

REALIZING BEIJING+20 IN JORDAN: WOMEN IN ACTION!

Bi-monthly Newsletter

Launch of the Beijing+20 in Jordan

It is a message of hope and a call to action for the youth, delivered by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal, on the occasion of the launch of the Beijing+20 review and appraisal process in Jordan. Disseminated on 22 May 2014 in conjunctions with the global opening, Her Royal Highness's video message commended global efforts and achievements in advancing women's rights and empowering women since the creation and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995. However, despite progresses, challenges still remain in regards to achieve gender equality. In this regard, Her Royal Highness called on the Beijing's generation to pave the way for new generations to inherit the legacy of Beijing, making them aware of the impact of the Declaration on their lives.

"With the will of my Arab sisters and the participation of women throughout the world, together with all those committed to furthering the rights of women, let us once again capture the momentum witnessed by the world in 1995 in Beijing." – Princess Basma bint Talal.

As the world approaches the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Her Royal Highness encouraged **youth** to renew the Kingdom's commitment from 1995 to promote the women's empowerment. New generations should be enabled to take action and become leaders in the field of women's rights, translating



the result of this global dialogue into action and making the world a better place for women and girls.

"Ultimately as current stakeholders, it is the youth who are responsible for building on what has been achieved so far and for making further progress in the future" she said.

A dedicated advocate for women's rights and empowerment in Jordan, Princess Basma bint Talal has been at the forefront of the field of women's issues and gender equality in Jordan. Her Royal Highness' significant contributions to the field of women's empowerment, gender equality, and sustainable human development have advanced the livelihoods and rights of Jordanian women for nearly three decades. Her Royal Highness Princess Basma was also the head of the Jordanian delegation attending the Beijing Conference in 1995.

Her Royal Highness's video message is available on the UN Jordan Youtube channel.

The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20



Beijing +20 provides a **once in-a-generation opportunity** to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment at the heart of the future development framework as means for achieving peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development. States are called upon to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. UN Women, in partnership with sister agencies, governments and civil society organizations, will conduct consultations and raise awareness on the 12 areas of concern highlighted by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, giving visibility to country-specific priorities. Key to these efforts is increased focus on social mobilization, engaging different sectors of society in public debate on women's empowerment and advancement and empowering the leadership of women's movements and grassroots organizations.

These reviews will contribute to the global review and appraisal that UN Women will prepare and submit to the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59) in March 2015. The 20th anniversary of Beijing opens new opportunities to reconnect, regenerate commitment, charge up political will and mobilize the public. The Beijing Platform for Action, still forward-looking at 20, offers important focus in rallying people around gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Joint Programme

The UN Country Team in Jordan has put the Beijing +20 review process at the heart of its work plan for 2014. Building on the foundations of 1995, UN Women is taking the lead and partnering with six UN agencies on a joint programme titled *Realizing Beijing +20 in Jordan: Women in Action!* in order to further the goals set by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Together with **WHO, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNRWA, UN Women** will work with various groups within Jordan to address key issues affecting women, including poverty, violence against women, education, health, and socio-economic issues that prevent women from fully advancing.

Launched on 1 April 2014, *Realizing Beijing+20 in Jordan* consists of a series of consultations and advocacy activities organized by UN Agencies in collaboration with governmental institutions and the civil society. In this regard, pivotal is the partnership with the Jordanian National Commission for Women, which have been mandated by the government to prepare the Beijing+20 progress report for Jordan. In accordance with its respective mandate, each Agency is taking the lead in one or more of the 12 areas of concern identified by the Beijing Platform for Action; agencies' expertise and networks will facilitate **social mobilization** while better addressing gaps and challenges for the Kingdom in the different spheres. Priorities and recommendations collected throughout this national dialogue will be clustered in a Position Paper that the government of Jordan will present during the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The objective of this joint programme is also to create a new momentum for women's movements in the Kingdom by influencing the dialogue on the Post 2015 development agenda through joint consultations and activities. To this extent, **youth** will be the protagonist of this joint programme, as their energy, enthusiasm, and hope are crucial elements needed for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Jordan.

THE CONSULTATIONS BEGIN.....

World Press Freedom Day

Joint consultations on Post 2015 and Beijing+20

The very first consultation for the Beijing +20 process in Jordan was organized by UNESCO on World Press Freedom Day on 4 May 2014 under the theme of “Media Freedom for a Better Future: Shaping the post-2015 Development Agenda”. The event was held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Rym Ali, founder and supporter of the Jordan Media Institute in collaboration with three local partners – the Jordanian Media Institute, Arab Women Media Center, and Imdad Media Center – and the media. During the opening ceremony, the UN Women Jordan Representative, Mr. Giuseppe Belsito, and the Director of UNESCO Amman Office, Ms. Costanza Farina, introduced the Beijing+20 process as an opportunity to advance the women’s agenda in Jordan.

“UNESCO Amman Office is currently partnering with UN Women in support of the wider national Beijing+20 consultations and is taking the lead for the thematic area Women and the Media based on its mandate to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image” affirmed Ms. Costanza Farina, Director of UNESCO Amman Office.



