

October 1998

**Questionnaire to Governments
on Implementation
of the Beijing Platform for Action**

New Zealand Response

The material posted here was provided to the Division for the Advancement of Women by the Government in response to the Secretary-General's Questionnaire on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. It has been made available in electronic format from the form received. In cases where it was not possible to reproduce charts and tables supplied, these can be obtained by contacting the Division for the Advancement of Women directly.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Part One

Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and women's advancement

- 1. Give a brief analytical overview (3 to 6 pages) of trends in your country in implementing the Platform for Action. This overview or broad picture should, for example, describe the country's policy with regard to achieving the goal of equality between women and men and should be linked to your national action plan or other plans or strategies. Your response could, for example, address questions such as:**

What have been the major achievements and/or breakthroughs in concrete terms in implementing the national action plan and/or policies and programmes for gender equality and advancement of women? ¹

Is the situation of women and girls in sectors not covered by the national action plan better or worse than in 1995? Why?

Are the goals of gender equality and advancement of women being pursued as a priority in relation to other public policy goals? Please explain.

What were the country's priorities in terms of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action? Explain.

Identify areas where mainstreaming a gender perspective has been most/least successful. In which sectors is a gender approach being applied? Please illustrate with examples of legislation, policies, best practice and lessons learned.

Has attention to gender equality and advancement of women changed since 1995 — in Government policies, in public perception, in the media, in academic institutions? Please explain concretely the nature of the change.

How has the global situation, for example, structural adjustment, the global financial crisis and/or globalisation of markets affected women and girls in your country?

¹ If no national action plan has been presented, please refer to other relevant documents.

2. Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, New Zealand

New Zealand government representatives played an active role in the formulation of the *Platform for Action* which was adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, September 1995. At the conference, the Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon Jenny Shipley, announced that she planned "to use the actions outlined in the Platform as the basis for developing a strategy for New Zealand women in terms of the areas of legislative, administrative and attitudinal change that still need attention."

Immediately after the Conference the Ministry published an issue of its newsletter about the Beijing Conference and also published a full report on the Conference — *Beijing and Beyond* which was distributed widely throughout New Zealand.

The *Platform for Action* has been the basis for many of the Government's initiatives for women since 1995.

Immediately after the conference, the Government identified six cross-cutting themes where further action could be taken to improve the status of women. These are:

- mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development of all policies and programmes
- women's unremunerated work
- the gender pay gap
- the need for more and better data collection on all aspects of women's lives
- the *Platform's* recommendations which are relevant to Maori women and girls
- enhancing women's role in decision-making.

In March 1996 the Government directed the Ministry of Women's Affairs to work with other relevant government departments and to report on progress and policy options to address these issues.

New Zealand has made significant progress in implementing the Beijing *Platform for Action* in the six key areas, and the relevant strategic objectives and actions in the Platform have been fully integrated into the work programme of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Highlights include:

- funding of \$2.25 million for a diary-based time use survey over a whole year
- development of a research programme on the gender pay gap
- development of employment programmes directed at women, Maori and Pacific people
- publication of *The Full Picture: Guidelines for Gender Analysis*
- holding more than 20 seminars on gender analysis for government departments using the Ministry's gender analysis framework, *The Full Picture: Guidelines for Gender Analysis*
- an increase in the numbers of women appointed or re-appointed to government committees and boards from 25 percent in 1993 to 35 percent in 1998
- the Ministry of Women's Affairs has worked with the Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit and the Institute of Directors to provide a training programme on corporate governance for potential Crown Company directors

- the Ministry of Women's Affairs has developed a project to profile Maori women in decision-making in the areas of business and community involvement
- funding secured for improved statistical information about women's lives, including an extension to the *Household Labour Force Survey*, a survey on childcare, and a longitudinal survey of income dynamics
- publication of *Maori Women in Focus* — a statistical profile of Maori women looking at health, work, education and family formation.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development of all policies and programmes has been a significant area of work following the Beijing conference.

The Ministry's medium term focus is to work with central agencies to improve the quality of policy advice provided to government, by developing a means of ensuring that other government agencies are accountable for implementing gender analysis in all aspects of their work. The Ministry is enhancing the gender analysis framework to reflect the diversity of women's lives.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has also developed a Pacific Analysis Framework, with associated Pacific consultation guidelines. Like the Ministry of Women's Affairs' gender analysis framework, the Pacific Analysis Framework is a tool for integrating the perspectives and priorities of a specific population group into the generic policy development process.

