

# Linking Beijing +10 and MDG+5

- A Country Perspective from Yemen -

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# Main Messages

- MDGs useful tool to measure development progress (gender indicators important)
- However, MDGs not sufficient as they lack BPfA themes and process.
- MDGs somewhat “marginalize” National Women Machineries (WNC no longer “main” interlocutor)
- MDGs also “compete” with PRSP monitoring and evaluation requirements

# Linking Gender Equality to the MDGs

- MDGs commit member countries to promote gender equality and women's empowerment to combat poverty .
- MDGs aim to promote women's social, economic, and political participation.
- MDGs recognize the fact that gender equality and women's empowerment are central to eradicating poverty.
- MDGs are not new and are in line with international conventions.

# MDGs in Yemen

- Yemen is **one of eight pilot countries** selected by the Millennium Project to ensure achievement of the MDGs by 2015.
- The Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation (MoPIC) took the lead in carrying out **MDG Needs Assessment and Costing**.
- MoPIC set-up five **MDG Thematic Working Groups**:
  - 1 Macro-Economic Growth & Employment;
  - 2 Health; 3 Education; 4 Infrastructure, and 5 Environment - along with three **cross-cutting** groups on (Gender, Decentralization and Civil Society).

# **Integrating Gender in Yemen's MDG Assessment Report**

- WNC formed five groups parallel to the five main national groups to develop gender needs assessments.
- The gender groups completed the first report by October 2004.
- The final report was forwarded to MoPIC to be incorporated in the national MDG report.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> Five Year Development Plan (2006-2010)/PRSP will be based on the MDGs.

# Working with MDG Thematic Groups...

Review of zero TG drafts and provision of guidelines on how to engender sectoral MDG assessment reports:

- Identification of gaps in women's participation/access in each sector
- Identification of barriers to women's participation/access in each sector
- Recommendation of potential interventions to address gender inequality

# **Example of Working with the Thematic Groups: Women & Economy**

**Although the right to work is recognized as basic entitlement of all citizens regardless of gender, in reality gender disparities in employment prevail.**

# Identification of key issues:

- Female labor force participation rate is low at 21.8 % compared to that of men 69.9% .
- Two-thirds (72%) of female employment is comprised of unpaid family labor in agriculture.
- Women's work is often viewed as low skilled, poorly-paid, and thus low status.
- Women lack resources and capital, which deprives them of the opportunity to start their own business.
- High female illiteracy rates of (70%) and low skills.

# **Proposed Interventions:**

- **Promote women's economic opportunities in all sectors, but mainly in agriculture, manufacturing , services sectors, and informal sector.**
- **Consolidate landholdings to encourage joint ownership of women and men.**
- **Encourage targeted credit to promote women's off-farm businesses.**
- **Provide incentives for the private sector to encourage recruitment of women.**
- **Review labor laws from a gender perspective.**

# **Proposed Interventions (continued):**

- **Focus on capacity building in potential areas such as ICT, foreign languages, and tourism management.**
- **Provide suitable environment, improve conditions where women work, and also market their products.**
- **Lobby for reform of social protection systems to cover all women.**
- **Promote equal access to credit, equal job and payment opportunities, and recognition of women's responsibilities.**
- **Provide access to infrastructure to reduce women's work burden (safe drinking water, cooking fuel and roads).**

# **Not covered by the MDGs: Women & Law, Girl Child, Violence Against Women etc.**

- Modify and amend national laws (including labor laws) to comply with the constitution and the international conventions (the Women National Committee revised the laws and succeeded to amend some articles in different laws, which are currently in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of amendments).

# Main Lessons-Learned

- Gender-mainstreaming MDG Thematic Groups was an important exercise to have women's voices be heard.
- Working with the Thematic Groups raised awareness among key development players
- Good work of Women's National Committee resulted in praise for WNC's work and raised WNC's status (presence at ministerial level discussion forum).
- National MDG report includes gender specific recommendations

# Main Lessons-Learned (continued)

- MDGs/PRSP do not automatically take BPfA into account.
- Gender mainstreaming in the long and medium term plans depend on political will and commitment to push the agendas.
- Donors themselves lack gender sensitivity
- Budgeting for gender-specific MDG intervention was a good exercise but required technical assistance.