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Foreword

Democracy, justice and solidarity are the guiding principles in our activities. The aim of equal rights for women and men is an indispensable element within this context. Twenty years ago our policy was to improve women's opportunities by means of programmes on income improvement and skill enhancement. Like many others working in development aid we had to realise that these programmes, apart from certain gains for the groups of women directly involved, did little to improve women's overall influence in legislation, business or politics. Women's disadvantages in their societies remained high despite a gradual increase in women visibility.

It was the Fourth International Conference on Women in 1995 that brought about a shift in emphasis, which prompted Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Co-operation to replace its "women empowerment" policy by a "gender equality" concept. "Equal rights, equal obligations, equal opportunities and equal power for women and men were given their own place on the agenda of German development co-operation." Providing equal opportunities for both genders was now a responsibility cutting across *all* policy fields. This is how the term gender mainstreaming found its way into the vocabulary of German development co-operation policy.

Even before that, in its 1994 guidelines on the promotion of women, the FES had identified the need for a "gender specific analysis in the planning of projects and activities". It was understood that this would also require structural adjustments within the organisation. This need was addressed by appointing a team of gender co-ordinators which has since then been working to establish and improve gender equality practice.

Together with its partner organisations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, the Foundation has begun to move towards gender mainstreaming over the past five years. Progress has not always happened at a very fast pace. Too great are the differences between cultural and political settings and the mentalities of the people who determine the speed and intensity of the transition. However, what we can say safely at this stage is that the discussion of gender mainstreaming has sharpened people's awareness of the difference between male and female life situations. There are still many open questions as to the way in which gender equality will be practised in the Foundation's daily project activities. As an initial step, we offer training programmes, as well as providing a "Toolbox – practising gender in the FES", complete with a set of questionnaires for a gender survey.

This brochure takes a look at how much we have achieved so far and what FES staff and partner organisations have done in their countries and regions to place gender equality higher up on their agendas.

By continually raising women's skill levels on the one hand and providing equal opportunities on the other, we are seeing a promising development ahead.

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(Original Seite 5)

From women empowerment to gender

With its over six million members Brazil's national trade union centre CUT is the biggest and politically most relevant one in Latin America. It is one of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's local partner organisations which, like the FES itself, has decided to change its policy from women empowerment to gender equality. Didice Godinho Delgado, former chair of the CUT women's commission, remembers:

"In the mid-eighties we women decided to set up our own group within our trade union confederation. The first question was in what form, either as a separate head office department or as a women's commission. We had seen in other trade unions how easily a head office department can become a ghetto. As a women's commission we could speak in all policy bodies but had no decision making power. After an extensive discussion we went for the second option.

In the years that followed we were able to put in place a number of women promotion programmes. But it soon became evident that these did nothing to improve the power balance. We had learned our lesson. It is good to have a say but it is better to have a vote. This is why we undertook another strategic effort in the early nineties. We demanded a 30 % women contingent in all leading positions. At first hardly anyone listened to our request. But at the end of a two-year campaign for which we received assistance from the FES we managed to sign up a big majority of delegates to back our claim.

This has certainly not solved all of our problems. But a great step forward has been made: women are now present in all decision-making bodies."

Kasten:

The president of CUT addressed the annual congress in August 1993 after a highly emotional debate on women contingents which lasted several hours:

"This debate has clearly shown the dominance of male trade union leaders in the powerhouses of our confederation. In its essence, the proposal under discussion is about sharing this power with women. That is what makes it so difficult to accept the quota solution."

(Original Seite 6)

There is one thing that the gender training workshops for FES staff in Bangkok, Kampala and Rabat had in common: Although all participants were occasionally facing gender issues in their projects, none of them had quite understood what the gender equality approach really means.

The gender equality approach

- addresses the current gender relationship and inequality between the genders
- assumes that the problems of women are societal problems and have to be solved by both women and men
- is a task cutting across all political domains: gender policy is not a niche and not a bolted-on component but has to be a structural element within each policy field.

And another shortcoming became visible all three seminars : male staff members had been in touch at several previous meetings and seminars whereas women participants had never met. It was found to be high time to put gender issues on the Foundation's own internal regional agenda and to offer more gender workshops and networks.

All three regional gender policy seminars were attended by a majority of women staff members. FES offices still appear to look at gender policy as a matter for women alone. This needs to be changed. And not only this.

In the past the FES offices had mainly focused on women-only activities: offering special assistance to women trade unionists and journalists, backing self-help groups, promoting legal advice and credit programmes for women, improving the participation of women in politics. Now it intends to shift the emphasis to a gender equality approach. But how?

