

EnGendering

THE ELEVENTH
FIVE-YEAR
PLAN 2007-2012

REMOVING
OBSTACLES,
CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES



National
Alliance of
Women



INDIA

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A Civil Society Initiative

Coordinated by
National Alliance of Women (NAWO)

With support from
Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)
UN Development Programme (UNDP) &
UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome	MoUEPA	Ministry of Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation
AIR	All India Radio	MSEs	Micro and Small Enterprises
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife	MoWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
ART	Anti-Retroviral Treatment	NAWO	National Alliance of Women
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist	NCERT	National Centre for Education, Research and Training
BIS	Bureau of Indian Standards	NGO	Non-Government Organisation
BPL	Below Poverty Line	NPP	National Population Policy
DoC	Department of Commerce	NRI	Non-Resident Indian
DD	Doordarshan	NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
DoHFW	Department of Health and Family Welfare	PCPNDT	Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques
DoIPP	Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion	PDS	Public Distribution System
EPZ	Export Promotion Zone	PHC	Primary Healthcare Centre
FCI	Food Corporation of India	PRIs	Panchayat Raj Institutions
FPS	Fair Price Shop	SC	Scheduled Caste
FTP	Foreign Trade Policy	SCERT	State Centre for Education, Research and Training
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SDP	State Domestic Product
Gol	Government of India	SEZ	Special Economic Zone
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus	SHG	Self-Help Group
IPR	Intellectual Property Right	SSBs	State Statistical Bureaus
MoCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry	ST	Scheduled Tribe
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	TB	Tuberculosis
MoC	Ministry of Culture	TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
MoEF	Ministry of Environment & Forests	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
MoH&FW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	VAT	Value-Added Tax
MoF	Ministry of Finance		
MoFPI	Ministry of Food Processing Industries		
MoHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development		

Preface

The reality check of the growth of a nation lies not only in economic growth but in the status of its women. Gender equality, a basic human right, is a constituent and instrument of development. A country cannot be called 'developed' if half of its population is deprived of its basic needs, livelihood options, access to knowledge and political voice. Women must participate in all aspects of the development processes. To ensure that women move from merely populating numbers to becoming a strategic presence in decision-making, all categories of women — especially the marginalised, under-represented and excluded groups — must actively be part of the development process. This must be an engendered process to develop and strengthen links between economic growth and gender justice.

An ongoing struggle for women and the women's movement in India, has been in getting women's voices together, articulated and then heard – in the corridors of power. Given the enormous diversity of women, their experiences and needs, this is not easy.

But, an external impetus - in the form of the global conferences on women and in particular the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China – served as a major opportunity and motivation for Indian women to come together. In preparation for Beijing, existing networks converged and new ones emerged. There was a conscious effort to get grassroots women into the pre-Beijing process. The Indian women who attended the conference in Beijing were not the same again. The change had an impact on the women who could not go to Beijing, but were involved in the pre- and post-Beijing processes.

After Beijing, the challenge before the groups interested and working on women, gender and development was how to mainstream gender into development. In India, policy making and development planning is done through the Five-Year Plans. It became important that women's voices and perspectives informed these policies. Hence, engendering the plans became critical.

The first-of-its-kind coordinated effort to engender the Plans was done during the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002), spearheaded by UNIFEM. A Think Tank was created and a process devised to bring on board women from different walks of life in different states and regions of India to give voice to their concerns and opinions. This process was taken forward in preparation for subsequent Plans, and finally brought to bear on the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, as a civil society initiative, steered by an expanded Think Tank and coordinated by the National Alliance of Women (NAWO). The message from these consultations and thousands of women is loud and clear: gender equality and gender justice must be the central focus of the Eleventh Plan.

The process has been an emotional and enriching experience for many of us. Looking to the future, it is essential that the process is institutionalised and women's analysis and experience continue to inform and influence the development policies and plans in a coherent and consistent manner. In return, the planning process must create opportunities for these voices to be heard.

The Eleventh Five-Year Plan has been approved by the National Development Council and we believe that quite a few of the recommendations - particularly relating to the women in the North East and the excluded groups - have been addressed. A more detailed analysis of the Plan will be done as soon as the document is available.

We wish to thank the individuals and institutions that actively engaged in engendering the Eleventh Five Year Plan - the organisers of the regional meetings, the thousands of women who participated, the Think Tank Members and the National Alliance of Women (NAWO).

We are grateful to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, in particular Ms. Parul Debi Das, Joint Secretary, for their keen interest, support and involvement in the process.

Without the financial support from UNDP and UNIFEM this project and process would not have been possible. Special thanks to UNIFEM Regional Programme Director Ms. Chandni Joshi and Deputy Director Ms. Firoza Mehrotra and UNDP Head, Human Development Resource Centre Professor Seetha Prabhu for their support. A special thanks to Meenakshi Kathel and Gitanjali Singh for their help throughout the process.

Members of the Planning Commission, in particular Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairperson and Dr. Syeeda S. Hameed, Member, provided support and opportunities for interaction with the Commission. We are confident that the voices and concerns of women will be reflected in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan.

And finally, a special thanks to Think Tank member, Anita Anand, for collating and editing this report.

Professor Pam Rajput
Convenor, Think Tank
Vice President, NAWO

Executive Summary

India is arguably amongst the most complex democracies in the world, with a long history of commitment to women's welfare and empowerment through Constitutional provisions, legislation, policies and plans and civil society action, even while deep levels of structural gender bias persist within families, societies and economies.

Over the last 57 years, the shift from a 'welfare' orientation to an 'empowerment' approach has been gradual. Language is a beginning, followed by changing hearts and minds, creating policies and strategies and implementing them. Policies give credence to change. In the case of India, the immense organising at the grassroots level by civil society and women's organisations has led the way to inform policy. The challenges to engendering policy and planning are formidable and there are no institutional mechanisms in place that encourage and allow efficient intervention. Where they exist, these are sporadic and one dimensional.

In 1996, a unique experiment began. Born out of a vision of UNIFEM, it included the Planning Commission, the UN system, civil society organisations and the Government of India — in a process to engender the policy and planning process. UNIFEM created a Think Tank to bring the concerns and experiences of women, from a gender perspective, to the Ninth Five-Year Plan. A concerted effort was made to get women in different parts of India, from different walks of life to come together to understand how their lives were affected by policy and their role in influencing policy. For the first time in the history of planning in India, 'gender' was mentioned and a Component Plan for Women was included in the 1997-2002 Plan.

This report, in preparation for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, is a result of several rounds of consultations and interactions — beginning with recommendations to the Approach Paper of the Planning Commission, a response to the Approach paper, a synopsis of the regional and sector-wise consultations and recommendations for the final Plan. It offers analysis on how a diverse set of social, cultural, political and economic issues impact women. In prioritising forward-looking action for the upcoming Plan, participants in these processes have highlighted the issues of accountability, capacity-building and governance.

The overarching recommendations focus on initiating and promoting w-governance (governance by, of and for women), ensuring adherence to laws and addressing corruption, enforcement and implementation of all pro-women laws, redefinition of the poverty line to reflect the Indian reality, and elimination of all forms of violence against women. There are recommendations for Ministries and from regions.

An engendered Plan must ensure an enabling environment in which women's contribution to the economy can be tapped and enhanced in a substantial and holistic way. A life-cycle approach to women's development requires this environment — from conception to death — an environment that provides physical, emotional, economic and political and community security to girls and women.

This document is a work in progress. Engendering the planning process is an enormous task. The Think Tank that has assisted in putting this document together — with thousands of women who were part of the meetings where discussions on the Plan were held — are aware that this work is the tip of the iceberg and that the task of engendering the Eleventh Plan has just begun.

Introduction

The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index for the year 2007, ranks India 114th among 128 countries. The index comprises economic, political, educational and health parameters. India has overall 59.4 per cent gender equality. In 'economic participation and opportunity', India's position is 122, in the bottom 10, at 39.8 per cent.

The Report examines four critical areas of inequality between men and women:

1. Economic participation and opportunity – outcomes on salaries, participation levels and access to high-skilled employment;
2. Educational attainment – outcomes on access to basic and higher level education;
3. Political empowerment – outcomes on representation in decision-making structures; and
4. Health and survival – outcomes on life expectancy and sex ratio.

The Gender Gap Index assesses countries on how well they are dividing their resources and opportunities among their male and female populations, regardless of the overall levels of these resources and opportunities. By providing a comprehensible framework for assessing and comparing global gender gaps and by revealing those countries that are role models in dividing these resources equitably between women and men, the Index serves as a catalyst for greater awareness as well as greater exchange between policymakers.

India is arguably amongst the most complex democracies in the world, with a long history of commitment to women's welfare and empowerment through Constitutional provisions, legislation, policies and plans even while deep levels of structural gender bias persist within families, societies and economies.

There are formidable opportunities and challenges, including continued high rates of economic growth in the face of a declining sex ratio, decreasing energy and natural resources, increasing income inequality and an urban-rural divide. An informed and purposive approach to addressing the inequities of women's social, political and economic exclusion, particularly amongst excluded groups, can no longer be viewed in terms of 'women's issues'. Rather, gender equality is a core prerequisite for sustainable and equitable economic growth.

No discussion of women, gender, planning and policy can happen without addressing the context in which Indian women live and die. The links between women's economic empowerment and the declining sex ratio is more important than at first glance. The constant undervaluing of women's worth in economic and social terms and statistical ability to measure the differences has brought the issue to a head. There is evidence from countries like South Korea – which, in 1990, had 116.5 boys to 100 girls – that an awareness of the causes can help in designing policies and programmes to make a difference. The Government of Korea, as it expanded its economy,

developed important positive social messaging and created education and job opportunities for women. By 2006 the sex ratio was 107.4 boys to 100 girls. In 1991, 40 per cent of the 5400 married women below 45 years surveyed wanted a boy. By 2007, this figure was 10 per cent. This example provides some powerful lessons for India.

According to the 2001 census, India's population crossed the one-billion (100-crore) mark, the pace of population growth slowed down during 1991-2001, and 27 per cent or 286 million people lived in urban areas.

The child sex ratio (the proportion of girls to 1000 boys in the age group 0-6 years) was 962 in 1981, declining to 945 in 1991 and 927 in 2001. The decline has been sharper in the states of Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat.

Over 75 per cent men and 50 per cent women are literate, and the absolute number of illiterate women fell from 200 million in 1991 to 193 million in 2001. Among the total number of literates, the proportion of those educated up to the primary school level is about 55.6 per cent. In 2,351 villages with populations of over 100, there was not even one single literate woman.

In the last decade, the number of workers in the agricultural sector declined. As the economy grows and diversifies, more people are opting for work in the non-agricultural sector. Increasing literacy and opportunities for education and employment nudge people to seek work in areas other than agriculture.

In all, there are 400 million workers; of these, 312 million are main workers and 88 million marginal workers (i.e., those who did not work for at least 183 days in the 12 months preceding the census-taking). Among the main workers, 23.3 per cent are women and of these about 87.3 per cent are from rural areas. This is also twice that of male workers, which may be due to their being employed predominantly in activities like cultivation and agricultural labour. Fifty-three per cent of all male workers, 75 per cent of all female workers and 85 per cent of all rural female workers are in agriculture. Twenty per cent of all rural households are headed by women who are either widow, whose husbands have deserted them or have migrated. In the urban areas, the majority of women work in households and engage in other non-formal work.

In marginal work women outnumber men. In three of the four categories, viz. cultivators, agricultural labourers and household industries, women marginal workers outnumber men.

These, and other statistics suggest that while women, like men, continue to be marginalised in certain kinds of work, they also make less money than men and have less job security. The declining sex ratio further suggests that women are still undervalued in society. At the same time, women are getting more education, becoming more conscious of the benefits of having small families and seeking alternative employment.

Globalisation and growth and diversification of the economy hold promise for women and men - jobs, a better quality of life and fewer struggles. But the same trends could, instead, widen differences and deepen inequities. Deliberate planning - keeping gender and inequities in mind - can ensure that the obstacles that hold women back are systematically removed and opportunities for genuine growth and empowerment put in place. This requires efforts from inside and outside the government, in public-private partnerships, in institutions of research, academia and civil society organisations. It requires alliances within and across institutions.

The important task of creating policy, allocating funds and showcasing the ideological and practical parameters of development and change lie within the Planning Commission and its

Number of Workers (in '000s)			
Category	Persons	Males	Females
Total population	1,028,610	532,157	496,453
Total workers	402,235	275,015	127,220
Main workers	313,005	240,148	72,857
Marginal workers	89,230	34,867	54,363
Non-workers	626,376	257,142	369,234
Cultivation	127,313	85,417	41,896
Agricultural labourers	106,957	57,329	49,446
Household industry workers	16,957	8,744	8,213
Other workers	151,190	123,525	27,665

Source : PCA India, Census of India 2001

Five-Year Plans. Therefore, the task of engendering the Five-Year Plans is an important step in bringing about policy change for women.

Engendering Policy-Making

The 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women adopted a Platform for Action which advocated, among other things, a major focus on mainstreaming gender policies and programmes.

The report of the UN Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3, 18 September 1997) says: "... mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

Women are major contributors to India's economy and an important constituent of development. Their empowerment is essential for distributive justice and for the nation's growth. Engendering the nation's development plan and processes means recognising that women and men are socialised differently. And, as gender is a macroeconomic variable, it needs to be incorporated into the growth model.

Engendering the growth model requires that women be perceived, first, as producers of economic goods and second, of non-economic goods that contribute to development. The first implies recognition of women as producers of market goods and services and requires integrating male-female differences in their constraints and potential to development policies. The second implies incorporating unpaid work as a macro-economic variable, as it contributes to the well-being of the population and in the formation of human capital.

The growth model in the planning process assumes three sources of growth: capital, labour and technology. However, this excludes natural capital. The concept of sustainable development that integrates natural capital with the development process is missing in the model. Indeed, for several decades now, communities working to input the planning process, including women and gender advocates, have asked that the development paradigm be defined beyond economic growth to reflect the reality of India's population.

An engendered Plan would include a gender dimension in all macro policies – fiscal, trade, agriculture, industry, infrastructure, labour and employment. This can be achieved by incorporating the specific needs of women and men in policy design, implementation, and assessing the impact of these policies on them.

Most women in India are not economically independent. Besides this, they often support their families, immediate and extended. The gender wage gap is remarkable: women earn only 38 per cent of the average male wage. This indicates the low value attributed to women's work. Statistics do not reflect the enormous work done by women – in rural India, nearly three billion days per year are spent gathering fuel and 700 million days processing it – i.e., chopping, storing and handling, all work that is almost exclusively done by women. The following table gives evidence that most of the work done by women is non-marketed labour, considered "unproductive" and not included in economic statistics.

Indicator	Female	Male
Sex ratio	933	1000
Adult literacy (over 15 years) in 2004	47.8%	73.4%
Economic activity rate in 2004/5, rural/urban	32.7% / 16.6%	54.6% / 54.9%
Total work time, minutes per day (2000)	457	391
Time allocation on market & non-market activities	35:65	92:8

Sources: UNDP, Human Development report 2006; National Sample Survey Organisation (2006), New Delhi.

To correct many of these discrepancies, gender equality and gender justice must be articulated as a central goal of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan. The ultimate goal in gender equality is to ensure that women and men have equitable access to, and benefit from society's resources, opportunities and rewards. And, as part of this, women need to have equal participation in defining what is valued and how this can be achieved.

