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and the
MDG+5 Reviews**

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER JUSTICE

LINKING

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

WITH THE

**CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL
FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

AND THE

BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

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Introduction

As the 21st century progresses, it is becoming apparent that the ideals expressed in the Millennium Development Goals will not be met under prevailing market-based economic policies.
Wendy Caird

The years 2004 and 2005 have been marked by significant events in the field of women's rights: 2004 saw the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In 2005, women all over the world will celebrate the holding thirty years ago of the First World Conference on Women which led to the proclamation of the Women's Decade by the United Nations and to four global women's conferences of major importance. In March 2005, the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) – the final document of the Fourth World Conference on Women – will take place at the UN in New York, a gathering which is also known as the "Beijing+10 Review". In September, "MDG+5", a high level meeting for the appraisal of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will also be held in New York under the auspices of the UN.

This paper aims at showing the interlinkages between the CEDAW, the BPFA, and the MDGs, and to emphasise that the MDGs must be developed further from the perspective of human rights, poverty eradication and the empowerment of women.

To begin with, some remarks on the role and the structure of the above mentioned instruments:

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** is the most important international agreement concerning women's human rights. In essence, all states who have ratified the convention or who have acceded to it have committed themselves to its implementation and, accordingly, to the transformation of their national legislation.¹

The **Beijing Platform for Action**, the document agreed by world governments at the **Fourth World Conference on Women**, is a comprehensive and courageous outline of strategic steps to be taken in order to concretise and enhance the goals of CEDAW. Although it is not, of its nature, a legally binding document, consisting of policy commitments rather than legal obligations, it is, nonetheless, a significant statement of principle, and has great symbolic value. Many of the signatory states saw in it guidelines for the worldwide advancement of women into the 21st century and stressed its historical importance.² This is due not only to the extraordinary media coverage of the conference and the intensive character of the negotiations, but also to the fact that a large number of countries made concrete commitments in the field of women's policies to be implemented "after Beijing"³.

¹ See Cook, Rebecca: State Accountability under the Women's Convention, in: Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives. Philadelphia 1994, University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 228; Neuhold, Brita; Pirstner, Renate; Ulrich, Silvia: Menschenrechte – Frauenrechte. Internationale, europarechtliche und innerstaatliche Dimensionen. Vienna 2003, Studienverlag, pp.49 and 235.

² See the final interviews and comments in China Daily of 18 September, 1995, p.4.

³ See Neuhold, Brita: Keep on Moving Forward. Hintergründe, Verlauf und Perspektiven der 4. UN-Weltfrauenkonferenz in Beijing. September 1995. UN-Konferenz und NGO Forum '95. Vienna 1996, ÖFSE, Annex 3, pp. 178.

The **Millennium Development Goals**, which were formulated on the basis of the “Millennium Declaration”, the document agreed at the Millennium Summit held in 2000, have as their aim the fulfilment of basic needs and are not embedded in an explicit human rights perspective. While equality and empowerment of women are named as explicit goals, these are not integrated into the paper as a whole.

The factors and trends outlined above result in the urgent need to reorient the **MDGs** on the basis and in the spirit of the CEDAW and the BPFA.

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – the legal framework

CEDAW, which is also known as the ‘Women’s Convention’, is **unique** and **visionary** for various reasons: It comprises both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. Considering the conflict that had been smouldering over these two “groups” for decades, this holistic view is an achievement in itself, and tells a lot about the visionary power of the founding mothers of CEDAW. Very consciously it surpasses the equal opportunity framework by demanding “temporary special measures” for the advancement and temporary preferential treatment of women, as well as “active political and legal steps” to be taken, in order to achieve de facto gender equality⁴. It obliges all signatory states to adopt “all appropriate means” and take “all appropriate measures” in order to achieve the goals of the convention and to obtain concrete results.⁵ It comprises 16 substantive and 14 procedural articles⁶, their implementation will be monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Since its adoption in 1979 CEDAW has acquired high **esteem**, at least theoretically; to date it has been ratified by 179 states.⁷ However, powerful states such as the USA, have only signed but not ratified the convention, others, such as the Vatican, have not signed it; while a considerable number of other states have made reservations which, strictly speaking, are incompatible with the object and purposes of the convention.⁸

Procedures concerning the **enforcement** of the convention have been considerably strengthened: The examination of periodic national reports on the implementation of the convention by the CEDAW Committee is becoming increasingly rigorous. Moreover, very valuable points of reference for the implementation of particular articles are to be found in the “General Recommendations”⁹. In addition to the examination procedure, an **Optional Protocol**¹⁰ to CEDAW was adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly. It creates two new procedures. A communications procedure now allows individual women, or groups of women, to submit claims of violations of rights protected under the convention to the Committee. The Optional Protocol also creates an inquiry procedure enabling the Committee to

⁴ Sporrer, Anna: Leitfaden zum Fakultativ-Protokoll der UN Konvention zur Beseitigung jeder Form der Diskriminierung der Frau. Vienna 2001, Frauenbüro der Stadt Wien, p. 9.

⁵ Cook, Rebecca, op. cit.

⁶ See Annex.

⁷ As of October 2004.

⁸ See Neuhold, Brita; Pirstner, Renate; Ulrich, Silvia: Menschenrechte – Frauenrechte., op. cit. pp 56.

⁹ www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations

¹⁰ Signed by 76 states, ratified by (or acceded to by) 71 states, as of 7 January 2005.

undertake inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women's rights.¹¹ The Optional Protocol is already in force and has been ratified by many countries in the North and South¹².

CEDAW, however, has also been exposed to **criticism** from various angles. It is attacked by conservative governments and NGOs as endangering basic values. Some feminists have also criticised CEDAW as being too oriented towards a western concept of equality before the law.¹³ In addition, the fact that the whole issue of violence against women was not included into the convention, has also been considered as a serious flaw. Efforts by the CEDAW Committee, with the strong support of NGOs, to expand and strengthen the concept of equality and the adoption of two comprehensive general recommendations on violence¹⁴, have, however, effectively counteracted these apparent weaknesses.

“A recent study of the impact of CEDAW has shown that it provides a powerful instrument at the national and international level for defining norms for constitutional guarantees of women's rights, for interpreting laws, mandating proactive, pro-women policies, and for dismantling discrimination overall.”¹⁵

Thus, it can be said that the practical **value** of CEDAW in overcoming discrimination of women and gender inequality, is confirmed by women in the North and the South, from the grass-roots to the governmental level.