Gender equality is often considered to be synonymous with women empowerment as though it were only a new label on an old package. Therefore, explaining the difference between the two concepts was the first point that needed to be addressed at the gender policy workshops. The next question was how the gender equality concept can be applied to the Foundation's key project areas and become an inseparable part of each one them.

The ultimate limiting factor of what the Foundation can do in terms of women and gender policy is of course the social, cultural and political framework of the respective countries. But what equally matters is the extent to which senior staff at national FES offices keep an eye on gender equality as one of the Foundation's policy goals. In any case gender equality must get definite support from senior levels if it is to be systematically applied in all policy fields.

(Original Seite 7)

Lessons learnt at the three regional workshops:

The main lesson was that implementing gender equality, i.e. moving it from theory to practice, is a policy decision: the ground needs to be prepared both in the societies concerned, but also at the Foundation itself.

Gender Mainstreaming is a task for the Foundation as a whole, from its headquarters to every single staff member working at project level. Gender mainstreaming obviously takes time. But the first steps can be carried out right away.

In order to introduce the gender concept, local people should be included more extensively into the planning, analysis and evaluation of the Foundation's activities.

As the conditions for gender activities are usually similar in a given region, it makes sense to focus on common issues and to back each other up by regular exchange visits.

Kasten:

Everything is changing, only our heads need a little more time.

Blauer Kasten:

Gender Mainstreaming:

Bring a gender perspective into all political departments. Be aware of gender-based data aggregation, ask about different needs for women and men, analyse the outcomes of measures in a gender specific manner, put in place compensation mechanisms; ensure women participation in institutions, strive for equal positions at all levels particularly those at which decisions are taken.

Women empowerment

assumes that women are socially, economically and politically disadvantaged; wants to promote women by offering targeted assistance and to help them attain equal rights and an equal status. Experience has shown that by means of a strategy of women promotion alone no equal rights for both genders can be attained.

Gender

refers to the roles of men and women that have been assigned to them by society and culture, as opposed to sex which refers to the biological status. Gender roles are products of society. They vary with cultures; they can be changed.

(Original Seite 8)

The 1993 constitutional reform was hailed by India's women's movement as a revolutionary act. The constitutional amendment upgraded the power of local government institutions and introduced a mandatory one-third quota of women on the election shortlists. Since then, almost a million seats have been put aside for women in Indian village and district councils. Women have begun to move in.

India

Women in local politics – a decentralised, silent revolution

Chameli Devi is a village council member in the State of Rajasthan in the west of India. She belongs to one of the lower castes, she is illiterate, a hard-working peasant woman, a wife and mother. In her society there are no role models and no established patterns women can follow if they wish to express their own interest, articulate themselves in public and put in a confident appearance. The fact that Chameli Devi is doing just that at a local politics level is the result of a growth process, and a success story of its own kind.

Since her election to the local council she was assisted and advised by SOHARD (Social Action for Human Resource Development), one of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's partner organisations. It was obvious that the new women local council members needed the necessary tools to act in democratic bodies as elected representatives. To develop a political

stance, and talk about it, is difficult enough already. To raise a point of concern and stand up for it, to negotiate and to take decisions, are skills that need to be learnt.

One realises that just being in office is not enough. Numbers alone don't guarantee that women will actually play a part in taking the decisions. Many women candidates were sent out to join the campaign as mere stand-ins for their husbands. From behind the scenes, husbands pull the political strings, or even sit in the council meetings with their wives. Many women politicians accept this because they do not consider themselves competent enough on their own.

Women pioneers in local politics need training programmes that enable them to negotiate and teach them to argue, challenge their opponents, stand up for themselves, and above all, not to be impressed by male scare tactics. Far too frequently do they stand before a maze of obscurity and old boys' networks, contempt and sheer spite from male council members. Where women hold their own political positions and do not let themselves be corrupted by, or even oppose, key players or members of the ruling caste, they are put under massive pressure and are often even threatened with physical violence. To Chameli Devi, the political training she received from SOHARD supported by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung at village level, was a workout for her perseverance and leadership skills. In addition, despite the language barrier and her lack of a formal education, she took part in a dialogue of local politicians from other south Asian countries which was arranged by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung together with the Centre for Development Studies and Action. This transnational experience of sharing ideas with women pioneers in local politics from other rural areas in south Asia helped her sharpen her political profile. Having political power means that she can now shift local council priorities. She is making water supply, electricity, regular school classes, social assistance paid to widows and male alcohol consumption the new issues in local politics.

(Original Seite 9)

Thailand

They're in Parliament for politics, not for show

So far, women deputies in the Thai parliament served mainly one purpose. They were regarded as beautiful flowers adorning what is otherwise a rather dull parliamentary life. Since the January 2001 general elections this has begun to change.