Creating an enabling environment

The planning process and the Five-Year Plans themselves lay the base for development programmes on the ground supported by fiscal allocations. Therefore, the task of any engendered Plan is to ensure that an enabling environment is created in which women's contribution to the economy can be tapped and enhanced in a substantial and holistic way. In a life-cycle approach to women's development, this environment needs to ensure – from conception to death – an environment that provides physical, emotional, economic, and political and community security to girls and women.

Engendering the Five-Year Plans

The Think Tank

The Think Tank is a group representing women's organisations, activists, researchers, and academicians working to engender India's Five-Year Plans and other policy initiatives.

The first Think Tank was formed in 1996, at the initiative of UNIFEM, South Asia and the UN system in India. Fresh from the 1995 Fourth UN World Conference on Women in China, Indian women, the government and the UN system were keen to see women as an integral part of the policy process. For the first time, consultations were designed to factor in the experiences and voices of women across a spectrum of researchers, representatives of grassroots women's organisations and various other activists and the interactions between them and state and national policy-makers.

Towards this, four regional consultations were held in the different regions of India – North, North-East, West and South – organised by and with NGOs who had a record of work in women's empowerment. Issues related to policies and programmes were discussed at each of these consultations, attended by grassroots women, representatives of women's organisations, researchers, planners and representatives of the state-level and national planning commissions.

The proceedings and recommendations were collated and presented to representatives of the Union Planning Commission in a national consultation and incorporated into the Ninth Five-Year Plan. These appeared in the document as the Women's Component Plan, and were featured in the recommendations to various ministries and sectors. Additionally, inputs were made to ministries. For the first time in the history of India's planning process, mainstreaming gender was included in the preamble to the Plan.

Prior to 1996, women have been mentioned in the Five-Year Plans and women experts have been consulted to make sector-wise inputs. However, 1996 was the first time a coordinated and planned effort was made to invite women's inputs into the policy planning process from a gender perspective.

Process for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan

For the current Plan, the process is a civil society initiative, coordinated by the National Alliance of Women (NAWO), and supported by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). The Think Tank was expanded and enhanced to include members who had been working in their areas of expertise from a gender perspective.

Learning from the experience in 1996, members of the Think Tank felt it was essential to begin the process of interface within the Think Tank and between itself and the Planning Commission well before the Approach Paper was drafted by the Planning Commission. In late 2005, the Think Tank met to discuss the need to make inputs into the upcoming Approach Paper. Following this, a presentation was made to the Planning Commission in several interactions, and at various stages

of the Commission's work. The Planning Commission requested the assistance of the Think Tank to develop detailed recommendations and inputs into its work.

Toward this, five regional and two national consultations were held in 2006-2007. The objective of these, as in the Ninth Plan, was to have on board the voices of a cross-section of women. The recommendations, as these came in from the meetings, were presented to the Planning Commission, its working groups, state level commissions, and to the ministries. Additionally, the Convener of the Think Tank actively engaged with the Planning Commission to request that members of the Think Tank be part of the Commissions' working groups.

Indian policy-makers have a strong track record in the creation of legislative and administrative provisions. However, mechanisms (both in their structural and human aspects) to ensure implementation are often ineffective. An explicit focus is essential and needed on creating mechanisms to ensure that new provisions will have impact on the ground.

This report offers sector-wise analysis on how a diverse set of social, cultural, political and economic issues impact women. Recommendations point to short- and longer-term requirements. In prioritising forward looking action for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan by their substantive components, issues of accountability, capacity-building and governance are of utmost importance.

Accountability requires that those responsible for implementing policies ensure that mechanisms for measuring impact are in place. Mechanisms must include clear and measurable outcomes in the short, medium and long term, as well as the involvement of civil society in the monitoring of policies, plans and programmes.

Capacity-building requires citizens to understand policies that impact them. Do they understand their rights and obligations under its provisions? Do civil servants, administrators and programme operators have the information and resources needed to implement this policy? Do local government leaders and Panchayati raj institution (PRI) members have the information and resources to connect policy to civil society?

Good governance requires enhancing accountability mechanisms to ensure that policies take shape and to increase the capacity of various players to implement policies. Policies that are designed, implemented and monitored through a collaborative process between government and civil society will have a higher chance of success.

Engendering national policies not only requires substantive and technical reforms, but equally the promotion of more inclusive and transparent processes through which policies are implemented.

Recommendations from regional meetings

The recommendations in this report have emerged from a participatory process of documenting the needs and aspirations of women across different parts of the country. The process involved consulting more than 2,000 women.

The underlying philosophy of these recommendations is that women's experiences at the ground level need to inform policies – at the Union and state levels. Women as individuals and in organisations want to be an inherent part of policy and programmes that are where the process and outcomes that is equitable, sustainable, participatory and efficient. The main aim of these recommendations is to inform the design elements, implementation arrangement and monitoring mechanisms of initiatives of the Government of India.

The recommendations are in the following sections:

- Recommendations Overall
- Recommendations by Ministry
- Recommendations by Regions

Overall Recommendations

1. Introduce and promote w-governance

■ **Challenge:** In the Lok Sabha, the representation of women varies between 6 and 9 per cent and in the Rajya Sabha, between 6 and 12 per cent. The number of women in the Central Council of Ministers has remained around 10 per cent between 1985 and 2005. The representation of women in the state legislatures has been much lower, ranging from 1.8 to 6.3 per cent. However, in the Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs), at the local level, women are rather well represented, at 26.6 per cent.

The experience of PRIs and urban local bodies – with the entry of 1 million women under the 73rd and 74th amendment quota for women – indicates that women have and are making a difference in the areas of water resources, alcohol abuse, education, health and domestic violence, among other things. Women also express different values. They understand and factor in proximity – in drinking water, fuel sources, crèches, health services, a court of justice or an office of administration, the redress of grievances and (most important of all) the ability to mobilise struggle at local levels. Women are helping to radicalise local government. Within this, there are obstacles to the realisation of their transformative potential: resistance to devolving power and funds from centres of (male) power to the periphery; considerable handicaps to their involvement in politics, like inadequate education, their reproductive and productive roles, a lack of self-confidence and the opposition of entrenched cultural and religious views.

■ **Action:** Introduce and promote w-governance (like e-governance) to ensure presence of women at all levels of decision-making and involve more women at the policy-making level. Introduce Women's Commissions (with a mixture of men and women) in all states immediately with more power and adequate resources to deal with women's concerns more effectively.

2. Ensure adherence to laws and address corruption

■ Challenge

Laws: The State neglectfully or knowingly breaks the laws it creates. Across the board and more specifically in many government-sponsored jobs – like cooking of the mid-day meals – workers are paid wages far lower than minimum wage. In some cases, tribal land is taken over

for government or government-sponsored schemes, without adequate compensation to the owners. And, money allotted to tribal welfare is diverted to general funds.

■ **Action:** Enforce the laws that have been created and review them in the context of present day realities. Create monitoring mechanisms to ensure that laws are implemented.

■ Challenge

Corruption: Corruption is endemic in state projects and schemes. Globally, research and evidence confirms that corruption disproportionately impacts the poor. Corruption hinders economic development, reduces social services, and diverts investments in infrastructure, institutions and social services. Corruption in the budgetary process reduces important expenditures for development and for social safety nets. It shifts the already limited funds for priority social sector spending to areas that benefit few people. The evasion of requirements for public health, protection of the environment, etc. can have disastrous consequences for people's livelihoods. It is reported that in the Eighth Plan period, of the total expenditure for every rupee spent by the Government for poverty alleviation only 15 per cent actually reached the people. The rest was wasted and pocketed en-route.

■ **Action:** Initiate a corruption perception index of all government departments, public sector enterprises and banks. Promote transparency in public procurement and e-governance via information technology, to check corruption. Corrupt activities should be criminalised; public officials should regularly declare assets; and whistle blowers should be protected. Access to information from the government departments should be made convenient.

3. Enforcement and implementation of all pro-women laws

■ **Challenge:** Several progressive laws for women's empowerment are in place. However, due to inadequate – and at times weak – enforcement mechanisms, there are delays, as for example in forming rules for the newly passed law against domestic violence, in formulating laws against sexual harassment in the workplace and non-compliance of the Equal Wages Act and of equal property rights due to loopholes in the law.

■ **Action:** Suitable machinery for severe punishment in case of non-compliance of all pro-women laws is needed, including laws on child marriage, dowry and trafficking offenders. For all pro-women laws passed in the country, proper attention to the implementation mechanisms, budgetary allocations and information and advocacy campaigns is essential.

4. Redefine poverty line to reflect reality

■ **Challenge:** The current official definition of poverty misrepresents the real situation. A simple caloric measure as a yardstick of poverty is insufficient. At present 37.7 per cent of Indian households do not have access to a nearby water source; 49 per cent do not have a proper shelter; 69.5 per cent do not have access to suitable toilets; 85.2 per cent of Indian villages do not have a secondary school; and 43 per cent of the villages do not have an all-weather road connecting them.

■ **Action:** Upgrade the concept of food security to that of nutritious food security. Provision of basic amenities such as safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter for urban and rural poor with special focus on women-headed households (single, separated, divorced, widows, deserted, differently-abled). Benchmarks for determining policies for the poor are needed, rather than about each citizen's food grain intake. This poverty line should be calculated for each state separately to account for regional differences in taste, clothing requirement, housing requirement, etc. Further, *Panchayats* and local bodies need to be strengthened in terms of power, funds and technology support with incentives to address clean water, fodder, sanitation and fuel and energy needs of women within close proximity, especially in Dalit, tribal and urban settlements.

5. Eliminate all forms of Violence against Women

■ **Challenge:** Violence against women and girls affects the health and economic stability of women, families, and communities. A violent environment – within and outside the home – discourages women from participating in the social, economic and political life of their communities. According to a World Health Organisation (WHO) survey, in India, each incidence of violence against women costs an average of 7 working days.

While domestic violence is a problem across the globe, women in developing nations face particular challenges. Research shows that intimate partner violence against women has serious consequences for maternal mortality and child survival. Violence against women most recently seems to start at the womb – with female foeticide. The alarming decline in the sex ratio of girls to boys is indicative of the deep and strong preference for sons.

Despite attempts to increase awareness and design interventions in the last decade or so, there is a disturbing trend towards increasing incidence of violence against women (coupled with low conviction rates) in various forms – female foeticide, custodial, domestic, caste and communal, development related, trafficking and State violence. Existing laws and policies designed to protect women from violence are not adequately implemented. There is lack of pertinent research and data on crimes and violence against women, as for example, against older women, HIV-positive women, differently-abled women, incest, etc. There are also delays in passing of amendments and new laws, such as with the law on sexual harassment at workplaces. Involvement of women's groups and networks in the process of drafting of new legislations is essential.

There is a need to study and analyse why attempts to deal with violence against women do not succeed.

■ **Action:** At the highest levels of leadership and policy, a strong call for no toleration of violence against women ... and that people who subscribe to violence against women are against the interests of families, society and the nation. Besides punitive measures, research and advocacy for prevention, intervention and healing mechanisms are also urgently needed.

For prevention: Programmes are needed for raising consciousness, beginning with curriculum changes in schools and colleges; gender sensitisation programmes for police personnel, judges, lawyers, teachers, medical workers, religious leaders, legislators, managers, using CEDAW as a framework; ensure that media plays a positive role in the portrayal of women, avoiding stereotypical roles for women; more women should be in the censor board.

For intervention: In every district, create mechanisms for safe and sensitive support services, shelter homes for women and girls; free legal aid cells counselling centres, and trauma units for victims and survivors of violence, in collaboration with NGOs; fast-track courts, lok adalats, and family courts that ensure convictions within a set time-frame. Medical treatment – resulting from violence – could be provided free of cost, especially to women from BPL households. Rehabilitation and capacity-building for victims and survivors should include equipping them with skills for self-sustenance, offering livelihood opportunities, access to right to property and land; care and protection, and preventing stigma and discrimination. Ensure special care for minors who are victims of any form of violence; and girl children must be protected from trafficking, especially during disaster situations.

For healing: Offer counselling and rehabilitation of perpetrators and those affected by violence. Build capacities in communities for individual and group counselling and healing.

Create timelines for implementation of existing laws to eliminate violence against women with appropriate monitoring mechanisms and budgetary allocations for all stages of prevention intervention and healing to combat violence.

6. Institutional Mechanisms – an unfinished agenda

■ **Challenge:** Over the last few years there have been several policy initiatives in creating institutional mechanisms to bring women into the mainstream of development.

The 2001 National Policy for Empowerment of Women announced formation of National and State Councils to oversee the implementation and operations of the Policy on an ongoing basis. The National Council was to be headed by the Prime Minister, and the State Councils by the Chief Ministers. They were to be broad in composition, with officials as well as Central and State Social Welfare Boards, National and State Commissions, NGOs, women's organisations, trade unions, academics, experts, social activists, etc. These bodies were to meet twice a year and review the progress made in implementing the National Policy. Further, the National Development Council, the highest body for planning in the hierarchy of Government, which has to officially approve all the Five-Year Plans, was also to be informed of the progress of the programmes undertaken under the Policy from "time to time" and their advice sought.

Other promises made in the National Policy for Empowerment of Women on institutional mechanisms include setting up of State Resource Centres, which would be linked with the women's studies centres functioning in the country. At the district level, the existing institutions would be strengthened and, at the grassroots, women's self-help groups (SHGs) would be helped to federate as registered societies at the Panchayati and municipal levels and be involved in the implementation of the Policy.

The Policy also announced the operational strategy for converting the Policy into concrete programmes at the ground level. This was to be done through the mechanism of the National and State Action Plans. These plans would be time-bound, would be implemented in a participatory way and also involve all the institutional machineries in the country.

Till 2007, none of these commitments were fulfilled. The MWCD as the nodal machinery has the responsibility of implementing the Policy. The requirements of gender mainstreaming call for

close coordination between MWCD and the other ministries and departments (as well as other agencies) that are involved in the advancement and empowerment of women. The setting up of gender budgeting cells in more than 52 ministries and departments at the national level has the potential of taking the preparation and implementation of the Plan of Action forward.

■ **Action:** To ensure that these proposals are addressed, it is essential to put certain mechanisms into place. More specifically:

- An apex body at the national level, as envisaged in the 2001 Policy, should be set up; the Apex Body should prepare a comprehensive review of the progress of action plans.
- Reporting on progress of women's plans to the National Development Council should be implemented.
- Action Plans for women at the national and state levels should be developed in consultation with women's groups, lawyers, activists, women's studies centres, etc.
- While Action Plans should receive inputs from all sector-specific agencies, the format of the Plans should address cross-cutting issues such as unpaid work, land and asset entitlements, skill development and vocational training, child care, occupational health, wages, etc., and be mainstreamed across all the implementing agencies.
- The Action Plan should be time-bound and a system of accountability for each component or action point should be spelt out. Different deadlines may be set for different components.
- Appointments to the National and State Commissions for Women should be made on the recommendations of a Search Committee comprising people from various strata, including women's movements and development organisations. The Search Committee should be set up by a decision of the Cabinet. The statutorily mandated systems for making appointments to other high level commissions and bodies can also be reviewed.
- All State Commissions should have a statutory base.
- National and State Commissions should have more functional and financial autonomy.
- The Policy commitment for setting up Resource Centres at national and state levels has still to be implemented.
- The Women's Component Plan must be extended to all ministries and departments and be implemented.
- All laws and plans must go through the Parliamentary Committee on Women's Empowerment.
- The Union Government must make a commitment to the women of India and all implementing agencies should be accountable to its achievements in a spirit of collective responsibility.

