progress toward achieving the MDGs;
- ensure that language in support of universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015 and its role in achieving the MDGs are included in **country statements delivered at the Summit**; and finally,
- ensure the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health in MDG-ized **poverty reduction strategy papers and long-term development plans**, both before and after the high-level meeting.

Source: E-Bulletin - June 7, 2005 - Millennium Development Goals and Sexual and Reproductive Health produced by Family Care International

FINANCING

Communication and Social Change Award

The Communication and Social Change (CSC) Award is an annual award given to an individual or organisation for contributions to the theory and/or practice of communication for social change.

Deadline: 1st November 2005

More information:

www.ug.edu.au/journ-comm/index.html?page=31906&pid=2569

Gender parity in secondary education - are we there yet?

Results from the *UIS Global Education Digest 2005*

The time-bound goal set by the international community in the Millennium Development Goals requires that girls and boys should have equal access to primary and secondary education by 2005. Are we there yet? The latest data show signs of progress in terms of greater gender parity at the primary level, but gaps are still wide at the secondary level.

The *Global Education Digest 2005* reminds the reader that gender differences in secondary education are accumulated across education levels – and reflect levels of gender parity in participation and completion at the primary level from the mid-1990s.

Latest figures from the *Digest* reveal that:

- Globally, gender disparity levels are almost equal at the primary and lower secondary levels. Some 56% of children live in countries with gender disparity in primary enrolment ratios and 58% live in countries with disparity in lower secondary education.
- However, the difference between girls and boys rises dramatically at the upper secondary level, where nearly nine out of ten (87%) children live in countries with gender disparity.

- At the primary school level, 13% of children live in countries with rates of gender disparity - where for every 100 boys fewer than 85 girls are enrolled (the Gender Parity Index¹ - is less than 0.85).

- In lower secondary education, one-third of all children live in countries with large disparities favouring boys (GPI is less than 0.85). Conversely, some 13% of children live in countries where enrolment ratios favour girls.

- In upper secondary education, only 13% of the of the school-age population live in countries where girls and boys have equal access. Girls are the most disadvantaged in Africa and Asia.

- Gender disparities against girls are highest in **Benin**, **Côte d'Ivoire**,

Ethiopia, **Guinea**, **Mali** and **Togo**, with fewer than 60 girls per 100 boys entering secondary education. These gender disparities reflect those that start in primary education.

- In countries where boys are disadvantaged it is mostly because the boys do not make the transition to secondary level. The greatest disadvantage for boys are reported in Bangladesh, **Cape Verde**, Mauritius, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Uruguay, with more than 110 girls entering lower secondary per 100 boys.
- Looking ahead, gender disparities for entry to lower secondary can be predicted based on entry at the primary level. Gender parity may improve from low existing levels in **Benin**, **Burkina Faso** and Mozambique. However, improvements will only be slight in Congo, Eritrea, **Niger** and Lao PDR, and parity will be lost in Swaziland, Papua New Guinea and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Fact Sheet:

www.uis.unesco.org/ev_fr.php?ID=6094_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Fact Sheet, April 2005, Issue 2005

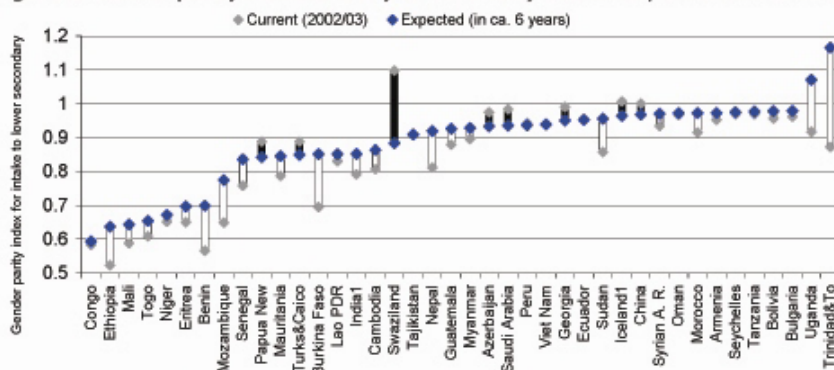
For more information:

www.uis.unesco.org/ev_en.php?ID=6094_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

¹ What is the Gender Parity Index?

