

"PROGRAMA UNIVERSITARIO DE  
ESTUDIOS DE GÉNERO" U.N.A.M.

# WOMANSOURCE

DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

Women, Information and Communication



## REPACKAGING POLICY # 2.

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*WomanSource*  
*A little bit about us*

*WomanSource is a comprehensive specialized collection of women and development materials. The collections includes both print and nonprint current materials such as handbooks, directories, field reports, unpublished papers, books, working papers, training materials, conference reports, subject and organizational files, funding files, periodicals, tapes, videos, slides, and clippings. Materials are collected in English, Spanish. Some ephemeral in French, Arabic and Portuguese.*

*Other services includes online access to the Internet, a database of recently published books and over 800 periodicals, research services for a fee, access and participation in electronic mail conferences, networking among Women's Documentation Centres; a document exchange program, capacity building workshops in Information and Communication as well as monitor and evaluation of policies.*

*WomanSource is a project of The International Women's Tribune Centre*

1- Bibliografía

## Food for Thought

*...Knowledge-and the means to get at the information upon which knowledge is based - is a critical element in sustainable and equitable development..." IDRC*

In its twenty years of experience **The International Women's Tribune Centre** more than ever sees information as a multi-dimensional tool for the empowerment of women.

The main components of this tool are: research and data, communication, media and information technology. The focuses are policy-shaping and evaluation of these policies.

The aim of **WomanSource Re-packaging Policy Series** is to make information in policy documents available. In this **#2 Series** we have scrutinized the Beijing Platform for Action in order to identify all references to information. We came up with four types of information programmes:

- Research
- Data/Statistics
- Publications
- Public awareness/media

Although information technology and the electronic superhighway are only mentioned in Section-J/Media, and Resource Centres\* are only mentioned in Section K/Women & Environment, we believe that both are essential tools for the appropriate collection and dissemination of information.

We hope this **Repackaging Policy Series** is useful for information specialists, people working in alternative media, as well as mainstream media, policy makers and NGO's.

In the meantime let's dream and organise for more funding for women's resource centres, documentation centres and archives. Let's plan for more access to the information superhighway. Let's attain decision-making positions that influence media policy.

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\* Women's libraries, women's documentation centres, archives...

**INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS**  
in the  
**Beijing Platform for Action**  
(paragraph by paragraph  
section IV: Strategic Objectives and Actions)

## A. WOMEN & POVERTY

*para. 67:*

(b) Apply these methodologies in conducting gender-impact analyses of all policies and programmes, including structural adjustment programmes, and **disseminate** the research findings.

*para 68:*

(a) **Collect** gender and age-disaggregated **data** on poverty and all aspects of economic activity and develop qualitative and quantitative statistical indicators to facilitate the assessment of economic performance from a gender perspective;

## B. EDUCATION & TRAINING OF WOMEN

*para 82:*

(c) **Provide information** to women and girls on the availability and benefits of vocational training, training programmes in science and technology and programmes of continuing education;

*para 83:*

(q) Promote education, training and relevant **information programmes** for rural and farming women through the use of affordable and appropriate technologies and the **mass media** - for example, radio programmes, cassettes and mobile units;

## C. WOMEN & HEALTH

*para 106:*

(n) **Develop information programmes and services** to assist women to understand and adapt to changes associated with ageing...

(r) Promote **public information** on the benefits of breast-feeding;

*para 107:*

(e) Prepare and **disseminate** accessible **information**, through public health campaigns, **the media** ... designed to ensure that women and men, particularly young people, can acquire knowledge about their health, especially information on sexuality and reproduction...

(k) Develop and undertake **media campaigns** and **information** and educational **programmes** that inform women and girls of the health and related risks of substance abuse and addiction...

(m) Establish and/or strengthen ... **media campaigns**, that address the prevention, early detection and treatment of breast, cervical and other cancers of the reproductive system;

(o) **Create awareness** among women, health professionals, policy makers and the general public about the serious but preventable health hazards stemming from tobacco consumption...

*para 108:*

(i) Give all women and health workers all **relevant information** about sexually transmitted diseases...

