



CSW 58 ROUND TABLE “The keys to Women Development Agenda Post 2015: the 3 Fs: Female participation, Family perspective, and Flexible working arrangements”

H.E. Joy Ogwu, Ex-minister of Nigeria and current Ambassador, Permanent representative of Nigeria to the UN

It is a pleasure to be here, where women are gathered to hold their destiny into their own hands. The divine designed that we are all here in a chapel I have never been in a conference in one, is a bit odd for me.

I just want to leave food for thought:

1. **Equality without complementarity** is considered vacuum. This is why men are so scared. When we talk about equality, we all know what equality means -especially legally- but culturally it is a problem in most developing countries. This is why we have to advance towards the development approach. We need to make the thought of the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, when he said: “Can one man run fast on one foot? This is impossible. He cannot run. Not even fast, but not run. We cannot even visualize it. The foot that is neglected by men is women”. What it means, in developing terms, that no system or community can ignore half of its population without educating them to be active participants in the process of development. And when we use this development approach, we cannot go wrong. Any community would want to develop their full potential should use this half of population. The development approach is a safe way out of the concept of equality.

2. **The role of the family in development**, in the building of a nation society, of community and of international system, the family is so essential.

The roots of political science, I studied in the 60s, are still applicable today. The first unit of analysis is the family, the second is the community, and the third is the State.

The best unit of analysis is the family. The family is a system just like the State. This is where politics take place, and what we learn is that the family influences school, community and the State. It is so significant the family is so essential to the formation of citizens. This is where we learn to be first citizens.

3. **Inside the family, the Head of State is the mother.**

She is the Head of State. In a patriarchal State, the man is legally the head of State outside the family, but it is the mother of the Family who plays a role so important in the formation of citizens when educating children. This is why the family is so important. Man has been legally head of State outside the family, but mother is the head of State inside the family.

In the MDG and UN development agenda post-2015: family is so critical and we must give the attention that it deserves.

Renata Kaczmarkska, Director UN focal Point on the family DESA “The 3 Fs and the XX anniversary on the family celebrations for 2014”

The 3 Fs can be linked to the XX anniversary. We have been doing meetings and celebrations before 2014 and, during all this year for the XX anniversary of the International Year on the Family, around 3 themes: work-family balance, family and ending poverty and social exclusion, and intergenerational solidarity. Regarding the 3 F's these themes are related:

1. Female participation: Women are entering in the labor market in increasing numbers. Not necessarily to gain professional career, but as a necessity. Today is a necessity for women to work. But is this recognized? Mostly, are not. In developing countries, women work in bad conditions, in difficult sectors, without benefits, no recognition of their paternity benefits. Women's poverty is not recognized. So, their poverty will perpetuate until we do not have this recognition. Until we do not have equal pay for equal work and more formal environment for women to work.

2. Family perspective: This relates to the Intergenerational perspective. Today family responsibilities are difficult to accomplish: Generations live far away and are disconnected, and we do not have people to care as it used to be, so more emphasis should be made on how to recognize this relationships better, this work that is being made by family members to each other, this is an area that family policy could work on, what we can do so that generations can work better so that work between generations is recognized better a lot of work needs to be done in this sense.

Women are still considered as care providers, they are expected to provide for children, older people and people with disabilities this care, and this care is not recognized by society and should be.

3. Flexibility: This related to the Work-Family Balance. This is a very important area, which still has not attention from the international community, because we should do more in UN. Some countries have signed some international treaties on it, especially the International Labor Organization. There are conventions on it: international convention on maternity protection, workers with family responsibilities, migrant

workers, so there is a lot of work that has been done and there is a need to apply these rules to a national level.

When we talk about work-family balance, we often think about flexibility for women, but we should not. We have to include men and change perceptions about man and family obligations. There is a lot of research that says that men would like to take paternity measures and flexible arrangements but they cannot in their work place for social pressure.

I know countries that had media campaign to change this. Prime ministers could take paternity leaves to remedy this situation. It is about making life better for men and for women.

