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Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

**“Achievements, Gaps and Challenges in Linking the
Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action
and the Millennium Declaration
and Millennium Development Goals”**

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**Practices of promoting gender equality
using the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs processes
and building partnership between government, private sector and
civil society
in the Komi Republic of the Russian Federation**

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* The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations

The monitorings' results have served as a basis for the Women Status Report that was further discussed by the State Council of the Komi Republic during the roundtable organized in cooperation with the Committee on Social Policy.

The consecutive Report on "Gender dimension of human rights" was based on the results of five following monitorings conducted in 2002-2003:

- "Men and women: Employers' preferences",
- "Urban and rural poverty: gender dimensions",
- "Gender dimensions of political participation and political processes in the KR",
- "Gender dimensions of health rights of citizens of the KR",
- "Gender violence".

The report has been evaluated by the experts, and on June 10, 2003 it was publicly discussed in Syktyvkar at the KR State Council meeting, attended by more than 100 participants - representatives of government, parliament, academia, NGOs and mass media.

Currently, the work of women's rights advocates in the provinces of the republic is continuing. On December 10, 2003, on International Day of Human Rights, 7 members of Women's Chamber received certificates of the Representatives of Human Rights Commissioner of the KR. In this way, the Commissioner's Office has enlisted the support of the women's organizations, and they, in turn, have gained additional incentives for further work towards protection of human rights.

1.2. Raising gender awareness and gender education.

The monitoring results proved that information and knowledge sharing about women's rights protection is of high demand in the republic. However, taking into account local peculiarities, such as lack of necessary information channels and territory size, a special approach had to be

- public court on domestic violence with participation of the students of the SSU Legal Studies department,
- youth talk-show “A Life free of Violence – It is Our Right?” organized with the support from the SSU Agency of Youth Information.

During the past 4 years Women’s Chamber joined the global campaign “16 days of activism against gender-based violence”, which is held annually on November 25 – December 10. The campaign includes conducting a series of lectures in the universities, public demonstrations in the streets, “White scarf” action, distribution of open letter, etc.

Latent character of the gender violence in the republic has resulted in introduction of a series of gender educational programmes. During the campaign more than 400 people have attended various seminars, field trainings, etc. Among the participants were social services specialists, different levels decision-makers, representatives of the civil society and law enforcement agencies, women activists and advocates and students.

In support to the raising awareness campaign and educational component, a practical support and advice was constantly provided. On June 10, 2002 UNDP and Women’s Chamber established the Office of Social Advocates, which offered free services of advocates weekly, who provided consultations on domestic violence issues, rendered legal advice, assisted clients during investigation procedures. Since then, 414 people have applied for support and received necessary assistance from this office.

1.5. Mass media for equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women.

Today women of the Komi Republic are actively participating in all spheres of our life, but this is not adequately reflected in the media. To address this situation, 3 years ago Women’s Chamber launched the competition “Mass media for equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women”. Final assessment of the journalists’ work considered the following: level of influence on public opinion, actual reflection of the existing gender problems, social roles of women and men, etc.

Overall, 153 works have been submitted. In general, the competition turned to be a powerful mechanism for building partnership relations with the mass media and as a result, the competition became an annual event.

As the journalists noted, gender equality issues are now reflected more often in the republican media. The pool of journalists writing about this issue have expanded the information on gender equality and it is becoming more popular among the general public; gender sensitivity of the public is gradually increasing, which is demonstrated through the recent social polls and elections result.

1.6. Improvement of legislation.

Women’s Chamber serves as a bridge between women’s non-governmental organizations and governmental agencies.

Civil society in Komi Republic represents strong consolidated force, which is open for partnership and dialogue with the regional government. It was an important factor for initiating the regional discussions on the MDGs in Komi Republic and applying the MDGs as a strategic framework for analysis and development of regional priorities and strategies.

Komi Republic is the only region in Russian Fedc is (36t)n1h was aexperiencthefas nuonar

cohesive approach for development, the actors may fail to respond meaningfully to socio-economic problems in the region.

- Serious analytical work undertaken by the group of experts during the preparatory stage to the Forum, provided well structured resource materials with strong argumentations and facts, which allowed participants to hold on constructive discussions and come up with concrete recommendations and strategies. It was commonly emphasized that the set of MDGs target and indicators helped to generate debates and formed the basis for elaborating additional gender responsive and locally relevant targets and indicators;
- Civil society used the package of analytical materials as the advocacy tool to attract attention of the government, private sector and public as a whole to inform on the important development processes ongoing in the region.

Private sector in Russia is consolidated under the Chamber of Commerce – body that provides