(l) Design specific programmes for men ... and male adolescents ... aimed at providing complete and **accurate information** on safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour...

*para 109*

(a) Train researchers and introduce systems that allow for the **use of data** collected, analysed and disaggregated by, among other factors, sex and age...

(b) ... mak(e) **information** available to women to enable them to make informed and responsible decisions;

(e) **Inform** women about the factors which increase the risks of developing cancers and infections of the reproductive tract...

(k) Develop mechanisms to evaluate and **disseminate available data** and research findings to researchers, policy makers, health professionals and women's groups, among others;

*para 111:*

(b) Provide **appropriate material**, financial and logistical assistance to youth non-governmental organizations in order to strengthen them to address youth concerns in the area of health, including sexual and reproductive health;

## **D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

*para 125*

(g) Organize and fund **information campaigns**... to sensitize girls and boys and women and men to the personal and social detrimental effects of violence in the family, community and society; teach them how to **communicate** without violence...

(h) **Disseminate** information on the assistance available to women and families who are victims of violence;

(j) **Raise awareness** of the responsibility of the **media** in promoting non-stereotyped images of women and men, as well as in eliminating patterns of **media presentation** that generate violence, and encourage those responsible for **media content** to establish professional guidelines and codes of conduct; also raise awareness of the important **role of the media** in informing and educating people about the causes and effects of violence against women and in stimulating public debate on the topic.

*para 129*

(a) **Promote research**, collect **data** and compile **statistics**, especially concerning domestic violence relating to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women, and **encourage research** into the causes, nature, seriousness and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of measures implemented to prevent and redress violence against women;

(b) **Disseminate** findings of research and studies widely;

(c) Support and **initiate research** on the impact of violence, such as rape, on women and girl children, and make the resulting **information** and **statistics** available to the public;

(d) Encourage the **media** to examine the impact of gender role stereotypes... and take measures to eliminate these negative images with a view to promoting a violence-free society.

## **E. WOMEN & ARMED CONFLICT**

*para 143:*

(e-iii) ... promote assistance in mine clearance, notably by facilitating ... the **exchange of information**, the transfer of technology and the promotion of scientific research;

*para 146:*

(c) Develop and **disseminate research** on the physical, psychological, economic and social effects of armed conflicts on women, particularly young women and girls, with a view to developing policies and programmes to address the consequences of conflicts;

*para 147:*

(m) **Raise public awareness** of the contribution made by refugee women to their countries of resettlement, promote understanding of their human rights and of their needs

and abilities and encourage mutual understanding and acceptance through educational programmes promoting cross-cultural and interracial harmony;

*para 148:*

**(a) Disseminate** ... UNHCR *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* and... *Guidelines on Evaluation and Care of Victims of Trauma and Violence* ... in close cooperation with refugee women and in all sectors of refugee programmes;

*para 149:*

**(b)** Raise public awareness ... through the **mass media** ... to create a better understanding of the situation of women of the colonies and non- self-governing territories.

## **F. WOMEN & THE ECONOMY**

*para 165*

**(g)** ... develop a more comprehensive knowledge of work and employment through ... efforts to measure and better understand the type, extent and distribution of unremunerated work ... and encourage the **sharing and dissemination of information** on studies and experience in this field ...

*para 168:*

**(a)** Pay special attention to women's needs when **disseminating** market, trade and **resource information** ...

*para 173:*

**(c)** Provide outreach programmes to **inform** low-income and poor women, particularly in rural and remote areas, of opportunities for market and technology access...

**(e) Disseminate information** about successful women entrepreneurs in both traditional and non-traditional economic activities and the skills necessary to achieve success, and facilitate networking and the **exchange of information**;

*para 180:*

**(b)** Design and provide educational programmes through innovative **media campaigns** and school and community education programmes to raise awareness on gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family...

## **G. WOMEN IN POWER & DECISION-MAKING**

*para 190:*

**(e)** Monitor and evaluate progress in the representation of women through the regular **collection, analysis and dissemination** of quantitative and qualitative **data** on women



and men at all levels in various decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, and **disseminate data** on the number of women and men employed at various levels in Governments on a yearly basis...

