

Millennia 2015: Outcomes of the meeting:

1. Understand present and possible alternative futures

- Create a State of the Future Index (SOFI) on the status of women – next 10 years based on last 20 years of historical data.
 - Identify the relevant vectors/indicators
 - Need to have quantified information for each of the indicators
 - Problem of finding adequate stats – request UN to provide a better service.
- Need to know what knowledge is available: in EU emphasis is on research for women, by women and on women e.g. “SHE figures” – EU annual publication.
- In reality, the life experiences of women around the world are profoundly different
- It is desirable to be critical of the present and necessary at the same time to offer positive visions of the future, using the creative imagination and the female perspective.

Priority issues:

- Politics
 - Women are under-represented in politics and over-represented in poverty.
 - Although there maybe international and national regulations relating to the rights of women, they are not necessarily respected and enforced
- Education/employment
 - Of the 850 million people in the world who are illiterate, 2/3rds are women.
 - Young women are more numerous and more successful in higher education in Europe and US.....but level of employment of women is lower than men – at all levels of education, and women are still regarded as a more risky employment prospect than men.
 - Call for more female presence in the boardroom; friendlier HR for working mothers.
 - MDGs on education of girls in primary and secondary schools in Africa and Middle East not going to be reached on current trends.
 - Importance of encouraging girls to study science, mathematics and new technologies, because these are the drivers of economic and social development and drivers of change in the status of women.
 - Educational sector in Africa does not offer sufficient support for girls and women – there is growing emphasis on gender training, including encouraging boys to express their emotions.
- Development
 - Need to re-assess the meaning of development for women around the world

- Women are the driving force of non-formal economy in Africa but there is too much ad hoc activity. Need to strengthen their capacities.
- Vision: every man, women and child opportunity to learn and develop throughout their lives
- Health
- Access to ICT - information and knowledge
 - Recognize the global digital divide needs to be narrowed - big challenge for women in Africa to get access to ICT – cell phones, computers and online information.
 - Further recognize the need to bridge another digital divide – those with access to the social resources of the world wide web – through Web 2.0

2. **Support a culture of peaceful diversity – recognize role of women as mediators**

- Review sexual adolescent relations between boys and girls – tendency for females to accept male domination (including violence against them) to their detriment.
- Promotion of linguistic diversity, and need for students to learn more than one language – benefits of immersion learning.
- Call for new linguistic international order – have all languages represented on the world wide web.
- Respect cultural diversity of immigrants.
- Explore how to foster the social and cultural resources of the internet to increase and improve the personal qualities of women’s lives.
- Most of the migrants are women – bring benefits as change agents to countries they go to and when they come home, therefore need to make migration easier.

3. **Recognize women as bearers of rights and builders of alternative futures – search for hopeful signs. Support women as actors of social change**

- What are the potential future scenarios and issues that will impact on the status of women?
- Millennium Project will run a *Real Time Delphi* to look at what trends and developments might affect the status of women – which might or might not happen – assess positive and negative impacts.
- Note the value of a real time health system – eg WHO created one linked to environmental issues.
- There is great value in sharing stories of women’s experiences as social change agents.
- Opportunity to build on the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society.

- Is there a problem with the focus on equal rights between men and women? Has it meant that women's contribution to the solution of global problems is limited to issues of inequality – particularly poverty? Instead, if women were taken seriously as builders of alternative futures they could shape political debates on all critical issues.
- Bearing in mind the growing strength of conservative forces in recent years, women are now taking inspiration from the liberated and imaginative thinking that took place in the 1960's and 1970's and recognizing the need to formulate new alternatives.

4. **Create networks**

- Build networks around major issues on UN Agenda - climate change and conflict prevention – link women's issues and gender sensitivity.
- Need to identify who should be involved in foresight and future planning- including question of participation of men.
- Create supportive groups between indigenous women and women in the wider population to develop their literacy in each others cultures and languages, and educate them in each other's values and notions of self-esteem.

Outstanding issues

- Is it possible to build a consensus around values that are ethically obvious and politically acceptable – and therefore advance non-negotiable positions for the advancement of the status of women?
- Does a focus on the interests of future generations now need juridical recognition?
- Is there a need for an International Court for Women – focused on the questions of equality between men and women in all respects?