To arrange the image of fathers we, in the Focal point on the family, also did our part. We published a book, "Men in families", and we also have a paper on work-family balance on our website. Just to mention some initiatives, 2014 was designated by civil society as the EU work and family life year. We also have private sector initiatives. Very interesting practices are time-credits. This is family members have set time to take time off for a variety of reasons: it could be for childcare, it could be for older parents and it is a way to empower families to give the extra-time to be with the members of their families.

In conclusion, I just want to read the longest paragraph of the Commission for Social Development. In this resolution we make recommendations to take action in the 3 different themes and work-family balance is the biggest recommendation:

"Encourages Member States to promote Family by supporting Family Balance, extent flexible working arrangements for employers with family responsibilities, including: flexible part-time, job opportunities and arrangements, promote gender equality and empowerment of women including eliminate discrimination for women and men with family responsibilities, enhance paternal involvement and support a wide range of child care arrangements noting the importance of reconciliation of work and family life and recognizing the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child."

Hopefully this paragraph covers it all and will influence Governments to pursue work-family measures and policies at a national level.

Mrs. Florence Didigu, Women’s Board UN Representative “Empowering Underprivileged Young Women through Vocational Education”.

THE UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS)

Genesis of the MDGs

As we all know, “the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were derived from the Millennium Declaration, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2000. Through this Declaration, world leaders forged a commitment to combat poverty, hunger and disease, to provide education to all children and equal opportunities to both women and men, protect the environment and establish a global partnership for development”. The challenge period to achieve these goals was pegged by 2015.

Slow Progress of Implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa 2015 is upon us, but if you examine one of my handouts titled “UN 2013 Progress Chart for the MDGs”, it is very obvious that, after thirteen years, “this framework of time-bound [developmental] targets and goals”, have not made appreciable progress in Sub-Saharan Africa. This chart also indicates that progress made in many parameters in this geopolitical zone is insufficient to reach the target by 2015 “if prevailing trends persist”. A more recent draft document titled “Challenges and Achievements in the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals”, released by the CSW Bureau on February 4, 2014, also acknowledges that certain target developmental areas in this same region lack growth or show slow or moderate growth.

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It is therefore imperative that initiatives for the implementation of the MGDs, or sustenance of progress made must continue after 2015. It is not a surprise then, that the ongoing Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 58) is evaluating progress (or lack of it!), so far made, acknowledging challenges and strategizing on “Implementing the MDGs for Women and Girls” after 2015.

WOMEN’S BOARD EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION SOCIETY

Profile

The Women’s Board Educational Cooperation Society, a Nigerian NGO, was created in 1972 to contribute to the development of both urban and rural women. It gained Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC in 2001 and has been associated with DPI since 2008.

Women’s Board’s Mission

For many years Women's Board has been an avid participant at the CSW because many of the priorities of this women's UN initiative coincide with the Board's mission and core objectives: "to foster the development of the individual Nigerian woman, empowering her with education and high standards of work, and inculcating in her a commitment of service to the community, so as to make her a citizen better equipped to participate in the social progress of the country".

Objectives

The main objectives are to build up leadership qualities; to emphasize integrity of life; to provide work skills; to foster a responsible attitude to work; to introduce basic organizational practices; to be committed to civic duties and to create environment awareness.

Strategy

These objectives are achieved through capacity building educational programs that directly empower underprivileged young women with technical skills, professional integrity and leadership quality that favorably position them to gain meaningful and dignified employment. Indeed the priority theme of CSW 56 echoed this same vision: "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work".