*para 193:*

(c) ... **collect** and **disseminate** quantitative and qualitative data on women and men in decision-making...

*para 194:*

(a) Build and strengthen solidarity among women through **information**, education and sensitization activities;

(c) Establish, consistent with data protection legislation, **databases** on women and their qualification for use in appointing women to senior decision-making and advisory positions, for **dissemination** to Governments, regional and international organizations and private enterprise, political parties and other relevant bodies.

## H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

*para 203:*

(d) Establish procedures to allow the machinery to **gather information** on government-wide policy issues at an early stage and continuously use it in the policy development and review process within the Government;

*para 206:*

(a) Ensure that **statistics** related to individuals are collected, compiled, analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society;

(b) Collect, compile, analyse and present on a regular basis **data** disaggregated by age, sex, socio-economic and other relevant indicators ...

(e) Improve **data collection** on the full contribution of women and men to the economy...

(f-i) Develop a more comprehensive knowledge of all forms of work and employment by: improving **data collection** on ... unremunerated work ...

(g) Develop an international classification of activities for time-use **statistics** that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work, and **collect data** disaggregated by sex.

(h) Improve concepts and methods of **data collection** on the measurement of poverty among women and men, including their access to resources;

(I) Strengthen vital **statistical systems** and incorporate gender analysis into **publications** and **research**; give priority to gender differences in **research** design and in **data collection** and analysis in order to improve data on morbidity; and improve **data collection** on access to health services...

(k) Improve concepts and methods of **data collection** on the participation of women and men with disabilities...

*para 208:*

*[Actions to be taken by the United Nations]*

(a) Promote the development of methods to find better ways to **collect, collate** and **analyse data** that may relate to the human rights of women, including violence against women, for use by all relevant United Nations bodies;

(c) Prepare a **new issue** of *The World's Women* at regular five-year intervals and **distribute** it widely;

## **I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

*para 231:*

*[Actions to be taken by the United Nations]*

(c) Develop a comprehensive policy programme for mainstreaming the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system, including activities with regard to advisory services, technical assistance, reporting methodology, gender-impact assessments, coordination, **public information** and human rights education, and play an active role in the implementation of the programme;

*para 233:*

(a) **Translate**, whenever possible, into local and indigenous languages and into **alternative formats** appropriate for persons with disabilities and persons at lower levels of literacy, **publicize** and **disseminate** laws and **information** relating to the equal status and human rights of all women...

(b) **Publicize** and **disseminate** such **information** in **easily understandable formats** and **alternative formats** appropriate for persons with disabilities, and persons at low levels of literacy;

(c) **Disseminate information** on national legislation and its impact on women...

(d) Include **information** about international and regional instruments and standards in their **public information** and human rights education activities and in adult education and training programmes, particularly for groups such as the military, the police and other law enforcement personnel, the judiciary, and legal and health professionals ...

(e) Make widely available and fully **publicize information** on the existence of national, regional and international mechanisms for seeking redress when the human rights of women are violated;

(f) Encourage, coordinate and cooperate with local and regional women's groups, relevant non-governmental organizations, educators and **the media**, to implement programmes in human rights education to make women aware of their human rights;

(g) ... undertake **public campaigns**, including in the most widely used languages of the country, on the equality of women and men in public and private life, including their rights within the family and relevant human rights instruments under national and international law;

## **J. WOMEN & THE MEDIA**

*para 234:* During the past decade, advances in **information technology** have facilitated a **global communications** network that transcends national boundaries and has an impact on public policy, private attitudes and behaviour, especially of children and young adults. Everywhere the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women.

*para 235:* More women are involved in careers in the **communications sector**, but few have attained positions at the decision-making level or serve on governing boards and bodies that influence **media policy**. The lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced by the failure to eliminate the gender-based stereotyping that can be found in public and private local, national and international media organizations.

