

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and women's advancement

In the Dominican Republic, the last decade and the current one characterized by new and increased interest on the part of civil society and the State in promoting gender equality and guaranteeing citizenship for women.

the event, the Fourth World Conference on Women, "Action for Equality and Peace", held in Beijing in September 1995, highlighted the need for the State, through public policies, to adopt a coherent strategy that encouraged the creation of initiatives and instruments to guarantee the effectiveness of the promises made at the conference.

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Platform for Action for the Advancement of Dominican Women is the result of a broad process of consultation with both public sectors and civil society, involving an in-depth diagnosis of the situation of Dominican women and the identification of the principal problems and the necessary corrective measures. This document reflects the commitment assumed by the Dominican Republic at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

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Official gender policy embodied in this document is promotion of the participation of women in development and recognition of their rights to citizenship within the context of sustained, equitable and democratic development. The document proclaims the global strategies of concertation, community participation, strengthening of institutions and decentralization.

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Emphasis is placed on the empowerment of women through their participation in public life, strengthening of mechanisms for the advancement of women, and decentralization and adaptation of the legal system. Efforts are also directed on the elimination of poverty through the integration of women into the national development process.



macroeconomic and social policies, equality of access to employment, strengthening of productive resources, assistance focused on groups of women in extreme poverty and participation of women in the preservation of natural resources and the environment.

culture and communication media, improving the treatment of disability and an inclusive social policy in gender issues and promotion of total health and the prevention of all forms of violence against women. National policy in gender issues reflects the following platform: In many of the areas mentioned above, there have been significant achievements or breakthroughs in the Dominican Republic.

The document also deals with education with emphasis on raising education standards for women in textbooks, promotion of cultural image that does not discriminate and violence are dealt with through prevention, punishment and elimination. In general, the main areas dealt with in the

Empowerment of Women

Women are playing a larger role in public life. They are in party politics. The Dominican Republic now has a woman for president, which would have been unthinkable a few years ago. The reorganized Supreme Court of Justice has 15 members, there had only been one woman member of the Supreme Court. A law measure allocating to women 25 per cent of the political

affirmative action measures and their government.

Secretary of State for the Advancement of Women

During 1998 and 1999, the Department of the Advancement of Women engaged in a broad process of consultation with the political parties and the civil society. This resulted in the submission of a draft bill concerning the Ministry of Women to the Congress by legislators from all the political parties. In addition, the Department for the Advancement of Women has conducted a parallel process of institution strengthening in the areas of technology, programs and administration in order to assist in and prepare for their transformation into a Ministry of Women.

Modernization and adaptation of the legal system. In recent years, an important process of reform of the legal system has taken place in the Dominican Republic. The latest legislative changes to ensure that women are the following:

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legal system has taken place in the Dominican Republic





Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President, the Ministries of Foreign Relations, Education and Culture, Agriculture, Public Health, and Attorney

Secretary of the Evangelical Church, the Coordinator of Research Centre for Feminine Action, and Women's

Domingo, the Executive NGOs for Women's Issues Development:

to follow up and monitor the National Plan of Action for Equality, which embodies the main actions and measures of guaranteed equality of women and break down barriers of discrimination at the regional and national level. In connection with the

The Committee will Equality, Development and the Dominican Government barriers of discrimination by the year 2001, a international commitments assumed by the country Conference.

draft bill which would to a Ministry. This new participation in State forums where decisions are taken and

The Dominican Congress is currently study elevate the Department for the Advancement of Women's status would give it greater influence in public greater scope power exercise

In the legislative area, efforts are being taken to amend codes and special laws which discriminate against women and to publicize, through the various media, the changes in benefit to women. Women are being urged to avail themselves of the legal instruments which protect their rights.

In 1995, the Senate of the Republic decided unanimously to appoint the "Honorary Committee of Women Advisers to the Senate", which is composed of women experts on gender issues drawn from the different political parties, women legislators, jurists, representatives of the women's movement, and the Department for the Advancement of Women. This advisory committee to the Senate of the Republic has played an important role in the process of amending and adopting codes, laws and measures aimed at bringing about changes in the

by Law 505 of 21 June 1995, the Dominican Government ratified the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence Against Women. This represented a very significant achievement, since our legal framework presented major lacunae in terms of the treatment and management of violence against women.

Ratification of this Convention has proved highly instrumental in amending Dominican laws to respond to the commitments which the Convention entails for the State in various respects:

Law 24-97 of 28 January 1997, which amended the Criminal Code, the Code of Family Procedure and the Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescent, dealing with violence, discrimination and desertion of family, and prescribes penalties for violence against women and abuse, describes and prescribes penalties for desertion of family and defines and prescribes penalties for procuring and trafficking in women, and defines and prescribes

ion. Information is given below on some of

prescribes penalties for discriminating against the amended articles.

the Dominican Government established the National Commission for the Prevention and Repression of Intra-family Violence

In 1998, by Decree No. 423 National Commission for the Prevention and Repression of Intra-family Violence

of the prevention of persons affected by it. The Commission is composed of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Coordinator of the Office of the Commissioner for Modernization of Public Health and Social Welfare, representatives of the National Police, the Attorney-General's Office in the National District, the Department of Community Development, the Department for the

With the goal of formulating plans and engaging in activities of intra-family violence and for the assistance and rehabilitation of persons affected by it. The Commission is composed of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Coordinator of the Office of the Commissioner for Modernization of Public Health and Social Welfare, representatives of the National Police, the Attorney-General's Office in the National District, the Department of Community Development, the Department for the

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of San Francisco de Macoris, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of Santiago, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of Sánchez Ramírez, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of Puerto Plata, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of La Vega, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of Española, established in 1996.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of María Trinidad Sánchez, established in 1997.

Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of San José, established in 1998.

Monce Plata, established in 1998. Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of San José, established in 1998.

Romana, established in 1998. Provincial Office for Women's Issues of the Province of Romana, established in 1998.

through these Offices, The National Plan for Gender Equity is implemented through various actions and initiatives of the Department for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing agreements.

As was done for the Beijing Conference, national commissions were established to follow up the following summit meetings: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; World Summit for Social Development; World Summit for Children and World Food Summit.

(b) The National Office for the Follow-Up of Global Conferences was established on 25 March 1991, by Decree No. 122-91, to coordinate the various follow-up efforts to global conferences.

Through the Coordinator of NGOs for Women's Issues, the Cibao Women's Coordinator, various topical and sectoral networks and in each organization, have drawn up national, regional and local plans based on the agreements in the Beijing Platform for Action, which have been implemented since 1995.

The principal achievements of these organizations include: their contribution to the overhaul of Dominican legislation; follow-up and promotion of legislation adopted for the benefit of women; their contribution to the preparation of the draft bill on the upgrading of the Department for the Advancement of Women; their support for the highlighting of violence as a problem of human rights; the development of educational programmes to publicize women and gender issues; their contribution to the development of the training and empowerment of national leaders in the political arena and their influence on public policies ensuring a gender perspective in national and topical meetings organized by DGPM.