



Republic of Nauru

Response

To the United Nations Questionnaire on
The Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action
And the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session
of the General Assembly

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NAURU'S RESPONSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Part One

National Mechanisms

Since the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing detailing women's needs for quality of life free from discriminations and violence, national machineries for the advancement of women have been established in every country in the pacific region. The Women's Office in Nauru was created in August of 1997, tasked to support government wide mainstreaming of gender equality perspective in all policy areas. Since the inception of the Women's Office a National Plan was drawn and ten priority issues of concern were identified This being the result from comprehensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders. The 2005 Work Plan is wider in scope to address the social, political and cultural aspects of development as reflected in the multiple functions in the productive, reproductive and community commitments. The Plan was submitted to Government in 1998 for support and endorsement

Nauru Women's National Plan of Action

Issues of Concern

1. Women and Health
2. Education and Training for Women
3. Violence against Women
4. Human Rights of Women
5. Women in Decision Making
6. Women and the Economy
7. Women and the Media
8. Women and the Environment
9. Women and Culture
10. Women in Agriculture and Fisheries

In 2004 a review to revise the 5 year Plan was formalized recognizing the need to reshuffle the priorities already identified and to insert 6 New Emerging Issues.

1. The Girl Child
2. Religion
3. Community and Family
4. Good Governance
5. Youths
6. Women in Sports

Implementation of the Work Program was done largely through the support and participation of Non Governmental Organisations, Women's Community Groups, Women's Church Groups and Individuals on voluntary basis.

Impact of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW)

Nauru has not ratified CEDAW but is very optimistic and would wish to be among the rest of the women of the world in the very near future who are enjoying their God given right as his people, in his land, a life without fear and prejudice.

There are no specific policies and no national mechanisms at present geared to provide effective collaboration for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

National Sustainable Development Strategy

Nauru has seen an upheaval in it's living standards due to negligence and poor political commitment. The decline in socio-economic conditions has resulted for Nauru to find a different way of life for it's people. The most affected by this economic crisis and shifting of commitments are women and children. Women, because there are more women headed households.

The formation of **Women Entrepreneurs Nauru Association (WENA)** a newly formed body of women already in business, some in family business and those interested to start their own. The formation resulted from a CEFE Small and Medium Enterprise's National Workshop. More and more women are finding the need to work outside the home to meet the rising cost of foods and to supplement the husband's income. The women's desire for a wind of change, and Nauru CEFE could not have come at a more opportune time as people are seeking alternative livelihoods.

Millennium Development Goals

The establishment of the **Well Women Clinic** is the gateway for a qualified healthy life for all women. The Clinic can provide optimal health care for the women (mothers) throughout the reproduction process. The Clinic can be the **Specific Age Health Care Unit** for women through their life cycle in the various health care settings. Improvement in the maternal health care for the women of Nauru can be achieved through the establishment of the WWC.

Nauru has achieved the **legal status of equality between women and men**. Women get equal pay for equal work, equal opportunities in education and health care, the right to vote and to participate in politics.

Education is compulsory and free for children ages 6years to 16years.

Part Two

Progress in Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Women's groups join together as a cohesive network giving women's issues a Voice and Presence

Implementation of the Work Plan, a link to the National Strategic Development Plan and a vision to improve Maternal Health is the establishing of the "Well Women's Clinic" a holistic approach to better health, where women are encouraged to take full responsibility for their well being and instill in them that prevention is better than cure. Health is number 1 issue in the Reviewed National Work Plan.

Safe House for victims of Domestic Violence, the Women's Office has seen the Necessity for women and children to be safe guarded from their violent environments. The prompting of establishing the Safe House is because of escalating cases of abuse to women and their children , and women who lived in their husbands' family homes and not having a place of their own to go to (especially for a non Nauruan woman married to a Nauruan man). The Women's Safe house was established in August 2008.

Recruiting of a Counselor for the Safe House to provide counseling services for victims of abuse.

Establishment of the Nauru Young Women's National Council: in June 2009, ages ranging from 16years – 35years. The young women of Nauru felt that some of the issues identified in the Women's National Plan are not necessarily their target priorities, and that extra emphasis should focus more on the issues that are very crucial and pertinent to the developing of the young women of Nauru.

Women Entrepreneurs Nauru Association (WENA) is a newly formed body of Women in Business, some already in business others in family businesses and those interested to start their own business. A National CEFE, Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) Workshop co-sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat and The South Pacific Community was organized which was attended by twenty seven women from the community. WENA was formed by the women who attended this workshop.

The Nauru Women's National Council was established in July 1991, this group is made up of the mature aged women of Nauru with district's representatives, who are now affiliated with the women's office. This group being representatives of women's voices throughout the districts and are a part of the National Priorities for Women (as a result of the national consultation of the women of Nauru back in 2004).