*para 236:* The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications - electronic, print, visual and audio - must be changed. Print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. In addition, violent and degrading or pornographic media products are also negatively affecting women and their participation in society. **Programming** that reinforces women's traditional roles can be equally limiting. The world-wide trend towards consumerism has created a climate in which advertisements and commercial messages often portray women primarily as consumers and target girls and women of all ages inappropriately.

*para 237:* Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to **information technology**. This will strengthen their ability to combat **negative portrayals** of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of the power of an increasingly important industry. Self-regulatory mechanisms for the media need to be created and strengthened and approaches developed to eliminate gender-biased programming. Most women, especially in developing countries, are not able to access effectively the expanding **electronic information highways** and therefore cannot establish networks that will provide them with **alternative sources of information**. Women therefore need to be involved in decision-making regarding the development of the **new technologies** in order to participate fully in their growth and impact.

*para 238:* In addressing the issue of the **mobilization** of the media, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes.

*Strategic objective J.1.* Increase the **participation** and **access** of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and **new technologies of communication**

Actions to be taken

*para 239:* By Governments:

(a) Support women's education, training and employment to promote and ensure women's **equal access** to all areas and levels of the media;

(b) Support **research** into all aspects of women and the media so as to define areas needing attention and action and review existing media policies with a view to integrating a gender perspective;

(c) Promote women's full and **equal participation** in the media, including management, programming, education, training and research;

(d) Aim at **gender balance** in the appointment of women and men to all advisory, management, regulatory or monitoring bodies, including those connected to the private and State or public media;

(e) Encourage, to the extent consistent **with freedom of expression**, these bodies to increase the number of programmes for and by women to see to it that women's needs and concerns are properly addressed;

(f) 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 communications to that end;

(g) Encourage and provide the means or incentives for the creative use of programmes in the national media for **the dissemination of information** on various cultural forms of indigenous people and the development of social and educational issues in this regard within the framework of national law;

(h) Guarantee the **freedom of the media** and its subsequent protection within the framework of national law and encourage, consistent with freedom of expression, the positive involvement of the media in development and social issues.

*para 240:* By national and international media systems:

Develop, consistent with freedom of expression, **regulatory mechanisms**, including voluntary ones, that promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women by the media and international communication systems and that promote increased participation by women and men in production and decision-making.

*para 241:* By Governments, as appropriate, or national machinery for the advancement of women:

(a) Encourage the development of educational and training programmes for women in order to produce information for the mass media, including funding of experimental efforts, and the use of the new technologies of communication, **cybernetics space and satellite**, whether public or private;

(b) Encourage the **use of communication systems**, including new technologies, as a means of strengthening women's participation in democratic processes;

(c) Facilitate the compilation of a directory of **women media experts**;

(d) Encourage the participation of women in the development of **professional guidelines** and **codes of conduct** or other appropriate self-regulatory mechanisms to promote balanced and non-stereotyped portrayals of women by the media.

*para 242:* By non-governmental organizations and media professional associations:

(a) Encourage the establishment of **media watch** groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women's needs and concerns are properly reflected;

(b) Train women to make greater use of **information technology** for communication and the media, including at the international level;

(c) Create **networks** among and develop information programmes for non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and professional media organizations in order to recognize the specific needs of women in the media, and facilitate the increased participation of women in communication, in particular at the international level, in support of South-South and North-South dialogue among and between these

organizations, inter alia, to promote the human rights of women and equality between women and men;

**(d)** Encourage the media industry and education and media training institutions to develop, in appropriate languages, traditional, indigenous and other **ethnic forms of media**, such as story-telling, drama, poetry and song, reflecting their cultures, and utilize these forms of communication to disseminate information on development and social issues.

**Strategic objective J.2.** Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped **portrayal** of women in the media

Actions to be taken

**para 243:** By Governments and international organizations, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression:

**(a)** Promote research and implementation of a strategy of information, education and communication aimed at promoting a **balanced portrayal** of women and girls and their multiple roles;

**(b)** Encourage the media and **advertising agencies** to develop specific programmes to raise awareness of the Platform for Action;

**(c)** Encourage **gender-sensitive training** for media professionals, including media owners and managers, to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and diverse images of women in the media;

**(d)** Encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities, rather than presenting them as creative human beings, key actors and contributors to and beneficiaries of the process of development;

**(e)** Promote the concept that the **sexist stereotypes** displayed in the media are gender discriminatory, degrading in nature and offensive;

**(f)** Take effective measures or institute such measures, including appropriate legislation against **pornography** and the projection of violence against women and children in the media.