The Gender Parity Index (GPI), commonly used to assess gender differences, is the value of an indicator for girls divided by that for boys. A value of less than one indicates differences in favour of boys, whereas a value near one indicates that parity has been more or less achieved. Gender parity is sometimes considered to have been attained when the GPI lies between 0.97 and 1.03.

Figure 2. Gender parity index at entry to secondary education, 2002 and c.2008



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Global Education Digest 2005.



Making progress in the negotiation of the final declaration on the Millennium + 5

As summer nears here in New York, things are also starting to heat up at the UN. And the season got off to a great start with two major successes last week!

• **Universal access to reproductive health was identified as a priority in the first draft of the political declaration for the Millennium+5 Summit!** The 26-page draft outcome document, prepared by General Assembly President H.E. Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon and his ten facilitators, was released on Friday, June 3 and contains two calls for governments to expand access to reproductive health.

Under the heading of HIV/AIDS and other health issues, the document commits governments to:

"Achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015 as set out at the ICPD, integrating this goal in strategies to attain the international development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration aiming at improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty" (Para. 19 bullet 4).

Similarly, "ensuring access to reproductive health" is identified as one of five core actions to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment (Para. 20). The document also makes other strong recommendations on gender equality and on women's human rights. For example, paragraph nine reaffirms "that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for women are essential to advance development, security and human rights."

Given the current difficult political climate in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights and

the fact that so many other pressing issues are also being discussed in this declaration, this is a remarkable achievement. With this language in the draft outcome document, we are in an excellent position to defend and strengthen this language as the document is negotiated and finalized by governments in the coming months.

Informal consultations on the draft has started on June 21, giving governments two weeks to consider the document and prepare comments and recommendations. A second draft is expected to be released in mid-July. We can be sure that there will be opposition to language on reproductive health, so continued national- and international-level activity is imperative.

At the **High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS**, held on June 2 at UN Headquarters in New York, **many governments mentioned the vital role that sexual and reproductive health information and services plays in the fight against HIV.** They also made the link between achieving the MDGs and expanding access to sexual and reproductive health services and information. Recognizing that young people-and particularly young women-are being infected with HIV at disproportionate rates, many governments also stressed the importance of empowering young

(Continued on p.7)

The 20 countries where there is the more risk to have children

Mother's Index 2005*

	Countries	Rank
1	Senegal	91
2	Madagascar	92
3	Côte d'Ivoire	93
4	Djibouti	93
5	Bangladesh	95
6	Benin	96
7	Burundi	97
8	Pakistan	97
9	Togo	99
10	Cambodia	100
11	Eritrea	100
12	Gambia	102
13	Nepal	103
14	Mauritania	104
15	Congo, Democratic Republic of	105
16	Yemen	106
17	Chad	107
18	Ethiopia	108
19	Burkina Faso	109
20	Mali	109

Extracted data from *The Power and Promise of Girls' Education*, the 6th annual report of the State of the World's Mother from Save the Children

15 out of 20 are countries from Africa and 8 of them are West African. Because of lack of data, the following countries are not included in the Index: Niger, Liberia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde. Also see the 2004 *State of the World's Mother Report*.

Read: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=574

You are member of WILDAF/FeDDAF West African Network and wish to publicize your activities? Your initiative? Your association?

Send us your text (long or short, what counts is the content!) by e-mail to WILDAF West Africa. **The deadline for the reception of the texts is: September 1st 2005 (for October 2005 issue).**

Who are the Newsletter readers? The WILDAF West Africa Newsletter is distributed to WILDAF West Africa members in nine countries of the sub-region BUT ALSO to our partners in Africa, Europe, Scandinavian countries and America.

info@wildaf-ao.org



Trafficking in persons in West Africa

The 5th annual *Trafficking in Persons Report 2005* of the United States covers not only trafficking but also labor slavery, especially internal labor trafficking, forced labor and involuntary servitude. Except for Guinea and Cape-Verde, all other West African countries have been analysed. Only two countries have ratified all of them, Mali and Senegal while Côte

d'Ivoire and Mauritania only ratified the ILO Convention 182. Mali has also signed two cooperation agreements to fight against child trafficking: the first with Burkina Faso on June 25th 2004 and the second with Senegal on July 22nd 2004 (also read about the bilateral agreement between Benin and Nigeria P.12 of this Newsletter).

