

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
STANDING COMMITTEES' PLANS OF ACTION 2012 – 2015

ACRONYMS

BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
ICW-CIF	International Council of Women – Conseil International des Femmes
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
NC	National Council
SCR	Security Council Resolution
UN	United Nations

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ICW–CIF THEME: Caring for Women is Caring for the World

1. STATUS OF WOMEN STANDING COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION 2012 - 2015
Incorporating the Advisorships of Human Rights, International Relations and Peace,
Legislation and of Conventions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

1. To make a practical difference to the Status of Women by enabling them to use CEDAW and SCR 1325 in order to improve both their personal circumstances and that of their societies.
2. To develop the skills necessary for women to hold workshops, present information and train other women as change agents for the Status of Women.

METHOD

3. To motivate and encourage Member Councils to launch 'Road Shows' for women at all levels of society informing them of the facts of the CEDAW and SCR 1325
And to train small teams of presenters to deliver the programme.

OUTLINE OF THE PLAN

4. The Plan aims to reflect the Themes of the UN Commission on the Status of Women year by year, viz.:
 - 2013 - CSW57 - VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
 - 2014 - CSW58 - PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
 - 2015 - CSW59 - possibly review of BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

5. To equip women and girls with the knowledge of their rights and to enable them to seek the implementation of these rights by urging their governments to ratify UN Conventions and Resolutions and to implement such Conventions and Resolutions in their societies to the benefit of all.

6. STEPS TO BE TAKEN

- 6.1 Consult Member Councils on current best practice in relation to Road Shows
- 6.2 Combine current best practice into a recommended ICW-CIF programme
- 6.3 Offer the programme to ICW-CIF Member Councils
- 6.4 Assist Member Councils to modify the programme to suit their own needs, abilities and funding
- 6.5 Review progress and respond as necessary
- 6.6 Report progress to ICW-CIF

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2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION 2012 – 2015

i). ECONOMICS

In this Plan of Action, National Councils and Advisers for Economics should adapt the following for what is relevant to their area.

- To hold seminars and workshops to encourage and assist women to care for and help each other to reach economic independence.
- To encourage economic freedom of women through programmes of handcraft like sewing, weaving, nutritional awareness, growing extra crops, tending small animals.
- To distribute information on micro-credit loans for small enterprises relevant to your area.
- To network with other national Councils as to what has been effective.
- To address the issue of domestic violence and violence against women and children, often caused by economic hardships.
- To continue to work for equal pay for work of equal value where appropriate.

ii) WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

- Casualisation of work of women of all National Councils
- Gender wage gap
- Retraining of those women who have been out of the work force for some time and wish to re-enter after e.g. maternity leave or caring for family members
- Encourage employers to offer flexible working hours to balance the work and parental roles of women and men.

iii) CONSUMER AFFAIRS

- To support women in realising their power as purchasers of consumer goods.
- To distribute information to all women about their rights, including legal, as purchasers
- To encourage manufacturers and retailers of consumer goods to provide accurate, simple information about products and to give adequate recourse for defective goods.
- Through women's organisations establish and maintain networking between women and manufactures around the world

iv) RURAL AND URBAN WOMEN

- Promote equality in all spheres of life
- Encourage and support women to take part in Local Government
- Work for land and inheritance rights for all women,
- Access to services e.g.– transport
health,
education
legal
- Ready access to markets to sell produce

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GENERAL WELL-BEING STANDING COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION 2012 - 2015

To link the well-being portfolio, it is suggested this framework of the Life Cycle is used being mindful, in particular, of the girl child, those with a disability, the elderly and women's social standing.

I) HEALTH:

In working to enhance the general status of women by improving their health and well-being across the lifespan be mindful the health of every woman is crucial to the development of their nation.

Ensure culturally appropriate, accessible, affordable and quality health care for all women and their families. Be mindful of the MDGs. particularly 1, 4, 5 and 6; work towards their achievement.

Suggested areas of work

- To improve maternal and infant health
- To improve the health of the girl child
- Improved access to preventive health – screening – education – public health
- Accessibility to appropriate health care pertaining to reproductive health in all stages of life.
- Lifestyle – body image

ii) ENVIRONMENT

To improve women's awareness of the importance of the environmental issues and to collaborate with and give support to those organizations and governments, at local and national levels working towards a healthy total ecosystem.

Suggested areas of work

- To promote the acceptance of the rights of women and of their obligations to be fairly represented in all decision making processes in relation to the environment and challenges of climate change.
- To promote environmental sustainability

iii) HABITAT

- To promote capacity building on awareness of housing rights, inheritance rights and land issues.
- To encourage participation in decision making policies of environmentally sound housing issues.
- To provide access to clean, safe drinking water and better water management.