Women Board's Concern and Optimism

Women's Board is naturally concerned that Sub-Saharan Africa has posted the slowest progress in several target areas of the MDGs, since Nigeria, its area of operation, is within this region. The Board is however excited and happy with the achievements of its initiatives so far, remains confident in the future, and is totally committed to the tasks that lie ahead in the implementation of the MDG's, despite persisting challenges

PREVAILING TRENDS IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG WOMEN IN NIGERIA

The educational initiatives and vision of the Women's Board have been shaped by the imperatives of prevailing circumstances and challenges in its area of operation, as regards the education of young women. Some of these are:

Uptake and Downturn in Universal Primary Education

While enrollment in universal primary education is generally in the uptake in Nigeria and gender parity is almost achieved, "Children and adolescents from the poorest households are still at least three times more likely to be out of school than children from the richest households".

High Girls School Dropout Rate

“Girls are more likely to be out of school than boys among both primary and lower secondary age groups” (Millennium Development Goals Report, 2013). Many underprivileged families, in the rural areas especially, cannot afford the costs of their children’s education, or, influenced by hegemonic and other cultural mindsets, they decide to invest their meager financial resources into educating their sons beyond the primary and secondary schools.

Critical education Inequality in Rural Areas

The most fundamental obstacle for women in rural areas is gender inequality in education. The fact that most women in rural Nigeria do not have the benefit of formal education has excluded them from participation in the formal sector of the economy and from accessing credit to increase their agricultural yields.

Inability of Unskilled Women in General to Access Meaningful Employment

The result of this status quo is that many young girls with very little or no education migrate to the cities where they cannot gain meaningful and dignified employment, because they have no useful skills. They end up working as poorly paid house girls or swell the ranks of those who walk the city streets at night. Again many of the girls in this category get married to husbands from equally indigent background, and the cycle of poverty remains unbroken.

Perpetuation of Cycle of Chronic Poverty Especially in the Rural areas

Rural women play a major role in agriculture which statistics show contributes 45 per cent of the GDP and provides a livelihood for 90 per cent of the rural population. Women however cultivate less than one hectare of land per household. The consequence of this inequity, which directly impacts food production and hunger, is that women are the most chronically poor.

Rural Women’s Lack of Political Leverage

At present, women in rural areas do not actively participate in the political process, despite the fact that women in pre-colonial Nigeria played complementary roles to the men in making political decisions. Out of the 360 members in the National Parliament in 2013, only 27 or 7% are women! This exclusion is not unconnected with the practice of liberal democracy, which is heavily dependent on literacy. They cannot therefore influence any local or national decisions about their wellbeing.

WOMEN’S BOARD VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Women’s Board Educational Cooperation Society has positively transformed the lives of many young women who were unable to continue their education beyond the

Secondary school level and prevented them from facing the challenges described above.

Our vocational education programs are multifaceted, but this presentation will highlight the nature and impact of the Board's vocational training in the area of Catering and Hospitality for young women from poor backgrounds. Mention will also be made of our other developmental initiatives.

Why Catering and Hospitality Management?

We chose vocational training in Catering and Hospitality because we realized that Nigeria's emergence as a giant petroleum producer and the imperatives of globalization, have spurred a very robust hospitality and tourist industries, which are always in dire need of competent and skilled professionals.

Training Centers

At present our four training schools span the entire spectrum of Southern Nigeria. Our first center, Wavecrest College of Catering and Hospitality Management, located in the former capital, Lagos is now a prestigious Monotechnic, offering curriculum that leads to the National Diploma and Higher National Diploma Certificates. Orisun Center is located in Ibadan, one of the most populous cities in West Africa. Lantana College of Catering is located in the heart of the East at Enugu. The Iroto School, located in the rural village of Iloti in the west of the country, has a Conference and Health Center attached to it; this greatly expands its spectrum of activities.

Extension and/or improvement of facilities are always ongoing at these centers.

Curriculum

These schools offer a two year curriculum with an additional year of supervised experience.

The main areas of activity are:

- Vocational Training in Catering and Hospitality Management
- Leadership training
- Professional development
- Education in the Rights of Women and Families
- Ethics

There is no doubt that this combination makes for a well-rounded professional woman the MDGs

Other Programs Promoting the MDGs

Besides these courses, Women's Board, in cooperation with development partners like the Afara Leadership Center in Lagos, Uzommiri Study Center in Enugu, Abidagba Health Center in the Village of Iroto, etc., organizes the following classes for women, mothers and children in the surrounding rural areas.

