

Gender as a Global Concern

Efforts taken by intⁿ community w.r.t. women.

- In 1948 itself EcoSoc of UN has established UN Commission on status of women. This commission has been instrumental in evolution of a many intⁿ treaties, conventions, organisation of conferences on gender concerns.

- In 1975, 1st Women Conference by UN was organised in Mexico, resulting into 1st plan of action for women by intⁿ community. It was realised that gender perspective has to be added in intⁿ development & aid activities.

It led to creation of 2 bodies

- INSTRAW (Intⁿ Research & Training Institute for Advancement of Women)

- UN Development Fund for Women.

- 2nd UN Conference took place in Copenhagen in 1980.

It was acknowledged that UN efforts has made the contribution but special actions are needed w.r.t. health, education & employment.

- 3rd Women conference at Nairobi ()

Focus was on empowerment of women & enhancing women's participation in different areas (social, political, etc) & just not restricting it to women issues.

- 4th Women Conference in Beijing in 1995. It has resulted into Beijing Platform for action.

The goal is improvement of all women without exception. It lists 12 critical areas

- poverty among women

- unequal access to education
- Lack of healthcare system & unequal access to it
- violence against women
- Vulnerability of women in armed conflict
- Inequality in economic structure
- Inequality in power & decision making
- Lack of respect for Human Right
- Underrepresentation of women concerns in media
- Inequality in natural resource management
- Institutional mechanisms for improvement & advancement of women.
- Disadvantage & violations faced by girl child.

Followup Summits

- Followup meetings or review of implementation of above by member states takes place after every 5 yrs either at UNGA or its committee. | next
- Next review in 2015. (Beijing +20)

Besides above there are other initiatives by UN

- Gender Justice to be considered at the centre of peace, human rights, environment, development initiatives
- Since 1995 UN has done gender mainstreaming in all bodies
- Millennium Summit in 2000 acknowledged that empowerment of women is essential for all.
- 2005 World Summit¹ acknowledged that progress for women is progress of all.
- CEDAW Convention on elimination of discrimination against women, has been ratified by 115 states.

gender - sustainable development

- In 2010, UN has created a new body 'UN Women' to streamline its activities related to women.

Changes on ground / Achievements

- As far as changes in real status of women is concerned, we do not see any achievement.
- Situations have worsened because of terrorism,
- rise of fundamentalism, ethnic conflicts, climate change, economic crisis
- There is a lack of understanding of women issues & perspectives.
- There is lack of political will
- Inadequate availability of resources. Gender has not been a priority.