The electoral victory of Thaksin Shinawatra the media tycoon did not only change the majorities in parliament but also its make-up. The proportion of women MPs increased to nine per cent – still a small minority but twice the number of seats compared to the last parliament.

In order to draw the public attention to this change, the Foundation hosted several meetings in Bangkok. Women were encouraged to form cross-party networks to handle women's rights issues more effectively. They all agree that they no longer wish to act as the 'parliamentary houseplants'. "We have been elected to make politics", says Khun Chanissata the Chat Thai Party's shooting star who began her career as a TV anchor woman.

What is also becoming increasingly evident is that the so-called *diamond ladies*, i.e. candidates who come from a wealthy family background and have "inherited" a constituency from their father or brother, are no longer willing to act as their families' puppets.

For the first time in Thailand's electoral history, several parties included women's issues in their campaigns. With the support of the FES gender project, women politicians will see to it

that this trend continues. Until proper equality has been reached, Thai women have a lot of ground to cover yet, but the initial steps have been taken. Pretty flowers by the wayside is not what they wish to be any more.

Kasten:

Kenya

The FES has helped Kenyan women candidates by providing them with a brochure which lists a number of "winning strategies" explained step by step, and offers some essential skills that are needed to win an election:

Checklist to evaluate your own leadership skills

- Develop a political message , such as "wealth for women"
- Media strategies and tactics
- Public appearances and public speaking
- How to organise a campaign
- Fundraising

(Original Seite 10)

Political women's forum in the Cono Sur:

A democracy is incomplete without women

The Cono Sur Women's Forum was a model for the Lusophonic Women's Forum. In Maputo, the FES arranged a meeting for women leaders from three Portuguese speaking countries: Mozambique, Angola and Cap Verde. "How can women be successful in decision-making? How can women leaders improve conditions for women at the grass root level?" The objective of this first meeting was to identify common problems and issues to address in the future.

The good news: in the three Portuguese speaking countries, the number of women in governments, Parliaments and administration is rising. The bad news: there is still a gigantic deficit regarding education, skill enhancement, and legal knowledge. This makes it so difficult for women to build expertise, decision-making competence and leadership skills.

The beginning of the nineties in Latin America was the time of the return to democratic regimes. And those who had been excluded in the past were promised a voice of their own in the democratic process. This motivated the Argentina office of the FES to start a women's forum in 1991, a small gathering of 20 women from five countries – all of them had a strong political awareness but had not gained a foothold in the trade union or political arena. On the agenda were women quota systems and affirmative action policies, regional integration of the MERCOSUR the common market of southern Latin America, state concepts, jobs and the employment market.

In the meantime, several participants of the forum have won seats in their national or local parliaments. Others hold leadership positions in major political parties or have entered a ministerial career. One of the participants was elected Mayor of Sao Paolo, one of the world's biggest cities.

Whether they come from political institutions or from non-governmental organisations – the approaches and experiences they offer to the forum have always been different from men's.

Over the past ten years the annual meetings have produced frequent bilateral contacts and a strong network holding a wealth of experience to share. Now, in addition to the regional forum in the five countries, national women's forums have been initiated so that women can develop political competence and make each other strong.

(Original Seite 11)

Join the gang and be successful

Network of young women leaders

Young women think differently. They have a different understanding of politics compared with earlier generations and their power and influence are growing. In the year 2000, thirty women from twelve Asian countries and Germany attended the first conference for young women leaders from politics, the media, civil society and academia, and they all agreed that what is needed is a network. Because despite all the differences in the levels of development and different political systems, women's problems are very similar in all Asian societies. Formal equality is hampered by a nexus of informal hindrances, "spanners in the works" (or sledgehammers for that matter) whenever a woman is on her way to a leadership position.

To many women, personal exposure to the male dominated and often corrupted world of politics is a disincentive. Even the younger women shy away from the struggle for the higher levels of decision-taking. "Power knows no genders", said Marianne Wellershof of the German weekly magazine "Der Spiegel" at the network's constituent meeting. Any political move, she said, needs power.

A good firm will is not enough in Asia to fill the gaps in women representation. The proportion of women MPs is only 13 per cent. Many network members therefore would like to see a quota system in place. Even if that is not going to be easily introduced in countries like, say, South Korea, it is the only way to "open the floodgates" for women.

Whether quality alone can do the trick and whether or not a larger number of women in key positions will already guarantee better policy – this question remains undecided. Adeline Tumenggung, member of Indonesia's Democratic Union, is worried at the prospect of another "Margaret Thatcher effect".

The media play an important part in the attribution of power. But, says Sarah Sabaratnam, network member and journalist working for the Straits Times in Malaysia, in journalism, too, women are assigned the work that has the least power attached to it. Society news and agony columns are the areas we have access to. The tougher fields of politics and business remain a male domain."