Suggested areas of work

- The girl child - reduction of poverty and homelessness; access to adequate safe housing
- To urge governments to give women full and equal rights to own land and other property including inheritance rights.
- To promote proactive policies in favour of strengthening effective women's rights to land and shelter.
- To promote good town planning including clean water and sanitation, waste management.
- To work with the respective governments at all levels to ensure good governance in all habitat matters and that the principles of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Goals, particularly no.7, are adhered to.

iv) NUTRITION

- To promote the importance of food security
- To network with other NCWs and to share their successful experience.
- To promote a healthy lifestyle and prevent disease through better access to nutritious food and regular physical activity
- To provide comprehensive evidence-based information and education about nutrition through the communication channels available.

Suggested areas of work

- Girl child: emphasize the importance of an adequate nutritious diet.
- To work for the removal of food taboos and myths particularly for pregnant women and the girl child.
- To promote healthy lifestyle across the lifespan conscious of the differing needs of infants, children, youth, adults and the aged
- Food security: Ensure access to nutritionally adequate and safe food, culturally appropriate and affordable. Also ensure people's access to and consumption of a variety of foods enhances physical, mental and social well-being.
- To promote the understanding of food labelling.
- To hold seminars and workshops about nutrition within your NCW.

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4. COMMUNICATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION 2012 - 2015

i) ARTS AND LETTERS

The term “Arts and Letters” takes in all forms of art including traditional craft and literature.

Based on our theme and within the BPfA and MDGs, we can value the way women use their talents and skills to improve their Communities.

Suggested action

Identify within your Community/Country interesting traditional crafts/cultural activities including needlework, weaving, pottery and cooking.

Set up workshops to promote and teach crafts

ii) EDUCATION

In working to achieve MDG 2, much remains to be done to raise basic education levels for women and girls’ in all countries. This can be addressed by changing attitudes to illustrate that educating girls is of great value to the community and the country.

Suggested action

- Assess the needs in your country
- Check the media for education stories
- Survey students / Teachers on matters of concern
- Encourage and enable your NC to lobby local /National Authorities to address shortcomings and improve conditions

iii) MASS MEDIA

Mass Media – newspapers, films, radio and television – is extremely influential.

- a) To become aware of changes on social attitudes which may impact on the family as well as the Community in general.
- b) To put systems in place to protect the family and the Committee from imminent or potential threats from any or all sections of the Media.

Suggested action

Start small, particularly if working alone. Watch the Media closely to identify issues, good and or bad
Keep records, for example magazine cuttings, always including name/date of publication
Use the media for campaigns, e.g. promoting equality of women in sport
- ending discrimination and violence against women

iv) MUSIC

Music brings joy and enriches our lives.

Suggested action

- Use local news media for information about local or visiting women performers
- Promote the contribution women are making to music
- Ask your local Community/Clubs/schools for interesting Music events/performers
- Promote community performances – instrumental and choral
- Encourage programmes to engage young children in music including singing.
- Highlight the value of music therapy and music therapists, many of whom are women, in e.g. the fields of rehabilitation and general well-being

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5. SOCIAL ISSUES STANDING COMMITTEE PLAN OF ACTION 2012 - 2015

i) CHILD AND FAMILY

Work

- To protect children from all forms of abuse
- To improve the parenting skills of families
- To improve the well-being of all children and their families.

ii) YOUTH

- Recognise young people, within your community, with disabilities and their particular difficulties gaining access to services
- Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- To provide leadership training for young women
- To involve and empower young women as future leader
- Programmes for planning for their financial future
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle (sport, nutrition and body image)
- Recognise the mental and physical health needs of the young
- Identify and participate in sustainable environmental programmes

iii) AGEING

- Develop social welfare policies for the elderly
- Appropriate affordable housing for the elderly
- National Councils to identify organisations that promote activities for elderly citizens so they can still contribute to society
- Recognise and acknowledge the role of the Grandparent

iv) MIGRATION

Issue 1. To work towards the caring and support of asylum seeking women and children

1. To inform the various ICW-CIF members on the issue of asylum seeking women and children
2. To collate information from ICW-CIF members on this issue to obtain a holistic view of the problems and needs encountered by them
3. To encourage ICW-CIF member organisations to take up the issue with their respective governments and advocate for change in policies

4. To demonstrate and disseminate best practice models on the caring and supporting programs which assist asylum seeking women and children in ICW-CIF member countries
5. To hold seminars/workshops and keep ICW-CIF informed of progress on the issue.

Issue 2. To work towards the protection of all migrant women workers, children and their families through the implementation of the Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

- a. Create an awareness of the Migrant Worker's Convention with all members of the ICW-CIF by providing information
- b. Encourage member countries to undertake campaigns, including workshops to inform and seek support to approach their governments
- c. Take the issue to CEDAW, CSW, ILO organisations and other UN bodies
- d. Hold workshops to discuss the progress of the Migrant Convention. Keep ICW-CIF informed of progress