2. The Beijing Platform for Action – a concrete programme

The BPFA was adopted on 15 September 1995 by 189 signatory states, and welcomed as an **historic document**¹⁶. As an agenda for women's empowerment, it recommends strategic objectives and actions in **12 Critical Areas of Concern**.¹⁷ Some of the most important paragraphs are those that confirm the universality of women's human rights, recognise sexual rights and reaffirm women's reproductive rights. The BPFA very clearly articulates that violence against women is a violation of human rights– whether in intimate relationships or within the context of armed conflicts. It also proposes changes in inheritance

¹¹ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/>

¹² While we recognise that no terms adequately reflect diverse realities, we use the terms North and South, rather than 'First World/Third World' or 'Developed World/Developing World', which imply superiority and inferiority. We use 'North' to refer to the economically and politically powerful countries of North America, the region of Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand; and 'South' to refer to the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Countries of the South which have ratified or acceded to the Protocol are: Bangladesh, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Guatemala, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Yamahiriya, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Uruguay, Venezuela. January 2005.

¹³ See Hevener-Kaufmann, Natalie; Lindquist, Stefanie A.: Critiquing Gender-Neutral Treaty Language: The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, in: Julie Peters/Andrea Wolper: Women's Rights – Human Rights. International and National Perspectives. New York 1995.

¹⁴ General Recommendation 12 (1989) and 19 (1992)

¹⁵ Grown, Caren; Gupta, Geeta Rao; Khan, Zahia: Promises to Keep: Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Washington D. C., April 2003, Background Paper of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, Millennium Project, p. 38.

¹⁶ See: China Daily, 18. 9. 1995, p. 4.

¹⁷ A Women and poverty, B Education and training for women, C Women and health, D Violence against women, E Women and armed conflicts, F Women and the economy, G Women in power and decision-making, H Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, I Human rights of women, J Women in the media, K Women and the environment, L The girl child.

law. It was at Beijing that the international commitment to gender mainstreaming was officially adopted.¹⁸

A special feature of the BPFA is the **interdependency** among the critical areas of concern and the light it sheds on burning questions, such as violence against women, armed conflicts and problems of the girl-child. The fact, however, that the progressive positions are mainly to be found in the area of civil and political rights of women, while in the economic field no fundamental systemic changes are aspired to.

In spite of all restrictions, the BPFA must be seen as a **milestone** on the way to true gender justice and the empowerment of women. It is equally important that regional and cultural differences between women are no longer considered as an obstacle but rather as a source of inspiration. It is also notable that women from the South made influential contributions to the Beijing process.¹⁹

There is a **direct connection** between CEDAW and the BPFA as highlighted in the following quotation:

“The Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW are complementary. CEDAW establishes rights and obligations, and the BPFA offers substantive analysis of the issues.”²⁰

The CEDAW Committee constantly stresses this interdependency, and calls upon the signatory states to integrate the 12 Critical Areas of Concern into their periodical reports.²¹

3. The Millennium Development Goals

3.1. Background

In September 2000 the Millennium Summit was held as part of the 55th General Assembly of the United Nations –without the direct participation of NGOs²². At the end of a very solemn ceremony the **Millennium Declaration**²³ was adopted by 191 states, mostly represented by their respective heads of state. The Millennium Declaration underscored the results of the pioneering conferences of the nineties, such as the World Conference on Human Rights and the Fourth World Conference on Women, and confirmed human rights documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and CEDAW.²⁴

The MDGs were extracted from the Millennium Declaration as a **“road map”** by the UN Secretariat, in close cooperation with the UNDP, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the OECD. In

¹⁸ United Nations: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women, 15 September 1995, A/CONF.177/20 (1995) and A/CONF.177/20/Add.1 (1995), Chapter 4, para 202.

¹⁹ See above, pp. 115 as well as: Macdonald, Mandy: Words into Action. Initiatives by Women in the ACP Countries to Follow up Commitments Undertaken at the Fourth World Conference on Women. WIDE Bulletin, Brussels 1998.

²⁰ Painter, Genevieve: Gender, the Development Goals, and Human Rights in the Content of the 2005 Review Process. October 2004, Gender and Development Network, p. 8.

²¹ Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Fifteenth Session), A/51/38(1996), para 335.

²² The NGOs could express their opinion within the framework of an NGO Millennium Forum, which was held at the UN headquarters in New York from March 22nd to 26th. They drafted their own “Millennium Forum Declaration” and “Agenda for Action” which were filed as UN documents A/54/959.

²³ A/Res/55/2. <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

²⁴ Cf. Barton, Carol: Seeking Accountability on Women’s Human Rights. Women Debate the UN Millennium Development Goals. New York 2004, WICEJ.

due course, **8 goals** were defined, together with **18 time-bound targets** and **48 indicators**, which are to be achieved by 2015, at the latest.

Millennium Development Goals²⁵

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Several **Task Forces**²⁶ are working within the framework of the “**Millennium Project**” in order to further develop the targets and indicators and to strengthen the coherence between the goals. A **Millennium Campaign** is geared to raise awareness and commitment at a broader level. Most of the signatory states are preparing **reports** on the implementation of the MDGs. The UN Secretariat is promoting the MDGs, considering them to be the panacea for the solution of the most pressing problems of humankind. Many institutions of development cooperation use them as a frame of reference. The original drive, however, seems already to have weakened.

There is little doubt that there are **positive aspects** to be found in the MDGs: For the first time the international community agreed on measurable time-bound goals and targets – at least in some areas – which can be used in monitoring and lobbying activities, and are easily understood by a broader public. It is, however, problematic that these long-term issues of civil society and the women’s movement have finally been addressed, but in a way that lacks a true human rights spirit, and does not address the underlying reasons for poverty and “underdevelopment”.

“The frustration for many has been the concern that the MDGs have met the letter of civil society’s demands for accountability, but not the spirit. That is, they seek to solve critical problems with measurable targets, without adequately addressing the roots of these problems.”²⁷

What is lacking in the whole concept is a clear **human rights** perspective and the commitment to the implementation of international and regional human rights instruments. From a gender perspective, the most important points of reference are CEDAW and the BPFA, but the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Declaration on the Right to Development and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) contain important norms as well.

²⁵ See also table with goals and targets in Annex. Further information: www.un.org/millenniumgoals.html.

²⁶Task Force 1: Poverty and Economic Development; Task Force 2 : Hunger; Task Force 3: Education and Gender Equality; Task Force 4: Child Health and Maternal Health; Task Force 5: HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB, and Access to Essential Medicines; Task Force 6: Environmental Sustainability; Task Force 7: Water and Sanitation; Task Force 8: Improving the Life of Slum Dwellers; Task Force 9: Open, Rule-Based Trading Systems; Task Force 10: Science, Technology and Innovation.

²⁷ Barton, Carol: op. cit., p. 3.

The human rights' approach, which had been explicitly emphasized in the Millennium Declaration, was eliminated by pragmatists, primarily from World Bank circles.²⁸

This reductionism characterizes the overall style of the presentation and implementation of the MDG concept: **efficiency** is prioritised, examples of **best-practice** are used to facilitate the process. Practically no importance is given to research on root causes of poverty and deprivation or to the eradication of structural imbalances between and within regions.

