

**SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONVENTION FOR THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**



**Training for Women Network
2013**

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.1 TWN would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the organisations that took part in consultations and provided information for this report:

- Women into Politics
- Cookstown & District Women's Group
- Kilcooley Women's Centre
- Empowering Women
- Newry and Mourne Women Ltd
- Galliagh Women's Group
- Fermanagh Women's Network
- Falls Women's Centre
- Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership
- Old Warren Community Association
- Women's TEC
- HURT
- Workforce Training Services
- Darkley Community Association
- Loughgiel Community Association
- Roe Valley Community Association
- Short Strand Community Forum
- STEP
- Churchtown Community Association
- Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
- Women in Agriculture

2. ABOUT TWN

- 2.1 TWN was formally constituted in 1996; it was a unique venture which was designed to bring together women and organisations committed to change which would have a major impact on the social, professional and economic regeneration of women in Northern Ireland. From this TWN has grown into an umbrella organization comprising 300 members and affiliate members and is Northern Ireland's leading network for the promotion of women's training and development, through policy, training, networking and education.
- 2.2 TWN is a non-profit organization which aims to:
- Advance, promote, develop and co-ordinate provision of accessible, high quality vocational and pre-vocational education and training for women in Northern Ireland to sustainable employment.
 - Facilitate vertical and horizontal integration of women in the labour market.
 - Provide a range of services to members and promote good practice in training for women.
 - Encourage and empower women to take up leadership roles and become involved in decision making in public and professional life.
- 2.3 In July 2012 TWN was awarded Special United Nations Consultative Status by the Economic Social Council (ECOSOC) which gives the organization the opportunity to attend and contribute to debates on critical issues at the United Nations.
- 2.4 After extensive consultation processes with many groups TWN has compiled this submission to CEDAW on the performance and state of both the United Kingdom (UK) and Northern Ireland in respect of their CEDAW obligations. Where required the report firstly comments on the situation in relation to each of the articles at the UK level and then where relevant at the Northern Ireland Level. This is by no means an exhaustive report but captures the learning and research in relation to

the issue TWN and its membership have come across in relation to the implementation of CEDAW in Northern Ireland and with that, the UK.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
<p>Article 1: Discrimination</p>	<p>There is a need for a greater understanding and ownership of the UNSCR1325 in Northern Ireland to empower women. More awareness would mean that women better understand their role and are willing to take part and contribute to the peacebuilding process.</p> <p>TWN welcomes the idea of a cross party UNSCR 1325 working group set up by the Northern Assembly but not all NI women's NGOs are engaged in this process. There is a lack of joint working in the NI women's sector and it is hoped that with the new Regional Infrastructure Funding there will be more cohesion within the sector of which TWN will be acting as the lead partner in this fund..</p>			
	<p>UK pre CSW and post CSW meetings – TWN would like it to be acknowledged however useful, that it is prohibitive for Northern Ireland to participate in these meetings.</p>			
<p>Article 2: Policy Measures</p>	<p>Gender mainstreaming increasingly amount to gender neutral legislation. In doing so, the government ignores the challenges faced by women and produces unequal piece of legislation.</p>	<p><i>Towards a childcare strategy, December 2012</i> : no mention of women or gender issues related to childcare.</p> <p>Welfare reform and its negative impact on women : poor gender mainstreaming of the reform</p>	2012	Towards a Childcare Strategy
<p>Article 3: Basic Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</p> <p>Article 4: Special Measures</p>	<p>Women receive very little from the peace building funding compared to other groups. Public bodies who are funding peace building initiatives should recognize the importance of women in peace and reconstruction and the international legal framework which backs this up (UNSCR 1325). There is a need for gender responsive budget.</p>	<p>Women-centred projects receive 82 times less money than projects dealing with ex-prisoners through PEACE III Priority 1.1 funding (SEUPB list of funded projects).</p>		SEUPB website and NI assembly Hansard Reports.

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
	<p>TWN has been granted special Consultative status by ECOSOC which enables the organisation to submit and present statements to ECOSOC in relation to the position of women in Northern Ireland and further afield.</p> <p>Therefore there is a clear role for OFMDFM Equality Unit to support TWN (in its capacity of having UN Special Consultative Status) to engage more practically and effectively with the UK Gender Equalities Office and the UK NGOs.</p>	<p>Economic and Social Council Substantive Session July 2012</p> <p>TWN has a current membership of 300 women's groups and organisations. Whilst we recognise that the NI women sector has been somewhat fragmented in the past, there is some progress with the Department of Social Development agreeing to fund a Regional Infrastructure from October 2013 with TWN as lead body to manage this strategic regional funding for women in NI.</p>	2012	
<p>Article 5: Sex Role Stereotyping and Prejudice</p>	<p>Every initiative directed at tackling gender stereotypes must include a dimension to deal with self-confidence of women and girls, which is a strong vehicle for their empowerment. Government campaigns should be further developed, put forwards strong role models and encourage projects working on confidence building and personal development. Good examples of this can be seen through TWN's ILM endorsed Women Leading the Way training programme.</p>	<p>TWN Evaluation research report (funded by SEUPB) into the role TWN's Positive Relations Project and Extending Positive Relations Project have played in encouraging women into public participation.</p>		
<p>Article 6: Trafficking and Prostitution</p>	<p>Sex roles and stereotyping concern men as well since stereotypes about the notion of masculinity perpetrate domination of men over women. Challenging both perceptions of femininity and masculinity are crucial to advance gender equality.</p>	<p>European Women's Lobby, <i>European Women's voice</i>, Autumn 2011, Brussels</p>	2011	<p>European Women's voice</p>
<p>Article 7:</p>	<p>The project of reducing the number of councils in Northern Ireland from 26 to 11 threatens the already low representation of women in political life. Indeed, it is believed</p>	<p>Stakeholder Engagement Event organized by the Ulster Business School, <i>Gender</i></p>		

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
<p>Political and public life</p> <p>Article 8: Government representatives</p>	<p>that this reduction in number of councils will impact negatively on female politicians being evicted more than male politicians. Coupled with this women currently only make up 19% of MLAs in the Northern Ireland Assembly – the lowest out of the four assemblies/parliaments of the UK!</p>	<p><i>Equality at Executive Level in Northern Ireland public sector organisations, March 18th 2013</i></p>		
	<p>One should not forget that on top of a vertical segregation in political life there is an occupational segregation. Women in politics are not only few but also more likely to be in charge of ‘soft’ portfolios which are considered as feminine areas such as health services, family-related matters etc. This strengthens some stereotypes surrounding what a woman’s role is.</p>	<p>UNICEF (2007), ‘<i>Reaping the Double Dividend of Gender Equality</i>’, The State of the World’s Children</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>The State of the World’s Children</p>
	<p>TWN’s ILM endorsed Women Leading the Way Programme is designed to encourage women into decision making and encourage active citizenship at a grassroots level. This will ensure that grassroots women’s views are heard to inform policymakers and enabling them to participate in the decision making process. This programme has been delivered across 23 strategic geographical areas across NI and 5 Border counties. As part of this programme TWN facilitated a study visit to the EU Parliament for 18 women from NI in April 2013.</p>	<p><i>Women Leading the Way Programme</i> is administered by TWN in partnership with Women into Politics NI through its PEACE III Programme, <i>Extending Positive Relations Project</i>. To date 630 women have completed the programme with a further 300 to be completed by the end of June 2013. It should be noted that the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister part core funded Women into Politics which enabled the NGO to deliver this training programme.</p>	<p>June 2012 – June 2013</p>	<p>Extending Positive Relations Post Project Evaluation Report</p>