Check out the **status of signatures and ratifications of main treaties related to trafficking** for West African countries in WILDaf/FeDDAF website at: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=581

Report available in HTML and in PDF: www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/

Cooperation agreement between Mali and Burkina Faso (in French):

www.justicemali.org/doc157.htm

Cooperation agreement between Mali and Senegal (in French):

www.justicemali.org/doc165.htm

Multilateral agreement being negotiated

A technical meeting was organised May 10-12th 2005 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) by the Family and Children Minister of the host country to draft a multilateral agreement to fight against children trafficking. Nine countries were there: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Togo. A second meeting is scheduled for 25-26 July 2005 again in Abidjan where it is hoped that the agreement will be adopted by ministers concerned with this issue. The goal will then be to get it adopted by ECOWAS and to get it signed by countries that were not participating at the first meetings. To read this **draft of agreement**: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=584

Monitoring the NEPAD's APRM

Ghana was the first country to welcome a support mission for the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in May 2004 (see our article in the July 2004 newsletter). Through this process, the country submitted a self-assessment report and a draft of a national program of action plan to the APRM Secretariat during the first week of March 2005. Ghana then welcomed an evaluation mission which was held 4 to 16 April 2005. Its aim was to analyse issues related with documents drafted by the country and background paper drafted by the Secretariat. The mission was composed of personalities coming from diverse backgrounds and staff from the Secretariat. We know mixed and women NGOs were consulted during the self-assessment process but there is yet no indication that gender issues were being included in the report. Indeed, we will have to wait for the public release of the documents but there is little hope that gender mainstreaming will really be part of it, a constant criticism of the program although some initiatives to compensate for the lack of gender awareness have been implemented in the last 9 months (see our NEPAD special issue of January 2005 Newsletter). **Nigeria** signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the APRM March 9th 2004. The support mission was held from March 21st to 24th, 2005. The government found a national focal point to coordinate the self-assessment. The coordinator presented the organisational structure of the focal point (national working group, a steering committee and a fully equipped and functional Secretariat) including a website for the APRM in Nigeria. Following discussions, both sides agreed that the national working group shall be expanded to include more civil society groups. An open forum bringing together about two hundred participants from the

(Continued on p. 11)

RESOURCES

Status of official West African countries report to the UN Human Rights treaty bodies www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=586

...and reports to be submitted during 2005-2006: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=585

(Continued from p.6)

Making progress in the negotiation of the final declaration on the Millennium + 5

people with the education, information and services they need to protect themselves from HIV. The chair's summary, which will be fed into Millennium+5 Summit, is expected to be released at some point this week.

Source: E-Bulletin - 7 June 2005 - Millennium Development Goals and Sexual and Reproductive Health

Draft outcome document in Word format:

www.nqaconqo.org/nqomeet/millplusfive/G

LIBRARY

NEPAD and Civil Society Participation in the APRM

Document in PDF:

www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0001229/P1361-Nepad_APRM_May2005.pdf

Le trafic des enfants : Mission d'enquête au Bénin

Author: Marc Beziat

Mission which took place from 9 September to 5 October 1999.

Report in PDF (in French): www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=559

Coming to terms with sexual harassment in Ghana

Author: Aryeetey Ellen Bortey-Doku Aryeetey

Report:

www.issar.org/Sexual%20harassment-ebda.htm

Source: Eldis Gender reporter, 9 June 2005

The Feminization of HIV/AIDS: Ten Unavoidable Choices for African Leaders

Report:

topics.developmentgateway.org/gender/rc/ItemDetail.do~1037427?intcmp=700

Source: AWID Resource Net Announcement Issue 265



ECOWAS Watch

Plan of action for the implementation of the agricultural policy

On May 3rd in Accra (Ghana), the Ministerial Commission on Agriculture and Food meet to adopt a plan of action for the implementation of the ECOWAS agricultural policy (ECOWAP) and the comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP). The plan of action goes from 2006 up to 2010. It is divided in four sections, one of which is the implementation of crosscutting actions including setting up of the gender mainstreaming mechanism. The Ministers recommend to the ECOWAS to ensure coherence between the national agricultural policies and MDGs and also to input the ECOWAP plan of actions within the framework of NEPAD/CAADP implementation in West Africa.

Read main conclusions and recommendations of the meeting: : www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=606
ECOWAS' organs websites

Court of Justice: www.court.ecowas.int
ECOWAS Parliament: www.parl.ecowas.int
Related document

ECOWAS Gender policy: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=208
Role of Parliaments in security sector

ECOWAS and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation organized a regional round table discussion on the role of parliament in the West African security sector and in the observance of the rule of law from 20-21 May, 2005 in Abuja (Nigeria). The aim was to look at how to enhance the role of legislators to enable them to play an increasingly active role in overseeing security issues with the sub region and to offer the participant an opportunity to engage in dialogue that could lay a framework for some of the tools needed to strengthen their roles.