Recommendations by Ministry

1. Ministry of Agriculture

Agriculture provides the principal means of livelihood for over 60 per cent of India's population. Despite a steady decline in its share of the GDP, it remains the largest economic sector in the country. Low and volatile growth rates and the recent escalation of agrarian crisis in several parts of the Indian countryside are a threat not only to national food security, but also to the economic well-being of the nation. Rural women are major producers of food in terms of value, volume and hours of work and there is steady feminisation of Indian agriculture.

A re-orienting of public policies with a gender perspective for agriculture and allied activities are needed. Women farmers are ignored in the agriculture agenda. They constitute two-thirds of the agriculture workforce and own less than one-tenth of the agricultural lands. Traders have a monopoly and buyers and middlemen dictate prices, depriving the small and marginal farmer of a fair market value for her product. Prime agricultural land is increasingly being used for non-agricultural purposes. Agricultural land in specified areas needs to be set aside for women farmers.

■ Recommendations

- Increase public investment in agriculture – a minimum of 10 per cent of GDP with a stipulation that 50 per cent of the new investment should be made in rural activities directly benefiting women.
- Ensure ownership rights and management of productive assets including land and animals to women through:
 - Joint *pattas* (titles) for all assets created through public funding, including watersheds, check dams, wastelands, and community bio-gas plants.
 - Distribute surplus land and land released under all land distribution programmes – such as land released under land ceiling acts, custodial land, and bhoomi-dan land – exclusively to rural landless women workers.
 - Provide incentives such as provision of higher subsidies for land development, irrigation, credit and a 50 per cent rebate on transfer fee, house tax, sales tax and stamp duties on land owned by women, housing and rural industries.

- Engender agricultural policies and increase women's representation at all levels of public policies and public institutions dealing with farm and non-farm activities.
- Lease land to women's groups for women's collective economic activities through government schemes.
- Ensure women's control over complementary resources (irrigation, credit, water, forest, fuel, fodder, information and training).
- Extend forest rights to women in forest and tribal areas.
- Initiate effective formulation and implementation of rehabilitation policies.
- In case of displacement, the rehabilitation policy should ensure that agriculture land is allotted to agricultural workers who have been displaced for their land and employment requirements.
- Ensure that all rehabilitation and government grant of land transfer to households should be with joint titles, to affected families which they enjoyed prior to dislocation, and a stake in the newly created assets private and public.
- Strengthen capacities and empower women.
- Initiate training programmes such as land surveying, resource mapping and management, use of technology, marketing, financial and cooperative management and organic farming.
- Encourage design of women-friendly farm and non-farm technologies.
- Waive the pending loans and debt against small and marginal farmers immediately.
- Conduct a census of farmers and families where suicides have occurred and design compensation packages particularly for women and children in affected families.
- Devise mechanisms to deal with trade liberalisation of agriculture and non-agriculture activities.
- Create social safety nets for farm and non-farm communities and women who are adversely affected.
- Encourage documentation and spread of women's traditional knowledge in the agriculture sector.

■ Institutional mechanisms

- Initiate institutional mechanisms for women's equal partnership at all levels – from the village to the Centre.
- Design occupational safety and health measures.
- Institute new land-use plans to ensure that initiatives are labour enhancing, effect food security positively and that women have access to these new opportunities.

2. Ministry of Commerce and Industry

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has two departments – Commerce and Industrial Policy & Promotion. The Department of Commerce formulates and implements the foreign trade policy and responsibilities relating to multilateral and bilateral commercial relations, state trading, export promotion measures and development and regulation of certain export oriented industries and commodities. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion is

responsible for Intellectual Property Rights relating to patents, designs, trade marks and geographical indication of goods and oversees the initiative relating to their promotion and protection.

At present the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) aims to reach out to 650 million people with a special focus on handloom and handicraft industry. This is to be done through BPOs and special economic zones (SEZs), which are seen as channels of employment generation. How will women benefit from these? Will their needs be kept in mind?

Developments in commerce and industry and the needs of women are rarely matched. When human power needs are sought, men are the first to be recruited. It is assumed that women are redundant and will be hired as last choice, at lower levels and wages. There is no blueprint for commercial and industrial growth and there is certainly no gender perspective when there is a plan. The challenge is to devise a gender sensitive trade policy.

■ Recommendations

- Generate sex-desegregated databases for planning of gender-dominated sector-specific economic growth, as most women workers and entrepreneurs are in the non-formal sector and cottage industry, and not factored into statistical resources used for planning.
- Gender sensitisation of policy-makers and industry leaders.
- Engender policies of commerce and industry. Additionally, private sector industry bodies and their members need to develop and adopt gender policies and practices.
- In the export promotion zones (EPZs) and SEZs, institute clear policies on hiring, maintaining and promoting women, as well as developing policies and practices keeping in mind the needs of women.

3. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (MCAFPD) has two departments – the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and the Department of Public Distribution (DPD). The former formulates policies for consumer cooperatives, monitoring prices, availability of essential commodities, consumer movement in the country and controlling of statutory bodies like Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Weights and Measures. The Department of Public Distribution manages the food economy of the country; it works to ensure remunerative rates for farmers and supply of food grains at reasonable prices to the consumers through the public distribution system (PDS).

Over 72 per cent of Indian consumers live in rural areas. Most of these are largely poor, marginalised and often workers in the non-formal sector without access to basic needs such as food, health and education, despite the many development plans and programmes of which they are beneficiaries. However, while the Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns are overflowing with grain, there are regions in the country affected by drought and floods, needing larger supplies of food grains. In addition to availability of food grains the poor need purchasing power, which could be ensured by either raising their incomes or supplying food grains at subsidised prices. Employment generation programmes for the poor are created to ensure that the poor have sufficient purchasing power.

The PDS supplies food grains to the poor at subsidised prices. With a network of more than 4.62 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) distributing commodities worth more than Rs 30,000 crore to about 16 crore families annually, the PDS in India is perhaps the largest distribution network of its type in the world. Levels of corruption in the PDS are higher in the states with higher poverty incidence – with diversion of food supplies to open markets at every point in the distribution chain. Nearly 60 per cent of the households using PDS supplies say that unavailability of rations at the FPSs is very frequent. In states with high poverty levels, this has been found to be as high as 80 per cent. Often there is incorrect identification and targeting of the needy households.

■ Recommendations

- The PDS is not working properly. The State needs to devise a more workable and efficient scheme for ensuring that the poor and especially women-headed households, old and destitute women get adequate food regularly at prices that correctly reflect the subsidies meant for them.
- PDS supplies should be available in all rural, urban and tribal areas.
- Individual, not family ration cards should be issued to each citizen.
- Devise mechanisms to curtail corruption in the implementation of the PDS.

4. Ministry of Culture

The mandate of the Ministry of Culture (MoC) is to preserve, promote and disseminate all forms of art and culture. The functional spectrum ranges from creating cultural awareness from the grass root level to the international cultural exchange level.

■ Recommendations

- Preservation and promotion of culture requires inputs and support from both men and women within the social constructs. Towards this, a gender policy needs to be initiated and implemented for all policies and projects related to culture.

5. Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region

India's north-eastern region has essentially depended on central funding for development works. Despite the fact that the per capita Plan outlays for the north-eastern states have, over a period of time, been considerably higher than the national average, the states still rank significantly below the national average in infrastructure development. In terms of per capita State Domestic Product (SDP) or other development indices, such as power, length of roads or hospital beds, the north-east region ranks well below the national average. Though the literacy levels are higher than the national average, vocational training and entrepreneurial skills remain weak.

As a border trade area, the region is plagued with smuggling, particularity of narcotics, and trafficking of women and children. There is a high incidence of HIV/AIDS.

■ Recommendations

- Development in the north-east region must include the elements of accountability, building, maintaining and monitoring appropriate infrastructure, and promoting livelihoods and entrepreneurship in all the states of the region. A gender perspective must be included in all the plans, outlays and programmes. Planning needs to be participatory and include various representative sections of the population.

Detailed recommendations for the region and each state are in the last section of the report.

6. Ministry of Environment and Forests

The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government, for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of environmental and forestry programmes. The principal activities of the Ministry are conservation and survey of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife, prevention and control of pollution, forestation and regeneration of degraded areas, protection of environment and legislation.

Women's life and livelihoods, particularly of poor women, is closely linked to natural resources. Sustainable management of natural resources are essential for women's empowerment.

■ Recommendations

Development Projects

- Projects and industrial activities need to prioritise ecology and people. Health and environment impact assessments and rehabilitation plans need to be provided prior to finalising any development project.
- Projects need to focus on regional needs first, ensuring minimal displacement and adequate rehabilitation packages.
- Intellectual property rights should value and respect bio-diversity.
- Sustainability of dams to be investigated since many dam projects have caused silting, salination and draining of rivers.
- Micro hydro electricity projects and alternative energy sources should be given preference.
- Non-extractive and non-exploitative industries to be promoted.
- No displacement without clearance certificates and rehabilitation packages. (This was suggested by a committee made up of human rights activists and affected people, including women.)
- A scientific mining policy is a must. In states where there are no mining policies and mining is a private affair, immediate state intervention is needed to prevent disastrous consequences such as poisoning of water sources, displacement and privatisation of common property resources. Women are most adversely affected in such situations.

Natural resource management

- Ensure that women are integrated in all decisions related to natural resource management.
- Ensure women's control over grazing lands, water resources, forest, fodder, fuel, irrigation, credit and information.
- Actively engage with and encourage civil society involvement to develop policy and programmes to enrich and protect natural resources.
- Remove encroachers of common property lands.
- Devise policy to protect common property resources and ensure equal rights of all local communities without caste, ethnic and gender bias.
- Protect existing forests through improved enforcement and community participation.
- Initiate special programmes for watershed management, conservation, down stream impact assessment, protection of rivers, forest, flora and fauna.

7. Ministry of Finance

The best of plans are dependant on adequate funding and appropriations. All plans, programmes and agreements between the Gol and other public and private parties must reflect the needs of women.

■ Recommendations

- Introduce gender budgeting in every department, ministry, and special cells in all departments at the state level.
- Increase direct taxes as indirect taxes burden the poor, the majority of who are women.
- Withdraw VAT on all food items and selected semi-processed food items.
- Reflect and reconsider tax holidays, tax exemptions and subsidies for SEZs, EPZs, STAs and multiplexes.
- The rupee should not be made fully convertible.
- Increase subsidies to poor farmers and non-farm livelihoods (livestock, fishing, fodder, etc.).
- Increase procurement prices for agricultural produce, and ensure timely payment of this money by the government. Also, introduce strict regulation of private traders.

8. Ministry of Food Processing Industries

The food processing industry in India is one of the largest in terms of production, consumption, export and growth prospects. Since August 1991, the industry has witnessed fast growth in most of the segments.

There is no gender-desegregated data available for those in the food processing industry. It is a sector that has tremendous potential for women, yet there seems to be no mention of this in the policy or programme of the Ministry.

■ Recommendations

- Initiate collection of gender-desegregated data on workers in the sector.
- Create engendered policies and programmes to bring more women into this sector.
- Initiate special training programmes for women to benefit from the growth and opportunity in the sector.

9. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Women experience more episodes of illness than men and are less likely to receive attention till the illness is critical. Maternal mortality rates in rural areas are among the world's highest. Infectious diseases, malnutrition, and maternal and peri-natal causes account for most of women's ill health. The nutritional status of women and girls is compromised by unequal access to food, heavy work demands, and inadequate attention to special nutritional needs (such as iron); on account of this, they are particularly susceptible to poor health, particularly anaemia. Women's health and nutritional status is inextricably bound up with social, cultural, and economic factors that influence all aspects of their lives, and has consequences not only for them, but also for the well-being of their children (particularly females), the functioning of households, and the distribution of resources.

The current approach to healthcare is need based and welfare oriented. The budgetary allocation for health is inadequate and health delivery systems are inaccessible, inefficient and unaffordable, especially in the rural areas. Healthcare services must be more responsive to the needs of the poor and marginalised. There is a narrow focus on women's reproductive needs. A life-cycle approach is needed.

The male-to-female sex ratio is skewed, with declining females. This and the increasing number of missing women need to be areas of major concern to policy-makers at all levels.

Major communicable diseases such as TB, malaria, cholera are still threats to most people, urban and rural, and need special attention. HIV is currently concentrated among women, the poor and marginalised, who often do not have access to testing and services, and bear the heavy burden of supporting and caring for affected family members, even when they themselves are affected. There is a great deal of apathy towards increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS among women.

Privatisation of healthcare and the withdrawal of government from the health sector create challenges and opportunities as often household incomes are not sufficient to cover the cost of healthcare. With increasing privatisation and commercialisation, primary healthcare is being substituted with curative super-speciality tertiary healthcare. There is an absence of regulatory mechanism for the proliferating private sector, particularly the pharmaceutical sector.

Traditional systems of knowledge are eroding and there is a trend towards over-medicalised and techno-centric healthcare.

■ Recommendations

- Increase government spending on healthcare from 0.9 per cent to 3 per cent of the GDP, with matching funds from the states.

- Initiate independent regulatory commissions to regulate and standardise the private sector healthcare services from an equity perspective and reform existing bodies like the Medical Council of India (MCI), Pharmaceutical Council, etc.
- Initiate a Standing Committee for women at all levels with 75 per cent women and 25 per cent men from PRIs, backed by capacity-building and adequate funds. Create a monitoring system to oversee PCPNDT implementation, social audit of services and quality check.
- Ensure women-friendly free and/or affordable, preventive and curative comprehensive primary healthcare accessible to marginalised populations, including migrants, sex workers, hijras, and differently-abled people, with particular attention to women. This should be instituted with the participation of public health professionals on an efficient incentive-based system. Upgrade at least 50-60 primary healthcare centres (PHCs) and their per cent sub-centres as 24x7 and make the phase-wise information of the plan available to all in the community, with particular attention to women.
- Ensure free ambulance referral and or alternate transport mechanisms by identifying a pool of transport in the local area and reimbursement by the state.
- Pay full wages to all frontline workers (AWW, ASHA). The package of services should be reviewed and made convergent and comprehensive with a rationalised workload.
- Initiate policies on mental health, especially for women and adolescents.
- Engender medical education with a holistic perspective on women's health (moving beyond reproductive health) and mainstream women's health concerns in the education system – from the primary education level onwards – in the formal, informal and non-formal sectors.
- Allocate funds for training, treatment in alternate medicine, recognise the role of TBAs and upgrade their skills.
- Address occupational health hazards and special needs of women working in adverse situations, such as mines, plantations, quarries, construction sites, the non-formal sector, free trade zones, in garbage disposal, etc..
- Assure disease control and sanitation during disaster situations.

Law, Policy and Guidelines

- Create a gender focal point in the MHFW and DHFW in all states.
- Develop a national policy on mental health in consultation with mental-healthcare activists with adequate budget provisions at the Central and state levels.
- Develop a strategy and appropriate measures to enforce the implementation of the PCPNDT Act within a fixed time-frame and fix accountability at all levels by undertaking a review of appropriate state authorities that takes into account number of visits, cases filed; non-maintenance of records, medical audit of 'F' forms, standards of performance. etc. Strengthen the case handling and prosecution processes.
- Ensure full enforcement of guidelines on sterilisation by adopting financial disincentives for the state governments that contravene the National Population Policy (NPP) by enforcing the two-child norm and use other coercive measures.