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
Article 9: Nationality	Migrant women represent a great potential in terms of entrepreneurship. They are often more likely to consider opening their own business because of their poor working conditions but also because they come from countries where there is a stronger culture of entrepreneurship. The UK should work on their business capacity to encourage this.	Acs. Z, Arenius. P, Hay. M and Minniti. M (2004), <i>Global Entrepreneurship Monitor</i> , London: GEM TWN (2008) <i>Minority Ethnic Women Entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland</i> , Belfast: TWN	2004 2008	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Minority Ethnic Women Entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland
Article 10: Education	Actions to promote a disaggregated educational systems are welcomed but programmes have to be designed in order to promote not only girls in STEM subjects but also men in highly feminized branches. The ECNI acknowledged this in a guidebook designed for teachers and career advisers but figures still show that progress is too slow.	Bettio et al (2009), <i>Gender segregation in the labour market – root causes, implications and policy responses in the EU</i> , Luxembourg : Publications Office of the European Union ECNI (2007), <i>Gender equality in action – How teachers and career advisors can break down gender segregation in vocational education, training and work</i> Sue Botcherby, Lisa Buckner (2012), <i>Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics : from classroom to boardroom</i> , WISE : male students constitute 85% of undergraduates in Engineering and Technology, 82% in Computer Science and 72% in Architecture, Building and Planning in 2011	2009 2007 2012	Gender segregation in the labour market – root causes, implications and policy responses in the EU Gender equality in action – How teachers and career advisors can break down gender segregation in vocational education, training and work Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics : from classroom to boardroom

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
	<p>One of the key areas to work on and that government officials are oblivious to is the research sector. It is necessary to promote women in scientific research since they are very few. This is key to the disaggregation of the sector and to improve more balanced practices in STEMs.</p> <p>Throughout their lives women who have disengaged can struggle to reengage with learning, and many fall into a negative 'space' which can make it extremely difficult for them to move out of without the appropriate support. When they do want to reengage, women face structural barriers including a lack of affordable and available quality childcare, the high costs associated with learning or training, and a lack of flexibility or appropriate provision on the part of education and training providers. They can also face the personal barriers of a lack of self-esteem or self-belief, education not being a cultural norm and a lack of role models.</p>	<p>Sue V. Rosser (2012), <i>Breaking Into the Lab : Engineering Progress for Women in Science</i>, NY University Press</p> <p>As part of the Strategy equality between men and women 2010-2015, the European Commission recognized this as very important and will "Monitor the 25% target for women in top level decision-making positions in Research."</p>	2012	Breaking Into the Lab : Engineering Progress for Women in Science
<p>Article 11: Employment</p>	<p>Concerning childcare, one of the solutions is to work on improving skills, productivity, diversity (include men) and salaries of childcare workforce to make childcare provision more efficient. This is one of the reasons all TWN training programmes include childcare as standard to combat this barrier.</p> <p>Very few attention is given to sexual harassment in the workplace whereas it is a widespread phenomenon mostly affecting women who are in insecure jobs and have limited opportunities to struggle against it.</p>	<p>P. McQuaid et al. (2013), <i>Childcare : Maximising the Economic Participation of Women</i>, ECNI</p> <p>TWN (2009) <i>Trades, Training and Tradition: Mechanisms for Encouraging Women into Non-traditional Occupations</i>, Belfast: TWN.</p>	2013 2009	<p>Childcare : Maximising the Economic Participation of Women</p> <p>Trades, Training and Tradition: Mechanisms for Encouraging Women into Non-traditional Occupations</p>
<p>Article 12: Health</p>	<p>Women in a post-conflict society have greater needs of healthcare due to post-conflict trauma. This results in stress and worry, especially for their children, mental and/or physical illness, higher rates of suicide and self-harm, drug/alcohol dependency and misuse.</p>	<p><i>Supporting Women Taking their place in post conflict Northern Ireland</i>, Kilcooley Women's Centre</p>	2011	Supporting Women Taking their place in post conflict Northern Ireland

Article	What has changed for women since 2008 & 2012	Evaluations, stats, research, consultations	Date	Report
<p>Article 14: Rural Women</p>	<p>Policies and programme should take into account not only the differences between urban and rural groups but also recognise that rural women do not constitute a homogenous group.</p> <p>The availability of reliable data and evidence on rural women and their contribution to the economy and the well-being of communities is critical. At present this is lacking.</p>			

4. ARTICLE 1 – OVERARCHING APPROACH TO THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION

4.1 UK

4.1.1 Despite recommendations from the CEDAW Committee in 1999 and 2008 there is still no unified national strategy to implement CEDAW in the UK. TWN are concerned that across the UK there may not be sufficiently developed commitment and leadership, co-ordination of strategies, and systematic monitoring of outcomes to ensure that CEDAW obligations are implemented, and these geographical inconsistencies could hamper overall national progress on the realisation of rights guaranteed by CEDAW. There may be laws to address equality and human rights but they do not always include specific information prohibiting discrimination against women. The emphasis on localism means that funding for many programmes is determined by local government but this decentralization of power and decision making should not detract from the responsibility of central government to fulfil its obligations to all women within its jurisdiction, including those in the devolved administrations, such as Northern Ireland.¹

4.1.2 Whilst TWN would like to acknowledge the pre and post Committee for the Status of Women (CSW) meetings the UK has had, it is prohibitive for Northern Ireland to participate in these meetings.

4.2 Northern Ireland

4.2.1 There is a need for a greater understanding and ownership of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in Northern Ireland to empower women. More awareness and recognition would mean

¹ Para 39 CEDAW GR 28

that women better understand their role and are willing to take part in the peacebuilding process.

4.2.2 TWN welcomes the idea of a cross party UNSCR 1325 Working Group set up by the Northern Ireland Assembly but not all Northern Ireland Women's NGOs are engaged in this process. There is a lack of joint working in the Northern Ireland Women's Sector and it is hoped that with the new Regional Infrastructure Support Programme under the Department for Social Development (DSD) there will be more cohesion within the sector. TWN has recently been appointed as lead partner responsible for this fund and the driving force behind greater cohesion.