Furthermore, the MDGs are a product of UN **bureaucrats** rather than the result of deliberations made in the signatory countries, thus making implementation rather doubtful.²⁹

3.2. Critical remarks from a development perspective

The crucial problem is that the MDGs are based on a concept of **development** which denies the necessity of structural and political transformations, and tries to solve problems such as hunger, illiteracy, disease and marginalisation by material incentives, investment, consumer goods and technologies, and the overall incorporation of the targeted sectors into processes of modernisation and industrialisation.³⁰

The framework strategy, and what is seen as the infallible panacea for the realisation of all MDGs, is the integration of the so-called developing countries into the concept of a **neo liberal market economy**, which has already proved to contribute to rising poverty and injustice.³¹

Recently even World Bank officials admitted that without equal distribution growth and poverty reduction will never be achieved:

*"There is increasing evidence, that growth and the prospects for long-term poverty reduction can be held back by inequality."*³²

Jan Pronk expresses this even more clearly:

*"However the direction is wrong. Since the 1990s the trend has been negative."*³³

Contradictions such as the fact that countries in the South are forced to privatise and to deregulate in areas such as health care, education, energy, transport and communication,³⁴ and on the other hand

²⁸ Abeyesekera, Sunila: Development and Human Rights, in: Barton, Carol: Seeking Accountability on Women's Human Rights, cf. p. 6. As concerns a strategy which links the MDGs explicitly with a human rights perspective, see: Painter, Genevieve: Gender, the Development Goals, and Human Rights in the Content of the 2005 Review Process. October 2004, Gender and Development Network.

²⁹ Menon-Sen, Kalyani: Statement made at the workshop at the WIDE Annual Conference 2004 in Bonn on the topic "The BPFA and the MDGs. How to defend the progress made? How to move forward", in: WIDE: Globalising women's rights. Confronting unequal development between the UN rights framework and the WTO trade agreements, Bonn 2004, p.52

³⁰ Barton, Carol: op. cit.; Elson, Diane: The Millennium Development Goals. A Feminist Economics Perspective. 52nd. Dies Natalis Address. 7 October 2004. Den Haag 2003, ISS; Pronk, Jan: Collateral damage or calculated default? The Millennium Development Goals and the Politics of Globalisation. Inaugural address. ISS, 11 December 2003.

³¹ Khor, Martin: Globalization and the South. Some Critical Issues. Penang 2001, TWN.

³² Ravallion, Martin, Research Manager, World Bank Development Research Group, in: Chronic Poverty Research Center: Opportunity is not enough. Overview of Conference on: Staying Poor: chronic poverty and development policy conference, Manchester April 2003. Chronic poverty update. September 2003, p. 2. www.chronicpoverty.org/pdfs/cpupdate2.pdf

³³ Pronk, Jan: Collateral damage or calculated default? op. cit., p.13.

are called upon to invest in just the same areas in order to attain the MDGs, are not dealt with. Similarly the devastating effects of international agricultural policy and of the TRIPS agreement pushed by the WTO and other powerful macro-economic players on poor countries and poor people are ignored.

“However, this national-level work will have limited chance of success if the root causes of failed development are not addressed. These lie primarily in the overarching framework of the global economy, and in the systems and rules of trade and finance which are failing to deliver on critical development objectives.”³⁵

Particularly problematic is the fact that the MDGs, and above all Goal I, start from a blurred **notion of poverty** which, on the one hand, does not consider **differences** between various forms of poverty and between varying conditions in countries and regions, and, on the other, pays no attention to differences in the situations of women and men and their different experiences due to ethnicity and social stratification.

No consideration at all is given to the **chronic poor**, whose condition is passed on from one generation to the next. It is estimated that there are between 300 and 425 million people who belong to this group and who are unable to profit from the opportunities offered by the MDGs. Among them are elderly persons, orphans, disabled people and women heads of households.³⁶

Harsh criticism has been sparked off by the quantitative definition of poverty which is based on those whose income is **less than one dollar a day**. For Jan Pronk this criterion is a “yardstick rough beyond reason”; in this context, he also questions the habitual calculations concerning the “poverty line”:

“Are people who no longer figure in the health statistics, because they now earn one dollar a day, out of poverty for good?”³⁷

Here it must be emphasized that the MDGs speak only about “poverty reduction” (and not elimination), defined as a reduction by half of the number of people living in absolute poverty – without paying any consideration to the future of the “other half”.

The **neo-liberal approach** of the MDGs becomes very evident when looking at Goal VIII – “Develop a global partnership for development”, where “development” is not defined as a basic right, but as part of an “open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system” modelled according to the aspirations of the macroeconomic actors. This is the most comprehensive of all MDGs, and the only one which addresses the industrialised countries and the international organisations. However, it is also the only goal which does not contain measurable time-bound targets and which does not require regular monitoring. Countries of the South have to carry the bulk of the social costs. Neither the international organisations nor the industrialised countries are called upon to change their policies.

³⁴ These policies were already widely applied at the beginning of the eighties within the framework of the Structural Adjustment Programmes by the World Bank and the IMF. Since the beginning of the nineties, these measures were drastically tightened up through bilateral agreements and GATS.

³⁵ Adaba, Gemma: A View from Labor. Transforming the MDGs, in: Carol Barton, op. cit., p. 31.

³⁶ Chronic Poverty Research Center: Opportunity is not enough. Overview of Conference on: Staying Poor: chronic poverty and development policy conference, Manchester April 2003. Chronic poverty September 2003, p. 8. www.chronicpoverty.org/pdfs/cpupdate2.pdf

³⁷ Pronk, Jan: Collateral damage or calculated default? The Millennium Development Goals and the Politics of Globalisation. Inaugural address. ISS, 11 December 2003, p. 9.

*"This means that efforts to halve extreme poverty, provide universal primary education, achieve gender equality and combat infectious diseases, among other important goals are occurring within the same **Washington Consensus** that has exacerbated poverty and gaps between rich and poor nationally and internationally."³⁸*

3.3. Gender justice within the MDGs

Gender justice and women's empowerment are not treated as cross-cutting issues in the MDGs, although the members of the United Nations themselves, through adopting the BPFA in 1995, launched global gender mainstreaming of all policies and at all levels. Achieving "gender equality" is not seen as a contribution to poverty reduction, which is the priority goal of the MDGs.

"Women's economic agency as a force for poverty reduction continues to be overlooked in the discourse. (...) Women are still not part of the poverty reduction goal."³⁹

Unfortunately the MDGs must be seen to a large extent as **gender-blind**. The lack of gender awareness in Goal I, Goal VII and Goal VIII is particularly problematic, and measures should be taken to ensure that they are reoriented from a gender-perspective. The proposal made by the UNDP Gender Task Force, "to add at least one gender-specific indicator to the set of indicators under each target" could represent a transitional or minimal solution.⁴⁰

Gender concerns are essentially limited to **Goal III** "Promote gender equality and empower women". They are also reflected in **Goals V and VI**, where women are seen merely as victims or as vulnerable persons who need special protection. Moreover, Goal III has a rather limited objective, as it does not take into account the structural requirements for women's empowerment.⁴¹ In none of the goals is any reference made to the need to gather or to include gender disaggregated data (readily available in many countries).