Significant progress has also been made on a number of the other strategic objectives of the Beijing *Platform for Action*, notably:

- the Domestic Violence Act 1995 and the New Zealand Government Statement of Policy on Family Violence 1996
- the development of a government strategy on sexual and reproductive health, including providing two varieties of oral contraceptive free of charge
- implementation of a national breast cancer screening programme
- making the practice of female genital mutilation illegal in New Zealand
- the implementation of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights
- free visits to general medical practitioners for children under six years of age
- protection of children from sexual exploitation by New Zealand nationals in other countries
- implementation of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy, 1996
tax credits for new parents including Family Support and Family Plus (Parental Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Family Tax Credit).

These initiatives are discussed in more detail in the response to Part Three of this questionnaire.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has reported twice to the New Zealand Cabinet on progress made in implementing the Beijing *Platform for Action* in New Zealand — in 1996 and again in 1998.

Part Two

Financial and institutional measures

2. **Discuss how equality and women's advancement are addressed in the national budget. This could include an indication of the percentage of the overall budget that is allocated for women-specific policies/programmes and any increases/decreases since 1995. What percentage of this allocation comes from international or bilateral donors? Describe efforts to monitor budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and advancement of women.**

New Zealand does not disaggregate budget data on the basis of sex. However, recent budget initiatives targeted towards women include:

- a Women Leaders Network (WLN) meeting as part of APEC 1999, which include an associated seminar on Indigenous Women in Exporting Business
- tax credits for new parents including the Parental Tax Credit
- free budget advice for families
- a new 24 hour *Healthline*
- new funding for *Plunketline*
- the Business Information programme (BIZ programme) which specifically targets women, Maori and Pacific peoples
- extension of childcare subsidy to low income parents with children 5 to 13 years
- \$3.15 million over three years for establishment funding of out of school child care services in low income communities
- doubling the Government's contribution rate to the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (EEO Trust) from \$1 to \$2 for each \$1 of employers' contribution
- continuation of \$500,000 per annum funding for the Maori Women's Development Incorporation
- an extra \$6.7 million for the Health Sponsorship Council to help people stop smoking — the biggest single cause of premature death and disease in women
- tax cuts to increase disposable income
- \$101 million over the next three years for children and families in need.

3. a **Discuss structures and mechanisms that have been put in place to institutionalise follow-up to, and implementation of, the Platform for Action. Describe whether similar mechanisms have been established for follow-up to other conferences, such as the World Summit for Social Development or the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.**

As noted in the responses to Part One, in 1996 the Government directed the Ministry of Women's Affairs to work with other relevant government departments and to report on progress and policy options to address the six key areas identified from the *Platform for Action* where further work could occur to improve the status of women. Progress in the six areas is discussed in part three of this questionnaire response.

To date, the Ministry has reported twice to the New Zealand Cabinet on the implementation of the *Platform for Action*.

Following the Beijing women's conference, New Zealand non-government organisations, with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, held a nation-wide tour to publicise the *Platform for Action*. This is discussed fully in the response to question 3c.

Follow-up to other world conferences is managed in a similar way with the most relevant government department taking the lead in reporting and identifying appropriate actions. For example, the Ministry of Health co-ordinates follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development.

b Describe the arrangements that have been made to co-ordinate the various follow-up efforts to global conferences.

As noted above, follow-up to other world conferences is managed by the most relevant government department which takes the lead in reporting and identifying appropriate actions.

While there are no formal arrangements in place, as part of its overall responsibility for the conduct of the Government's business internationally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is responsible for the dissemination of information relating to follow-up efforts to global conferences to the relevant domestic departments. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also co-ordinates Government's responses to global conferences and follow-up activities, as appropriate.

c Describe the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in planning and shaping the follow-up activities. Do members of NGOs participate formally in the mechanisms established to follow up the Beijing Conference?

New Zealand non-government organisations expressed a high level of interest in the Beijing conference. The Ministry of Women's Affairs organised a number of consultative and informative seminars for NGOs to fully involve them in the preparatory processes before the conference. NGOs also formed an NGO Co-ordinating Committee to consult with the Government and to inform NGOs about the Conference.

Three NGO representatives were included in the Government delegation to the conference and eight NGO representatives received Government funding assistance to attend the associated NGO forum, *Forum '95*.