4.3 Recommendations

4.3.1 Greater inclusion of devolved regions of the UK in CEDAW process and greater acquiescence by UK Government of the need to include devolved regions

5. ARTICLE 2 – LEGISLATIVE APPROACH TO OBLIGATIONS TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION, ARTICLE 3 – BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND ARTICLE 4 – TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES TO ACCELERATE EQUALITY

5.1 UK

5.1.1 The Equality Act 2010 has introduced a new, integrated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which covers seven protected characteristics including gender. The new duty, which took effect in April 2011, may act as a stimulus for public authorities to consider the impact of its policies and decisions on women. The Act claims to replace, harmonise and extend² the existing anti-discrimination laws for race, disability and gender and allows “*measures to be targeted at women, for example to enable them to gain employment or access health services*”.³

5.1.2 The Equality Act applies to England, Wales and Scotland but does not apply to Northern Ireland as it has its own equality legislation. Therefore in Northern Ireland there is no immediate prospect of a ban on gender or other discrimination in relation to services, public functions and associations.

5.1.3 New legislation has not introduced gender-responsive budgeting which is needed to ensure that the allocation of public resources benefits women and men equally including gender analysis, gender budgeting, and use of sex disaggregated data for more gender responsive public policy and budgets. This approach emphasizes the importance of bringing together

² Government Equalities Office and Equality and Diversity Forum. (2010) ‘*Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know? Disability quick start guide*’

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/401727_EDF_Disability_acc.pdf

³ Government Equalities Office (2011) CEDAW (*Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women*) report. (2011) *United Kingdom’s Seventh Periodic Report*.

http://www.wrc.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2011/1/110610_uk_seventh_cedaw_report.pdf

advocates, parliamentarians and other stakeholders into the budgeting process.⁴

5.1.4 Budgets and the wider resources allocated to policy initiatives are crucial in determining the differential impact on women and men, and how CEDAW rights are realised for women in the UK. Therefore gender analysis of budgets, and gender responsive budgeting, must constitute an integral part of state policy-making if state governments are to comply with their obligations under CEDAW.

5.1.5 We have found no evidence of the CEDAW Convention being directly invoked in domestic courts to gain equal rights for women, or any examples in case law. Therefore TWN are concerned about the lack of awareness of CEDAW within the legal system which is needed so that lawyers and advocates are able to directly cite the Convention in court, and judges can refer to it or other international human rights principles in their decisions.

5.1.6 We are unaware of any existing national laws that conflict directly with the CEDAW Convention, however, there is a conflict between the Convention and national laws and policies as much legislation in the UK directly discriminates against women in practice.

5.2 Northern Ireland

5.2.1 Gender mainstreaming in Northern Ireland increasingly amounts to gender neutral legislation. In doing so the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly are ignoring the challenges faced by women and produces unequal pieces of legislation, for example in the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister's (OFMDFM) consultation document 'Towards a

⁴ Bachelet, Michelle (March 2012) *The Time is Now: A letter to UN partners from UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet*. http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/EN-UNW-LetterToPartners_2012-REV_3-9-12.pdf

Childcare Strategy'⁵ there is no mention of women or gender issues related to childcare in the entire document.

5.2.2 In terms of the PEACE III funding received in Northern Ireland, Women's NGOs receive very little from the funding compared to other groups such as ex-prisoners/ex-combatants. The following is a breakdown of the PEACE III funding SEUPB have directly awarded to Women, Youth and Ex-Prisoner Organisations **to date**:

Group	Funding awarded	Per person in grouping
Women	£5,600,000.00	£6.45
Youth	£3,142,894.00	£5.16
Ex-prisoners	£14,258,305.48 ⁶	£459.95

5.2.3 Women's organisations have been awarded £5,600,000 by SEUPB under PEACE III Priority 1.1. Census data reveals that there are approximately 868,818 women in Northern Ireland. This funding if spread over all the women in Northern Ireland would equate to £6.45 for each woman. This amount is further decreased if you factor in women from the Border Counties of Northern Ireland who can also access PEACE III funded projects meaning that an even smaller amount is available to help women.

5.2.4 Youth organisations have been awarded £3,142,894.00 by SEUPB under PEACE III. Census data reveals that there are approximately 609,538 young people between the ages of 0-24 years of age living in Northern Ireland. This equates to £5.16 per child.

5.2.5 Shirlow (2004) estimates that there are approximately 31,000 political prisoners in Northern Ireland. Prisoner organisations to date have been

⁵ www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/about-ofmdfm/ofmdfm-consultation-zone.htm

⁶ Figure taken from Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) Question and Answers for March 2013.

awarded £14,258,305.48 in SEUPB PEACE III funding which equates to £459.95 per ex-prisoner.

- 5.2.6 From these figures you can see how women, the biggest swath of the population, and the largest out of the three named groupings above, receive 71 times less than ex-prisoners.
- 5.2.7 Public bodies who are funding peace-building initiatives should recognize the importance of women in peace and reconstruction and the international legal framework which backs this up (UNSCR 1325).
- 5.2.8 TWN has been granted Special Consultative Status by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)⁷ which enables the organization to submit and present statements to ECOSOC in relation to the position of women in Northern Ireland and further afield. Therefore there is a clear role for OFMDFM Equality Unit to support TWN (in its capacity of having Special Consultative Status) to engage more practically and effectively with the UK Gender Equalities Office and UK NGOs.
- 5.2.9 TWN is currently the Lead Partner for a PEACE III regional project entitled 'Extending Positive Relations Project'⁸ working in partnership with 23 organisations throughout Northern Ireland and the Border Region, the 18 partners in Northern Ireland are established urban and rural organisations that deliver services to disadvantaged areas. TWN secured the block grant and disseminates the funding for the delivery of services at the local level. The partner organisations known as Regional Project Management Agencies (RPMAs) act as regional 'hubs' for the delivery of project activities

⁷ Economic and Social Council Substantive Session, July 2012.

⁸ Under this programme TWN received £2.8 million in phase 1 (Oct 2008 – Feb 2011) and £2.8 million in phase 2 (Mar 2011 – Feb 2013).

to local women at the local level in each of their designated urban and rural communities moving out into their wider geographical areas.

5.2.10 The project gives local women the opportunity to avail of a variety of activities, including, personal development, confidence building, community leadership, Peace and Reconciliation training, women in decision making along with networking and relationship building. The project aims initially to build the confidence of local women through the delivery of personal development and confidence building initiatives which are tailored to suit the needs of these local women. Through the project women are encouraged and supported in community development and leadership. Statistics indicate that women are underrepresented within decision making bodies within Northern Ireland and the key aim of the project is to get more women's voices heard throughout Northern Ireland in decision making processes. This can range anywhere from having a say in a local community decisions through to those taken at council level and even at regional level. The impacts of the project not only benefit the women but their families, their communities and the wider society. The Positive Relations RPMA Partners in Northern Ireland are as follows:

Churchtown Community Association, Castlederg, Co Tyrone	Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP), Londonderry
Roe Valley Community Education Forum, Limavady	Workforce Training Services, West Belfast
Loughgiel Community Association, Loughgiel, North Antrim	Empowering Women in the Community, Antrim
Cookstown & District Women's Group, Cookstown	South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP), Dungannon
Darkley & District Community Association, South Armagh	Newry & Mourne Women's Network, Newry
HURT, Lurgan & Portadown	Fermanagh Women's Network, Enniskillen
Old Warren Community Association, Lisburn	Kilcooley Women's Education & Development Group, Bangor
Short Strand Partnership Forum, East Belfast	Galliagh Women's Group, Londonderry

