



Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOWS)

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GenderInSITE:

Results of a workshop to plan an International Campaign to Promote Gender and Innovation for Development: UNESCO, Paris, January 18-19, 2010

Organized by: the Third World Organization of Women in Science (TWOWS), in collaboration with TWAS, the academy of sciences for the developing world, the Gender Advisory Board, United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and UNESCO, with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).

Approximately 30 participants attended, including the Directors of three Divisions at UNESCO: Basic and Engineering Sciences; Science Policy; and Gender Equality. Participants met to explore the possibilities of collaborating around a global, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder initiative to promote not only the role of women IN science, technology and innovation, but also how science, technology and innovation can be FOR women, that is, how it can serve women's lives and livelihoods at the grassroots level.

The workshop was convened as a result of the experience of the sponsoring organizations that in many cases insufficient action has been taken because the key stakeholders – policymakers, agency decision makers, NGO groups and others - are unaware of the gender dimensions of STI for development. The concept comes out of the work of the Gender Advisory Board in 1993-1995, and the 1999 UNESCO World Science Conference. Paragraph 90 of the WCS Framework for Action contains a comprehensive list of actions for governments and agencies to promote the participation of women in science in education, the workforce, and decision making, including research on best practices, and the collection of statistics. The workshop took as this Para as its starting point which among other things called on governments and other stakeholders to

launch, in collaboration with UNESCO and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), national, regional and global campaigns to raise awareness of the contribution of women to science and technology, in order to overcome existing gender stereotypes among scientists, policy-makers and the community at large.

The Millennium Development Goals in 2000 (MDGs) include gender equality and empowerment of women as Goal number 3. It is also designated as a cross-cutting issue, reflecting acknowledgement among signatory countries that the MDGs cannot be achieved without the integration of women and gender dimensions into every aspect of development.



The campaign is intended to mobilise a range of stakeholders at all levels to:

- support understanding of the gender dimensions of science and innovation for development in the areas of emphasis of Para 90;
- highlight women's role in development and how it can be supported using science and technology;
- recognize and highlight women's role and contribution to national science and innovation systems; and
- develop and disseminate strategies and models for action.

The Paris event was held to consult with experts from all regions on the value, targets, and focus areas of a campaign.

The meeting began with a presentation of the results of an online survey which participants completed beforehand. Survey responses indicate:

- The main obstacle to greater recognition and support for application of STI to support women's activities, is lack of awareness on the part of decision makers, agencies and development actors; followed by lack of political will and lack of political and economic power of women. Other identified obstacles include lack of data and the perception that S&T are luxuries for the elite.
- Agreement that there is clear need for a campaign of this type, based on what we know: there continues to be poor representation of women in S&T careers and education, (leaky pipeline), the development of smaller-scale technologies to support women's activities and livelihoods has been neglected; and that while there has been some progress, many of the key issues identified by the CSTD Gender Working Group in the early 90s continue today.
- Acknowledgement that there is a lot we still don't know about the gender dimensions of STI, including the reasons (regional/cultural) why women drop out of the science, technology and innovation system at various points, in particular after tertiary education and before going into the S&T workforce, and why in many regions the numbers of girls and women in science and technology at all educational levels are so low.
- It was also noted by some that in their experience even those policy and decision makers who were skeptical about the importance of the issue could be convinced differently with data and solid research. Reaching out to the rest of the science community with data is also an important activity.
- The importance of presenting role models for girls and young women was highlighted, as well as for changing public perceptions about appropriate activities for females.
- An important aspect of any campaign has to be one or more clear messages.
- Finally, it was noted that any campaign must highlight a "win-win" perspective, stressing that mobilizing and retaining women in the S&T system, and addressing women's priorities in S&T development will benefit development objectives and help countries attain the MDGs.
- Other key issues include the recognition of varying timeframes and levels of reaction to a campaign based on institutional culture and political situation; gender advocates can use ICT effectively, and that work at the national level is critical.

What is a campaign?

A campaign is a means of transferring knowledge from keepers to users. This transfer needs to take place in a situation where users have the capacity to understand and implement the knowledge. It therefore involves building understanding and capacity of the target users, as well as an understanding of the constraints and barriers that decision makers may encounter in becoming more aware of the issues as well as options for

action.

Depending on the targets, there are a range of effective methods for transmitting information, which vary according to stakeholder, level of knowledge, and type of action or policy to be initiated. Methods can include person to person discussions or lobbying, training courses, toolkits/guidelines, national or sectoral assessments. But all need to be based on sound evidence and data, either qualitative or quantitative - or both.

The steps for assessing the status of knowledge, through data review, gap analysis and lessons learned, include:

- aggregating existing information and data;
- analysis of trends, conclusions and gaps
- translating the knowledge into different formats according to target or audience
- getting it to knowledge users in a variety of media
- use of existing knowledge brokers: science advisory committees; media; journals; educational/training organizations

What is the focus of a GenderInSITE campaign?