After the Beijing Conference the NGO Co-ordinating Committee held 21 consultative meetings throughout New Zealand to inform women about the outcomes of the conference and to identify priority areas for action in New Zealand. A report of these meetings was prepared and published as *Beyond Beijing – the New Zealand Way*. This report has been distributed widely. Individual NGOs have also discussed the *Platform for Action*.

Some NGOs prepared their own reports after the Conference, including Soroptimists International of New Zealand Central Region and New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW). These reports were sent to the Minister of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

NGOs continue to participate in planning and shaping follow-up activities through formal mechanisms for making submissions to Government and via consultative meetings held with government departments. For example, the Ministry of Women's Affairs held meetings while preparing New Zealand's report to the CEDAW Committee in 1997/88, and the Ministry for the Environment holds meetings with NGOs on a regular, formal basis every three months. The Human Rights Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade also holds meetings with NGOs to discuss and report on international human rights activity.

New Zealand's NGOs take an active interest in implementing the Beijing *Platform for Action* and are very interested in the Beijing + 5 Review. In preparing the response to this questionnaire, the Ministry of Women's Affairs sought comment from a range of NGOs and received responses from:

- National Council of Women
- Maori Women's Welfare League
- National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges
- New Zealand Employers Federation
- New Zealand Council of Trade Unions
- Ngai Tahu Development
- New Zealand FPA (Family Planning Association)
- New Zealand Federation of University Women
- New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils
- Rape Crisis
- New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

The National Council of Women (NCW) circulated the Beijing + 5 questionnaire to members and asked them to identify advances achieved for women since Beijing. Responses identified advances and continuing barriers as follows.

"Advances:

- *A growing number of women in top management jobs, law firm partnerships as members of Parliament — women head the two major political parties*
- *A greater awareness of domestic violence*
- *A greater variety of work for women and more childcare*
- *Better preventive healthcare bringing positive impacts on women's health*
- *More women in local government elected to councils and community boards*
- *Legislation to remove discrimination — Human Rights Act 1993; Child Support Act*
- *An amendment to the Crimes Act making the practice of female genital mutilation illegal*

- *Greater community support for victims of abuse e.g. more women's refuges, rape crisis centres, victim support groups.*
- *More encouragement for women to study science and technology.*

NCW members noted health-related advances including:

- *free breast screening for women aged 50–64*
- *free flu injections for those over 65*
- *establishment of marae-based health clinics*
- *establishment of the position of Health and Disability Services Commissioner, and a greater awareness and education of rights*
- *establishment of marae-based health clinics to provide more appropriate and accessible services to Maori*
- *Community Services Card to assist people on low incomes*
- *Introduction of anti-smoking drinking and drugs campaigns in schools and communities with particular targeting of young women*

Continuing barriers noted by NCW members included:

- *Women's economic advancement continued to be impeded by family responsibilities and unpaid work in the home*
- *access to affordable, appropriate childcare*
- *the gender pay gap*
- *access to affordable housing*
- *fees for tertiary education*
- *the lack of women in senior decision-making roles*
- *employment issues, including job insecurity, casualisation of the workforce in many female dominated sectors."*

New Zealand FPA (Family Planning Association) noted that it endorsed the Platform's recommendations and concerns in the critical areas including health, human rights and protection of the girl child. However, FPA expressed disappointment that health was not separately identified as one of the six cross-cutting themes where further action could occur to improve the status of women in New Zealand.

New Zealand FPA noted that the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy has seen the introduction of good programmes for improving sexual and reproductive health of New Zealanders, especially women, Maori and Pacific people.

The National Council of Women also identified significant NGO programmes that implement the Beijing Platform such as:

Source: National Council of Women

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- *establishment of the Women's Loan Fund to assist women to become financially independent through second chance education*

- *lobbying for matrimonial property law reform*
- *language courses for immigrant women*
- *projects on personal safety in the home, the workplace and in community*
- *raising awareness of the UN Declaration of Human Rights*
- *a pamphlet on the Employment Contracts Act*
- *establishment by New Zealand women's organisations of a regional network with special consultative status as a national body with the ECOSOC*
- *a survey on satisfaction with maternity services.*

Future projects planned by NGOs to implement the Platform include:

- *further funding of tertiary scholarships for women*
- *making the best use of the results of the Time Use Survey*
- *encouraging women to stand for election both locally and nationally*
- *further action to close the gender pay gap*
- *support of parents as first educators of their children*
- *education for peaceful conflict resolution."*