- Out-of-school programs for teenagers
- Literacy, School support, Health education and services, grassroots skills
- Food, Nutrition and Hygiene classes
- Training in micro-enterprises

IMPACT OF TRAINING INITIATIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MDGS

- Reduction of Female Unemployment and Poverty: Graduates from our training schools are in high demand because of their professional capability and integrity, and so most find prestigious jobs in the flourishing hospitality industry.
- Reduction of female illiteracy
- Bread Winners and Change Agents: As they pull themselves out of poverty, most of them become bread winners and help to educate their siblings and cater for their families' needs, thereby forging a trajectory out of perpetual poverty for those families
- Development Agents and Partners in Implementing the MDGs: Under the Leadership Development and Economic Development Programs (LDP and EDP), Women's Board organizes students in our rural training centers to facilitate literacy and grassroots skills acquisition programs for rural women and mothers in their catchment areas, and provide health, nutrition, and basic hygiene classes for them. They guarantee the success of these programs by package and breaking the class content down for their rural audience and communicating with them in "pidgin-English" and native Nigerian languages.

Success Stories

Several success stories are testimonials to the enormous impact of Women Board's vocational education for young women from underprivileged background. The story of Theresa Ukamaka Ohaka is one that needs to be told here, because her narrative represents that of many of the young women from disadvantaged backgrounds who went through our training centers.

The story of Theresa Ukamaka Ohaka (nee Ekunie)

From a very poor family in a village, she became a house girl at the tender age of eight in Lagos. In 2004, a benevolent Aunt, pleased with her services, sent her to Women Board's Wavecrest Catering College. She now works for Sofitel, an international Hotel outfit in Lagos, where her tips alone are three times her basic salary. She has helped to send her siblings to school and refurbished the family's lowly village dwellings. She got married in 2010, and with her husband's support she is presently running an online degree program in Hospitality Management at the Nigerian Open University!

NGO CAPACITY BUILDING

Women's Board also reaches beyond its primary target audience to make its impact felt. It periodically gathers a number of NGOs and organizations at its Management Training Unit in Lagos for short seminars geared towards building their knowledge base and capacity for development delivery. Some of the themes at these seminars in the past are: "Strengthening the Organizational Capacity of Nigerian NGOs", "Understanding the United Nations System: The UN and Development", "Assessing the Millennium Development Goals – 5 Years After", "NGOs Leading by Example: Accountability Charter for the Non-Profit Sector", etc.

Beneficiaries:

Hundreds of NGOs, like Association for Education and Empowerment (ASSEEMP),

Association of Concerned Mothers (ASCOM), Women and Children Advancement Program (WACAP) and Catholic Institute for Development Justice and Peace (CIDJAP), etc., have benefited from these capacity building initiatives.

MAINSTREAMING THE MDGS AND UN PROGRAMS

Besides MDGs- friendly best practices at the Board, our commitment to their implementation is shown by a constant effort through seminars and communication initiatives to demystify the MDGs, secure the commitment of other stakeholders to achieving them, and ensure their effective mainstreaming into national and sub-national development plans. Indeed each of the Board's semi-annual Newsletters contains a one page pullout on events at the United Nations as it concerns the MDGs and other UN human development initiatives, especially as they impact women.

FUNDING

Generating enough funds to run the Board's programs is always a big challenge. Students' fees barely cover 50% of actual cost of training. Students who cannot pay anything are financed by contributions from friends, funds raised by the Development Committee of the Board from Foundations, Embassies, individual and

corporate donors. The Bulk of funds for building and equipping schools are provided in cash or kind by local and international corporate bodies, International Development Agencies and Northern hemisphere NGOs.

THE FUTURE

These future projections are also our suggestions towards maintaining momentum in the implementation of the MDGs post 2015.