- Label violence as a public health issue and include it in medical education, train auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) and appoint counsellors at the PHCs to deal with violence and trauma.

HIV/AIDS

- Institute special provisions to increase rural women's and children's access to anti-retroviral treatment (ART).
- Increase allocation of funds for ART and treatment for women living with HIV/AIDS.
- Health insurance to cover chronic illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and TB, as well as morbidity.
- Introduce sex education in school curriculum with full support from Central and state mechanisms.
- Encourage voluntary testing for HIV/AIDS.

10. Ministry of Home Affairs

The mandate of the Ministry is to eliminate threats to internal security, including militancy, insurgency and terrorism; preserve, protect and promote social harmony; enforce the rule of law and provide timely justice; provide the society an environment free from crime; uphold the principles of human rights; and mitigate the sufferings resulting from natural and man-made disasters.

In times of peace and conflict, women and girls suffer enormously and their human rights are routinely violated. Sexual harassment in schools, colleges and workplaces is common. Public security is an issue, with parents afraid to let girls and women out of the house for fear that they may be physically and mentally harmed. Kidnapping, abduction and forced trafficking are being reported more and more in the media.

In the time of human disasters such as famine, floods, etc, women and girls also need extra care in terms of housing, toilets, and health care. The same is true for conflicts and riots.

■ Recommendations

- An engendered policy in all of the Ministry's work is essential.

Internally Displaced People

- Formulate a national policy for the resettlement of internally displaced people within a specific time-frame. Conduct surveys of physical structure, livelihood and job opportunities, and basic requirements of people.
- Ensure provision of safe mobility and access – especially for women – to Common Property Resources.
- Initiate and expand vocational and technical training of women, particularly in non-traditional areas, along with appropriate skills-training, technical up-gradation, and entrepreneurship training, under public-private partnership within a region-specific context.

- Upon death of a spouse, land titles could be transferred to women-headed households impacted by conflict.
- Increase allocations to SHGs and develop them into independent cooperatives.
- Provide orphans free care including food and education till class 12.
- Increase the number of trauma and counselling centres.
- Introduce State insurance cover for victims.
- Arrange for capacity-building of boys and girls in order to sensitise them to especially cultural and social issues.
- Consider a quota for conflict-affected female-headed households under Indira Awas Yojna.
- Introduce gender sensitisation of military and para-military forces. There should not be any stationing of military and para-military forces near girls' schools, hostels etc.
- Institute fast-track criminal courts for dealing with military, para-military and other state actors who inflict atrocities against women.
- Monitor implementation of policies and schemes and use media to ensure accountability.

Disasters and conflicts

- Hazardous situations like cyclone and earthquake-prone areas should be recognised and vulnerable communities should be equipped adequately with the science, technology, and infrastructure and transport support required.
- Institute an institutional mechanism to monitor the impact of disasters on women and ensure that an adequate budget is allocated for this.
- Relief and rehabilitation packages should consider women's specific needs. Special consideration must be given to pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Strong environmental laws and vigilance should be in place to avert industrial, chemical, mining disasters and any unsafe economic activities to be prevented.
- In disaster and displacement situations, compensation and assets should be for both men and women. The notion of 'men as heads of households' is to be avoided, so women-headed households can benefit.
- The Centre to monitor the work of state governments, since state governments are often late in responding or not responding at all, especially when conflicts are politically motivated.
- In conflict situations, institute a system of fast-track courts with deadlines for settlement of cases.
- Provision to set up non-partisan committees at different levels to design and monitor interventions during and after conflicts.

11. Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation

The Ministry of Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation formulates policies, sponsors and supports programmes, coordinates the activities of various Union Ministries, state governments and other nodal authorities and monitors programmes concerning all the issues of urban employment, poverty and housing in the country.

■ Recommendations

- Formulate a national policy to cover pavement dwellers and other homeless people residing in the country.
- Allocate houses in joint names if not only in the women's name.
- Introduce a quota for female-headed households.
- Reduce property taxes and related stamp duties, etc for single women.
- Examine the housing being provided under schemes such as Indira Awas Yojna, as these are anti-poor and anti-women.

12. Ministry of Human Resource Development

The primary responsibility of the Ministry of Human Resource Development is education. Funding for education, especially of girls and women, is inadequate. The national policy does not take into consideration the needs of various kinds of education and training and has not responded in a timely and appropriate manner to changing needs and aspirations of the people.

Children, particularly girls, of migrant parents, school drop-outs, children in prisons, children of sex workers, child labourers and disadvantaged groups like those belonging to scheduled castes and tribes, minorities, as well as women and children with disability and those affected and infected with HIV/AIDS, have inadequate access to education. Escalating costs, privatisation and commercialisation are adversely impacting education. Quality of education is being affected by the lack of physical and human infrastructure. Teachers need continuous pedagogical training and reorientation, including gender sensitivity. There is no desegregated data and information at all levels. Currently monitored targets do not address gender disparities.

■ Recommendations

- Ensure that 6 per cent of GDP is invested in education at all levels and of all types.
- Specific allocations to enhance girls' education at all levels including higher, technical and professional education.
- Ensure access by the unreached and disadvantaged groups like the scheduled castes and tribes, minorities, and people with disabilities, among others. Broaden the base of education at the pre-school, secondary and higher education levels by providing neighbourhood schools up to the high school and college levels, each at the block level. Also ensure scholarships, uniforms, mid-day meals, a gender-friendly secure environment, especially in *Navodaya Vidyalayas*.
- Improve education infrastructure – proper buildings, separate and common toilets – for the girls. More and better trained women teachers, regular in-service training with up-to-date syllabi, gender sensitisation, and remedial teaching for disadvantaged girls.
- Increased support for higher education (for greater accessibility) in infrastructure, faculty development, research support and increased women's studies centres to promote gender sensitisation and awareness in the entire higher education system about women's multiple roles.

- Allocation of extra funds to universities, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the state councils of educational research and training (SCERTs), and other training institutions for improvement in the content of education, and make them free of communal, religious and gender biases. This should include training in life-skills and human rights issues to act as a deterrent for rising drug abuse, incidence of violence against women and trafficking.
- To ensure efficiency and check corruption rigorous monitoring and inspecting by authorities and civil society vigilant groups.
- Building on the reservation policy, an internal reservation of at least of 30 per cent seats for girls (including 50 per cent of this for disadvantaged groups) in institutions of higher vocational technological scientific, medical and professional education in newer emerging areas. Also, seats to be reserved for a single girl child.

13. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, through radio, television, films, the press, publications, advertising and traditional mode of dance and drama gives people access to free flow of information. It operates through All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD).

Despite the outreach of AIR and DD, development programming is missing from state media. The great opportunity and challenge presented in terms of public broadcasting as well as socially relevant messaging has been by-passed by the Ministry and its media arms.

In state and private media, there is a continuing stereotyping of women. Even though more women are entering journalism, schools and media corporations in both print and electronic media, the concerns of position, portrayal and content continue. While women enter the media in greater numbers, as many drop out.

■ Recommendations

- The State should set standards for its own as well as private media to portray women realistically and positively.
- Gender sensitisation of media content and media professionals so as to be able to create and present government programmes from a gender perspective.
- Use of media to portray the complex and multiplicity of women's lives.
- Popular media forms like live theatre, street plays, folk theatre be encouraged by state grants to promote images of women being successful in all fields.
- The proposed broadcast Bill must ensure that there is a regulatory body or a media monitoring committee on the lines of the Film Censor Board that regulates and monitors private TV channels in each state.
- Develop public information and advocacy programmes to promote gender sensitisation. For example, important legislations, like that on female foeticide, should be complemented with a strong media campaign with a focus on changing the mindset of preference for sons.

- Mainstreaming of regular broadcasts of development related information, especially relating to housing, health, education and other civic rights issues, should be broadcast at prime time and not only at other times.

14. Ministry of Labour and Employment

The agriculture sector is the largest source of employment for women, particularly poor and landless women; 75 per cent of all female workers and 85 per cent of all rural female workers are in agriculture. However, this is not taken into account when agricultural policies are being formulated in priority areas of investment, research and formulation of schemes.

There has been tremendous pressure on the livelihood and income of poor, landless women and small and marginal farmers in the past five years, hastened by commercialisation and mechanisation of agriculture. This is seen through shifts in cropping patterns – from food grains to commercial crops, including horticulture and change in land use – due to industrialisation, infrastructure development, and exploitation of forest and diversion of agricultural land due to submergence under large dams and takeover by large projects.

There is distress migration and suicides of farmers and farming families in several parts of India. Between 30 per cent and 20 per cent of rural households are female-headed due to widowhood, desertion or male migration, all leaving women to manage their small landholdings. In urban areas, the unorganised sector, comprising 93 per cent of India's productive workforce, produces 65 per cent of the GDP, and covers a wide range of occupations.

In the urban areas, 80 per cent of the women workers are in the unorganised sector, including the garment industry, petty trade, service, construction industry, domestic work, teaching in private schools, and home-based occupations such as beedi and agarbatti work. The unprotected nature of the work leads to widespread exploitation and discrimination, including gross aberrations as bonded labour, child labour, female exploitation, poverty and deprivation of children.

These processes have been hastened and enhanced by globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation, which sometimes result in retrenchments, under-employment, poverty and malnutrition.

Women – although they could gain – have lost out in the productive employment market, with the shrinking of opportunities in the agriculture and industrial sectors, closure of old industries and change in land-use patterns leading to displacement, homelessness and unemployment. Increased marginalisation and 'casualisation' (contract employment) of the workforce, have caused women to undertake activities that are low-skilled, low-paid and insecure. They are deprived of protection under the existing labour laws. Non-implementation of labour standards has enhanced sweat shops and girl child exploitation. Reduction in real income is forcing women to multi-tasking without commensurate remuneration. Harvesting of natural resources and non-traditional forest produce (NTFPs) in addition to curtailing of access rights to natural resources, have worsened the situation for women and the households dependent on them for their livelihoods.

■ Recommendations

- Stipulate a national minimum wage to give people dignity.

- Institute a comprehensive social security legislation covering unemployment, health insurance, nutrition, old age pension, maternity, disability and regulation of employment for all workers.
- Ensure gainful rehabilitation in terms of alternate land, livelihood, shelter and all basic necessities concerning health, education and connectivity for all people displaced by development projects, closures, lockouts, relocation, man made and natural disasters.
- Collective rights to vested land and for access to natural resources to be given to women.
- Institute employment guarantee for urban and rural areas throughout the year with separate cards for women and for all adults who demand employment.
- Introduce special programmes to impart training and entrepreneurial skills, capital, and credit facilities without collateral and market support to women-headed households and all women.
- Enforce existing labour laws in SEZs, EPZs and free trade zones (FTZs).
- In housing schemes, 10 per cent of houses to be allocated to single women.
- No stigmatisation and discrimination for people suffering from HIV/AIDs in terms of loans, business, credit and job opportunities.
- For BPO workers, attention to issues of timings, schedules, working conditions, facilities, holidays, nutrition, transport, security, etc.

15. Ministry of Law and Justice

The Ministry of Law and Justice (MoLJ) is made up of the two separate departments – for legal affairs and for justice. The Department for Legal Affairs is mainly concerned with the drafting of all principal legislation for the Union Government and advises various ministries on legal matters and attends to litigation on behalf of the Government of India. It looks into matters regarding the treaties with foreign government in matters of civil laws. The Department of Justice is responsible for the judiciary and justice systems in the country.

Generally, women perceive that they will not receive justice and laws will not be implemented. In particular, laws that ensure their rights are routinely violated by family and society.

■ Recommendations

- Engender laws.
- Ensure gender balance in hiring and placing legal talent.
- The judiciary must be gender-sensitised.
- Encourage appointment of more women lawyers and women judges.
- All non-resident Indian (NRI) marriages must be subject to the Hague Convention.

16. Ministry of Minorities

The Ministry of Minorities oversees policy, planning, coordination, evaluation and review of the regulatory and developmental programmes of the minority communities and all matters relating

to the minority communities except matters relating to law and order. This includes policy initiatives for protection of minorities and their security in consultation with other Union ministries and state governments.

In 2007, the Prime Minister's 15-Point Programme for Welfare of the Minorities has been recast to make it easier to monitor, to focus action on issues intimately linked with the social, educational and economic improvement of minorities, to provide for earmarking of outlays in certain schemes and through location of developmental facilities in minority concentration areas, and to prevent communal disharmony and violence. Despite these efforts, minorities still have a particularly hard time.

■ Recommendations

- Engender the minorities agenda.
- Create curricula to promote better understanding of minority issues in India.
- Use state media to promote harmony and understanding.
- Encourage the private sector to integrate minorities and marginalised groups such as the dalit and tribal communities.
- Establish Muslim Women Development Boards at the state level, with decentralised functioning and adequate funding.

17. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

The importance of increasing use of renewable energy sources in the transition to a sustainable energy base was recognised in India in the early 1970s. During the past quarter century, a significant effort has gone into the development, trial and induction of a variety of renewable energy technologies for use in different economic and social sectors.

The extensive use of biomass in traditional and inefficient ways and the limited availability of modern fuels are manifestations of poverty. The widespread use of fuel wood and charcoal results in scarcity of local supplies.

Rising prices of commercial fuel mean that women of almost all rural households regularly spend long hours scrounging for non-commercial fuels which are increasingly scarce, adding considerably to the workload of rural women. Women devote at least two and up to seven hours each day to the collection of fuel for cooking. It is estimated that three billion days are spent in collecting fuel and 700 million days processing it.

Women are most likely to suffer the health effects of energy-inefficient appliances. Their exclusion from the decision-making processes results in failure of many poverty alleviation programmes.

■ Recommendations

- Government must formulate a comprehensive policy regarding fuels for domestic usage, taking full account of the total workload of women.

18. Ministry of Panchayati Raj

The Ministry of *Panchayati Raj* was created in May 2004, with the responsibility for the work of advocacy and monitoring of the implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Provisions of the *Panchayats* (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996. It is also responsible for the formulation and implementation of an Action Plan for seeing PRIs emerging as 'Institutions of Local Self-Government', securing economic development and social justice in their respective areas.

It is estimated that about 3 million elected members and the staff members assigned to the elected bodies need training to enable them to discharge their functions effectively. The Ministry funds research studies, workshops and seminars for development of *panchayats*.

Though the PRIs have been in existence for a long time, they have not been able to acquire the status and dignity of viable and responsive people's bodies. This is due to many reasons, including the absence of regular elections, prolonged super sessions, insufficient representation of weaker sections like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women, inadequate devolution of powers and lack of financial resources.

■ Recommendations

- Reserve one-third seats for women in Parliament and State Assemblies.
- Continue capacity-building of elected representatives and officials of PRIs and functionaries involved in rural development programmes.
- Document the progress of women representatives and make it available publicly so others may be inspired by them.
- Institute gender-sensitisation of members of the PRIs and urban local bodies.

19. Ministry of Planning

The Planning Commission was set up in 1950. The first eight Five-Year Plans emphasised growth in the public sector with massive investments in basic and heavy industries. Since the Ninth Plan in 1997, the emphasis on the public sector has become less pronounced and the current thinking on planning in the country, in general, is that it should increasingly be of an indicative nature. It was also the first of the Five-Year Plans that included the importance of engendering planning and programmes.

■ Recommendations

- Increase the number of women members in the Commission.
- Engender all plans – Union and state plans – and give directions to all ministries to plan their work and budgets accordingly.
- The Planning Commission must institutionalise a gender approach to the Plan.
- Create effective monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms for the engendering of the Plans.

20. Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways

The Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways formulates and administers policies for road transport, national highways and transport research with a view to increasing the mobility and efficiency of the road transport system in the country.

■ Recommendations

- Engender all policies and plans.
- Increase the number of special buses and trains for women.
- Reintroduce lockable coupes in general compartments in long-distance trains.
- Lower the height of holding straps in buses and trains.
- Link communities to all PHCs with all-weather roads.

21. Ministry of Rural Development

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) consists of the departments of rural development, land resources and drinking water supply. In delivering rural development schemes for generation of self and wage employment, provision of housing and minor irrigation assets to rural poor, social assistance to the destitute and rural roads, the Ministry can do better.

The Department of Land Resources implements schemes to increase the bio-mass production by developing wastelands in the country. The Department of Drinking Water Supply works on provision of drinking water and sanitation facilities to the rural poor. However, despite these efforts, many women and men in rural India do not have access to proper infrastructure. Women, despite all the schemes, suffer enormously in trying to make a living and keeping their families together.

■ Recommendations

- Engender all programmes and schemes of the Ministry.
- Pay greater attention to issues of water and sanitation – ensure that every habitation has access to a sustainable supply of water and technology to be minimum water dependant.
- Ensure that land reforms benefit women.
- Ensure that women in drought prone areas get appropriate assistance.
- Ensure that self employed women are not discriminated against and can access loans for their businesses.
- Ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work.

22. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

In 2007, the Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries and the Ministry of Small Scale Industries were merged into the single entity – the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Worldwide, micro and small enterprises (MSEs) have been accepted as the engine of economic growth and for promoting equitable development. In India, MSEs play a pivotal role in the overall industrial economy of the country. It is estimated that in terms of value, the sector accounts for about 39 per cent of the manufacturing output and around 33 per cent of the total exports of the country. In recent years, the MSE sector has consistently a registered higher growth rate compared to the overall industrial sector. The major advantage of the sector is its employment potential at low capital cost. As per available statistics, this sector employs about 31 million persons spread over 12.8 million enterprises and the labour intensity in the MSE sector is estimated to be almost four times higher than the large enterprises.

In India, the funding of micro enterprises is aligned with SHGs.

■ Recommendations

- An autonomous high-level Commission on the Status of Micro-Credit policies and programmes should be constituted to review the existing vision, policies and programmes related to micro-credit in order to assess the extent to which these are addressing the social, economic and political rights of women.
- The members of the suggested Commission should include eminent academics and practitioners who have a substantive engagement with issues of poverty, women's empowerment, and livelihoods.
- The mandate of the suggested Commission should include recommending the manner in which the State will generate data in order that the performance of micro-credit based interventions may be reviewed and monitored.

Some of the critical areas on which information is currently lacking relate to:

- Number of functioning (as opposed to defunct) SHGs.
- Financial impact of micro-credit on poverty alleviation.
- Evaluation of the degree of inclusion of the poorest population groups.
- Number of women and women's groups being able to access credit.
- Types of enterprises for which women borrowers receive credit.
- Sustainability of such enterprises in the absence of adequate support inputs.
- Ownership of assets created and strengthened through micro-finance.
- Data on capacity-building, including the extent to which these are being provided, to whom, nature of the inputs and the time allocated to training in social justice and equity issues.
- Data on lending practices and norms, both formal and those that are being practised although unwritten.
- Identification and analysis of existing macro data on indicators that will enable an assessment of the impact of SHGs. This could include macro data related to poverty reduction, distress migration, violence against women, inclusion of economically and socially marginalised communities, etc..
- Design processes so that progress can be monitored in terms of empowerment and equity.

23. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is mandated to address issues of the welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections of the society, viz., scheduled caste communities, backward classes, people with disabilities, aged persons and victims of drug abuse, among others. The objective of the policies, programmes, laws and institutions is to bring these groups into the mainstream.

The schemes currently have a 'welfare' approach and do not encourage empowerment. From birth till old age, women – especially poor and disenfranchised women – suffer enormously. There is lack of dignity in deprivation of homes, families, food and shelter. Children are kidnapped, sold, abused and violated by their families and by society. Adolescent and adult women face a cycle of sexual and mental violence, again in homes and in workplaces. Aging women – in the absence of social security mechanisms – often face neglect by family and the community. And this cuts across all class and caste lines.

Women face gross medical violence. While access to healthcare centres and services remain a challenge, their reproductive and sexual rights are also violated with unnecessary hysterectomies, organ sale, etc. Trafficking and sex work for drugs is on the rise. Women are particularly vulnerable, being coerced to act as carriers of drugs, and become victims of party drugs and gang rapes and are impacted as wives and children of alcohol abusers. However, women have lower access to all rehabilitation programmes.

And, for children, adolescent and adult women who are differently-abled, there is a high level of family and societal stigma, discrimination and violence.

There is little in women's socialisation that prepares them for the challenges of life. Family, schooling, society, workplace, all conspire together to create an environment that is less than conducive to make women able to take charge of their lives. Therefore, the challenge before the Ministry is to design programmes that strengthen women's capacity to be prepared for the life ahead of them.

■ Recommendations

For Aged Women

- Pension schemes for old, infirmed, deserted, displaced and widowed women. Pension delays to be reduced and amounts increased.
- Help-lines and counselling to address physical, mental, financial abuse.
- Affordable medical care and social security.
- Special counters, easier referrals.
- Initiate self-help groups, even for wives of retired pensioners.
- Encourage involvement of younger volunteers (through NSS, etc.).
- Social work training should include geriatric care.
- Better management and scrutiny of old age homes.

For Women with Disabilities

- Better surveillance of state institutions.
- Access to higher education and jobs.
- Ensure facilitative equipment (wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc).
- Construct ramps and introduce Braille instructions in lifts in government offices, public places, buses, etc.
- Simplify procedures of access.
- Persons with secondary disability should get compensation and be rehabilitated within the same factory or workplace.
- Institute stringent laws against organs trade.

Substance Abuse and Women

- Institute special and more rehabilitation centres and introduce modern technology at these centres.
- Encourage women's cooperatives for self-employment.
- Revenue from alcohol and tobacco sale should be challenged.
- Minimum age policy for alcohol and tobacco purchase should be enforced.

24. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

The Statistics wing of the Ministry acts as the nodal agency for planning integrated development of the statistical system in the country. It coordinates the statistical work with a view to identifying gaps in data availability or duplication of statistical work in respect of the various departments of the Government of India and the State Statistical Bureaus (SSBs) and to suggest necessary remedial measures.

In mainstream discussion, women's work is seen as marginal, as much of it is 'invisible' according to market criteria or in terms of socially dominant perceptions of what constitutes 'work'. This underestimates women's productive contribution. It is more common in developing countries, where patterns of market integration and the relatively high proportion of goods and services that are not marketed imply that women's contributions to productive activity extend well beyond those which are socially recognised.

Thus women's work participation is more complex than it appears. Since most women are actually employed in some kind of productive and/or reproductive work, whether or not this is recognised and quantified by statistics, the issues relating to their employment are qualitatively different from those of men.

A World Bank Report states: "Although women work fewer hours on average in market activities than men, this difference is more than offset by their greater hours of efforts in household activities. In almost every country women are responsible for a disproportionate share of work within the household." Thus, women navigate between two spheres regarding their labour. Yet in only one of them are women counted as productive.

Additionally, gender-sensitive indicators at the national, state and local levels are vital for enabling comparisons of gender equality through translating complex data into accessible messages about achievements and gaps. The focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a milestone for decades of advocacy around the importance of gender equality to human development.

■ Recommendations

- The definition of work must reflect the realities of all working women in various categories of workers. Otherwise, most women will be denied the benefits of proposed social security schemes.
- Not treating women's multiple tasks as work means that public schemes for their economic independence often adds to their workload but does not give them an adequate income. Very poor women need full-time wage work. Other women who are capable of self-employment must be given training in new skills and in entrepreneurial skills.
- In many government schemes for employment, the nature of the work envisaged is not considered fit for women. Consequently, even though policy-makers claim that women have equal access to the benefits of such schemes, women actually continue to remain on the periphery or get lower wage rates. Such schemes must be designed to give women work that earns them equal pay even if the tasks are not the same.
- Gender-disaggregated data-keeping should be made compulsory for every government department, public sector unit, the private sector, corporations, etc.
- Initiate a compulsory monitoring mechanism relating to allocations, schemes, etc. at the Central and state levels, in collaboration with academic institutions, NGOs etc.
- Support and strengthen national statistics offices to produce gender-sensitive data.
- Consider how best to measure the gender aspects of multi-dimensional and sensitive issues and share examples of successful approaches.
- Consider a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to generate richer databases.
- Use participatory approaches wherever possible, including in defining gender-sensitive indicators.
- Use gender-sensitive indicators to assess the outcomes and impacts of gender mainstreaming.
- Make gender evaluations or internal audits mandatory; the mandate should stipulate that such audits are undertaken at specified intervals.
- Gender-sensitive measurements alone do not improve gender equality. To realise positive change, findings must be documented, disseminated and used.

25. Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the formulation of national policies and programmes and for the co-ordination of activities of various Central Government agencies, state governments Union Territories and the private sector for the development and promotion of

tourism in the country. With the sector rapidly growing, more women can be proactively encouraged to enter the sector.

■ Recommendations

- Identify the role that women can play in the growth of the tourism sector.
- Use affirmative action in recruiting and training women for the opportunities.
- Create opportunities for women entrepreneurs in the sector.
- Ensure that women and children are not used for sexual activities in the tourism industry.

26. Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was created in 1999, to give focused attention to integrated socio-economic development of the most underprivileged section of Indian society, the Scheduled Tribes (STs), in a coordinated and planned manner.

Tribal communities experience displacement due to mining, industrialisation, urbanisation, environmental degradation and construction of large dams and conflict. Women and children, who may not be landholders, are adversely affected in these cases.

■ Recommendations

- Support services for rehabilitation – especially for women and children – along with economic activities, education and training, and protection from violence must be provided.
- Issues of livelihood and ecology for populations being displaced; plans for rehabilitation should use a cluster approach and be women-centred.
- Clear-cut demarcation of land for tribal communities; wherever there are over 20 families, there should be no intrusion from other communities for any purpose.
- Time-bound programmes to ensure land titles to women in tribal communities.
- Clearance certificate – from a committee consisting of human rights activists and the concerned parties including women – required before displacement of any kind.
- Adequate infrastructure – housing, clean water, drainage, roads, toilets, streetlights, burial grounds – to be ensured in dalit and tribal settlements as a basic right and for prevention of migration.
- Strictly implement the law banning manual scavenging and provide adequate alternative employment to those engaged in this activity.
- State and National SC/ST commissions to be empowered and given statutory powers.
- Employment to be strengthened by ensuring that quotas are filled.
- In case of urban families, housing should be a minimum of 20'x25' for each dalit family, and titles should be in the name of women.

- The quality of care in SC/ST schools and hostels to be improved in terms of infrastructure, nutrition, security and a non-abusive environment.
- Review the sale of alcohol as it works against the interest of the dalit and tribal communities.
- Full utilisation of the allocated budget for the Special Component Plan; increase allocations under it, and include a special component for dalit women in this Plan.

27. Ministry of Urban Development

The responsibility to address issues of housing and urban development is assigned to state governments and the Constitution (via the 74th Amendment) delegates many of these functions to urban local bodies. The legal authority of the Government of India is limited only to Delhi and other Union Territories and to such subjects as those that the state legislatures authorise the Union Parliament to legislate upon.

However, the Union Government exercises a large influence to shape the policies and programmes of the country as a whole. The national policy issues are decided by the Gol; funds are allocated to the state governments through various centrally sponsored schemes; national financial institutions are funded and various external assistance programmes for housing and urban development are supported. Policies and programme contents are decided at the time of the formulation of the Five-Year Plans. The indirect effect of the fiscal, economic and industrial location decisions of the Gol exercise a far more dominant influence on the pattern of urbanisation and real estate investment in the country.

Women in urban areas face particular challenges – in making a living, a home, raising children, all in a hostile environment. They are particularly prone to poor health, violence and inadequate resources for income generation.

■ Recommendations

- Engender all plans and programmes of the Ministry at the central and state levels.
- Provide public toilets in metros, markets, institutions, colleges, and schools.
- Change the pattern of both public and private investment in transport so as to benefit the majority of the population.
- Fee hikes in public transport to be rational and continuity in provision of services is essential.
- Urban planning to ensure preservation of pavements, public spaces and parks so that all enjoy the benefits of public spaces.
- Develop the notion of women-friendly cities that are safe and cater to women-specific needs in terms of lighting, toilets and provision of garbage cans.
- Increased allocations for public transport.
- Beautification and expansion of roads in urban areas should consider cyclists, pedestrians and slower moving traffic.

- In the case of urban families, housing should be a minimum of 20'x25' for each dalit family, and titles should be in the names of women.

28. Ministry of Women and Child Development

The Department of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) was set up in the year 1985 as a part of the Ministry of Human Resource Development for the holistic development of women and children. In 2006, the Department was upgraded to a Ministry.

The broad mandate of the Ministry is to promote holistic development of women and children. It formulates plans, policies and programmes; enacts and amends legislation, guides and coordinates the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organisations working in the field of women and child development. It implements certain innovative programmes for women and children that cover welfare and support services, training for employment and income generation, awareness generation and gender-sensitisation. These programmes play a supplementary and complementary role to the other general developmental programmes in the sectors of health, education, rural development, etc.

The task before the MoWCD is huge. Not only is it responsible for almost 50 per cent of India's population (comprising women), it also has responsibility for children. In many ways, the traditional approach of the Ministry has been reactive, rather than proactive. Each challenge has been responded to with a programme or a 'scheme'. However, it is time to look at women's needs in a more holistic and proactive way. This requires policies and interventions that enable women to participate as equal citizens in India's development. And, this proactive approach has to be adopted by all ministries, at the Union and state levels. As the nodal Ministry, it can also take responsibility to spearhead policy, which is the basis of all programming, for development and women's empowerment.