Part Three

Implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action

A. Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices

4. **In relation to each of the twelve critical areas of concern, describe best practices and innovative actions taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve the objectives in each critical area of concern in the Platform for Action. Your response should refer to the country's national action plan, and could include examples of legal measures, reforms, media campaigns, and pilot programmes or projects. Please cite, in particular, any targets which were set in the Government's national action plan or other relevant plans, and indicate how far these were met. (For example, a target may have been to appoint more women to the Cabinet. To what extent was it achieved?)**

As previously noted, the New Zealand Government has identified six cross-cutting themes as the key areas for action. However, actions have also been taken in other relevant areas. Progress in all areas of the Platform was reported in July 1998 to the United Nations through New Zealand's combined third and fourth reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Progress on the key areas for action:

Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in the Development of all Policies and Programmes

Following the Government's consideration of the *Platform for Action*, the Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon Jenny Shipley, instructed the Ministry of Women's Affairs to work with other government departments to ensure that gender analysis is incorporated ("mainstreamed") within government policy and programme development, as a matter of routine. This is in line with the Cabinet office requirement for all other government departments to consult with the Ministry of Women's Affairs on "all matters which relate to the economic and social status of women, especially Maori women".

Since then, the Ministry has published *The Full Picture: Guidelines for Gender Analysis* and conducted gender analysis seminars for government departments. The Ministry is also enhancing the gender analysis framework to reflect the diversity of women's lives.

The Ministry's focus is to work with central agencies on improving the quality of policy advice provided to government, by developing a means of ensuring that other government agencies are accountable for implementing gender analysis in all aspects of their work.

In 1997/98, strategic policy development accounted for 28 percent of the Ministry's budget. This encompassed the work on mainstreaming gender analysis. In 1998/99, strategic policy development amounted to approximately 40 percent of the Ministry's budget.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs works closely with other government agencies to incorporate gender analysis into their policy and programme development through information sharing, encouragement and leadership, particularly with the widespread dissemination of the Ministry's publication, *Guidelines for Gender Analysis*. The Ministry provides advice on significant policy areas being advanced by other departments.

The Ministry's current work in this area includes:

- working with other departments to demonstrate good practice and the benefits that will result from incorporating gender analysis within their business
- development of statistical gender equality indicators with Statistics New Zealand to measure changes in outcomes for women
- refining the techniques for gender analysis and enhancing them to reflect the diversity of women's lives
- maintaining a watching brief on relevant international initiatives.

Women's Unremunerated Work

In the 1997 Budget, funding of \$2.25 million over three years was announced for a comprehensive Time Use Survey. The survey was conducted by Statistics New Zealand and sponsored by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The data will provide a robust benchmark of time allocation by New Zealanders.

The survey will provide time-use information on population groups including men, women, Maori, non-Maori, the employed, the unemployed, and urban and rural dwellers. It will also identify differences in the amounts of time that specific population groups spend on various activities. The survey will provide data on men's and women's unpaid productive activities such as household work, caring for family members and other people, and voluntary work in the community. In addition, the data will cover men's and women's participation in paid work, education and training, leisure and personal care.

This sort of information, which has been unavailable until now, will be used to improve public sector policy and programme development in the health, employment, justice and welfare sectors, and for population-based policy advice – for example, women, Maori and youth.

The Time Use Survey will be particularly useful in providing a first ever estimate of the time spent by Maori women in tribal organisations and other organisations concerned with the maintenance of cultural activities, this is largely unpaid work. Furthermore, it will provide benchmark information which will assist in gauging the efforts by all New Zealanders to preserving Maori culture.

Several government agencies are already planning to use the results for policy and programme development, and the data generated will also be useful to non-government voluntary or non-profit organisations. The survey will also provide information on the amount of time people spend doing paid and unpaid work for different types of voluntary agency. This will help in understanding the resources that voluntary agencies have available, and what they contribute to society and the economy.

Prime Minister Rt Hon Jenny Shipley, has said of the survey:

“Unpaid work, including childcare, care for the elderly, household work, and voluntary community work, is crucial to the New Zealand economy but its value is largely ignored. The Time Use Survey will help us better understand how people balance these important social and economic responsibilities.”

The first data sets will be available by the end of 1999.

The Gender Pay Gap

New Zealand women earn approximately 82 percent of the average total hourly earnings of men. Since 1995, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs has:

- analysed the components and the extent of the gender earnings gap
- commissioned research; distributed information; held seminars
- worked with other key Government departments on policy work to address benefit dependence and employment outcomes for women.