**para 244:** By the mass media and advertising organizations:

**(a)** Develop, consistent with freedom of expression, **professional guidelines** and **codes of conduct** and other forms of self-regulation to promote the presentation of non-stereotyped images of women;

(b) Establish, consistent with freedom of expression, professional guidelines and codes of conduct that address **violent, degrading or pornographic materials** concerning women in the media, including advertising;

(c) Develop a **gender perspective** on all issues of concern to communities, consumers and civil society;

(d) Increase women's **participation** in decision-making at all levels of the media.

*para 245:* By the media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in collaboration, as appropriate, with national machinery for the advancement of women:

(a) Promote the equal sharing of family responsibilities through **media campaigns** that emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family and that disseminate information aimed at eliminating spousal and child abuse and all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence;

(b) Produce and/or disseminate **media materials** on women leaders, inter alia, as leaders who bring to their positions of leadership many different life experiences, including but not limited to their experiences in balancing work and family responsibilities, as mothers, as professionals, as managers and as entrepreneurs, to **provide role models**, particularly to young women;

(c) Promote **extensive campaigns**, making use of public and private educational programmes, to disseminate information about and increase awareness of the human rights of women;

(d) Support the development of and finance, as appropriate, **alternative media** and the use of all means of communication to disseminate information to and about women and their concerns;

(e) Develop approaches and train experts to apply **gender analysis** with regard to media programmes.

## **K. WOMEN & THE ENVIRONMENT**

*para 253:*

(b) Facilitate and increase women's **access to information** and education, including in the areas of science, technology and economics, thus enhancing their knowledge, skills and opportunities for participation in environmental decisions;

*para 255:*

(a) ... **provide information** to contribute to resource mobilization for environmental protection and conservation;

*para 257:*

(a) Involve women in the **communication industries** in **raising awareness** regarding environmental issues, especially on the environmental and health impacts of products, technologies and industry processes;

*para 258:*

(b) Develop **gender-sensitive databases, information** and monitoring systems and **participatory action-oriented research**, methodologies and policy analyses, with the collaboration of academic institutions and local women researchers, on the following:

(i) Knowledge and experience on the part of women concerning the management and conservation of natural resources for incorporation in the **databases** and **information systems** for sustainable development;

(v) Programmes to create rural and urban training, research and resource centres that will **disseminate** environmentally sound technologies to women;

## L. THE GIRL CHILD

*para 275:*

(a) Disaggregate **information** and **data** on children by sex and age, undertake **research** on the situation of girls and integrate, as appropriate, the results in the formulation of policies, programmes and decision-making for the advancement of the girl child;

*para 277:*

(b) Encourage educational institutions and **the media** to adopt and project balanced and non-stereotyped images of girls and boys, and work to eliminate child pornography and degrading and violent portrayals of the girl child;

*para 281:*

(a) Provide **public information** on the removal of discriminatory practices against girls in food allocation, nutrition and access to health services;

(e) Ensure education and **dissemination of information** to girls, especially adolescent girls, regarding the physiology of reproduction, reproductive and sexual health, as agreed to in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and as established in the report of that Conference, responsible family planning practice, family life, reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and AIDS prevention, recognizing the parental roles referred to in paragraph 267;



(h) Develop **information** and training programmes for health planners and implementors on the special health needs of the girl child;

*para 283:*

(c) Undertake gender sensitization training for those involved in healing and rehabilitation and other assistance programmes for girls who are victims of violence and promote **programmes of information**, support and training for such girls;

*para 284:*

(a) Provide access for girls to training, **information** and **the media** on social, cultural, economic and political issues and enable them to articulate their views;