Women's TEC, North Belfast	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (BCDA), South Belfast
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5.2.11 The structure of this partnership enables the flow of services and information in both directions. TWN provides essential training in organisational governance, financial and non-financial project management including establishing a monitoring framework for good outcomes and impacts. Training also includes best practice in procurement, tendering, legislation amongst other things. In turn the 23 RPMA's consult with women in each of their geographical areas on, for example, the need for the overall project and the various activities delivered through the project. Discussions with the women identifies how best to meet the needs of these local women with regard to moving their community forward with the skills and knowledge needed to engage fully in a fair, stable and peaceful society. Local women were given the opportunity to express their feeling about sharing experiences, collaborative working and building relationships. The RPMA Co-ordinators then feed this information back to TWN through consultation and evaluation days which look at the work undertaken, progress made, what worked or didn't work and the best way forward for all the women. This structure is also used for the compilation of wider policy consultations affecting frontline services for women in both urban and rural areas.

5.2.12 Initially, when TWN applied for the first phase of their project they applied for three years' worth of funding but, following economic appraisal, this was reduced to two years. The same thing once again happened when they applied for phase two, the project only being awarded two years' worth of funding instead of three. Upon raising concerns with SEUPB in late 2010 over why their projects were awarded funding for two years at a time instead of three, as was the case with all other regional projects, of which TWN's was the only women's regional project. TWN therefore submitted an application to SEUPB for a third phase of funding in the final call of applications for funding for regional projects in January 2011. However, the

Peace III steering committee at their meeting in November 2011 scored the application down in terms of effectiveness and efficiency which led it to be unsuccessful. TWN attended a debrief session in December 2011 where they were informed of the reasons why their application was unsuccessful and decided to appeal the decision. A review panel was held in March 2012 where once again their application was deemed to be unsuccessful. Having discussed at length with TWN the reasons from SEUPB why this application for a third phase of funding has been deemed unsuccessful, it would appear that there are a number of concerns within the decision making process which has resulted in TWN's application being unfairly treated.

5.2.13 Firstly, SEUPB marked the application from TWN down on effectiveness and efficiency even through the economic appraisal carried out by FPM Chartered accountants recommended that a third phase of funding be given the go ahead. The reason it was marked down was due to the fact that SEUPB felt that:

- Given that the Phase 2 Extending Positive Relations project is not due to be completed until the end of February 2013, the added value of proceeding to a 3rd phase is not fully apparent.
- A number of issues were highlighted around budget breakdown and details submitted.
- The need for a 3rd phase was unclear as the 2nd phase had only begun and need could only be based on the results of the 1st phase as outputs could not be quantified for the 2nd phase.

5.2.14 The difficulty with this is that the 2nd phase of the project had only just begun and added value, value for money and need could not be ascertained. Baring in mind the reason the 2nd phase had just begun was due to SEUPB awarding TWN only two years of funding at a time for the project instead of three and, at the time of submission TWN were led to believe that the letter

of offer for the Extending Positive Relations was imminent, as it had been passed by the selection committee in September 2010, however the Letter of Offer was not finalised until May 2011. Surely it would have been more appropriate for SEUPB to defer the decision until the value and need for a 3rd project could have been ascertained from, what has went on to become, a very successful 2nd phase. SEUPB did defer decisions for other applications at their steering committee meeting in November 2011 but not for TWN.

5.2.15 SEUPB also marked their application down because they believed the project did not make reference to contact being made with the National Women's Council in Ireland. If SEUPB had deferred the decision they would have found that many of the participants from Phase One of the project now currently sit on boards such as the Women's council and this therefore would not have been an issue or reason to deem the application unsuccessful. The 'Cementing Positive Relations Project' would have continued the work of these 24 partners, TWN plus 23 Regional Project Management Agencies (RPMAs) spread throughout the eligible region delivering vital training and relationship building for the development of positive relations at individual, local and regional levels. To date the first phase of the project benefitted 2470 women, the second progression phase of which is mid-term has recruited a further 1440 women of which 70% are new to the project. The 'Cementing Positive Relations Project' aimed to target a further 2760 participants.

5.3 Recommendations

- 5.3.1 *Carry out a gender equality impact assessment of welfare reform and public funding cuts in general.*
- 5.3.2 *Gender responsive budgeting should be mandatory for all national and local Government departments and public bodies.*

- 5.3.3 *There should be a comprehensive review of discriminatory legislation and a plan developed for legal reform.*
- 5.3.4 *Appreciation of Northern Ireland Governmental departments that there are specific barriers and issues that women face which makes their policies of gender neutrality inefficient.*
- 5.3.5 *The Northern Ireland Government should be supporting those organisations with Special Consultative Status in a more comprehensive manner in order to engage with their UK counterparts in order to help achieve CEDAW obligations.*
- 5.3.6 *There should be a European Measure directed at women to increase the economic and social development of women and children.*

6. ARTICLE 5 – SEX ROLES, STEREOTYPING AND PREJUDICE AND ARTICLE 6 – TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION

6.1 UK

6.1.1 Women’s groups remain concerned that the UK Government has done little so far to address the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in 2008 regarding the stereotyping of women in the media and lack of positive images of women, including ethnic and minority women, elderly women and women with disabilities.

6.1.2 Within certain aspects of the print-based media, it is commonplace for stereotyped and objectifying images of naked or semi-naked women to accompany the news, and indeed to be printed on the front page. These images are more often than not accompanied by derogatory language referring to the female body parts, and advertisements for the sex and pornography industries within such newspapers further serve to commodify women as sex objects.⁹

6.1.3 This persistent portrayal of women as sexualised objects in the print based media is clearly discriminatory in nature, it is un-paralleled for men, and it exists without context. Indeed, such images would be prohibited for adults in the workplace under equality legislation, because they are considered a form of sexual harassment, and when the campaign group OBJECT¹⁰ submitted evidence to the Leveson Inquiry¹¹ of the harms associated with this persistent portrayal of women as sex objects in the UK press, their exhibits were censored.¹² Yet, as OBJECT highlighted, such portrayals of

⁹ See the OBJECT and Turn Your Back on Page 3 evidence submitted to the Leveson Inquiry <http://www.OBJECT.org.uk/files/The%20Leveson%20Inquiry%20-%20OBJECT%20and%20Turn%20Your%20Back%20on%20Page%203%20Joint%20Submission.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.object.org.uk/>

¹¹ <http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/>

¹² See OBJECT’s written statement to the Inquiry and the exhibits within <http://www.OBJECT.org.uk/files/Witness%20statement%20for%20the%20website.pdf>

women form a staple part of mainstream tabloids which are sold in ordinary newsagents and supermarkets without any form of age-restriction. This lack of press regulation on the issue is inconsistent with other forms of media, and equality legislation, and it allows for the sexual objectification of women in mainstream media to continue unchecked.