The Ministry’s research programme on the gender earnings gap included research on occupational segregation, performance related remuneration systems and associated human resource practices, and employment and remuneration practices in homecare work. Several publications have been produced. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission has published a useful leaflet on the rights of pregnant workers.

The Need for More and Better Data Collection on all Aspects of Women’s Lives

Work is to fill information gaps critical to women’s lives, including unremunerated work (see Time Use Survey above), the availability of childcare and women’s labour market participation through the New Zealand Childcare Survey 1998; and, longitudinal data on income dynamics, which will provide a valuable additional source of data on women.

The Ministry of Women’s Affairs worked with other government departments to jointly publish two significant statistical publications: *Women: New Zealand Now – Statistics* and *New Zealand: Maori Women in Focus – Te Puni Kokiri* (Ministry of Maori Development). recent issues of the Ministry’s newsletter, *Panui*, also provided statistical details about women and work and older women.

A very recent publication by the Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato, *New Zealand’s Contraceptive Revolutions*, has also added to the available information about New Zealand women’s lives.

Other work in progress includes:

- Statistics New Zealand’s feasibility study on integrating administrative data for cross-sectoral policy development
- the design of gender equality indicators so that outcomes for women and the quality of gender analysis to be monitored

- further information about women's lives is to be generated by research within the eight priority areas for cross-portfolio, long term applied social science research developed by the Officials Group on Applied Social Science Research, and endorsed by the Government in 1997.

The Platform's Recommendations which are Relevant to Maori Women and Girls

The Platform calls for governments to address areas of concern for indigenous women and girls. The primary areas of focus in New Zealand are in education, health, economic development, participation in decision-making and information about the lives of Maori women and girls.

Recent education, health and welfare and other strategies to improve outcomes for Maori include:

- Education Strategy for Maori
- Maori Medium Teacher Strategy
- A child health Strategy
- Maori Health Provider Development Scheme
- Family Start — a highly targeted home-based support service which sees a family worker providing advice and help to meet family needs, co-ordinating access to services, and working with parents to give them the skills and support to raise their children
- Iwi Social Services
- Teenage Sole Parents
- Sexuality Education resources in schools for Maori
- Maori Statistics Forum – established by Statistics New Zealand to improve the quality and quantity of information collected about iwi/Maori women and men)
- Maori Women in Focus — a statistical profile of Maori women looking at health, work, education and family formation.

Enhancing Women's Role in Decision-Making.

As part of New Zealand's response to the *Platform for Action*, the Ministry of Women's Affairs is working with other government agencies to enhance women's role in decision-making through a government commitment to gender balance on all government-appointed boards and other relevant official bodies by the year 2000.

Equal employment opportunities and the elimination of discrimination in the appointment process will help women participate more fully in public decision-making but a need for governance training has also been identified.

This led the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit (CCMAU) to work with the Institute of Directors to develop director governance seminars aimed at getting greater diversity on Crown company boards.

Three two-day seminars have been held to date with further seminars planned for 1999. All participants have some prior governance or management experience. A number of the

participants have been appointed or are being considered for appointment to statutory boards.

In addition, five one-day introduction to directorship seminars have been held in Wellington and regional centres around New Zealand for women who are interested in serving on boards. These seminars have been held in association with local government or community agencies. The seminars introduce women to the basic requirements and duties of directorship and suggest ways of increasing their chances of being considered for positions on statutory or private company boards.

The Ministry is also working with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs on a pilot seminar to provide support and training for consumer representatives on statutory boards and committees.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has also:

- Improved the quality of the curricula vitae held by the its Nominations Service
- Recruited more Maori women to the Nominations Service
- Worked closely with other departments to raise their awareness of the skills and qualities of women available for appointment
- Improved its communication with women on the Nominations service.

Appointment process across government

In November 1998, the Ministry ran a seminar for government officials involved in the appointments process to increase their awareness of the Ministry's Nominations Service. The seminar provided a forum for discussion on such topics as the information and training needs of board members, the appointment process across government, the use of candidates' personal information, and the information needs of both appointing and nominating agencies.

The Ministry has received a breakdown of appointments by gender and, in some cases, ethnicity, from Cabinet Office, Justice and the Crown Company Monitoring and Advisory Unity. Other government agencies, such as the Ministry of Health and the Department of Internal Affairs, will be able to provide a gender breakdown of appointments as they computerise their appointments processes.