The overarching vision for the GenderInSITE campaign was agreed to be to:

- develop informed and innovative citizens of the globe; involving sustainability, conservation and equitable development.
- identify and highlight practical and effective solutions of STI for global sustainable development
- encourage women's access to technology and knowledge for national development
- support the capacity of women to advance knowledge both globally and nationally, recognizing that countries cannot achieve the MDGs and a high quality of life without empowering their women
- mobilize STI to support women as social and economic agents in rural areas and increase national progress towards achieving the MDGs.

Who are the beneficiaries in this outreach? Women scientists, and women who are encouraged to become scientists. Young women in the educational system, who are encouraged and supported to continue to strive for their dreams. Women at the grassroots, whose quality of life and livelihoods can be improved and increased through use of small-scale innovative technologies. Society as a whole will benefit – not just women.

After some discussion and deliberation, the specific focus themes of the campaign were agreed to be:

- Education and research, focusing on education and training of women and girls at all levels of the STI system.
- Employment / Workforce and Leaky Pipeline issues, particularly the loss of women in the transition from the educational system to the STI workforce
- Innovation systems, SMEs and technology transfer, with a focus on the role and situation of women in informal and grassroots innovation systems in both rural and urban settings
- Gender and STI dimensions of global climate change. Focusing on women's role in the STI system, and development of technologies to support recovery, mitigation and adaption efforts.

These themes are seen as having a range of synergetic areas of overlap and intersection, with the potential to focus efforts on the gender and STI dimensions of climate change, which affect and are affected by the other themes.

Modes and strategies for outreach

The targets, or key players for change, of a GenderInSITE campaign were identified as:

- Decision makers: policy makers and their advisers; policy implementers (bureaucrats), leaders of the scientific community; community and religious leaders
- Women and girls themselves: science and engineering need to become desirable, attractive, high profile activities
- Parents, who need to understand and support the interests, capacity and potential of their daughters as well as their sons
- The business community: this kind of campaign relates to employment trends, HR policies; job creation
- NGO and advocacy organizations, both inside and out of the women's movement
- General public / public awareness: both women and men need increased awareness so that they understand the value of science and technology for their lives as well as the value of including girls and women in STI
- The educational system at different (all?) levels
- Ministries of education, gender, children, economics: encouraging them to work together and share resources, common strategies in a "whole of government" approach.

To address these different groups and different knowledge needs, a campaign will need to take on several characteristics that will encourage flexibility and response to the situation, addressing the differing and evolving needs for knowledge, as well as capacity to address different sectors, regions and cultures.

It will need to bring in the strengths and capacities of different types of organizations. For example, at times it may be appropriate to work with advocacy organizations, as in the case of SOPAC, the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission. As a technical organisation it manages programme interventions in member states in the Pacific. With less capacity in running campaigns, it chose to work closely with advocacy organisations. Through its publishing and graphic arts capacity, it develops materials with organisations that reach into different social groups to ensure the material is pitched correctly; after which that organisation takes the message out.

This involves:

- a continual iterative process of needs assessment, benchmarking and monitoring that should be undertaken from the beginning and at periodic milestone events.
- an interdisciplinary approach, encouraging collaboration and coordination among the natural, behavioural, social and economic sciences.
- multi-stakeholder partnerships and alliances, building on the strengths and knowledge of the constituent groups for knowledge assessment, packaging, stakeholder analysis advocacy, awareness raising and education.
- While maintaining a global perspective and scope, remaining grounded firmly in regional and national situations, with focal points/lead organizations identified in each region.

Projects and Plan of Action

Various campaign activities were discussed, including a visual campaign using video, web, print and other electronic media to highlight and generate a more current and interesting profile for these issues, and to attract the attention and involvement of youth. Capacity building and "how-to" activities, such as training, toolkits and

guidelines for policymakers, development experts and advocates are another important facet of publicising this topic, through a variety of electronic, interactive and print formats. Scorecards which rate and compare countries according to their ability to mobilize women in national STI systems are another potential activity.

Specific activities include:

- National or regional assessments in one or more sectors to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data on women's situation in one or more of the focus theme areas. The assessments would identify priority issues and sectors, gaps and include success stories and lessons learned from the region. Products would include various levels of toolkits, scorecards, guidelines, policy recommendations, based on evidence and models of action.
- Development of scorecards to rank countries by one or more key sectors concerning the participation of women in national STI systems.
- Collection, packaging and dissemination of success stories, through video, web, social networking, handbooks, etc.
- Gender and innovation toolkits
- Use of ICT to empower women, and engendering ICT
- Gender and STI training and capacity building workshops to develop skills in analysis, policy and action, aimed at university faculty, politicians, students and advocacy groups.
- Development of curricula for training in gender and STI capacity building /training of trainers workshop
- Revision and expansion of the survey internationally.

Followup for 2010

1. Next Steps

- Expand beyond the participating organizations to develop one or more networks around the focus theme areas, as well as leverage points into key target groups
- Identify regional contacts and networks for participation.
- Use the meeting report and recommendations to engage with policy makers in home countries.
- Carry out a survey of stakeholder knowledge about gender and science issues, administered by regional focal points.
- Carry out a review of other campaigns to identify best approaches for the GenderInSITE campaign.

2. Potential launch meeting in South Africa early 2011, hosted by the Ministry of S&T.

Participants:

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