An analysis published in May 2003 of thirteen **MDG country reports** shows that, upon implementation by the governments, gender aspects were only considered in Goals III, V and VI. This means, that in many countries women are still regarded only in their **traditional roles** as mothers, rather than as "agents in the development process".⁴² The idea of women's rights as the basis for their overall empowerment is still not sufficiently taken into account.

Therefore feminist NGOs and academics from the North and the South – among them the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality in the framework of the Millennium Project⁴³ – continuously demand that gender aspects be **integrated into the whole agenda** of a newly shaped MDG concept – in particular into Goal I, VII and VIII – which should be based on a clear commitment to human rights.⁴⁴

³⁸ Mbilinyi, Marjorie: Lessons of Civil Society Engagement, in: Barton, Carol, op. cit., p. 10.

³⁹ Kabeer, Naila: Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development goals. A Handbook for policy-makers and other stakeholders. Commonwealth Secretariat. London 2003, p. XV und p. 20.

⁴⁰ UNDP: Millennium Development Goals. National Reports – A Look through a Gender Lens. New York, May 2003, p. 24.

⁴¹ See below.

⁴² See UNDP: op. cit., p. 22.

⁴³ Grown, Caren; Gupta, Geeta, Rao; Khan, Zahia: Promises to Keep: Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Background Paper of the Task Force on Education and Gender Equality. Millennium Project. New York 2003.

⁴⁴ Vgl. Barton, Carol, a.a.O., Grown, Caren; Gupta, Geeta, Rao; Khan, Zahia: Promises to Keep: Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, cf.; Elson, Diane: The Millennium Development Goals: A Feminist Development Economics Perspective. 52nd Dies Natalis Address. Den Haag 2004, ISS; Kabeer, Naila: Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals, cf.

Below, a short **feminist analysis** of the MDGs is presented. The focus is on Goals I, III, VII and VIII. At the end of the brief analysis of each respective Goal, I make reference to the articles of CEDAW and the strategic objectives and/or institutional regulations from the BPFA which, I argue, should be reflected in the MDGs.⁴⁵

Goal I: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

The fact that 70% of the world's absolute poor are women is nowhere reflected in the targets and indicators of this goal. Women's poverty and the fact that more women and girls suffer from hunger than men and boys are closely related to **patriarchal structures** and an unequal distribution of power. Women tend to have lower status within the family, in the division of labour within and outside the home. Their access to income, ownership, land tenure and training is severely restricted.⁴⁶

The poverty of women in the South is also rising due to the **economic strategies** recommended in the MDGs: Within the framework of Structural Adjustment Programmes of the World Bank and the IMF and national liberalisation and lean budget policies, women are deprived of free or modestly priced services to cover their basic needs; modernisation projects destroy their subsistence structures and agricultural liberalisation lowers the value of their farm products.⁴⁷

Safeguarding the **economic and social rights of women** and the elimination of gender specific injustice should thus be put centre-stage in poverty eradication – which should be the real goal, instead of mere poverty reduction. A target formulated particularly for this purpose, or specific indicators should secure, for example women's access to land, infrastructure, financial resources, credits and training, as well as to tools, inputs and technologies.

Link to CEDAW

In CEDAW the following **articles** deal with the above mentioned issues: Article 11 (Equality in employment), 13 (a) and (b) (The right to family benefits; to bank loans etc), 14 (Rural women), together with **General Recommendations** No. 13 (Equal remuneration for work of equal value, 1989) and No. 16 (Unpaid women workers in rural and urban family enterprises, 1991) and No. 17 (Measurement and quantification of the unremunerated domestic activities of women and their recognition in the gross national product, 1991).

⁴⁵ See Painter, Genevieve: Gender, the Development Goals, and Human Rights in the Content of the 2005 Review Process. October 2004, Gender and Development Network.

⁴⁶ Johnsson Latham, Gerd: Power and Privileges - on Gender Discrimination and Poverty. Stockholm 2004, SIDA

⁴⁷ Baden, Sally: Economic reform and poverty: A gender analysis. Brighton 1997, Institute of Development Studies, Bridge Report: Briefings on Development and Gender, 50; Bridge: Briefing paper on the "feminisation of poverty". Briefing paper prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Institute of Development Studies/University of Sussex, Brighton 2001, Bridge Report: Briefings on Development and Gender, 59; Alter Chen, Martha: The feminization of poverty, in: A commitment to the World's Women. Edited by Noeleen Heyzer, New York 1995, UNIFEM, S. 27-37.; Neuhold, Brita, Gugenberger, Gertrude: Bekämpfung der Feminisierung der Armut in Ländern des Südens, a. a. O.; UNIFEM: Progress of the World's Women 2002: Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals. New York 2002.

Link to the BPFA

In the BPFA we find specific links to the targets and measures to be taken within the **Critical Areas of Concern A** (Women and poverty), **F** (Women and the economy) and **K** (Women and the environment), which have to be taken into account by all available means.⁴⁸

Goal II: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3 calls for universal primary education for boys and girls; however, the MDG indicators are limited to gender neutral data, thereby impeding a gender differentiated approach.⁴⁹ If strategies are to be successful, they must start with **awareness raising** among girls' parents, as daughters often are put in second place in favour of sons or other male relatives. Efforts should also be made to create **perspectives** for girls outside the home and to guarantee a safe learning-environment free from violence and sexual harassment.⁵⁰ A basic requirement for developing counter strategies, would be gender disaggregated data not only on school enrolment, but especially on girls' drop-out rates, which are extremely high for various reasons, and particularly in the South.

Link to CEDAW

Articles 5 (Social and cultural patterns), **10** (Equality in education) and **14** (Rural women), as well as **General Recommendation No. 3** (Education and public information programmes, 1987) call for basic changes in order to eliminate discrimination of women and girls in the field of education.

Link to the BPFA

The BPFA offers promising entry points, especially when defining strategic objectives and actions to be taken within the **Critical Areas of Concern B** (Education and training for women) and **L** (Girl child).⁵¹

Goal III: Promote gender equality and empower women

It is a positive achievement that Goal III reflects gender issues as an independent MDG and that it figures in the third place. However, this first favourable impression obscures the fact, that the **safeguarding of sexual and reproductive rights**, which had been achieved in Cairo and Beijing, is not included in Goal III, despite the efforts of the international feminist movement and especially of women in the South, to define it as a priority concern.⁵² Furthermore, the exclusion of the **violence issue**, and in general, the lack of an integrated **human rights perspective**⁵³, is a serious flaw. Thus the approach of the MDGs falls far way behind CEDAW and the BPFA.

⁴⁸ See Annex.