Maori Women in Decision-Making Project

Maori women play a major role in their own communities and increasingly significant roles as businesswomen and entrepreneurs. The Ministry is working to increase the visibility of highly skilled Maori women to promote their selection to decision-making bodies, such as the boards of Crown companies, statutory boards, committees and tribunals.

The first part of the Maori women in decision-making project selected ten Maori women from business backgrounds and introduced them to key audiences in the public and private sectors through a media profiling and targeted communications strategy.

The second part of the project profiles eight Maori women, again introducing them to key audiences. On this occasion the Ministry asked iwi (tribal) authorities to nominate significant women who were leaders in their communities and beyond. The final selection was made by an independent panel. The women all have the skills and experience to make valuable contributions to the governance of statutory boards.

To date, five of the women profiled in the Maori Women in Decision-Making project have been appointed to statutory bodies.

New Zealand women have attained some of the highest offices in the land including Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Chief Justice, Governor General, Chief Human Rights Commissioner.

PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Please refer to the response to part one for this information.

B. Obstacles encountered

5. **What obstacles were encountered and what lessons were learned in implementing policies and other measures in each critical area of concern? (For example, despite new legislation to limit traditional practices harmful to the health of women and girls, these practices continued, showing that an education campaign was also needed to bring change in behaviour, or customary law was adapted to fit modern legislation when it was learned that women were more discriminated by customary laws than men).**

The Ministry of Women's Affairs is the government agency charged with the implementation of the Beijing *Platform for Action*. The Ministry's implementation strategy has been to work with other government departments to ensure that their advice includes consideration of the impacts on women, and on different groups of women. This recognises that central agencies such as the Ministry need the commitment of other agencies and political leaders to assist with their work improve the status of women.

New Zealand's work to implement the Beijing *Platform for Action* has enjoyed the support of the Prime Minister and other Cabinet ministers. This has been critical to the progress made to date.

C. Commitments to further action and initiatives

6. **Many Governments made commitments to action at the Beijing Conference. Describe steps taken by your Government to fulfil any specific commitments it made at Beijing.**

The *Platform for Action* calls upon governments to develop implementation strategies for the Platform. The Ministry of Women's Affairs analysed the Platform and in March 1996 the Government instructed the Ministry to work with other relevant government departments on six key areas of concern and to report on progress and policy options to address these issues. Progress with this is reported on in Parts One and Two of this questionnaire.

7. **List any new commitments in each of the twelve critical areas of concern which your Government has made since Beijing and how these are being implemented, including any new targets which have been set and the time frame for meeting them. (For example, to increase resource allocations to primary education and to local governments to conduct an awareness campaign among parents on the importance of sending girls to school; to review the regulations governing land rights for women and men; to increase by 50 per cent the number of police officers trained to handle domestic violence cases and cases of rape.)**

The *Platform for Action* is one of the international instruments taken into consideration by government in the policy development process. New Zealand's progress for women, including in the in the 12 critical areas of concern in the Platform, is documented in Status of Women in New Zealand 1998, the combined 3rd and 4th report to the CEDAW Committee. Highlights are included in Parts One and Two of this questionnaire.

In 1999, New Zealand holds the chair of APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation). Key initiatives while New Zealand is in the chair include:

- A Women Leaders Network meeting held in June 1999 and the associated Indigenous Women in Export Business Seminar
- The Working Group to develop a framework for the integration of women in APEC. The framework is being developed during 1999 for consideration by Leaders at the APEC meeting in Auckland in September.

8. List any further actions and initiatives which your Government believes should or could be taken to fully implement the Platform for Action beyond the year 2000. Among these, identify which ones your own Government intends to take and when.

The six-cross-cutting themes from the Beijing Platform Action identified where further action could occur to improve the status of New Zealand women are fully integrated into the work programme of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Reflecting these themes, the into the Ministry's priority areas of work include:

- increasing women's participation in decision-making
- improving women's lifetime earnings
- low-income women and their families
- women's security and well-being, including freedom from violence
- improved data and statistics about all aspects of women's lives
- measuring women's contribution to the economy and community through unpaid work
- improving the quality of policy advice through gender analysis.

9. Briefly describe your vision for women's advancement and equality for women in the new millennium.

Making a difference for Women is the Ministry of Women's Affairs vision and this underpins New Zealand's drive to implement the Beijing *Platform for Action* domestically and our support for its implementation internationally.