The need to guarantee **women’s freedom of expression** as well as their rights and opportunities as professionals in the media outlets were also stressed:

“Women journalists addressing such issues for themselves, already proved to be an eye-opening experience in many Arab countries. The future generations of media professionals ... are asked to play a responsible role in establishing a social, cultural and political awareness on women’s rights and women’s empowerment” said Mr. Giuseppe Belsito, UN Women Representative.

After the opening ceremony, a round table discussion was organized around the topic *The Role of Media in Promoting Women Empowerment*. Around 20 participants – such as media professionals (TV and radio, press), journalists and activists from the civil society- discussed the role of the media in promoting **gender equality** and women’s empowerment within the context of Beijing+20. A comprehensive set of recommendations was given at the end of the discussions, focusing on three main pillars: women as recipients of media content, women as media professionals, decision makers regulating the role of women in the media.

As Ms. Iman Najieh stressed - TV Presenter and rapporteur for the consultation- women shall not be considered passive recipients of media content; their active role should be mainstreamed in media programming and programmes’ development. In addition, media outlets must take into consideration the social and cultural status of women while designing media content, as well as reflect their different needs. Participants also emphasized the fact that more opportunities for women to tell their stories and express their views publicly should be provided. Finally, ad-hoc policies as well as an enabling environment should be in place to promote women’s rights in the media.

National Consultations on the gaps and challenges related to Women and Health



On 22 May 2014, WHO conducted a round of consultations on Women and Health in collaboration with UN Women and the National Woman's Health Care Center, under the theme of *National consultations on the gaps and challenges related to women's health*. Organized under the patronage of HRH princess Aisha bent Al Hussein, the event took place in Aqaba in the South of Jordan, and brought together around 60 members from civil society organizations, local government leaders, military experts, local NGOs, youth volunteers and health care providers from the southern governorates of Aqaba and Ma'an. In his opening statement, Dr. Ahmad Basel Al-Yousefy - Acting Representative for WHO Jordan - discussed the significance of Beijing+20 and the role of women's empowerment in improving women's health. For instance, Dr.

Al-Yousefy mentioned that for every extra year of education for women, the mortality rate of those women's children decreased by 9.5% in Jordan, demonstrating the important effect of empowerment on women's health and well-being.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Rowaida Al-Maaitah, Former Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research and former President of the Hashemite University, affirmed *"The woman is a key partner and actor in the development process...[and] the bulk of the responsibility falls on her shoulders"*. She also added *"Health is not only a right but an investment in the building of our beloved country"*.

As part of the consultations process for the Beijing +20 process, participants were divided in different focus groups to address key issues such as prospects and aspirations for women in the health sector, the definition of woman's health, food and nutrition for women, healthy life styles, women's health needs and women's **access to health care services**. A dedicated questionnaire on Women and Health was also prepared by WHO and UN Women in collaboration with the Jordan University of Science and Technology. Based on the Beijing Platform for Action, the questionnaire aims at assessing the status of gap and challenges for women in Jordan in accessing to dedicated health care services as well as on raising awareness on healthy life style.

This consultation represents a pilot event which will be replicated in the upcoming months in the northern governorates of Jordan as well as in Amman by WHO, UN Women and the National Woman's Health Care Center. Results collected will not only contribute to the Beijing+20 process, but also to national programming and policies creation in the field of women and health.



Media corner

Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture It!

*Open-Ed by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka,
UN Women Executive Director*

[Jordan Times, 19 May 2014] Nearly 20 years ago, the world came together in Beijing for the Fourth World Conference on Women. There, 189 governments adopted a visionary roadmap for gender equality: the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. More than 17,000 delegates and 30,000 activists pictured a world where women and girls had equal rights, freedom and opportunity in every sphere of life. While much progress has been made in the past two decades, no country can claim to have achieved equality between men and women. It is time for the world to come together again for women and girls and complete this journey. UN Women is launching a year-long campaign to re-energize the vision laid out at the Beijing Women's Conference. Our goal is straightforward: **renewed commitment**, strengthened action and increased resources to realize gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights. We call it: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture It! ...

Princess Basma urges young people to promote women's empowerment

[Jordan Times, 21 May 2014] As the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action nears, HRH Princess Basma encouraged young Jordanians to renew the Kingdom's commitment from 1995 to promote women's empowerment. Youth are crucial to the legacy and implementation of the Beijing Declaration since their enthusiasm, energy and hope can catalyse the world into action and make the world a better place for women and girls, a UN Women statement released on Wednesday quoted the princess as saying.

"With the will of my Arab sisters and the participation of women throughout the world, together with all those committed to furthering the rights of women, let us once again capture the momentum witnessed by the world in 1995 in Beijing," Princess Basma said on the occasion of the launch of the Beijing+20 review and appraisal process in Jordan. Adopted in 1995, the Beijing Declaration is **"a groundbreaking agenda aimed at empowering women, addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality on a global scale"**.



Beijing+20 is on social media!

Different advocacy campaigns are begin launched by UN Women at the global level to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration.

The outreach components of Beijing+20 have been presented to the UN Communication Group, where a task force, with communication focal points of participating agencies, has been created to coordinate **advocacy messages** for the joint programme *Realizing Beijing+20 in Jordan: Women in Action!*