■ Recommendations

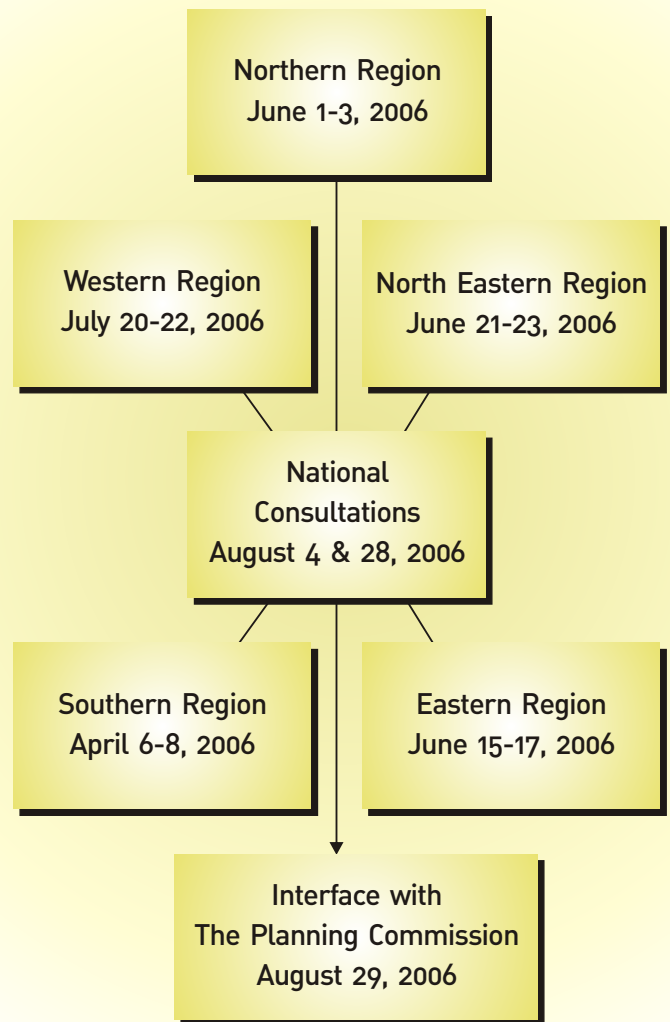
- MoWCD as the nodal agency is also an implementing agency. It should keep a strategic balance between these two roles and workloads, with a definite tilt towards the former, in view of the enormity of the tasks implied in the gender mainstreaming mandate.
- It should focus on proactive engendered policy initiatives with focus on women.
- As a nodal agency, its challenge is to serve as a role model for other ministries at the Central and state levels. It can take a much more proactive stand than it has in the past.
- It must urgently upgrade its gender planning skills, and enable a comprehensive database on women that should be updated regularly. The database should be refined and expanded every year.
- There should be separate budgets for women and children, with periodic reviews and evaluations.

Regional Recommendations

National and Regional Consultations

States/UTs Covered under the Regions

- 1. Northern Regional Consultation**
Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Chandigarh
- 2. North Eastern Regional Consultation**
Assam, Arunachal, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur
- 3. Eastern Regional Consultation**
West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Lakshwadeep
- 4. Southern Regional Consultation**
Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh
- 5. Western Regional Consultation**
Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu



Five regional consultations were held in 2006. The recommendations below are by region.

EASTERN REGION

Five sub-regional workshops were held – in Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and two in West Bengal, one was for all southern districts in the state, the other for districts in the north of the state, particularly the hill districts, and Sikkim.

■ Overall

- All pro-women laws passed at the national level need implementation and adequate budgetary allocations. There are delays, as seen in: the formulation of rules for the newly passed law against domestic violence; in formulating laws against sexual harassment at the workplace; non-compliance of Equal Wages Act and non-compliance of equal property rights due to loopholes in the law. Suitable mechanisms for severe punishment in case of non-compliance of all pro-women laws including child marriage, dowry and trafficking offenders are needed.
- Registration of marriages and births must be mandatory. Panchayats could be given responsibility for this; it will help combat female foeticide, infanticide, child marriage and trafficking of minor girls.
- States must pay greater attention to maintaining law and order to ensure women's safety in public places.
- The Public Distribution System (PDS) does not work. A more workable and efficient scheme to ensure that poor, women-headed households, old and destitute women get adequate food regularly at prices that correctly reflect the subsidies meant for them.
- Hostels for women and crèche facilities for working mothers are essential.
- The list of persons below the poverty line is misleading. A better method of identifying those eligible for benefits is needed.
- The definition of workers in the proposed legislation for providing social security to informal sector workers should be such that it includes women who work lifelong for their families, and yet do not qualify as workers.
- To deal with the problem of 'missing girls', or those who are trafficked, *panchayats* could keep records of girls leaving the village for marriage or work.
- Introduce effective mechanisms for prevention and protection for victims of 'witch hunting' and ensure restoration of their right to property and livelihood.
- A system of pension for the old, infirm, deserted, displaced, widowed and other distressed women is needed.
- Incorporate mechanisms for generating gender-disaggregated data at all levels and all programmes and give mandate for gender budgeting in all departments at the Centre as well as the states.
- Like e-governance, w-governance is essential to ensure the presence of women at all levels of decision-making and, specifically, at the policy-making level. Women's commissions should be instituted in all states immediately and be given more powers and the authority to deal with issues more effectively. Members of the commissions should be representative of the community of women.

■ Education

- Overall public expenditure for education to be raised to ensure children's fundamental right to education.
- Each neighbourhood must have schooling facilities up to the secondary level with easy accessibility. The infrastructure in school buildings must be gender-friendly, including separate toilets for girls. West Bengal must make particular efforts to raise the relative number of women teachers in schools and provide safe residential facilities for them in villages.
- Provide suitable facilities in schools, libraries, and residential areas for disabled and handicapped students.
- Ensure that students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are not relegated to the non-formal stream or to second-rate schooling.
- Rigorous monitoring and inspection of schools must be made a part of the regular school administration.
- Urgent need for expanding technical education and vocational training, especially for girls. It must be job-oriented.
- The State must formulate schemes with adequate budgetary allocations and ensure that the allocations are properly spent.
- A gender-sensitive, life-skills and human rights curriculum is essential to deter rising drug abuse, incidences of violence against women and trafficking.
- Counselling centres in schools are needed so that young people can face challenges.
- Planning for remote, difficult, hill and forest areas – inhabited by socially disadvantaged groups and large numbers of drop-outs – is needed.
- Funds should be adequately provided to expand district libraries to function as community information centres and data banks for information on women legal rights, schemes and programmes related to health, education, employment, training, responsibilities of *panchayats* and local governments, consumer rights, etc.
- High schools should be located within convenient reach for girls and a women's college provided in every block.

■ Health

- Health services should be rationalised with more emphasis on preventive and promotive medicine rather than on cutting-edge health services.
- *Panchayats* and village level institutions should have an active role in formulating health policies, which should be sensitive to local needs, particularly of women.
- Reducing maternal mortality should be a high priority. All deliveries cannot be done by professionals due to inadequate infrastructure and staff. Paramedics and *dais* should be trained and upgraded for safe home deliveries.
- Provision for treatment and care of low-income patients, especially those with HIV/AIDS, must be ensured.
- Maintain computerised detailed area-wise health records. *Panchayats* should be empowered for this.

- Mental health issues to be addressed with sympathy and care.
- Since most rural people resort to local healers and practitioners of alternative medicine, comprehensive and short courses for treating common diseases is essential.
- The reproductive and child health (RCH) programme should cover adolescents.
- Universal breastfeeding campaigns have to be more sensitive to the mother's nutritional needs and work schedule.
- Introduce comprehensive health policy for women in BPL groups and older women and monitor strictly government hospitals and PACs.
- Proper surfaced roads, transportation facilities and availability of doctors for hill and forest regions and remote areas must be ensured as also trained, community-based cadres for providing support to women for women-specific health problems in addition to general cadres.
- Funds for safe drinking water supply and proper sanitary facilities in slum areas and in every school / training centres in semi urban and rural areas must be provided.
- Funds must be provided for training and treatment in alternate medicine, yoga therapy, naturopathy, homeopathy and ayurvedic treatment.

■ Employment and work

- Definition of work to include all women. If not, women are denied social security and informal sector workers' rights.
- Ensure full-time wage work for poor women and skill and entrepreneurship training for self-employed women.
- Government schemes for women must ensure equal pay even if the tasks are not the same.
- Crèches must be provided for ALL women.
- Vocational training to be product-oriented rather than skill-based; trainees must be prepared for market realities.
- Education should be oriented to awareness of skills, markets and their developments.
- A comprehensive policy on fuels for domestic usage is needed, keeping in mind the workload of women.
- Vocational training programmes need to be linked with industry, and also provide information about current market trends, about products, services, and technology; curriculum needs to be upgraded as also trainers' skills.
- Appropriate training for women entrepreneurs and access to credit, marketing facilities, etc. must be provided, going beyond the current training provided to SHGs.
- Implement the provision of 'land to the women tillers' stipulated in the *Panchayats* act.

■ Images of women

- The media must actively promote images of women in different roles.
- State grants for popular media forms like live theatre, street plays and folk theatre can promote images of successful women in all fields.
- There should be a regulatory body, a media monitoring committee on the lines of the Film Censor Board that regulates and monitors private TV channels in each state.

- The State could provide incentives to itself and private media to promote more positive images of women.
- Print and AV media professionals should be trained to understand the importance of women's rights and work from a gender perspective.
- The proposed broadcasting Bill should be passed.

NORTHERN REGION

■ Health

- Increase government spending on health from 0.9 per cent to 3 per cent of the GDP, with matched funds from states; this must be disbursed and utilised in good time.
- Expand the women's component plan to cover anaemia and under-nutrition, morbidity, needs of single women and commit 30 per cent of the funds towards this.
- Allocate adequate budgets for all communicable and non communicable diseases – including IEC, prevention, early detection, treatment, equipment, etc..
- Pay a fair full wage to all frontline workers (AWW, ASHA etc.) with workloads that are rational.
- Ensure women-friendly free comprehensive primary healthcare with full preventive, curative and promotive care at the PHC level with public health professionals on a full-time salaried basis, instead of contractual terms; also provide free ambulance referral and transport.
- Set up Standing Committee on women's issues (at all 3 levels) with 75 per cent women and 25 per cent men from PRIs, backed by capacity-building and adequate funds. The proposed Standing Committee should monitor the implementation of the PCPNDT Act, social audit of services and quality checks.
- Regulate growing misuse of technologies and develop a law for Assisted Reproductive technologies and surrogacy (ICMR guidelines to be reviewed and translated into law).
- Set up and prominently display standards of care, citizen's charters and protocols for hospital management, rational drug use, MVA for safe abortion and systems for proper waste management. Apply specific punitive measures and standard rates of compensation for violation by both public and private healthcare service providers.
- Set up independent regulatory commissions to regulate private sector from an equity perspective and reform existing bodies such as the Medical Council of India (MCI), Pharmaceutical Council.
- Provide regular fundamental and refresher training and capacity building with strong public health and gender perspectives for all functionaries.
- Integrate gender grievance cell and help lines with health services to ensure speedy investigation and facilitate redress for users and health workers.
- Horizontally integrate the vertical National Cancer Control Programme into the public health system by imparting health awareness, making available the test of visual inspection and appropriate referral.
- Ensure universal availability of ART, access to drugs for treatment of opportunistic infections, provision of safe blood banking and palliative care.
- Ensure availability of required mental health professionals- psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric social worker and mental health nurses at all levels.

- Undertake periodic assessment of treatment facilities including rehabilitation at district level.
- Ensure a clearly defined package of essential reproductive health services – including post-natal care, obstetric care, information about and services for contraception and safe abortion and counselling – at the PHC, free to all women and adolescents (married or unmarried).
- Provide adequately trained attendance for deliveries at home or in institutions, with emergency referral back-up and a continuum of care from pregnancy through childbirth and 42 days thereafter.
- Recognise and validate the role of traditional birth attendants and upgrade their skills.
- Ensure regular check-ups of newborns and monitoring of growth parameters through maintenance of growth charts of children, lactating mothers, and adolescents.
- Allocate funds for comprehensive education and counselling for adolescents, with special emphasis on Life Skill Education, sex education and education against substance abuse.
- Ensure privacy of toilets for school girls.
- Address occupational hazards and needs of women working in adverse situations – in mines and quarries, on plantations, at construction sites, in the informal sector, free trade zones, in garbage disposal, etc..
- Create a Gender Focal Point in the health ministry and departments of health in the states.
- Develop a National Policy on Mental Health with adequate budget provision at both the Central and state levels.
- Develop clear targets of normal sex ratios at birth (SRB) and give financial benefits to states that have improved CSR. The Planning Commission should have independent estimates for SRB at the district level for 2007.
- Develop a strategy and appropriate measures to enforce implementation of the PCPNDT Act within a fixed time-frame and fix accountability at all levels by undertaking:
 - Review of State Appropriate Authorities that take into account factors such as the number of visits, cases filed, non-maintenance of records, medical audit of F forms, standards of performance, etc.; and
 - Strengthening of case handling and prosecution under the Act.
- Implement the Nursing Home Registration Act in all states along with institution of strict monitoring mechanisms.
- Ensure full enforcement of Supreme Court guidelines on sterilisation.
- Adopt financial disincentives for the state governments that contravene the National Population Policy by enforcing the two-child norm and use other coercive measures.
- Recognise violence as a public health issue and include it in medical education. Train ANMs and appoint counsellors at the PHCs to deal with violence and trauma.

■ Marginalised people

People are marginalised on the basis of caste, religion, identity, sexuality or illness; there are push and pull factors responsible for migration – conflict, disasters, displacement, trafficking, etc.. Moreover, HIV/AIDS is an increasing vulnerability. The State has obligations in protecting the marginalised to devise measures to remove discrimination, ensure equality and safety and security, repeal discriminatory laws and ensure implementation of laws that prohibit dowry, child marriage, bigamy and provide equity in inheritance and property.

■ Poverty Alleviation

- The income level that defines 'BPL' needs to be raised and redefined based on current realities.
- Clear definition of female-headed households along economic lines need to be developed.
- Conduct surveys on female-headed households to obtain clear understanding of their social, economic realities for inclusion in policy-making.
- Give land titles in joint names.
- Complete the land reform programme initiatives.
- Ensure access to food for those in severe poverty, based on work and on demand for ALL – the able-bodied, for the old, disable and chronically ill.
- Establish a regulatory technical body to examine closure and down-sizing of industrial units which result in loss of employment of men and women.
- Community assets created under government schemes must meet women's needs, such as drinking water bodies, reforestation, etc.
- Monitoring systems and mechanisms for government poverty alleviation programmes and schemes must be made mandatory.

■ Employment

- Make FULL employment, development and livelihood effective rights.
- Set up missions with concrete objectives, based on detailed benchmark studies within employment, addressing issues such as the identification of the kind of vocational training that will result in jobs, what skills are marketable, what kind of activities should SHGs adopt and so on.
- Work related schemes should be based on local market trends.
- All workers in all sectors should be given identification cards.
- Every sector should have an exit and entry policy for women.
- Indigenous livelihood practices should be strengthened.
- Marketing skills are essential to women working in the unorganised sector.
- Expand access to micro-credit and move women up the value chain to micro-enterprise development with market linkages.
- Provide tax subsidies for women's cooperatives.
- Sales tax exemption should be provided for products of women's enterprises for at least first 10 years.
- Government assistance should be provided to women's enterprises in terms of setting standards, grading and market tie-ups.
- Agriculture extension services should have women-friendly equipment.
- All rozgar yojanas should have financial and not physical targets.
- Develop women-friendly IT training programmes at all levels.

■ Infrastructure

- All roads, parks, train stations, bus terminals, markets etc., should have clean hygienic women-friendly facilities. Provide safe, well lit, clean, women-friendly toilet facilities in all villages, industrial estates, universities, hospitals, colleges, schools. State-owned and

operated infrastructure and facilities such as public transportation should never be closed under any circumstances.

- Subsidise LPG.
- Provide free safe drinking water to all.
- Set up women's resource centres in all villages under the PRI's, for information regarding common land, crops grown, health, etc. These should also be *shramik* centres with employment information. Also a series of booklets in local languages on know your rights should be distributed through the PRIs.
- Provide information on government schemes and other important messaging on radio and TV throughout the country at prime time.
- Provide identity cards for all workers.
- Provide social security for unorganised sector.