6.1.4 We are pleased to see the Government taking some action on the representation of women through the body image debate¹³ and acknowledging the links between this and VAWG and discrimination against women more broadly. Research indicates that physically abused girls are more likely to develop eating disorders and 61% of girls with eating disorders have reported sexual abuse while 85% have reported physical abuse.¹⁴

6.1.5 In addressing trafficking only as organised crime, the Government does not reflect the common picture of individual exploitative relationships which still amount to trafficking and so can result in victims being missed. It also results in conflicting, disproportionate and inappropriate policy measures from other government departments, particularly the UK Border Agency (UKBA) which is recognised as increasing the vulnerability of victims.¹⁵ We are especially concerned that the role of the UKBA in the NRM may compromise the equal treatment of trafficked women.¹⁶

6.1.6 A significant proportion of trafficking can be internal and even where it does cross international borders it is not necessarily the case that it raises any immigration offences so this portrayal and approach is misleading and risks

¹³ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/may/30/girls-aged-five-worried-about-body-image>

¹⁴ Women's Resource Centre (2008) Briefing: Violence Against Women, Health and the Women's Voluntary and Community Sector. WRC: London
http://www.wrc.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2008/v/vaw_and_health_briefing_sept_08.pdf

¹⁵ Opinion No. 6/2010 of the Group of Experts on Trafficking in Human Beings of the European Commission On the Decision of the European Court of Human Rights in the Case of Rantsev v Cyprus and Russia, para. 8.

¹⁶ http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/pdfs/Measuring_up_A_report_by_Rights_of_Women.pdf

failing to address the reality and entirety of the abuse. As Dave Stamp from the Asylum Support and Immigration Resource Team in Birmingham has commented:

“We see a lot of women who are themselves destitute in the UK being severely exploited. It happens in a lot of ways; partners abuse women and they are being forced to remain with their partners. There is not much law they can rely on without their partner. We see women here who have trafficked not just into the sex industry but also into factories and domestic work. They often also experience sexual violence during this process.”¹⁷

6.1.7 International measures still tend to focus on attempting to discourage individuals from coming to the UK despite there being little or no evaluation of such campaigns or whether this is the most appropriate support for developing countries seeking to address trafficking. To the contrary, in fact there is ample evidence¹⁸ to suggest that the factors that make an individual most likely to risk all in an attempt for a better life overseas are factors such as inequality and VAWG, lack of access to education and employment, and extreme poverty. These factors significantly outweigh the potential scaremongering effect of attempting to deter travel.

6.1.8 Due to the hidden nature of prostitution and the increasing normalisation of the sex industry in the UK, we do not feel able or that it is appropriate to cite statistics for the scale and extent of involvement of women in prostitution in the UK.

6.1.9 The Scottish approach to prostitution is one that we would welcome across the UK in that it clearly situates prostitution as VAWG,¹⁹ discrimination,

¹⁷ From PICUM submission

¹⁸ UNODC website: <http://www.unodc.org/nigeria/en/t18-traffickingip.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/violence-women/Key-Facts>

inequality and exploitation, and consequently encourages responses that address demand and can also support women who wish to exit.

6.1.10 Migrant domestic workers are peculiarly vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking and abuses of their human rights as recognised by the International Labour Organisation²⁰ and many international experts,²¹ however this group is not mentioned in the Government's submission to the CEDAW committee. On 6 April 2012 the UK introduced retrogressive immigration measures that will make domestic workers far more vulnerable to this kind of abuse. Previously, in 1998, the UK granted migrant domestic workers certain rights for the express purpose of protecting them from exploitation and abuse. These include the right to change employer, renew their visas if in domestic work, and eligibility for settlement after 5 years. This system was working very well and the UK was cited as international best practice for these provisions. These rights have now all been removed, contrary to General Recommendation No. 26.²² Migrant domestic workers will be tied to one employer, unable to escape abuse without losing their livelihood, their accommodation and their permission to remain in the UK.

6.2 Northern Ireland

6.2.1 Every initiative directed at tackling gender stereotypes in Northern Ireland must include a dimension to deal with self-confidence of women and girls, which is strong vehicle for their empowerment. OFMDFM/Department of

²⁰ International Labour Organisation Decent Work for Domestic Workers: Report IV(1) (International Labour Office: Geneva, 2010)

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_104700.pdf

²¹ See for instance Gulnara Shahinian Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences: Thematic report on domestic servitude 18 June 2010 (United Nations) http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/slavery/rapporteur/docs/A.HRC.15.20_EN.pdf ; and Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, Jorge Bustamante: Mission to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. United Nations, Human Rights Council.16 March 2010. <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4c0623e92.html>

²² http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/GR_26_on_women_migrant_workers_en.pdf

Justice (DOJ) campaigns should be further developed and strong role models put forward. Good examples of this can be seen through TWN's ILM Endorsed Women Leading the Way training Programme.²³

6.2.2 Sex roles and stereotyping concern men as well as women since stereotypes about the notion of masculinity perpetrate domination of men over women. Challenging both perceptions of femininity and masculinity are crucial to advancing gender equality in general.²⁴

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 *Media images of disabled women and women from diverse backgrounds in positive roles should be increased.*

6.3.2 *Government initiatives which challenge perceptions of the relationships between femininity and masculinity.*

6.3.3 *Standardise anti-trafficking responses across the UK insofar as possible given the devolution of law enforcement powers, and appoint a Rapporteur or Ombudsman in each devolved authority to make critical assessments and improve the UK's overall anti-trafficking response.*

²³ www.twnonline.com

²⁴ European Women's Lobby, *European Women's Voice*, Autumn 2011, Brussels.

7. ARTICLE 7 – POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE AND ARTICLE 8 – GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

7.1 UK

7.1.1 Women's equal participation in public, political and cultural institutions plays a pivotal role in the advancement of women.

7.1.2 Women remain starkly underrepresented in all walks of political life in the UK. 22.3% of all MPs are women,²⁵ which is an increase from 19.7% at the General Election in 2005.²⁶ However, the number of female members of the cabinet was reduced by 20% in the 2012 reshuffle.²⁷ In 2011 32% of Labour MPs were women, whilst 16% of Conservative and 12% of Liberal Democrat MPs were women.²⁸ In 2012, 22% of all Peers in the House of Lords were women,²⁹ an increase from 19.7% in 2008 and 16.5% in 2003;³⁰ and 35% of all local councillors were women,³¹ an increase from 30.6% in 2010.³² 35% of all the UK's elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are women.³³ The UK currently ranks 60th in terms of female representation worldwide.³⁴

²⁵ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2012), *Women in National Parliaments*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

²⁶ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2005), *Women in National Parliaments*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif311005.htm>.

²⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/the-womens-blog-with-jane-martinson/2012/sep/04/cabinet-reshuffle-maria-miller-women>

²⁸ Hansard Society (2012), *Women at the Top – Politics and Public Life in the UK*. www.hansardsociety.org.uk/files/folders/3314/download.aspx

²⁹ McGuinness, Feargal (2012), *Women in Parliament and Government*. www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN01250.pdf

³⁰ Kelly, Richard and White, Isobel, (2009), *All-women Shortlists*. www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05057.pdf

³¹ Centre for Women and Democracy (2012), *Representing Change: Women in the 2012 Local Elections in England*.

<http://www.cfdw.org.uk/uploads/Representing%20Change%202012%20Local%20Elections.pdf>

³² Centre for Women and Democracy (2011), *Representative Democracy? Women in the 2011 Local Elections in England*. <http://www.cfdw.org.uk/uploads/pdfs/RepresentativeDemocracyFinal.pdf>

³³ Centre for the Advancement of Women in Politics (2010), *UK Women Members of the European Parliament*. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/UKhtmls/UKMEPs04.htm>

³⁴ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2012), *Women in National Parliaments*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

- 7.1.3 The Government has adopted temporary special measures to increase the number of women in Parliament, by extending until 2030 the provision under the Equality Act 2010³⁵ allowing political parties to adopt women-only shortlists for parliamentary candidates. However, few political parties are employing these provisions in proactively tackling the underrepresentation of women within their parties and in addressing issues of supply and election of women.
- 7.1.4 The House of Lords Reform Bill provided an opportunity to bring about a step change in women's political representation and address the democratic deficit of the current gender imbalance in the House of Lords. Disappointingly this was withdrawn in September 2012.³⁶
- 7.1.5 One should also not forget that on top of a vertical segregation in political life there is an occupational segregation. Women in politics are not only few but also more likely to be in charge of 'soft' portfolios which are considered as feminine areas such as health services, family-related matters etc. This strengthens some stereotypes surrounding what a women's role is.³⁷
- 7.1.6 There has never been a nomination for a member of the CEDAW Committee from the UK and considering the wealth of experience and expertise on women's rights held by women here this seems to be a missed opportunity and unfortunately another example of the lack of attention given to CEDAW by the UK Government. This issue has been raised and the response³⁸ was that there were other international forums that took priority in terms of UK representation.

³⁵ S.104 & s.105 Equality Act 2010

³⁶ <http://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2012/september/statement-on-house-of-lords-reform-bill/>

³⁷ UNICEF (2007), 'Reaping the Double Dividend of Gender Equality', *The State of the World's Children*.

³⁸ <http://thedowningstreetproject.ning.com/profiles/blogs/british-government-not-backing>

7.1.7 It is also of concern that the UK has not taken stronger action to support women to take up senior positions within international peace and security structures. Security Council Resolution 1325 calls on member states to provide candidates to the UN Secretary General so there are more women as special representatives and envoys. It also urges member states to ensure increased representation of women in peace and security mechanisms and institutions. Of the fifteen members of the UN Security Council only three members currently have a woman as their Permanent Representatives. The UK has never appointed a woman as the UK's Permanent Representative to the UN in New York.³⁹

7.2 Northern Ireland

7.2.1 The project of reducing the number of councils in Northern Ireland from 26 to 11 threatens the already low representation of women in political life. Indeed it is believed that this reduction in the number of councils will impact negatively on female politicians being evicted more than male politicians.⁴⁰ Coupled with this women currently only make up 19% of MLAs in the Northern Ireland Assembly – the lowest of the four assemblies/parliaments of the UK.

7.2.2 TWN's ILM Endorsed Women Leading the Way Programme⁴¹ is designed to encourage women into decision making and encourage active citizenship at a grassroots level. This will ensure that grassroots women's views are heard to inform policymakers and enabling them to participate in the decision making process. This programme has been delivered across 23 strategic geographical areas across Northern Ireland and 5 Border

³⁹ Available at <http://ukun.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/whos-who/former-permanent-representatives>

⁴⁰ Stakeholder Engagement Event organised by the University of Ulster Business School entitled, 'Gender Equality at Executive Level in Northern Ireland Public Sector Organisations', 18 March 2013.

⁴¹ The Women Leading the Way Programme is administered by TWN in partnership with WiP through its PEACE III Programme, Extending Positive Relations Project. To date 630 women have completed the programme with a further 300 to be completed by the end of June 2013.

counties. As part of this programme TWN facilitated a study visit to the European Parliament for 18 women from Northern Ireland in April 2013.

7.3 Recommendations

7.3.1 The UK and Northern Ireland should actively encourage all political parties to adopt proactive equality guarantees (such as women-only shortlists) to redress the gender imbalance within the supply pool of party candidates and the selection and election of party candidates.

7.3.2 The Appointment Commission should be statutorily required to appoint equal numbers of women and men as peers in the House of Lords

7.3.3 Northern Ireland should learn from best practices in other devolved assemblies and beyond, including initiatives such as:

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- *Electoral Amendment (Political Funding) Bill 2011 in the Irish Dail*
 - *The availability of crèche facilities and an emphasis on family-friendly working hours in the Scottish Assembly*
 - *TWN Women Leading the Way Programme*
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7.3.4 Ensure women are put forward for all levels of posts within international peace and security structures and set targets for the number of such posts filled by women.

8. ARTICLE 9 – NATIONALITY

- 8.1 Migrant women, refugee women and asylum seeking women are amongst the most vulnerable groups in the UK. They are subjected to multiple discrimination on the grounds of their gender, race and migration status.
- 8.2 The Beijing Platform for Action recognises that “*Some groups of women, such as...refugee women, women migrants, including women migrant workers... destitute women, women in institutions.... are particularly vulnerable to violence*”.⁴² Migrant, refugee and asylum seeking women face additional barriers to accessing services. They find it harder to access health services, are more vulnerable to violence against women and girls (VAWG) and lack access to social services and legal protection. This enhances their vulnerability and raises human rights concerns.
- 8.3 There is a gap in the Government’s Seventh Periodic report⁴³ under Article 9 as it only refers to asylum issues and women with ‘no recourse to public funds’, not making reference to all the other migration and nationality issues that affect hundreds of thousands of vulnerable women in the UK, including women migrant workers, undocumented women, foreign national prisoners or other groups of migrant women.⁴⁴
- 8.4 We welcome the statement made by the CEDAW Committee on the 60th anniversary of the Refugee Convention calling on all State parties to CEDAW to ensure that their laws, policies and practices do not discriminate against refugee

⁴² UN Women Beijing Platform for Action <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

⁴³ Government Equalities Office (2011) CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women) report. United Kingdom’s Seventh Periodic Report. GEO: London <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/international-equality/7th-cedaw-report?view=Binary>

⁴⁴ Migrant groups include dispersed asylum seekers, refugees, seasonal agricultural workers, students, ‘Tier 1’ (highly skilled) migrant workers, dependants joining already settled family members, people with irregular migration status such as those who have overstayed their visa or who are working in breach of their visa conditions, women who have left violent partners and have no recourse to public funds, and people from inside and outside the EU. Local areas vary according to the size and distribution of these groups in their population.

women and girls.⁴⁵ However, the UK Government has failed to address this effectively and the UK report omits 2008 recommendation 48a).