⁴⁹ Although women and girls appear in Goal III as beneficiaries of educational measures, it would also be of utmost importance to develop strategies within the frame of Goal II geared at overcoming gender specific imbalances.

⁵⁰ See Duenas Loza, Martha: Education and Training. The Road to Women's Emancipation and Empowerment, in: INSTRAW News. Women in Development. Miami (27/1999), pp. 5-8, Hartl, Maria: The BPFA on Education and Training, in: Division for the Advancement of Women (ed.): Vocational Training and Lifelong Learning of Women. New York/Torino 1997, pp. 30-34, Ker, Jill; Bourque, Susan C. (ed.): The Politics of Women's Education. Perspectives from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Michigan 1993.; Leach, Fiona: Gender, education and training. An international perspective, in: Gender and Development. Gender, Education and Training. An Oxfam Journal. Oxford (Vol.6/Nr.2) July 1998.

⁵¹ See Annex.

⁵² See Antrobus, Peggy: MDGs-The most distracting gimmick, in Barton, Carol, op. cit., p.14

⁵³ See Painter, Genevieve: op. cit.

Political strategies to eradicate **violence against women** are excluded from MDG III. Another weak point is that aspects, such as **race, class and ethnicity** are overlooked: women are treated as a homogenous group.

The only **target** for Goal III (Target 4) is limited to the elimination of gender specific disparities in the field of education.⁵⁴ This is both confusing, because this target partly overlaps with the Goal II target, and too narrowly defined.

The following **indicators** are specified: the girl-boy ratio at all educational levels, the young male-young female ratio (15 to 24 years) among literate persons, women's ratio among persons receiving remuneration outside the agrarian sector, women's ratio among members of national parliaments. Although these indicators are significant pre-conditions for the strengthening of women's "strategic capacities" and for overcoming traditional images and roles, other highly important aspects remain neglected or are left out.

The above mentioned shortcomings have been **sharply criticised** by feminist experts, groups and networks around the globe. There is a wide variety of viewpoints on elements which should be integrated into Goal III in order to create the preconditions for empowerment and gender justice, at least at the conceptual level. The following priority recommendations for strengthening the MDGs and ensuring their coherence with the BPFA and CEDAW are drawn from a range of feminist critiques.

1. In the first place, the targets for **education**, together with the respective **indicators**, must be widened in scope. The access of women and girls to education will remain an illusion if gender specific stereotypes are not eliminated, as laid down in Article 5 of CEDAW.
2. **Violence against women** must be eliminated, as already demanded in recommendations 12 and 19 of CEDAW and in the BPFA (Critical Area of Concern D). Its eradication should be called for in a separate target.
3. Safeguarding women's **reproductive rights**, a principle which was confirmed in Cairo and again reinforced by the BPFA, should be another target. The latter should address safe access of girls and women to sex instruction and counselling, but should also involve boys and men in sex education.
4. Women's and men's access to rewarding **paid work** with adequate remuneration, as the inalienable right of all human beings (see CEDAW Article 11, 1 b), should be a target or at the very least an indicator. Well targeted measures to impede gender specific discrimination and to protect girls and women against exploitation should be added. At the same time, efforts should be made to support women in the subsistence **economy and the informal sector**.
5. Another important issue, already included among the indicators, consists in proportionally raising the number of women as **members of parliament**.⁵⁵ Political participation is a fundamental political human right, however, it has to be complemented by special measures, such as affirmative action and by institutional support for women. Furthermore, formal political participation must go hand in hand with **awareness raising** measures for women, to enhance their **autonomy** inside and outside their homes and to encourage their political participation in their communities. This must be accompanied by support for women's NGOs, grassroots groups and networks, in order to widen the scope of women's potential **collective agency**.

⁵⁴ In primary and secondary education the elimination of disparities is demanded until 2005, at university level the year 2015 is the deadline.

⁵⁵ The Task Force on Education and Gender Equality demands a minimum of 50%.

6. Another concern consists in guaranteeing girl's and women's equality concerning **inheritance law**. This issue was heatedly discussed in Beijing and resulted in the inclusion of a recommendation on the "equal right to inherit" in the BPFA.

Link to CEDAW

All the substantive articles, especially **Articles** 4 (Temporary special measures), 5 (Cultural patterns), 6 (Trafficking in women), 7 (Equality in political and public life, national level), 8 (Equality in political and public life, international level), 10 (Equality in education), 11 (Equality in employment), 12 (Equality in health care), 15 (Equality before the law), 16 (Marriage and family relations), are valid starting points for strengthening Goal III.

General Recommendations No. 5 and 25 (Temporary special measures, 1988 and 2004), No. 23 (Women in political and public life, 1997), No. 3 (Education and public information programmes, 1987), No. 13 (Equal remuneration for work of equal value, 1989), No. 16 (Unpaid women workers in rural and urban family enterprises, 1991), No. 17 (Measurement and quantification of the non remunerated domestic activities of women and their recognition in the gross national product, 1991), No. 24 (Women and health), No. 14 (Female circumcision, 1990), No. 14 (Women and AIDS, 1990), No. 12 and No. 19 (Violence against women, 1989 and 1992) and No. 21 (Equality in marriage and family relations, 1994) are deepening and consolidating these articles.

Link to the BPFA

In this area the BPFA has already developed visionary paragraphs concerning women's empowerment which are going way beyond traditional categories. The following **Critical Areas of Concern** should be mentioned here: C (Women and health)⁵⁶, D (Violence against women), G (Women in power and decision-making), H (Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women), I (Human rights of women) and L (The girl child)⁵⁷. This level of consciousness should certainly be reflected in the MDGs.⁵⁸

Goal IV – Reduce child mortality

In this field the MDGs should raise gender specific concerns and remind key actors of the fact that in many cultures sons are disproportionately esteemed over daughters, due to deeply rooted religious concepts. Female embryos are aborted in higher numbers than male, and there are many reports of female babies killed right after birth.⁵⁹ The MDGs should state very clearly that the highest rate of infant mortality is found among girls and that they are dying because of the simple fact that they are girls: because they are neglected, badly fed, are not receiving proper health care and are often sexually mutilated. For these issues, which reflect characteristics of a **gendered culture**, very specific targets and indicators must be elaborated.

⁵⁶ In this context the sexual and reproductive rights of women were confirmed (C 94, 95, 96).

⁵⁷ Important statements on inheritance law were made in this context, see L 274 d.

⁵⁸ See Annex.

⁵⁹ Croll, Elisabeth: *Endangered daughters. Discrimination and Development in Asia*. London 2000, Routledge; Russel, Diana (ed.): *Femicide in global perspective*. New York 2001, Teachers College Press; Syed, Renate: *Ein Unglück ist die Tochter*: Zur Diskriminierung von Mädchen im alten und heutigen Indien. (Daughters are bad luck: On the discrimination of girls in traditional and modern India)) Wiesbaden 2001, Harrassowitz.