Ex-Community Education Training Centre Graduates, this group is made up of the women from and throughout the communities /districts, who have been trained at the Community Education Training Centre in Narere, Fiji. This group is affiliated with the Women's Office as a Resource Group committed to assisting the Women's Office in areas of need in areas such as starting a kitchen garden and other projects within their skills and capabilities .

There has been consultation with RRRT,(Regional Resource Rights Team) based at SPC, Noumea with the Nauru Government in providing a localized focal point for the Legal Rights (Human Rights) of the woman. This position is to commence in September 2009.

Also part of the Women's National Program of events is incorporating part of the International Calendar earmarked to be carried out and celebrated by the women of Nauru. Events are mostly carried out by the women's church groups and communities and by the Nauru

Women's National Council (NWCN). Celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) is always celebrated with an Interdenominational Commemorative Service and this is being held and conducted each year at a different church to ensure women's equal participation and ownership.

1. 8th March International Women's Day
2. 15th May International Day for Families
3. 21st May World Day for Cultural Development
4. 28th May International Day for Action for Women's Health
5. 5th June World Environment Day
6. 11th July World Population Day
7. 01 October International Day for Older Persons
8. 16th October World Food Day
9. 25th November International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women
10. 03rd December International Day of Disabled Persons.

Women in the Public Service and other Government Instrumentalities were awarded half a day off from their respective duties to celebrate International Women's Day from 1999 – 2004 and for the last five years to date, Government has awarded 8th March as a Public Holiday for all employees in the Public Service and other Governmental Instrumentalities.

Monitoring

There is no monitoring agency established for this purpose, but as the Women's Development Program is being carried out by the Women's Office and by those Agencies and Groups affiliated with the Women's Office, the practice of monitoring and the carrying out of specific programs and distribution of responsibilities is co-shared. The Women's Office is required to submit a Monthly and an Annual Report to the Chief Secretary on developments of the Office.

Statistics

Since the establishment of the Safe House for victims of Domestic Violence 2008-2008
Victims who have sought the comfort of the Safe House

Women	-	(six)
Young persons	-	(4)
Children	-	(13)
Total	-	(23) Twenty Three

Domestic Violence Reported Cases 2008 - 31, in all including women and children
2009 - 9, women and children

Reported Convictions **2008** - 102, women and children
 2009 - 18, women and children

Statistics provided by the Police Department with no break downs of convictions.

Challenges

Constraints to carrying out the development and initiative efforts have been with line departments, because Government Officials and members of the different Governmental Sectors have their own organizational priorities and do not regard Gender Issues as a priority.

There are no policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment although the argument is that the Constitutional Protection is basically ensuring that all people's rights and protection are enshrined and entrenched in the Constitution of Nauru. The Constitution is still under review and there are clauses that need to be amended.

ie: Citizenship, where a non Nauruan woman married to a Nauruan man or has been married to a Nauruan man may become a Nauruan by applying in a manner prescribed by law. There is no similar provision in the Constitution for a non Nauruan man married to a Nauruan woman. This is a clear constitutional discrimination on the Nauruan woman.

- 1) Lack of dedicated personnel (consultants) for the Women's Office in relation to the priorities of the Women of Nauru these being in the areas:
- 2) Legal Rights and Changing laws of Nauru to ensure women's equality before the Law – **Ratification of CEDAW.**
- 3) Training for the Women's Office for Counseling Services for Domestic Violence (both victims & offenders)
- 4) Training for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.
- 5) Assistance for the development of SME's for Women of Nauru through expert technical assistance and funds for start up, and to help identify viable business in a competitive country because of it's smallness and remoteness.
- 6) Nauru would like to see the full ratification of CEDAW but with Archaic Laws that still governs the nation at present, this may pose some constraints. The Judicial process is slow coming because of the few qualified personnel in the field of law and pressing commitments of government. The non ratification of Human Rights Conventions and Declarations is an indictment and a continuing one for the government of Nauru. Uncertainty of whether Nauru will be able to meet the obligations after Ratification is probably Nauru's hesitance. (pls. note this is my own personal view and not of Government)

Education and Training

Women in the Education Department are the highly qualified personnel in the Public Service. Staff and Teachers Qualifications (including office staff)

No	Qualification	Sex	Total
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		Male	Female	Total
1	Doctorate(Phd)		1	1
2	Masters	1	1	2
3	Degree	7	22	29
4	Diploma	2	21	23
5	Certificate	5	77	82
6	Instructors	2	0	2
7	Trainees	10	26	36
8	Experience with no qualifications	12	65	77
	Total	39	213	252

Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) offer Scholarships in Hospitality, - for Certificate in, Commercial Cookery, Patisserie and Diploma in Community Welfare Supervision, Two women have gained their certificates in Patisserie and four in Supervision.