■ Agriculture

- Increase women's representation at all stages of public policy-making and in public institutions dealing with agriculture in order to correct the existing male bias. This will help to design women-friendly agricultural programmes and get inputs of local knowledge of women for the agricultural policy.
- Constitute a Women's Resource Rights Committee to manage the documentation of existing resources in legal control of women and plan for increasing women's resource base at the village level; institute a Village Resource Centre that should be owned and managed by women in every village and ward, where women collectively decide about resources, especially the use of common assets.
- Enhance public investment in agriculture from the current 1.3 per cent of GNP to 10 per cent of GNP.
- Prioritise the development of low quality and marginal lands, cultivable wastelands and fallow lands for allocation to people; 50 per cent of this allocation and asset creation should be for women and 50 per cent of the beneficiaries should be women.
- Hire local village level women to manage employment guarantee and livelihood management programmes.
- Create joint *pattas*, watersheds, check dams, wastelands, and community bio-gas plants through public funding.
- Distribute exclusively to rural landless women workers the surplus land and land under distribution programmes such as under the land ceiling acts, custodial land and bhoodan land.
- Legitimise women's rights to homestead and housing by adopting 'women only *patta*' policies at the state level as has been done in Andhra Pradesh.
- Ensure women's control over complementary resources such as irrigation, credit, water, forest, fuel, fodder, information and training, as has been done in Gujarat.
- Extend forest rights to women in forest and tribal areas.
- All common property resources should be under the management and control of women with liberal investment by the government.
- Promote sustainable agriculture by encouraging organic farming (a woman-oriented activity that not only ensures better returns but also reduction of health hazards from toxic

elements), regeneration of land by use of farm yard manure, vermi-composting, emphasis on growing food crops, and soil and moisture conservation, use of non-chemical (organic methods and products) and knowledge-intensive (managing life-cycle of pests) approaches to pest management, management of locally produced seed varieties, ensuring biodiversity and, cultivation of herbal crops.

- Incorporate targets for redistribution of land to women with secure legal rights, including rights to forestland and agricultural land within the Eleventh Plan. Develop women's skills in land surveying, resource mapping and management, along with men at the panchayat level.
- Improve women's access to agricultural technology through technical training and by designing women-friendly agricultural technology.
- Provide incentives to families to retain land in the name of women by reducing transfer fees, providing higher subsidy for land development, irrigation, credit and a 50 per cent rebate on house tax, sales tax and stamp duties on women-owned land and housing.
- Institute measures to increase women's knowledge on land ownership titles.
- Strengthen backward and forward linkages of the agricultural sector with non-agricultural sectors to provide gainful employment to women. Promote agro-based industries owned and managed by women's cooperatives.
- Improve women's access to credit and marketing institutions by strengthening the mechanisms of SHGs and women co-operatives, issue Kisan Credit Cards, and give them equal partnership in crop insurance schemes.
- Farmers' suicides reflect the impact of poverty due to state, market and community failure. There are differences between the number of cases reported by the State and the Movement against State Repression. A survey of farmers who have committed suicide needs to be done and rehabilitation measures should include: compensation to the victims' families; agricultural extension services to farmers' design rehabilitation schemes, particularly for women and children in affected families; and addressing the problems of small farmers who are becoming agricultural labourers as the average landholding is becoming very small and uneconomical.
- Waive the pending loans/debt of small and marginal farmers immediately.
- Identify amendments to the law to facilitate legitimate access to and purchase of land for women – for example, it is suggested that there should be abolition of section 171 of UP ZALR act, section 59A of Punjab Tenancy Act and section 30 of Pepsu Tenant Act 1955.

■ Rehabilitation Policy

- The rehabilitation policy should ensure land-for-land for the displaced. In the case of tenants and agricultural labourers, the compensation and rehabilitation package should aim to restore pre-displacement status.
- Ensure that all rehabilitation and government grant of land transfer to households is done on individual title in the name of women only.
- Ensure women's livelihood in all rehabilitation processes.
- Resident community affected by displacement must be ensured a stake in the newly created assets in the region.

■ Education

- Set targets and monitorable indicators for women's education at all levels – especially for enrolment and retention – and monitor achievements. Specific allocation must be made to enhance the girl child's education.
- Initiate and introduce policy measures and programmes to address the educational needs of women living in conflict situations.
- Formulate a comprehensive strategy to enhance the access of dalit and tribal communities to education, particularly in higher and professional education
- Ensure that the *Navodaya Vidyalaya* schools for girls are established as a good practice.
- Ensure greater budgetary allocations for adult literacy and early childhood education.
- Financial outlays must match the requirements and the flow of funds to the districts must be regularised. Specific targets should be set, people made accountable to utilise the funds appropriately and outcomes should be closely monitored.
- Increase the number of schools and upgrade existing schools to ensure Education for All.
- Special incentives to ensure participation of girls at all levels. This should include, for instance, providing scholarships (to meet all expenses) to girls in higher education; hostel and transport facilities; proper buildings, toilets for girls, mid-day meals, sports equipment for teaching, safe and secure environment; and convenient location of schools.
- Create separate toilet facilities for girls in all schools.
- Increase the number of women teachers (50 per cent) and ensure availability of female attendants in all schools. Ensure quality of teachers through:
 - Periodic and regular training (orientation and refresher courses) in accordance with new techniques to update teaching methodology, skills and exposure to more effective TLMs
 - Do not involve teachers in non-teaching activities such as election duty, etc.
 - Increase salary of teachers to reflect their qualifications and training and improve infrastructural facilities such as conveyance, housing, etc.
 - Sensitise them towards crucial issues such as abuse, violence, discrimination resulting from disability, caste and other social inequalities.
- Remove gender bias in the subject choices available to girls. Include values-based education and gender perspectives in the NCC & NS curriculum.
- Develop and offer gender-sensitive material to adult readers which are accessible to neo and semi literates.
- Revamp and improve ICDS. Ensure a minimum of one worker or two helpers in one unit and provide specialised training to them, and a 30 per cent increase in the salaries of ICDS workers.
- Improve the teacher-student ratio (should not exceed 1:40) in schools.
- Link education with employment and have placement unit for girls who complete basic and higher education.
- Introduce programmes for educated girls in the rural areas to work in their own villages.
- Pay special attention to polytechnic and professional education.

- *Gram Shiksha Samiti* should monitor school education.
- Involve parents, family and community at all stages of education. Inclusion of fathers, making them responsible and accountable to girls' education. Increase community participation thorough parent teacher and children associations (PTAs), *Panchayats*, village education committees etc.
- Involve NGOs at both community and government levels.

■ Violence against Women and Girls

- Implement and operationalise the 2005 PWDVA with a separate budget and resource allocation. The Ministry of Women and Child Development should develop a mission statement on domestic violence that should be adopted by ALL ministries and departments. Develop strategies and mechanisms to enforce implementation of the Act, within a fixed time-frame and accountability at all levels.
- Ensure that all clinics and doctors indulging in pre-determination of sex and elimination of foetus are convicted under the law.
- Introduce the proposed Bill on social harassment in Parliament and allocate appropriate funding and resources for this.
- Allocate support services for UAWG in every district with more safety homes or shelters, adequate staff and counselling centres with qualified social workers cum counsellors, with good pay packages. Set up special fast track courts, lok adalats and ensure family courts work within a time-frame. Constitute an 'Enforcement Cell' for enforcement of all laws within a time-frame.
- Include credible NGOs for support services and projects related to women's issues.
- Appoint commissioners for women's rights at the Central and state levels (a demand pending since 1991).
- Attach gender cells to all state departments of women and children for budget allocation, financial and social auditing with mid-term appraisals.
- Encourage alternative community dispute resolution systems, e.g., '*mahila panchayats*' in Delhi supported by DCW.
- Amend school curricula to include ALL forms of violence against women and girls and their legal rights and entitlements.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports should take up violence against women and gender violence as a priority issue and encourage interaction with young people, particularly boys (Jamia Milia University has started a training programme for boys in the community on 'gender' to curb violence against women and girls).
- Provide legal aid, compensation and pension to widows (especially those widowed because of HIV/AIDS) who are facing harassment in the matrimonial homes.
- For victims of rape and sexual assault ensure immediate filing of FIR (the First Information Report), which is a registration of the complaint at police stations) and statement of the victim under IPC Section 164 and make provisions for online FIR registration, ensure a separate lawyer who assists the victim other than the police prosecutor, free medical treatment and compensation to rape victims, set up more forensic labs and DNA testing centres in various districts, institute special care centres for minor rape victims, stipulate that all below 18 are considered minors under all laws and for all purposes, ensure

recruitment of more women in the police force, and institute rehabilitation for victims of trafficking, both minors and adults.

- Schools, colleges and universities should make self-defence training for girls compulsory.
- Ensure training in legal awareness for women leaders at the grassroots, district and block levels.
- Ensure sensitisation of all stakeholders – police, judges, lawyers, teachers, medical workers and the community (resident welfare associations).
- Aggressive publicity of rights and laws on women should be undertaken, with awareness-building campaigns being given time slots on various TV channels.
- Institute a committee to study NRI marriages and problems faced by women and children.

■ Domestic Violence

- The Planning Commission, the MoWCD and other government departments and ministries should issue a policy document or mission statement on domestic violence through which they resolve to end domestic violence in all forms and make every home violence-free.
- The Planning Commission must pro-actively direct all ministries and departments, as well as the police force, health workers and hospitals, among other public services, to adopt the same policy. This policy, once adopted, should be publicised. The Mission Statement should categorically state the budget and resource allocation for the PWDVA, 2005.
- The Mission Statement could state that:
 - The Gol sees domestic violence as a serious public and political issue, with implications for health, economic and human rights.
 - The Gol has passed the PWDVA in September 2005 to prevent and protect women from DV and give them immediate relief from domestic violence on an emergency footing.
 - The enactment of the PWDVA reflects the Gol's accountability towards CEDAW and honours India's commitment to substantive equality for women.
 - The Gol realises that domestic violence is a result of the unequal power relationships in families. It will design policies and programmes that effectively address domestic violence and create and sustain a safe and secure environment for the well-being and development of children, girls and women.
 - The Planning Commission is strongly committed to and undertakes to encourage implementation and enforcement of all laws affecting women and girl children in general and the PWDVA in particular. It will work for the realisation of the above and undertake to make special budgetary allocations towards the setting up of the necessary infrastructure and needs of the PWDVA 2005.
 - The Gol undertakes to give wide publicity to the PWDVA by all means and work towards training of all stakeholders including police, protection officers, judiciary and public prosecution on PWDVA.
- The MoWCD adopted a mission statement on budgeting for gender equity in 2004-2005. Also, 41 ministries and departments of Gol have set up gender cells. The Planning Commission strongly recommends to the MoWCD the setting up of the following bodies with the view of implementing the PWDVA. More specifically –
 - Initiate a needs assessment in all states on the initial requirements and the specific needs of each state for the PWDVA 2005. The role of the NCW can be explored in this respect.

- Appoint a taskforce in each state to monitor and act as a watchdog, in partnership with the state women's commissions and state welfare supervisory boards.
- Undertake a monitoring and periodical evaluation in collaboration with the proposed state taskforces.

■ Jammu and Kashmir

- Women's political participation is low. In the cabinet of 13 ministers of J&K State, there is not a single woman minister. Of the 50 Secretaries/Commissioners, there are only three women. There are no woman deputy collectors or judges at the High Court. In the district and sessions courts there is only one woman out of 50 judges.
- Women must participate in all aspects of conflict resolution and social transformation. This requires institutionalised structural changes. The J&K State Commission for Women has been without a chairperson since 2003. Proper data on women and the poor is essential as well as inter-sectional coordination on issues of concern to women.
- Urgent need for counselling services and establishment of Trauma Management Centres for women.
- A comprehensive action plan to provide women with adequate and appropriate opportunities for education, training, employment, rehabilitation, health, safe and peaceful living environment and decision-making at all levels.
- Initiate efforts to increase women's literacy levels and awareness about law, rights and gender issues.

■ Uttarakhand

- Fifty per cent women's participation should be made compulsory in all decision-making bodies.
- Women must have *Kisan* Credit Cards, and joint property rights must be made mandatory, as in hill areas men migrate and women do all the agricultural work. This is especially true for widows and other single women.
- Universities must have funds to organise district or block level camps, disseminate the information about development of new seeds, tools and agriculture techniques. Tools and machines used in agricultural activities are not developed according to the needs and physical structure of the female farmers; this should be done.
- All institutions at the macro and micro levels concerning agriculture must have at least 40 per cent women staff.
- Women should have the right to collect minor forest produce so they can increase the income of the family and give them handy cash earnings.
- The health insurance schemes implemented by government and private agencies must cover the pregnancy period of women (both normal and caesarean cases). The premium should be minimum so poor women can have access to these schemes.
- Registration of marriages should be compulsory. For rural women the registration should be at the panchayat or block levels.
- All development programmes to include gender sensitisation at policy and community levels.
- Ensure women's right to land, water and forest. This is crucial for protection, conservation

and proper utilisation of natural resources and to increase livelihood options for women. Land consolidation is essential for conserving women's energy.

- Sales and income tax exemptions should be instituted for start-up ventures by rural women entrepreneurs.
- The macro and micro effects of globalisation and market oriented economy affect marginal farmers directly and indirectly. Mitigating these should be a priority of the government at the Central and state levels.
- A major sustained livelihood initiative for women is fruit processing. To market the processed items a Food Production Order (FPO) is required from the government – a long process and only available in Delhi and Lucknow. The FPO should be available at the district level.

NORTH-EASTERN REGION

The north-east region is one of great contrasts. It has incredible bio-diversity and is extremely rich in resources, both human and natural. However, a large majority of people are economically, geographically and socially disadvantaged. There is growing disparity accompanied by identity conflicts as reflected in the present climate of social unrest. Top down, non-participatory and regionally insensitive development planning has contributed much to this state of unrest. Women, however, are absent in major decision-making bodies for the planning and development of the region. The Eleventh Five-Year planning process provides yet another opportunity to engender development interventions and to bring in women's perspectives to proactively contribute to the processes of transformation.

■ Overall

■ Accountability: Initiatives by the Planning Commission

- Monitoring units should be set up, consisting of highly credible individuals from government and civil society with at least 50 per cent women members. A five-member unit in each state and an eight-member regional team should be constituted. Resource allocation should be adequate to enable the functioning of this unit, which would include periodic review meetings and annual convening of all units of the seven states in the north-east.
- Following the success of the community approach in Nagaland, an alternate non-political, participatory group/community approach could be adopted in all sectors in all the states. Build on traditional existing strengths of communities in the north-east and bring all the sectors under this, ensuring quality of services and meaningful/proactive participation of women.
- Resource allocation for social monitoring for all schemes should be assured.
- Capacity-building of the monitoring team should be undertaken.

■ Infrastructure

To attain full utilisation of the allocated 10 per cent of central departmental budgets, a higher percentage of 12-15 per cent may be allotted to the states of the north-east region. The Planning Commission should initiate and facilitate a survey on existing functioning and non-functioning of public/social services infrastructure in the north-east region. Additionally, undertake –

- Phase-wise revamping and revitalising of the same;
- Continuous flow and utilisation of funds linked to the proposed increment of 12-15 per cent

from all central ministries and departments for the region. Out of the total outlay, 50 per cent should be earmarked for women's development initiatives;

- A non-lapsable pool of funds should be created for women from the money which is not utilised in relation to gender budgets;
- Continuous up gradation of human resource development; and
- Continuous flow of a technical expertise support system.