Concept paper and Program of the round table: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=609
ECOWAS official slams women's exclusion from Head of State

The Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Dr. Remi Artificial, has raised the question of why women were still being excluded from the much-coveted position of Head of State and Government.

Article: www.analystnewspaper.com/ecowas_slams_women_exclusion_from_head_of_state.htm

NETWORK NEWS

Benin: WiLDAF/FeDDAF Benin organised with its partner Women's Legal Rights a forum on the Family Law in Cotonou on 29-30 June 2005 with 77 mayors of Benin to inform them on changes concerning civil status and about the celebration of marriage. The network also drafted in collaboration with WANEP and RIFONGA both of Benin a shadow report on the implementation of CEDAW for the revision of the State report due for the 33rd session in July 2005. Read the entire report of the NGOs, the one from the State and questions and issues raised by the Committee. **Shadow report of Benin:** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=570

Côte d'Ivoire: The Côte d'Ivoire network should soon be up and running. Actually, Mrs Christiane Bitty Kouyaté of the Côte d'Ivoire Women Lawyer Association is organising a General Assembly to revive the organisation and renew the membership. Contact: Mme Kouyaté: afjci@aviso.ci.

Guinea: Invited by the New Field Foundation, Mrs Mariame CAMARA, Vice-president of the Guinean network and Hawa KEITA, President of the Mano River Women Peace's Network Kissidougou chapter took part in the meeting of women living near the borders of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. **Report:** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=571

Senegal: WiLDAF/FeDDAF-Senegal organized a workshop to give account of what happen during Beijing+10 for the Austrian Cooperation with the presence of numerous partners. There were exchanges on priorities. The NGOs coalition, of which the Senegalese network is a member of, which was leading the evaluation process of Beijing+10 and which was also present in New York will also give account to the civil society. Last, the network is preparing a General Assembly to be held soon.

Togo: The Togolese network organised two workshops: a first one on the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and a second one on «Gender and Reproduction Health». In July, the network will celebrate the Pan-African Day of Women on the 31st. Then, it will continued lobbying for the ratification of the Protocol related to the Rights of Women and for the adoption of a bill on the repression of sexual harassment. It will reactivated the SOS Girls committees already founded in three (3) regions and around Lome and it will started new one in two other regions. Last it will take part in the 16 days of activism against gender violence. **Bill on the repression of sexual harassment (in French):** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=572

Sub regional office: Mrs Kafui Kuwonu, Program Officer, participated at the sixth consultation on the integration of gender into the African Union mechanism organised by FAS. They did talk about the monitoring of ratification since only one State party of the AU ratified the Protocol since the 8th of March 2005. The sub regional office was asked to participate at the NEPAD Gender Taskforce (read our article on page 7 on the follow-up of the NEPAD). Mrs Adjamagbo-Johnson, Coordinator of the sub regional office will represented the organisation. She also participated at the Technical meeting for the implementation of the Solemn Declaration adopted by Heads of State of the AU in July 2004. She will also go to the consultation on the gender policy of the AU that will be held the third week of July in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) (see article on the AU Watch page 10). **On the sixth consultation on the integration of gender into AU mechanism:** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=534

EVENTS

CEDAW Committee

The **Gambia, Benin and Burkina Faso** reports will be examined at the 33rd session. The one from **Mali and Togo** will be handle at the 34th session.

33rd session: 5 to 22 July 2005

34th session: 16 January to 6 Feb. 2006

Venue: New York

Source:

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/33sess.htm

Shadow report of Benin: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=570

Tribute to Lawyer Grace d'Almeida

A great lady of the world of the basis rights, public freedoms and especially women's human rights has just left us. Read the tribute we paid to her at: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=597

ANTICIPATING MILLENNIUM + 5

Read our article *Anticipating the Millennium + 5* of this issue to know about reports, analysis and statistics related to the Millennium Development Goals.

Millennium+5: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=564

Measuring progress in West Africa through 12 indicators related to women: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=573

Follow-up on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

180 countries have ratified the Convention up to 18 March 2004.

On ratifications: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/states.htm

Follow-up on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW

Up to 7 January 2005, only 71 countries have signed, of which 8 African countries and four from West Africa.