Link to CEDAW

In **Articles** 5 (Cultural patterns), 10 (Equality in education), 12 (Equality in health care), 14 (Rural women), 16 (Marriage and family relations) as well as in the **General Recommendations** No. 3 (Education and public information programmes, 1987), No. 24 (Women and health), No. 14 (Female circumcision, 1990), No. 14 (Women and AIDS, 1990), No. 12 and No. 19 (Violence against women, 1990 and 1992) and No. 21 (Equality in marriage and family relations, 1994) unequivocal obligations of the states are stipulated.

Link to the BPFA

The BPFA speaks up very clearly on the **Critical Area of Concern L** (The girl child), in favour of eliminating negative cultural attitudes and practices affecting girls (strategic objective L 2) and states specific measures to be taken in order to overcome gender specific discrimination in the fields of health care and nutrition (strategic objective L 4).⁶⁰

Goal V – Improve maternal health

This goal is very closely linked, not only with the provision of maternal (pre- and post natal) health care, but also to the social status of women and girls, their dignity and autonomy, **protection against violence** and safeguarding of **sexual and reproductive rights**, with their chances to take their own decisions on their sexual life and the number and spacing of their children, with their access to reliable, affordable contraceptives with no side-effects, but also with the importance given to sex education and the awareness-raising of boys and men. Unsafe abortions, together with the lack of pre- and post-natal health care, are causing the highest death rates among adolescent girls and women in the southern hemisphere.⁶¹

Another question is women's general **access** to health care and medication.⁶² The MDGs do not even mention this issue; Target 6 and its respective indicators use a very general language.

Link to CEDAW

Points of reference are **Article** 12 (Equality in health care), 14 (Rural women), 16 (Marriage and family relations) as well as the **General Recommendations** No. 21 (Equality in marriage and family relations), No. 24 (Women and health, 1999), No. 12 und No. 19 (Violence against women, 1989 und 1992), No. 15 (Women and AIDS, 1990).

Link to the BPFA

In the BPFA pioneering goals are formulated for the **Critical Areas of Concern C** (Women and health), I (Human rights of women) and L (The girl child), which should be taken implemented in full.⁶³

⁶⁰ See Annex.

⁶¹ Pilla, Vijayan K.: Women's Reproductive Rights in Developing Countries, Aldershot 1999, Ashgate Publishing Ltd.; The Center for Reproductive Law and Policy/University of Toronto International Programme on Reproductive and Sexual Health Law (ed.): Bringing Rights to Bear. An Analysis of the Work of the UN Treaty Monitoring Bodies on Reproductive and Sexual Rights, New York/Toronto 2002 (http://www.reproductiverights.org/pu-bo_tmb.html); UNFPA: World Population Report 1997: The right to choose. Reproductive rights and reproductive health. New York 1997.

⁶² Petschesky, Rosalind P.: Global prescriptions. Gendering Health and Human Rights. London 1993, Zed Books.

⁶³ See Annex.

Goal VI – Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

HIV/AIDS has a terribly threatening dimension for women and girls, as has been pointed out *inter alia* by the WHO. Within the framework of the latest AIDS epidemic update it was affirmed that in Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, 57% of persons affected by HIV are women.⁶⁴ These facts are extremely well documented and backed up by medical experts, international aid agencies, health centres and NGOs. All those findings should have been reflected in a much more women-specific target or should have led to the formulation of a new target addressing only women. The indicators should also reflect the importance of educational and preventive measures for both sexes.

The fight against **malaria** and other diseases, such as tuberculosis, together with their treatment, should be reflected in additional indicators specifically geared to women and girls. As girl children are usually of a weaker constitution, they are affected by these diseases more often, at an earlier age and suffering an accelerated progress, often causing death. In addition, women and girls have less access to health care than men.⁶⁵

Link to CEDAW

Specific commitments are laid down in **Article 12** (Equality in health care) and 14 (Rural women) and in the **General Recommendations** No. 15 (Women and AIDS) and No. 24 (Women and health).

Link to the BPFA

The BPFA has drafted extensive recommendations for these goals within the framework of strategic objectives and actions of the **Critical Area of Concern C** (Women and health), in particular in strategic objective C 3, where the international community is requested to undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.⁶⁶

Goal VII – Ensure environmental sustainability

It is hard to understand why the needs and chances of women are completely left out of Goal VII, considering the overwhelming, also widely documented proofs of women's **leading role** in safeguarding biodiversity and sustainable development, and of women's decisive role in guaranteeing food security.⁶⁷ It might be explained by the pragmatic, non-political and technology-oriented approach of the whole MDG concept.

⁶⁴ WHO: Women and AIDS. AIDS epidemic update, December 2004, p. 1;

http://www.unaids.org/wad2004/EPIupdate2004_html_en/Epi04_04_en.htm#P28_3962

⁶⁵ Dominguez, Alejandra; Crossetto, Rossana: Women and rights: Health knowledge and care, in: Women's Health Journal (2000), I separata, pp. 9-21; Petschesky, Rosalind P.: Global prescriptions. Gendering Health and Human Rights. London 1993, Zed Books; Sen, Gita; et. al. (ed.): Engendering international health: The challenge of equity. Cambridge (Mass.) 2002, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; UNFPA: World Population Report 1997: The right to choose. Reproductive rights and reproductive health. New York 1997.

⁶⁶ See annex.

⁶⁷ See Braidotti, Rosi et al.: Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development, Santo Domingo 1994, Zed/INSTRAW; Harcourt, Wendy (ed.): Feminist Perspectives on Sustainable Development. London, New Jersey, Zed; Rodda, Annabel: Women and the Environment, London 1993, Zed; WEDO: Common Ground. Women's Access to Natural Resources and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. New York 2004;

The effects of bilateral and multilateral **investment, financial and trade policies** carried out by the industrialised countries, on the sustainability of the natural environment in the southern hemisphere and the environmental rights of women, are not taken into consideration.

Moreover, the concept of **sustainable development** is defined in a very limited manner and completely leaves out the safeguarding of biodiversity, the need to ensure (indigenous) people's intellectual property rights and of food security.

All the targets and indicators mentioned under Goal VII would not only require a strong and well grounded gender perspective, but must also include clear challenges for the **governments and corporations** in the **North**, to change their policy. Instead, the whole burden is shifted onto the countries of the South. This applies to Target 9 on the integration of the principles of a sustainable development into national policies, and also to Targets 10 and 11, where specific problems are listed, such as drinking water, sanitation and measures to be taken for slum dwellers. In this context the industrialised countries and the multilateral companies should clearly express their commitment to support Governments in the South in their efforts to **cover the basic needs** of their populations. When it comes to distributing budget funds, **gender-budgeting** should be given special consideration. Within the framework of the respective targets and indicators, women should be supported in their efforts to protect the environment, especially in the context of **afforestation** and the provision of **drinking water**.