In the future Women's Board will:

- Continue its core best practice of advancing the development of women through vocational training which empowers them humanly and financially. This will continue to bridge the gender gap in education and give women the skills they need to access meaningful employment.
- Expand medical and literacy services through outreaches in rural areas to combat diseases and improve education. This will greatly improve the urban/rural poverty, health and knowledge disparity.
- Empower women in general and rural women in particular with knowledge of responsible governance so they can participate in the political space and play complementary role with men in making political decisions that impact their lives and address systemic discriminations against women.
- This will require fundamental changes in power relations and a re-engineering of social structures that perpetuate women's disempowerment, such as changes in property rights and inheritance.
- Expand our global and national partnerships for development. Due to a wide range of NGOs soliciting for funds for different projects, competition in raising funds is always stiff. We are therefore always in dire need of funds and are untiring in our funding drives and forging new partnerships
- Strengthen the institution of the family by encouraging young people to get married and live together to raise a family. This can be done through incentives to those who get married and live together without getting a divorce. Taking advantage of the special "genius of women" will facilitate this task.
- Empower women and rural women in particular with parental skills. Rural women are repositories of culture, and despite the onslaught of globalization on indigenous cultural values, they continue to pass these to the next generations through socialization. Through this process the family institution is preserved and children are inculcated with the norms and values of the society.

Indeed “the future of humanity passes by way of the family”; but like Mary Gottschalk warns in her book, *The Family Revolution*, the traditional family is “under siege everywhere”, “its indispensability denied and its integrity violated. But there is for it no viable substitute. Without a thorough going revival of it, the human race will self-destruct”.

Uloma Ubii, Medical school student, WB representative “My Family: lessons learned”

In Society one of the biggest influences is the family. What I have learned so far from my family: the need to share, in a large family where I came from; my room was shared with my sister. The generosity was not forgotten. A parent’s guidance is crucial. A friend was my sibling. A lot of the things that I have learned are helping me to live now as adult. In the family we are all responsible of brothers and sisters problems. Benefits of family: they all consult each other for the decisions that affect all, even with extended family, there’s a protocol, all the members know, is more that sharing food.

I do not want to romanticize about family. Every family has its problems. No family is perfect but family bounds will grow strong with difficulties. And society would strength those bounds for the better of all: in the family we learn generosity, sacrifice and maturity, wisdom and important values as equality between man and women, important lessons for life.

Ada Garriga, WB representative and ICWF researcher “UN Agenda Post-2015 regarding The Human Right to education and women”

There is two MDG that relates to Education:

The Millennium Development Goal number one is: to achieve Primary Education for all. The objectives will not be achieved by the end of 2014 (still more than 50 Million people without any education). The MDG number 3: Promote gender equality in education, women empowerment; objectives are still not achieved in 2014.

During the last decade, the UN have progressively put education as a priority and we have now some UN initiatives: “Education First” promoted by the UN Secretary General, Ban-ki Moon, “A world fit for children” from UNICEF, and “Education for All” from UNESCO.

Moreover, all UN bodies, agencies and UN related institutions work somehow for education: UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, WTO, IMF, World Bank, Human rights Council, General Assembly, Committees on the right of the child... therefore, coordination of the different education policies is a must.

The right to education is contained in the UDHR and the most important Human Right Treaties, and it is analyzed by the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, now Mr. Kishore Sigh, with detailed studies around the world regarding this right.

Recommendations for Agenda Post 2015:

1. Education is a human right.

We cannot forget the origin of Human Rights. The roots in the end of the second world war and the promise to respect all human dignity without discrimination regardless of the race, nationality, ideology and opinion. Therefore, it was important to respect Human Rights to education for all without discriminations, and Parent's right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children, in order to avoid using education as a tool to impose any ideology, which was the case in the 40s. (Nazi ideology, communist ideology).

As established in art. 26.3 of the UDHR, "Parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children" (Art. 26.3 UDHR, Art. 18 UDHR and Art. 13-14 Civil and Economic Pacts).