On ratifications: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/sigop.htm

Follow-up on the amendment of article 20 paragraph 1 of CEDAW

No change since 11 June 2004. Only 45 States parties have agreed on the amendment yet. To know more about the amendment, read our July 2004 Newsletter No 19 at:

www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/rubrique=autrebuletin.php3?id_rubrique=83

More information on CEDAW: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=294

Annotated Bibliography in PDF: www.iwrrp.org/pdf/biblio.pdf

Source: E-Civicus 255 15 June 2005

Monitoring of official reports submission for CEDAW by West African States Parties*

Countries	UN Member State	Signature	Ratification, accession, succession	Optional Protocol	Amendment to art. 20	Reports	Observations	Reservations
Benin	1960	1981	1992	Signature		Pending July 2005		
Burkina Faso	1960		1987	Signature		Pending July 2005		
Cape Verde	1975		1980			Overdue		
Côte d'Ivoire	1960	1980	1995			Overdue		
Gambia	1965	1980	1993			Pending July 2005		
Ghana	1967	1980	1986	Signature		Overdue		
Guinea	1958	1980	1982			Overdue		
Guinea Bissau	1974	1980	1985	Signature		Overdue		
Liberia	1945		1984	Signature		Overdue		
Mali	1960	1984	1985	Ratification	Accepted	Pending January 2006		
Mauritania	1961		2001			Overdue		
Niger	1960		1998	Ratification	Accepted	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 2 para (d) et (f); art. 5 para (a); art. 15, para 4; art.16, para 1 (c), (e) et (g); art. 29, para 1
Nigeria	1960	1984	1985	Ratification		Not ye due		
Senegal	1960	1980	1985	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 9, para 2; art. 29, para 1
Sierra Leone	1961	1968	1988	Signature		Overdue		
Togo	1960		1983			Pending January 2006		

* Extracted data from *Advance Social Watch Report 2005: Unkept Promises of Social Watch*

African Union Watch

The fifth Assembly of Heads of State and Government which was held in Syrte (Libya) on 4-5 July ended with a Declaration on the Review of the Millennium Declaration and the Development Goals (MDGs). The Heads of State have also decided what will happen to the two Courts of Justice of which a merging Protocol was drafted by the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) and experts.

The Assembly ended and for the first time there were no civil society Summit which was up to now funded by the AU. Some activists asked for one part if it is acceptable to still depend upon the UA to organise it and for the second part that it is important to have inputs from the civil society into actions and decisions of the AU. **Read the text of the two activists:** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=613

A Commissioner of the AU Commission announced at the 37th session of the ACHPR (press release of the 37th session) that it will introduce a new human rights champion award in 2005. It will be offered each year.

Decisions of the Assembly: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=617

Follow-up on the Protocol to the treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament

No change (46 ratifications) since the inauguration of the Parliament on 18 March 2004. It is in force since December 14th 2003.

Follow-up on the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council

No change since 1st March 2005, so there is still a total of 38 ratifications. Botswana, Cape-Verde, Erythrea and Tunisia did not sign it yet. It is in force since December 26th 2003.

Follow up of the Protocol related to the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights

Twenty countries ratified as of 18 February 2005. It is into force since 25 January 2004.

Follow up of the Protocol on the Court of Justice of the African Union

Up to 8 March 2005, 7 out of 53 States ratified the Protocol and 36 countries signed it.

African Union: www.africa-union.org

Gender equality and social policy framework

At the third Assembly in July 2004, a Solemn Declaration on the Equality of Men and Women was adopted by Heads of State. To implement the Declaration, the AU called an expert technical meeting on 25-27 May 2005 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). The report should soon be available.

On 21-22 of July, there should be a consultation on the gender policy of the AU. We hope that this policy will be more substantial than the actual draft of the *Social Policy Framework for Africa* which is available from the AU website. Thus, this last one singularly lacks gender mainstreaming. The inequality between men and women is noted but the problem is restricted to 'Cultural attitudes (that) hamper social development in terms of attitudes towards women in the area of **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)** education, employment, politics etc.' This problem being recognized, it is then proposed to implement a regional program to fix it like any other problems. But there is nothing in the analysis showing it is considered a crosscutting issue.