Link to CEDAW

Unfortunately, this issue is not dealt with in CEDAW, with the exception of a very general note in Article 14 (Rural women), paragraph 2, lit. g. The Committee should take action and draft a **General Recommendation** on the respective issues.

Link to the BPFA

The BPFA uses a very clear language concerning **Critical Area of Concern K** (Women and the environment) and the respective strategic objectives and actions to be taken. It stresses that women must be included in the decision-making process on environmental issues, all policies and measures in the field of sustainable development must have a gender-perspective and take gender aspects into account. The consequences for women of environmental deterioration or improvement must be documented on the basis of gender disaggregated data. All those findings must accordingly be embedded into the MDG process.⁶⁸

Goal VIII - develop a global partnership for development

One of the most striking flaws of the MDGs is, as has been stated already, the fact, that the **role and the needs of women** in trade and development, in financial transactions and debt relief are not taken into account in Goal VIII. As has been widely evidenced, the negative impacts of the **neo-liberal orientation** of the economy falls disproportionately on women, because of their lower social status. Due to the capitalist economy dominated by male values, more and more women are impoverished and marginalised.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ See annex.

⁶⁹ Carr, Marilyn (ed): Chains of Fortune: Linking women producers and workers with global markets. London 2004, Commonwealth Secretariat; Harcourt, Wendy (ed.): Places, Politics and Justice: Women negotiating globalization.

The indicators on **development cooperation**, which are considered to be important for achieving the goal of a “global partnership”, do not once refer to women or gender relations, neither is a special target formulated in this context, though a great deal of research and planning has been carried out in this field. During the first three World Conferences on Women, especially in Copenhagen and Nairobi, specific measures were formulated in order to gear development cooperation to the needs and the possibilities of women. The approach gradually developed from “women in development” to “gender and development”.⁷⁰ Development cooperation must be considered as the first and foremost area where gender mainstreaming should be applied, as has been proposed in the **BPFA** as well as in the **Gender Resolution** (1995) and the **Gender Regulations** (1998 and 2004) issued by the European Union.

It would therefore be essential to include, among the indicators on development cooperation, one that measures the degree to which women benefit from development programmes and projects, in particular in evaluating their access to **basic social services**.

Additionally a new target should be formulated which aims at increasing **official development assistance** by industrialised countries, with a clear emphasis on the involvement of women as important development agents.

The indicators dealing with **market access** and **debt sustainability** completely neglect social aspects and the concerns of poorer and vulnerable groups, especially of women. The dramatic impoverishment of many women as a result of the “**debt crisis**” and in particular of Structural Adjustment Programmes has been widely documented. Therefore, any measure geared at debt relief has to consider women’s needs.⁷¹ This should be reflected in a separate indicator.

Indicator 45 of Target 16, **juvenile unemployment**, is the only one with a gender perspective. When drafting Target 17 on **access to affordable drugs**, and its indicators, emphasis should have been laid on the access of both sexes to low-priced medication. Target 18, dealing with improving access to **information technologies**, should also refer to women and girls as specific target groups.

All topics and issues mentioned above have been extensively explored in the course of the **past thirty years** – due to the persistence of women’s movements and women’s networks around the globe – and are reflected in a continuously growing number of research papers and of praxis oriented concepts and recommendations, also at UN level. One can only feel appalled at the lack of exchange and congruence in this respect.

Link to CEDAW

CEDAW does not deal with development cooperation as such, still less with overcoming discriminatory international trade relations. Nevertheless, **Article 3** is quite explicit when calling upon Governments “to take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the

Development, Vol. 45, No 1, March 2002; Neuhold, Brita/ Gugenberger (now Eigelsreiter-Jashari), Gertrude: Combating the Feminisation of Poverty in Countries of the South. Vienna 1997. VIDC; Sweetman, Caroline (ed.): Women Re-Inventing Globalisation. Gender and Development: An Oxfam Journal, 1/2003, Oxfam; Wichterich, Christa: The Globalized Woman. Reports from a Future of Inequality. London 2000, Zed Books; Young, Brigitte; Hoppe, Hella: The Doha Development Round, Gender and Social Reproduction, in: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Dialogue on Globalization, Occasional Papers, Nr. 7, July 2003.

⁷⁰ See Moser, Caroline: Gender Planning and Development. Theory, Practice and Training. London, New York Cooperation, Austrian Development Cooperation - Federal Chancellery.

⁷¹ E. g. with counter-value funds; cf. Neuhold, Brita, Gugenberger, Gertrude: Combating the Feminisation of Poverty.

purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.” Article 14 (rural women) also sets high standards with its call for measures to improve the situation of rural women. Furthermore, all the substantive articles, especially Articles 6 (trafficking in women), 10 (equality in education), 11 (equality in employment), 12 (equality in health care), 13 (i. a. access to financial services), must also serve as a guideline for the improvement of the living conditions of a big part of women in the South.

Link to the BPFA

The BPFA contains viable solutions for all issues raised within the framework of Goal VIII. They can be found in particular in the strategic objectives and actions of the **Critical Areas of Concern** A (Women and poverty), F (Women and the economy), H (Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women), but also in the chapter on **Institutional Arrangements**, within the context of the financial and trade policies of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (paras 342 and 343). All these proposals should by all means be integrated into Goal VIII of the MDGs.⁷²

4. Conclusion and perspectives

In the light of the above considerations the following **strategies** should be adopted in order to further develop the MDGs:

- Question and change the prevailing neo-liberal, growth-oriented concept of “**development**”.
- Introduce a strong and holistic **human rights-perspective** within the MDGs and enhance the effectiveness of human rights instruments.
- Express a strong commitment to the universal ratification and the progressive implementation of **CEDAW**.
- Call for the implementation and further development of the strategies elaborated in the **BPFA**, with the participation feminist experts, NGOs, grass-root groups and networks.
- Reorient international **financial, monetary and trade policies** from the perspective of human rights, gender justice and sustainable development.
- Ensure **coherence between** measures in the field of development cooperation and financial, monetary and trade policies.
- Support the integration of a strong and comprehensive **gender-perspective** on the basis of CEDAW and the BPFA into all MDGs and widen the scope and the targets of Goal III, in order to pursue the following sub-aims:
 - Safeguard the fundamental **rights, needs and capabilities** of girls and women in the field of nutrition, health – with an emphasis on reproductive *rights* – and education.
 - Combat **violence** against girls and women at all levels in the public and private spheres.

⁷² See annex.

- Strengthen the **economic rights** of girls and women within the household and the subsistence economy, in the informal and the formal sector, by recognising, adequately rewarding and supporting their manifold reproductive and productive activities; by securing their access to land, property, capital, credit, training, guidance and counselling, technologies, tools, infrastructure and transport; by ensuring their right to income and equal remuneration, to satisfying working-conditions and to social security.
- Ensure the equal treatment of women and girls in the **inheritance law**.
- Promote the **empowerment** and **political agency** of (adolescent) girls and women at all decision-making levels, from their personal environment to the parliamentary and governmental level.
- Strengthen the **collective agency** of women and girls by giving support to structures of mutual **cooperation** and **networking** at the local, regional and international level and by supporting their **political strategising** in all these spheres.