■ State support services

- Address the urgent mental health needs of women, a particular area of concern consequent upon the prevailing situations in the north-east and the absence of state mental health policies. Resource allocation is a must for provision of holistic, gender-sensitive, updated mental health facilities in each state of the north-east region.
- Strengthen, increase and upgrade state support services for women and girls in terms of shelter, short-stay homes etc. for destitute, mentally challenged, women victims of various forms of violence, etc.
- Ensure proper functioning of working women and girls' hostels through state departments and implementing agencies.
- Create enabling conditions for ensuring quality education from primary to higher education levels, especially for girls and women.
- Institute rapid intervention and care services across states to provide uniform holistic support to women affected and infected by HIV/AIDS.

■ Development and Environment

The Planning Commission to ensure gender sensitive, people-centric development paradigms that sustain the environment and communities. More specifically:

- Constitute a people's Commission/Think Tank to critique ongoing and forthcoming development interventions in the region.
- Projects to have regional requirements, ensuring minimal displacement, protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) and without any loss of biodiversity. Promote only micro hydro electricity projects, non-extractive and non-exploitative industries, alternate energy sources.
- Constitute policy to protect Common Property Resources/Rights e.g. water resource, land and forests.
- Ensure protection of existing forests through improved enforcement and community participation.
- Initiate patenting and certification authorities in all states of the North-East.

■ Entrepreneurship

Planning Commission to initiate and facilitate full participation of women in the Look East policy, vis-a-vis decision-making and equal opportunities in:

- Investments.
- Infrastructure – better road connectivity linking districts and markets within states.
- Marketing skills and forward/backward marketing linkages.
- Enhance appropriate livelihood alternatives (e.g. gender sensitive eco-tourism focusing on indigenous arts, crafts, cuisines etc) and opportunities in rural areas. In the context of eco-

tourism, sensitivity should be shown in sustaining domestic livelihood practices of communities, particularly women.

- Adequate resource allocation to ensure safety nets for strengthening local women's markets of the region. (e.g. *Ima Keithals*).
- Special opportunities and support for particularly vulnerable women viz., internally displaced women; women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS; women affected by armed and ethnic conflict; and by domestic violence; women with disabilities; women displaced due to developmental projects.
- Invest in the inherent potential for sports, adventure and creative pursuits of the young women and men of the region.

■ Recommendations (by State)

■ Arunachal Pradesh

- Fund allocation to be need-based.
- Planning should be decentralised, though funding may be centralised.

■ Education

- At least two higher secondary schools for girls to be set up in each district, offering science and arts courses and adequate hostel facilities as well as transport facilities for day scholars.
- Improve sanitary facilities and transportation in all schools to reduce absenteeism of girl students during menstruation.
- Provide free uniform and study materials for girl students from families of below poverty line up to the secondary school level.
- School curriculum to include vocational subjects like agriculture, horticulture, and floriculture.

■ Gender sensitisation

- For the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) programme, the present 75:25 per cent budgetary allocation ratio between the Union and state governments should be continued.
- Public-private partnership projects, similar to that in the health sector, can be started for primary schools.

■ Health

- Every district hospital should be equipped with all gynaecological and obstetrical facilities.
- Free treatment for women below poverty line should be assured as well as free basic medicines.

■ Tribal development

- Compulsory representation from Arunachal Pradesh in the screening committee in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs; a local tribal person from Arunachal Pradesh should be appointed to the committee.

■ Governance

- For accountability, involvement of NGOs and SHGs should be made mandatory in the planning processes of the *gram sabha*.
- Panchayat elections should be people-based, not party-based.
- Devolution of power to *Panchayats* must involve the NGOs who are working effectively.
- Central monitoring system for *Panchayats* should involve NGOs.

■ Agriculture

- A horticultural revolution is essential for this region.
- Increase the number of research and demonstration institutions in the region.
- Emphasis on marketing support.

■ Monitoring

- Institute systems for better monitoring all sectors involving the communities

■ Environment

- Community-based conservation initiatives with transparency should be instituted.

■ Support services

- Set up SSH, working women hostels.
- Improve and increase the number of gender-specific training centres for capacity-building of civil society, local leaders, government officials and the community (Learning and Doing Centres).
- Improve technological support to increase competitiveness in the global market.
- Establishment of Institute of Loin-Loom for quality improvement, marketing and research to provide support directly to women who have potential of knowledge of weaving.
- Monitoring mechanism autonomous body should be appointed by Gol.
- 50 per cent of tribal component plan should be spent on women.

■ Assam

■ Environment

- Integrate watershed management approach.
- Better community participation in conservation efforts.
- Protect elephants.
- Downstream impact assessment (soil erosion, hills to river).
- Protection of existing rivers and forests.

■ Public Health Services

- Better functioning of public health services.
- Community control of health, care of pregnant women in crisis situation.
- Mental health policy and support services for women in crisis situations.

- HIV/AIDS and malaria control to be prioritised.
- Early intervention to prevent disability.

■ Livelihood

- Promote cottage and small scale industry.
- Alternate livelihood in places of sand cast practice.

■ Education

- Sexual and reproductive health in high school curriculum.
- Higher education in hills areas.
- Training of teachers.
- Monitoring mechanisms for government run programmes.

■ Development

- Enhancing per capita allocation for infrastructure in all sectors.

■ Manipur

- Sufficient resources for essential infrastructure in hill areas needed.
- Implement LOOK EAST policy.
- Government must implement railway services in Manipur.
- Specific allocation in employment schemes.
- Hostels to be established for working women, particularly in the hill districts.
- Women's entrepreneurship to be linked with CII.
- Special measures for improvement in the lives of OBC women.
- Promote and enhance and political participation of women at all levels.
- Protection of indigenous people's right to land.
- Protect rights of community owned lands, e.g. opposition to Tipaimukh Dam.
- Implement State RTI Commission.

■ Meghalaya

■ Accountability

- Social auditing and monitoring needed.
- Monitoring committees at village and town level.
- Fund for capacity building of the monitoring committees and these to be democratically elected with 50 per cent women
- Involvement of women in the planning process of elections.
- Zone wise monitoring in towns.
- RTI to be part of high school curriculum.
- Improve institutions in health and education sectors.

■ Nagaland/Mizoram/Tripura

- Improve trade linkages.
- Higher technological inputs, skill development investments, micro-credit infrastructure, market linkages etc. to develop and promote NE traditional industries and agricultural and allied sectors.
- Customary laws to be reviewed through legislation to ensure the economic and social security of women.
- Provision for vocational training centres at block and district levels to enhance skill development for all age groups.
- Implement the RTI Act.
- Hostels for girls and working women.
- More vocational and professional courses to be introduced in schools and colleges.
- Revamp the primary education system and developing human resources in the region.
- IT for health services i.e. telemedicine.
- Trauma centres for counselling and guidance services.

■ Tripura

- At present 97 per cent of indigenous Tripura population is below BPL line, 2 per cent are government employees and of 22,000 government employees, 3000 are women.
- Urgent need to create and implement income generation programmes.
- Attention to tribals who have lost out to migrants from Bangladesh who occupy important portfolios in the administrative set-up.
- Justice for women who are raped and shot in fake encounters.
- Medical attention and intervention is needed. In 2003-04, about 150 indigenous people died due to lack of food. In 2006, 300 people have died due to malaria.
- Land rights for indigenous people.
- More schools for interior tribal areas. Of thousands of schools in the state, only 60 schools are for interior tribal areas.
- Measures to recruit teachers and reduce drop-out rates.
- More livelihood options needed.
- Basic infrastructure needed.
- Awareness and action against corruption in government is needed.
- SC/ST women need access to legal assistance.
- Direct funds – not through the State – are needed for the Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC).

SOUTHERN REGION

■ Dalit and Scheduled Tribe Communities

- The SC/ST PA Act should be modified to include a provision that others can file a complaint on behalf of the victim.

- Appoint protection officers, legal cells, women police officers, and women doctors at taluks to check instances of untouchability, women's harassment and to ensure equality and justice.
- Grant statutory powers to State and National SC/ST Commissions.
- Encourage Dalits to enrol in the police force.
- Employment of the marginalised should be strengthened by ensuring that the quotas are filled.
- Ensure reservations in employment in the private sector.
- Dalits converting to Christianity should continue to enjoy their SC status.
- Privatisation or contracting of municipal cleaning services should not be allowed, so as to ensure proper enrolment and remuneration to the Dalit cleaning staff.
- Mechanise scavenging, strictly implement the law banning manual scavenging; provide alternative employment to those engaged in manual scavenging.
- Clear-cut demarcation of land for tribal communities to be ensured, and wherever there are over 20 families, no intrusion from any other community should be allowed for this or any other purpose.
- Institute time-bound programmes to ensure land titles for women in tribal communities.
- No displacement without a clearance certificate from a committee consisting of human rights activists and the concerned populations, including women.
- Address issues of livelihood and ecology for populations being displaced; introduce plans for rehabilitation that should be women-centred with a cluster approach.
- Housing, clean water, drainage, roads, toilets, streetlights, burial grounds, to be ensured in Dalit and tribal settlements as a basic right and to prevent migration.
- Living spaces should include areas for livestock and a kitchen garden. Hence the minimum area for each family should be increased from three cents to five cents.
- Ensure full utilisation of the allocated budget for the Special Component Plan; increase the allocations under it, and include a special component for Dalit women in this fund.
- Women's markets and banks to be set up at every taluk.
- Special awareness training should be imparted to Dalits and tribals on government proceedings and for political education.
- Ensure the training and equipping of elected representatives and filling of vacant reserved seats; ensure representation for women in politics, ensure capacity-building for grassroots women.
- Focus on gender budgeting.
- Decisions on the issue of licence for sale of alcohol must involve local women group leaders.
- Assure information dissemination on issues, plans and schemes, and widespread education to counter non-implementation of schemes.
- Simplify procedures and introduce a single-window system to address and redress issues; work to be monitored by a tripartite body.
- Involve local CBOs and women in planning and implementation processes.
- Parameters to measure BPL population should be more realistic.
- In urban families, housing should be a minimum of 20'x 25' for each Dalit family, and titles should be in the name of women.
- In schools, a system to address Dalit issues such as caste discrimination and caste-based sexual harassment and patriarchy.

- Strengthen local aganwadis to ensure a good early start in life for Dalit children.
- The quality of care in SC/ST schools and hostels should be improved in terms of infrastructure, nutrition, security and a non-abusive environment.
- Initiate community colleges to develop vocational skills in more locations to make vocational and skill training more accessible.
- Scholarships to cover higher education.
- Improve quality of teachers.
- Introduce stringent measures to check corruption.

■ Health

- Introduce comprehensive health insurance for urban women.
- Ensure budgetary allocation and availability of more drugs, especially the expensive drugs, at the PHCs and government hospitals.
- Improve allocation of ARV and other treatments for HIV/AIDS affected persons.
- Reallocate HIV/AIDS funding with more emphasis on treatment and care.

■ Urban Poor

- Institute a comprehensive national slum policy.
- No citizen should be chased (out like a dog!) from their habitation and work and business area.
- Shifting or eviction must only happen after a committee of people, including human rights activists and people involved with them, have approved it.
- With increased migration to cities, free night shelters should be built at certain urban centres to check trafficking and other forms of violence against women and children.
- Migrants should be registered by the caretakers at these shelters and their rehabilitation and livelihood issues should be addressed by a team of officials from revenue/welfare/labour departments.
- Plans for urban development must reflect a comprehensive understanding of issues for the urban poor and include sufficient budgets for their development.
- In housing allocations, there should be a quota for free allocations to single women including widows and other single women, and battered women.
- Fifty per cent of the boards and committees on urban development should be composed of women from the urban poor sangams.
- Basic civic amenities including water, electricity, sanitation etc should not be privatised.
- Ensure exclusive women hawkers' zones and allocation of 50 per cent of shops in shopping complexes for women.
- The IHSDP fund utilisation must be transparent to avoid corruption and diversion from housing for urban poor. It should be administered by the slum development boards and not the city corporations, which divert funds into road construction, etc..
- Medical services at PHCs to be made available round the clock, including medicines and the services of women doctors. Traditional Birth Attendants to be trained and given incentives to provide services.
- Institute more action to prevent HIV/AIDS.

■ Muslim women

- Establish Muslim Women Development Boards at the state level with decentralised functioning and adequate funding.
- Provide reservations for Muslims in education and employment, including in public services such as the IAS/IPS.
- Provide government scholarships for education from primary to higher levels
- Muslims engaged in fishing need to be recognised as fishermen.
- Muslims need to be integrated into the list of BPL population, and have access to credit.
- Proper civic infrastructure is essential in areas inhabited by poor Muslims.

WESTERN REGION

■ Maharashtra

- Establishment of knowledge and information centres for women at district level with adequate funding.
- Complete utilisation of funding for short stay and shelter homes for women
- Skill development for women.
- Women's schemes to factor in their needs and individualities.
- Five per cent of GDP must be allocated for women and gender specific schemes.
- Inter state and intra-household trafficking of women needs attention.
- Revamp the mid-day meal scheme and prioritise supply given to reputed SHGs, strict monitoring regarding quality, variety and quantity of food offered to children.
- SEZs, EPZs and EPZs (52 in number) should assist in increasing opportunities and labour standards established.
- Capacity-building for SHGs.

■ Goa

- Redefine and reformulate indicators of development and growth.
- Adequate representation of women on all statutory bodies and committees
- Gender assessment of policies, macro projects and schemes. Women's department to be a nodal one with an officer posted in each department.
- Women's perspectives must be sought and included - through public hearings- in policy formulation and when macro projects being planned and considered for licensing.
- Displacement should not be seen as given.
- Special attention for vulnerable, old, mentally challenged and migrant and emigrating women.
- Locate health centres in tribal areas and create detoxification centres for women
- RTI: Detailed guidelines - with gender concerns - must be given to each department and directorate as to what information is to be suo moto disseminated.
- Family laws: Consultative process should be bottom up.

- Registration of Marriage: Compulsory and counselling facilities.
- Existing family counselling schemes should be revised and receive more budgetary allocation
- Contract employees in government sector should be regularised.
- Budgetary allocation for implementation and monitoring of all laws concerning employment.

■ Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh

- The Land ceiling Act and Land Reform Act must be implemented.
- Natural and organic farming should be encouraged.
- Natural water reservoirs should be revived.
- Agricultural sector should get 10 per cent more budgetary allocation.
- Pro-people and pro-poor policy needed for groundwater usage.
- Special allocation of funds to promote traditional games for youth.
- Promote Dalit land rights.
- Promote indigenous grains and ensure distribution reaches villages.
- Minimum wages for women in the informal sector and domestic work.
- Equal wages and occupational safety for women construction workers.
- Labour should be seen as a resource. Women must have the right to work.
- Strong monitoring of Visha Directive by the Supreme Court of India. A workplace free from sexual harassment should be ensured by the State.
- Training for counsellors at Family Counselling Centres.
- Use of Depo Provera, Net-O-En must be strictly prohibited in the family planning and health centres.
- Development must not displace people.

■ Gujarat

- Divide the Department of Women and Child Development into the Department of Women and the Department of Children.
- Poor women should have free access to natural resources such as fuel, fodder, water, herbal remedies.
- Provide adequate funding for PRIs and 30 per cent women's component in all ministries.
- Increase focus on the SSA so that the child sex ratio and the school drop-out rate of girls in schools improves.
- NTFP collector should be given identity cards and must adequately compensated for the sale of NTFP.
- Registration of unorganised labour.
- Realistic Criteria for BPL and strengthen PDS.
- Monitor state run institutions and focus on inclusive rehabilitation policy.
- Prioritise specific needs marginalised sections, women headed households and socially excluded groups.

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