CEFE, Training for women in small and medium business took place from 13th July to 24th July 2009; conducted by a Chief Trainer from Fiji, her visit also involved assessing and providing coaching services to the Local CEFE Trainer who had successfully completed the ToT Workshop at CETC in Fiji and to grant her full accreditation if requirements are met during the course of the Workshop.

Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund, offered a Workshop on Women's Development in Taiwan from September 2 to September 11, 2009. The workshop is to enhance women's ability, position and development opportunities. It will also look at the diversification and roles that women play, Women in Business and its economical benefits and opportunities.

Women in Power and Decision Making

To empower and prepare the women of Nauru for the 2007 Parliamentary Election, a workshop conducted by a consultant from UNIFEM was initiated. The three day workshop from 13, 14 and 15 August 2007, found the women believing that there is a need for equal participation of women and men in the People's House. Three women stood for election but did not get elected. As quoted by Nauru's own Government Rep. to the Beijing Conference on Women, **Fear** is the root cause of failure to bring about Equality, Development and Peace. Women need to break through the shackles of fear and those in power to be liberated from their fear, only then can the revolution can be achieved.

Women and Poverty

Identifying what poverty is, will depend on how Nauru defines poverty.

From a survey conducted by the Women's Office in 2007, it was apparent that there are women most in their late forties who are forced by circumstances to care for their extended

families, find it very difficult to make ends meet. Nauru imports most of its food stuff and is very costly, it is difficult to clothe the children and feed them, sometimes a meal a day is all that they can get. Mothers or guardians do not care to send the children to school on empty stomachs.

(members of parliament and community workers need to pin point homes with large families with no income and make recommendations to Government to assist where it can and when laying people off work to find alternative means)

Women and Health

(a need for a policy on women's reproductive health)

Despite the relative ease of access to Nauru's main health facility, the DHS revealed a very low rate of antenatal visits but only when pregnancies have significantly progressed. This can cause many pregnancy related problems that can lead to complications and even fatalities. Postpartum care also reported a very low percent of women that get checked up after the birth of their babies. The urgency is compounded by the fact that 90% of women reported having experienced some problems accessing health care services.

(because women feel that if they are not experiencing any discomfort then there is not that need to see a doctor, a healthy and friendly environment should be strengthened)

Women and the Economy

Women share in the labour force continue to rise in both private and public sectors, and everywhere women are working more outside the household. Women's income is becoming increasingly necessary to households of all types. There has been a growth in women's entrepreneurship and other self reliant activities particularly in the informal sector.

(A visible policy to mainstream gender perspectives and the effects on women and men respectively)

Reduction in Government revenues and social welfare
A minimal allowance allocated to people ages 60 and over..

Women and the Media

A program called the "Women's Corner" need to be revived. This program can be the Voice and Presence that the women in Nauru need.

This is a government owned entity and programs aired are carefully monitored.

Religion

The women of Nauru believe that Religion plays an important role in promoting equality for women and men in strengthening community identity and solidarity.

Women and Culture

As a matrilineal nation, women play an important role in the social, cultural and economic support for the extended families, especially the need to support families through this transitional period of changing priorities and lifestyle.

The Girl Child

Nauru has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). There is the urgent need to establish a Centre or Unit to take on the responsibilities of children's issues (girl) and employ a focal person to take on the role.

Women in Agriculture and Fisheries

Participation of women in Agriculture and Fisheries is increasing, most of the work that women are involved in are in the harvesting with less involvement in the processing and marketing. Part of the community work of the CETC graduates is helping the community to grow nutritious food by creating a kitchen garden.

Women in Sports

Sports as seen by the women can enhance the quality of their health and achieve a productive life and longevity. Effective participation of all concerned in the development process, and promoting of a cohesive and healthy linkage to whole of Government whole of community approach are things that women value and contribute to.

Part Three

Institutional Development

The Women's Directorate is the only body in Government mandated to ensure of women's development and well being. Women in Nauru hold leadership positions in Government and other Government entities. The most highest position in the Public Service (Chief Secretary) is held by a woman, 4 Lay Magistrates, six members of the Family Court, two heads of Departments, several Directors, one Lawyer, one Pleader and five Paralegals.

Part Four

Remaining Challenges and Actions to take

1. To draw up a National Policy on Women.
2. To work with all Stake Holders and Government to ratify CEDAW.
3. To mobilize Women to stand for Parliament.
4. To establish Healthy Linkages with Government and Government entities.
5. To create Gender Equality.