Annex 1**Summary of major provisions of the
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
(CEDAW)**

Article 1: Definition of discrimination against women

Article 2: Obligation of states to “take all appropriate measures” to effect “the elimination of discrimination in all its forms” by “any person, organization or enterprise” and “to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices” (undertaking article)

Article 3: Obligation of states to take in all fields all appropriate measures to guarantee the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women on a basis of equality with men

Article 4: Temporary special measures to combat the discrimination of women

Article 5: Modifying social and cultural patterns

Article 6: Suppressing trafficking in and exploitation of the prostitution of women

Article 7: Equality in political and public life at the national level

Article 8: Equality in political and public life at the international level

Article 9: Equality in nationality laws

Article 10: Equality in education

Article 11: Equality in employment

Article 12: Equality in access to health care

Article 13: Equality in access to family benefits, to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of credit and to recreational and cultural activities

Article 14: Elimination of discrimination against rural women

Article 15: Equality of women with men before the law; accordance of legal capacity to women identical to that of men

Article 16: Equality in marriage and family law

Articles 17-22: Function and tasks of the CEDAW-Committee

Articles 22-30: Procedural issues, incl. reservations (28)

Annex 2

**Beijing Platform for Action
Fourth World Conference on Women, September 1995
Critical Areas of Concern
Strategic Objectives and Actions**

A. Women and poverty

- A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty
- A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources
- A.3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions
- A.4. Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminisation of poverty

B. Education and training of women

- B.1. Ensure equal access to education
- B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women
- B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education
- B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training
- B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms
- B.6. Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women

C. Women and health

- C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services
- C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health
- C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health
- C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health
- C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health

D. Violence against women

- D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women Actions to be taken
- D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures
- D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking

E. Women and armed conflict

- E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation
- E.2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments

- E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations
- E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace
- E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women
- E.6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories

F. Women and the economy

- F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment and appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources
- F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade
- F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women
- F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks
- F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination
- F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men

G. Women in power and decision-making

- G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making
- G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

- H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies
- H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects
- H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

I. Human rights of women

- I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice
- I.3. Achieve legal literacy

J. Women and the media

- J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication
- J.2. Encourage and recognize women's media networks, including electronic networks and other new technologies of communication, as a means for the dissemination of information and the exchange of views, including at the international level, and support women's groups active in all media work and systems of communication to that end
- J.3. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

K. Women and the environment

- K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels Actions to be taken

K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development

K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women

L. The girl child

L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child

L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls

L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl child and increase awareness of her needs and potential

L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training

L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition

L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work

L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl-child

L.8. Promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life

L.9. Strengthen the role of the family* in improving the status of the girl-child

*As defined in paragraph 29.

Institutional Arrangements

342. In implementing the Platform for Action, **international financial institutions** are encouraged to review and revise policies, procedures and staffing to ensure that investments and programmes benefit women and thus contribute to sustainable development. They are also encouraged to increase the number of women in high-level positions, increase staff training in gender analysis and institute policies and guidelines to ensure full consideration of the differential impact of lending programmes and other activities on women and men. In this regard, the Bretton Woods Institutions, the United Nations, as well as its funds and programmes and the specialised agencies, should establish regular and substantive dialogue, including dialogue at the field level, for more efficient and effective coordination of their assistance in order to strengthen the effectiveness of their programmes for the benefit of women and their families.

343. The General Assembly should give consideration to inviting the **World Trade Organization** to consider how it might contribute to the implementation of the Platform for Action, including activities in cooperation with the United Nations system.

Annex 3

**The Millennium Development Goals
Goals, Targets, Indicators**

Goals and Targets		Indicators
Goal 1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
	Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day	1. Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) a day 1a. Poverty headcount ratio (percentage of population below national poverty line)* 2. Poverty gap ratio (<i>incidence x depth of poverty</i>) 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
	Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	4. Prevalence of underweight in children (under five years of age) 5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2	Achieve universal primary education	
	Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education 7a. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 7b. Primary completion rate* 8. Literacy rate of 15 to 24-year-olds
Goal 3	Promote gender equality and empower women	
	Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015	9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary, and tertiary education 10. Ratio of literate women to men ages 15-24 11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
Goal 4	Reduce child mortality	
	Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	13. Under-five mortality rate 14. Infant mortality rate 15. Proportion of one-year-old children immunized against measles
Goal 5	Improve maternal health	
	Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	16. Maternal mortality ratio 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Goal 6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	
	Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	18. HIV prevalence among pregnant women ages 15- to 24 19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate* 19a. Condom use at last high-risk sex*

		<p>19b. Percentage of 15-24-year-olds with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS*</p> <p>19c. Contraceptive prevalence rate</p> <p>20. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance on non-orphans ages 10-14</p>
	<p>Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</p>	<p>21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria</p> <p>22. Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures</p> <p>23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis</p> <p>24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)</p>
Goal 7	Ensure environmental sustainability	
	<p>Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and program and reverse the loss of environmental resources</p>	<p>25. Proportion of land area covered by forest</p> <p>26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area</p> <p>27. Energy use (kilograms of oil equivalent) per \$1 GDP (PPP)</p> <p>28. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (ODP tons)</p> <p>29. Proportion of population using solid fuels*</p>
	<p>Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation</p>	<p>30. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural</p> <p>31. Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural</p>
	<p>Target 11: Have achieved, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</p>	<p>32. Proportion of households with access to secure tenure</p>
Goal 8	Develop a global partnership for development	
	<p>Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction—both nationally and internationally)</p>	<p>Some of the indicators listed below will be monitored separately for the least developed countries, Africa, landlocked countries, and small island developing states</p> <p>Official development assistance</p> <p>33. Net ODA total and to the least developed countries, as a percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income</p> <p>34. Proportion of bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors for basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water, and sanitation)</p> <p>35. Proportion of bilateral official development assistance ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied</p>

		36. ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their gross national incomes 37. ODA received in small island developing states as proportion of their gross national incomes
	Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries (includes tariff-and quota-free access for exports enhanced program of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction)	
	Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states (through the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions)	Market access 38. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from least developed countries, admitted free of duty 39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries 40. Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their gross domestic product 41. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity
	Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term	Debt sustainability 42. Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) 43. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative 44. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services
	Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth	
	Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries	
	Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications	Other 45. Unemployment rate of 15-24-year-olds, male and female and total 46. Proportion of population with access to affordable, essential drugs on a sustainable basis

		47. Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population 48a. Personal computers in use per 100 population 48b. Internet users per 100 population
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* These indicators are proposed as additional MDG indicators, but have not yet been adopted.