The AU is actually structuring itself. It is now setting up the foundation of its policies and programs which will be implemented in the following years. Thus, it is now that women and women's rights organisations must intervene vigorously to ensure that this new institution will be built with material of quality which will support the whole structure. Thus, the drafting of these two documents seems to be done independently one from the other while they should build upon each other. As they are still only projects, it is still possible to influence their content. You can download the Social Policy Framework from our website. As soon as the gender policy is done, it will be

available to you so you can lobby your representatives at the AU.

Social Policy Framework: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=614

37th session of the African Commission on the Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)

The Commission examined reports from Egypt and Mauritania. It urges States to sign the Protocol on the Rights of Women. It adopted a resolution on the creation of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights noting that 'Decision **EX.CL/Dec.165 (VI)** of the Executive Council in January 2005 allows the operationalization of the Court notwithstanding the continuing discussions on the merger.' The Commission is thus asking the election of Judges, the determination of the seat of the Court and the allocation of adequate resources.

The 38th session will be held from November 21st to December 5th in a location determined later.

ACHPR press release:

www.achpr.org/english/communiqués/communiqué37_en.html

... and what about the civil society

In January 2005, the Centre for Governance and Development, FAHAMU, Oxfam GB, Pan Africa Movement and AA International formed an interim steering group that would lead on the concept of a monitoring organisation. The group suggested, among other things, to create a facility that might provide high quality and monitoring information as to whether AU and its specialised organs are fulfilling their promises, commitments and decisions. It will pro-actively support African citizens, NGOs, trade unions and interest groups so that they engage with the AU on policies and decisions that affect the African citizens. A consultation is under way now and a plan of action should be soon available.

Terms of Reference for the

consultation: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=615

(continued from page 7)

NEPAD

civil service, civil society groups, the private sectors, media, academia and the diplomatic community was held on the 23rd of March 2005. The Business Community emphasized the importance of improved governance for economic growth and development and the need for gender empowerment and mainstreaming.

Press releases in PDF:

Ghana:

www.nepad.org/2005/files/aprm/com/muniquecrm15042005.pdf

Nigeria:

www.nepad.org/2005/files/aprm/niger/iانcsmcommuniqu.pdf

NEPAD Gender Task Force

Last fall 2004, the NEPAD Secretariat made an announcement that it had recruited a Gender and Civil Society Organisation Counsellor and was willing to create a taskforce on gender. It was supposed to start in April 2005 but the launch will finally be July 12th in South Africa. The aim of the taskforce will be to make sure gender issues are included in policies, programs and actions of the NEPAD. **Read more information:** www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=591

NEPAD and G8

Indeed, it is a bit late but the NEPAD Secretariat has engaged itself to consult civil society for the future of the program. Hence, at the 13th meeting of the implementation committee in Egypt, a number of documents have been submitted to Heads of State on the international funding of NEPAD, the Africa Commission and the G8 process. The NEPAD Secretariat was thus soliciting contributions of civil society.

Comments could be sent to Mrs Litha Musyimi-Ogana:
LithaM@nepad.org.

Read the documents of the consultation: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=604

NEWS FLASH - NEWS FLASH

Gambia: Islam Council head on female circumcision

Despite the harmful effects of the practice of female circumcision on a girl child, the Islamic Council leader says, 'FGM is a recommendation of the hadiths of the Prophet. It is an honour for a lady to undergo the practice of FGM.'

Article:

www.observer.gm/enews/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=390&Itemid=33

Source: Africa InfoServ du 13 May 2005

Niger: Niger stopped the road of the caravan

Gone from Ouagadougou since 6th May 2005, the Burkinabese caravan of the Women's global charter for humanity traveled the 13 regions of Burkina Faso. This caravan which had planned to end its trip in Niamey (Niger) could not do it because of internal problems from the country of Mamadou Tandja. The caravan finally ended its trip at the Peoples' House Wednesday 8 June 2005.

Article (in French):

www.lobserveur.bf/articl_imprimer.php3?&sq=articl_imprimer&id_article=2953

Nigeria: Country gets first female supreme court justice

Nigeria's upper legislative chamber, the Senate, has confirmed the appointment of Justice Aloma Mariam

Muktar as the country's first female Justice of the Supreme Court.

Article of 13 May 2005: www.afrika.no

Source: Resource Net Announcements Issue 264

Sierra Leone: In series of controversial rulings, international tribunal refuses to hear evidence relating to sexual violence

Breaking from growing international recognition of the gravity of crimes such as rape and sexual enslavement, a decision issued late last week by a trial chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone prevents it from hearing evidence of sexual violence in one of its three cases.