8.5 Migrant women represent a great potential in terms of entrepreneurship. They are often more likely to consider opening their own business because of their poor working conditions but also because they come from countries where there is a stronger culture of entrepreneurship. The UK should work on their business capacity to encourage this.⁴⁶

8.6 Recommendations

8.6.1 The Government should monitor the situation of women migrant workers and ensure that they receive adequate protection and support.

⁴⁵ CEDAW Committee (2011) *Statement on the Anniversaries of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*.
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4ea13f012.html>.

⁴⁶ Arcs.Z, Arenius. P, Hay. M and Minniti. M (2004), *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*, London: GEM.

9. ARTICLE 10 – EDUCATION

9.1 UK

9.1.1 When girls experience problems either inside or outside school which make it difficult for them to stay engaged in learning, they often ‘drift out’ of the system rather than ‘acting-out’ in a way that results in their permanent exclusion. Young women who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) are more likely than NEET young men to self-harm and to report feeling suicidal, depressed, and desperate or hopeless about the future.⁴⁷ Lack of parental interest in girls’ education is a factor in girls becoming NEET and dropping out of school,⁴⁸ as can be the low expectations of school teachers.⁴⁹

9.1.2 Throughout their lives women who have disengaged can struggle to reengage with learning, and many fall into a negative ‘space’ which can make it extremely difficult for them to move out of without the appropriate support. When they do want to reengage, women face structural barriers including a lack of affordable and available quality childcare, the high costs associated with learning or training, and a lack of flexibility or appropriate provision on the part of education and training providers. They can also face the personal barriers of a lack of self-esteem or self-belief, education not being a cultural norm and a lack of role models.

9.2 Northern Ireland

9.2.1 Actions to promote a disaggregated educational systems are welcomed but programmes have to be designed in order to promote not only girls in STEM

⁴⁷ FutureYou (2011) 'Waste: A FutureYou Report'

⁴⁸ Bynner, J. & Parsons, S. in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* (Vol 60, Issue 2, April 2002, pps 289-309 (Abstract) Social Exclusion and The transition from School to work: The case of Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science>

⁴⁹ Literature Review of the NEET Group, The Scottish Government accessed at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005>

subjects but also men in highly feminized branches. The Equality Commission Northern Ireland (ECNI) acknowledged this in a guidebook designed for teachers and career advisers but figures still show that progress is too slow.⁵⁰

9.2.2 One of the key areas to work on and that government officials are oblivious to is the research sector. It is necessary to promote women in scientific research since they are very few. This is key to the disaggregation of the sector and to improve more balanced practices in STEMs. As part of the Strategy equality between men and women 2010-2015, the European Commission recognized this as very important and will “Monitor the 25% target for women in top level decision-making positions in research.”

9.3 Recommendations

9.3.1 *Carry out and publish full gender assessments on all proposed changes to education policy.*

9.3.2 *Many women re-enter education in adult life via the women’s sector. Statutory funding should be provided to women’s organisations to support women into education and training with clear but fair targets and progression routes.*

9.3.3 *Any Government strategies designed to target young people into research and STEM industries must put a special emphasis on the need to target young women in order to make up the gender deficient in these areas.*

⁵⁰ Equality Commission Northern Ireland (2007), *Gender equality in action – How teachers and career advisors can break down gender segregation in vocational education, training and work*, Belfast: ECNI.

10. ARTICLE 11 – EMPLOYMENT

10.1 UK

10.1.1 Women have increasingly become a significant part of the workforce and given the opportunity, have the potential to bring at least £15bn of value to executive and managerial roles.⁵¹ However, many women are still struggling against inequality in the workplace, pay gaps and barriers to gaining positions of power. Women still do not hold key positions of power in the job sector. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) found that more than 5,400 women are missing from Britain's 26,000 most powerful posts.⁵² Furthermore, rising unemployment caused by the cuts has led to more women than men losing their jobs and taking on more temporary or part-time work.

10.1.2 Women's work is concentrated in jobs providing public services. Therefore, public service cuts have a gendered impact. There is a growing gap between the public and private sector in terms of opportunities for women. The private sector workforce is male dominated. Any growth in private sector employment may not therefore benefit women, either in terms of the number of jobs provided, nor their quality, and will not replace what they will lose from the public sector. Women in the public sector are more likely than those in the private sector to consider having or enlarging their family because of relative job security, more flexible working hours and more generous family-friendly policies that tend to be available there. However, it is far from sure that many new private sector jobs will be created.

⁵¹ Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Sex and Power 2011*, http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/sex+power/sex_and_power_2011_gb_2_.pdf

⁵² Equality and Human Rights Commission Online (August 2011), 'Sex and Power: 5,400 women missing from top jobs', <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/news/2011/august/sex-and-power-5-400-women-missing-from-top-jobs/>

10.2 Northern Ireland

10.2.1 The recession has put a halt to improvement in the gender balance of the workforce. Historically, the female employment rate has been low and at 62.8 per cent for women aged 16-64 is still three percentage points below that in Great Britain. The long-term trend has been to narrow that gap, and the total of 374,000 women in employment in 2012 is 34 per cent higher than in 1995. But the NISRA report Women in Northern Ireland 2012 shows that while the female employment rate in Great Britain registered a slight increase in 2011 (0.4 per cent), the trend in Northern Ireland was in the opposite direction, with a decrease of 0.5 per cent.

10.2.2 The most comprehensive survey of the labour market is the biennial Census of Employment carried out by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, which covers 55,000 organisations. The 2011 report concluded that women had experienced more job losses than men in the previous 12 months (10,486 compared to 4,485). Most male job losses were full-time (80.4 per cent), while female job losses were almost evenly split between full- and part-time employment in Northern Ireland has an even male/female balance (51/49), part-time employment is 70 per cent female.

10.2.3 The ratio of female earning to men's has also shown a small reversal. In 2011 the ratio was 91.2 per cent but in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earning (ASHE) report for 2012 it had slipped to 90.3 per cent. This is still better than the UK average of 80.3 per cent. Women make up 64 per cent of the public sector where they are on UK-wide pay scales, while men make up 58 per cent of the private sector where wages are lower and the public/private balance of employment tilts towards the former in Northern Ireland.

10.2.4 Concerning childcare, one of the solutions is to work on improving skills, productivity, diversity (include men) and salaries of childcare workforce to make childcare provision more efficient.⁵³ This is one of the reasons all TWN training programmes include childcare as standard to combat this barrier.

10.2.5 Very few attention is given to sexual harassment in the workplace whereas it is a widespread phenomenon mostly affecting women who are in insecure jobs and have limited opportunities to struggle against it.