World Trade Organization, GATS, consider Education as a service. But it is not only a service; there is a danger of considering education only as a market good. Education is a Human Right and States and International Community have to guarantee this right to all, without discriminations. State has to guarantee equal access to education for all, free education with no fee. Poverty should not be an obstacle to receive education. Education is not a cost is an investment. The Human Capital increases with education and especially with educated women.

But for developing countries cooperation is a must: The International Community needs to give support in order to achieve education for all in these countries, and many developed countries may help through international funds and many NGOs.

2. Full Concept of Education.

Education should not only be a preparation to work, but might contain education to respect other human rights. And not only skills but ethics, spiritual and affective education to be able to be a complete citizen.

Art. 29 CRC: "education of children should be directed to: full respect of human rights, development of his personality, talents and abilities, respect for child's parents, his cultural identity language and values, and natural environment, preparation of the child for responsible life in free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance,

equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

3. Early childhood Education and child's best interest considerations.

Early childhood education from 0 to 6 years old education of children is important to learn languages and skills. But from 0 to 3 years old, we cannot forget that it is important to build a bond between mother and children. The psychological attachment theory should be considered. This theory researched by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth considers that children should be able to build a bond with an adult in their early years (0-3years) naturally with the mother, to be able later in life to build healthy bonds with other adults and be psychologically balanced.

In this sense, the World Health Organization for the psychological and health wellbeing of children recommends mothers to breastfeed 6 months exclusively and 2 years none exclusively.

Some Nordic countries have the possibility to have maternity leave for 2 or 3 years but some others, like Spain, only have 4 months of maternity leave. Therefore, work-family policies should be extended to cover those periods of recommended times and to be able for mothers to achieve WHO recommendations without discriminations.

We have to consider always as a priority the child's best interest: psychologically balanced children are even more important than skills.

4. Formal education is changing in the XXI century:

The Importance of Non-Formal education: media, games (PlayStation) internet and phones, music and entertainment industry is crucial. We cannot give a message of equality at school and then let children play with stereotypes or let violent films or games against gender equality that can affect them.

Also we have to consider a long life learning education. The highest level of education, the highest possibility to have better jobs. Education should not stop at a primary level for the development goals, but should continue through secondary education.

5. We have to consider Family mainstreaming or family perspective in all the agenda post 2015. Strengthen the family should be at least an objective per se or a common goal for all objectives.

Achieving Family mainstreaming in education means respecting parents' rights and responsibility in Education; promoting Family responsible policies/ Family responsible companies; promoting Family stability and cohesion among family members; family reunification policies for education reasons specially when dealing with migration

issues, or divorce; helping, advising and training parents in their roles should be supported especially education.(art.24 and 18CRC).

6. Family prior actor inside and outside the family and should be protected

Family has the right to be protected by Society and State specially while is responsible for the education and caring of children. As established in the Art.16.3 of UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights): “The family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and is entitled to protection by Society and State”. And also, in Art.23 of International Covenant on civil and political rights, CCPR of 1966 “The States parties to the present Covenant recognize that: 1. The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family which is the natural and fundamental group of society particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children”. (Also see Art.17 and art.24 CCPR)

Therefore, when dealing with girl’s needs, we have always to consider and support the girl’s family. Also because they deserve assistance and protection while responsible for dependent children.

7. Eliminate obstacles to women’s education: Some obstacles to girl’s education are referred to girl’s employment additional costs. Transport, books, meals, security and hygienic conditions of schools should be covered too. Economic scholarships may include this too. And also analyze the economic and social particularities of each State that goes beyond education and education laws; and goes to the family laws, property laws and other stereotypes.

8. States should guarantee equal opportunities for all: accessibility, adaptability, quality, affordability.

Final conclusion: It is not useful to educate women and girls if they cannot pass this education to next generations: their daughters. For this reason, we need recognition of the importance of this family education, and need time, work-life balance and flexible arrangements as the key to female participation and family development.