News story:

www.peacewomen.org/news/SierraLeone/June05/tri.refusal.html

For the full report, "Silencing Sexual Violence: Recent Developments in the CDF Case at the Special Court for Sierra Leone", visit:

socrates.berkeley.edu/~warcrime/Silencing_Sexual_Violence.pdf

Source: 1325 PeaceWomen E-News Issue 63: June 30, 2005

Congo-Kinshasa: Principle of parity between men and women in the Constitution

On May 11th 2005, the Parliament adopted at its plenary the principle of parity between men and women in its Constitution, article 14 paragraph 5.

Source: [femmes-afrique] Message of 13 May 2005 of Forum de la femme ménagère

Library

Bringing equality home: promoting and protecting the inheritance rights of women

This report, published by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, contributes to a fuller understanding of the issues and the existing legislation and practice notably in **Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal**,

Full report at:

www.eldis.org/gender

Source: Eldis Gender reporter, 9 June 2005

African Economic Outlook 2004/2005: Country studies

Forecasting exercise for the next two years, based on a simple macroeconomic model, together with an analysis of the social and political context. In West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

Report in PDF: www.oecd.org

EVENTS

Training: Promoting gender and human rights in reproductive health and HIV/AIDS

A three-week course that will highlight regional priorities and current controversies in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and Beijing Programmes of Action, particularly in the context of HIV and AIDS.

Venue: Nairobi, Kenya.

Date: 24 October to 11 November 2005

For further information, contact Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS), P.O. Box 60054, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: 254-20-444 86 18, Fax: 254-20-444 86 21

E-mail: info@cafs.org

Source: Pambazuka 211, 16 June 2005

"Rethinking African Development: Beyond Impasse, Towards Alternatives"

Call for Abstracts and Panel Proposals for CEDESRIA 11th General Assembly.

Venue: Maputo, Mozambique
Date: 6 to 10 December, 2005

Further details:

www.pambazuka.org/index.php?id=28085

Source: Pambazuka 206, 12 May 2005

The 2005 People's Forum

Fourth edition of the People's Forum in as a counter summit to the G8.

Venue: Fana, Mali
Date: 6 au 8 July 2005

More information:

President: Mrs Barry Aminata Touré or
Permanent Secretary: Mr. Samba Tembely

Tel.: (223) 224 01 34

Fax: (223) 221 78 55

Quartier Djélibougou, B.P.E1539 Bamako, Mali

Website: www.forumdespeuples.org

Source: Pambazuka 210, 9 June 2005

NEWS FLASH - NEWS FLASH

West Africa: Benin, Nigeria Forge Alliance Against Child Trafficking
Benin and Nigeria agreed to unite efforts to prevent and suppress human trafficking, particularly of women and children. With cross-border trafficking into Nigeria rising, the countries further pledged to protect, rehabilitate, and return trafficking victims to their homes.

Article:

africa.oneworld.net/article/country/959

Africa: Women's organisations from different parts of Africa gathered in Johannesburg to add their voices to the Global Call Against Poverty.

Article:

www.whiteband.org/News/gcapnews.2005-06-24.9518130492/en

Source: Resource Net Announcements Issue 270

Africa: Memorandum of Civil Society to the 3rd Ordinary Session of the African Union Ministers of Trade, Cairo, Egypt

Memorandum on issues of trade and development in Africa at the third ordinary session of the Africa Union Ministers of Trade held 5-9 June 2005.

Memorandum:

twnafrica.org/news_detail.asp?twid=793

Source: Pambazuka 211, 16 June 2005

Africa: AWOMI Spearheads African Women's Involvement in the G-CAP

The recently inaugurated African Women's Millennium Initiative on Poverty and Human Rights (AWOMI), held its first meeting, titled "African Women Speak on Impoverishment," in Kenya on 9-11 May 2005.

For more information: www.igtn.org

Source: UNIFEM Currents May-June 2005

WILDAF WEST AFRICA

Newsletter

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International: Putrajaya declaration and programme of action on the advancement of women

Ministerial meeting of the non-aligned movement on the advancement of women that was held 7-10 May 2005.

Declaration: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/article.php3?id_article=603

International: World Bank Report says increasing number of girls affected by HIV/AIDS, announces three-year initiative

Girls are 'increasingly falling victim' to the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, often because they are unable to refuse sex.

Article of 19 May 2005:

www.kaisernetwork.org