10.2.6 Through the Northern Ireland European Social Fund (NIESF) TWN's Advancement for Women Programme⁵⁴ ensured that locally identified gaps in education and training provisions to encourage women into employment were addressed by working in partnership with seven organisations working in disadvantaged and rural areas, namely:

Short Strand Community Forum	Cookstown & District Women's Group
Foyle Women's Information Network – disseminated to a further 10 groups	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
Loughgiel Community Association	Kilcooley Women's Education & Development Group
Falls Women's Centre	

10.2.7 This partnership, which resulted in the delivery of 1154 training places for women, ensured that following the identification of gaps within each area, partners were able to share resources to increase the reach of services and thereby avoid duplication. 35.5% of participants went on to Further Education/training or other government initiatives, an incredibly high success rate for this grouping of hard to reach women from disadvantaged areas. TWN did apply for a second tranche of money and while the

⁵³ P. McQuaid et al. (2013), *Childcare : Maximising the Economic Participation of Women*, ECNI

⁵⁴ TWN received £1.5 million from NIESF between June 2008 – March 2011 for the Advancement for Women Project.

application was passed, due to Ministerial directives, there was not enough funding in this round to fund the application resulting in:

- Loss of at least 16 Jobs throughout Northern Ireland as well as the closure of several affordable crèches allowing women to undertake this training.
- Loss of 9000 women being able to undertake courses that are directly beneficial to helping them gain employment over the course of the next 3 years.
- Confirms DEL's stance that increasing women's employment is not a high priority.

10.2.8 After much campaigning and lobbying by TWN highlighting the unfairness of the application process and the unequal benefit this would have on women throughout Northern Ireland, TWN were eventually awarded additional funding under this measure to maintain and increase the important work the project was undertaking.

10.3 Recommendations

10.3.1 Further support women in business by promoting alternative sources of finance and provide access to training and support as well as introducing more networking and mentoring.

10.3.2 Current maternity, paternity and parental leave policy needs to be re-designed to enable parents to be able to meet their work and caring roles. There needs to be greater integration of parental leave policy and early years and childcare policy and infant maternal/paternal well-being with communication between Governmental departments.

10.3.3 Greater recognition of the important role training programmes funded under the NIESF are in encouraging women of all ages back into employment, further education and training.

11. ARTICLE 12 – HEALTH

11.1 UK

11.1.1 There are differences between men and women in the incidence and prevalence of most health conditions. Sometimes there are clear biological reasons for these differences – but often there are not. Gender is the most significant factor interacting with economic status to compound health inequalities.⁵⁵ Women and girls have greater health and social care needs than men across their lives⁵⁶ and face significant barriers to both good mental and physical health.⁵⁷ Women and girls' lives are shaped by biological factors and social experiences that negatively impact on their physical and mental health, including poverty and economic disadvantage, women's reproductive and caring roles, experiencing violence and abuse and age. Whilst women live longer than men, they spend more years in poor health and with a disability.⁵⁸ This has a detrimental impact on them as individuals but women's position in society as main care givers means their poor health will also have a detrimental impact on the lives of their families and their ability to function in wider society, in their community and in the labour market.⁵⁹ According to research,⁶⁰ young women leave school half as active as young men, while over 80% of women are not active enough to stay healthy.⁶¹ Women and girls across the UK face poorer health, not only as a result of a poor response to the physiological differences between

⁵⁵ Department of Health (2008) The Gender and Access to Health Services Study: Final Report http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_092042

⁵⁶ As a result of longer life expectancy and longer durations of poor health - ONS (2010) 'Health Statistics Quarterly' 45 Spring 2010

⁵⁷ WHEC (2011) 'Why women's health?' <http://tinyurl.com/8n5f86k>

⁵⁸ ONS (2008) 'Focus on Gender' <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/social-trends-rd/focus-on-gender/september-2008/index.html>

⁵⁹ Women's Health and Equality Consortium (2011) Why women's health? WHEC: London <http://www.whec.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/11/WhyWomensHealth11.pdf>

⁶⁰ Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (2012) Changing the Game, for Girls. <http://wsff.org.uk/publications/reports/changing-the-game-for-girls>

⁶¹ Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (2012) It's Time: Future forecasts for women's participation in sport and exercise http://www.wsff.org.uk/sites/wsff.org.uk/files/Its_Time_0.pdf

them and men, but because of all these factors. An increase in women's unemployment and poverty, combined with current health reforms in the UK, could exacerbate existing health inequality between men and women.⁶²

11.2 Northern Ireland

11.2.1 Women in a post-conflict society have greater needs of healthcare due to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of the conflict. This results in stress and worry, especially for their children, mental and/or physical illness, higher rates of suicide and self-harm, drug/alcohol dependency and misuse. This is clearly seen in Northern Ireland as research demonstrates.⁶³

11.3 Recommendations

11.3.1 The UK Government and NI Executive should ensure that health professionals receive education on CEDAW and other relevant international human rights obligations.

11.3.2 Effectively tackling the health issues women and girls face must take into account the diverse experiences of women's lives, including poverty, sexual violence and abuse, reproduction and understanding how these experiences impact on women's health and well-being.

11.3.3 There has to be a realization of the increased need of healthcare for women in Northern Ireland as a result of the conflict and the trauma that resulted from it.

⁶² Women's Resource Centre (2012) Factsheet: Women and the cuts 2012
http://www.wrc.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2012/f/1_factsheet_women_and_the_cuts_2012_final_omnes.pdf

⁶³ Mooney, J (2011) *Supporting Women taking their place in post conflict Northern Ireland*, Bangor: Kilcooley Women's Centre.

12. ARTICLE 14 – RURAL WOMEN

12.1 UK

12.1.1 Rural women face many of the same challenges and difficulties of women in urban areas. However these difficulties are exacerbated by living in isolated rural communities. The poor, older and disabled are most affected.

12.1.2 Two thirds of public transport journeys are made by bus and a quarter of UK households do not have a car, including 11% in rural areas.⁶⁴ Women are more likely to be reliant on public transport than men as 78% of women live in a household with a car compared to 84% of men and 63% of women have a driving licence compared to 81% of men.⁶⁵ Older women are also particularly likely to be reliant on public transport. In 2009 women over 70 made only a fifth of their trips as car drivers, while men over 70 made more than half their trips as car drivers.⁶⁶

12.2 Northern Ireland

12.2.1 Policies and programmes should take into account not only the differences between urban and rural groups but also recognise that rural women do not constitute a homogenous group.

12.2.2 The availability of reliable data and evidence on rural women and their contribution to the economy and the well-being of communities is critical. At present this is lacking.

⁶⁴ House of Commons Transport Committee (2011) Bus Services after the Spending Review: Eighth report of session 2010-12.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmtran/750/750.pdf>

⁶⁵ Department for Transport (2009) Women and Public Transport: The checklist.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/women-and-public-transport/>

⁶⁶ Department for Transport (2009) Women and Public Transport: The checklist.

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/women-and-public-transport/>

12.3 Recommendations

12.3.1 Policies and programmes should take into account not only the differences between urban and rural groups but also recognise that rural women do not constitute a homogenous group.

12.3.2 There must be a greater effort to capture more reliable data on the contributions rural women make to the economy and society by government departments.

12.3.3 Work with all stakeholders to integrate, co-ordinate and improve affordable transport services in rural areas, including a range of options from dial-a-ride schemes to buses and increase accessibility in public transport to assist disabled travelers.