Women must get better access to leadership positions, and they must demand it very firmly. This also applies to the trade unions in which old gentlemen are vigorously defending their monopoly position.

The new generation of women at the beginning of their careers unanimously agree: Like elsewhere, politics in Asia has long stopped being an exclusively male business. At the end of the conference the participants felt that their opinion had been confirmed that "young women stand for new policies." They have already agreed on a motto for a future meeting at which problems will be compared and strategies forged: "Form gangs!"

Kasten:

"It is the specific task of young women to come away from pure women's programmes which have so far been a permitted but insignificant niche."

Nurul Izzah Anwar

Malaysia, Member of the network, daughter of imprisoned former vice president.

(Original Seite 12)

Trade Unions

ITS: Union membership across national frontiers

International Trade Secretariats, like their affiliates, until not so long ago functioned as pure male brotherhoods. You were not very likely to see a woman in a leading role, and gender policies were not in evidence, not even in the form of trace elements.

Over the past few years, movement has set in. This has several reasons:

- levels women employment have risen
- pressure from women is felt everywhere in society
- in the rank and file, the feeling grows that the present union culture is highly unattractive for women.

All this has prepared the ground for gender policy. At first there were only minor tremors here and there but then organisation structures began to change everywhere. This is how good examples were set, and the first few exceptions from the rule were seen and heard. It came across as a striking innovation when a woman was elected general secretary of the International Graphics Federation in 1998, a small International Trade Secretariat which later on merged with a bigger one. Adriana Rosenzvaig, a trade unionist from Argentina and a long-time partner of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung remembers: "The unions in the printing industry have always been among the most progressive ones. Yet to our male colleagues it was strong stuff to accept a woman in this position, especially one from a third-world country, at the top of an international organisation."

Kasten:

International Trade Secretariats are international trade union bodies with a history reaching far back into the 19th century. They operate at the level of industry sectors. The public services unions (mostly women membership) have set themselves up in Public Services International (PSI), the metalworkers have joined together in the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF). In the age of globalisation, the importance of ITS as world-wide defenders of employee interests grows.

The Foundation contributed both conceptually and financially, towards ITS efforts to develop a more gender-minded policy in developing countries.

First step: a regional meeting was arranged for women trade unionists to share their experience. These transnational talks put them in a position to compare their own realities with those of other countries. Often there were great differences even between two neighbouring countries, with regard to whether and to what extent gender policy worked, using what strategies and tactics. The aim of these transnational meetings of women trade unionists was to identify best practice and present it to other organisations to follow the example.

(Original Seite 13)

Second step: An institutional setting needed to be created in which a sustainable gender policy and an equitable presence of women in leading positions become possible. Women are still underrepresented, sometimes a dwindling minority, at major international conferences. For this reason the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung offers preparatory seminars and workshops for women trade unionists prior to the big conferences to find a platform and to discuss common positions and strategies before attending – and voting at –the conference itself.

Progress often happens at a snail's pace, and it will take a while yet until gender policy has taken root in the International Trade Secretariats. But there are more and more shining signals of hope at the horizon that give us courage. One such luminous moments was when Anita Normark was elected general secretary of the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) in September 2001. Hopefully, the rise of a woman in this traditionally male domain will set a signal for the fact that women in the unions from now on mean business.

Mozambique

Breaking into a male bastion

In many countries, trade unions and gender policy had little if anything in common. Recently more and more women have begun to try and break into the male bastion of trade unionism. One such case is Mozambique.

Plans are now under way to integrate COMUTRA the women's committee into the trade union national centre OTM-PS as a strategic move to establish gender work as regular trade union business. So far women trade unionists have been most likely to run into walls, either those in the heads of their male colleagues and those in the structures of their organisations. There are more people that put obstacles into their path than people offering them networks to help them. Women trade unionists enjoy no recognition by their male colleagues, and often their sense of self-worth is correspondingly low. Only few of them have the courage to assume leadership positions, and those few are soon weighed down with committee work.

In the future

- the women's committee will be written into the articles of association,
- the women's committee must prepare itself meticulously for trade union congresses and demonstrate a united front
- male colleagues are to attend gender training while women trade unionists will be coached in leadership techniques and management. Joint workshops for both genders will be held on subjects such as HIV/AIDS
- existing labour law will need to be analysed, and gender-based proposals for a legal reform must be prepared
- working women will be informed about their rights in leaflets and radio broadcasts.

The Foundation will continue to offer its support to COMUTRA in its relentless efforts and back them up on their march into the male dominated fortress and on their way up to senior union offices.

"Women must get into leadership positions. For either they are In, or they are completely disregarded. There is nothing in between."

Sudarat Keyuraphan, Thailand
Deputy chairperson of the Thai Rak Thai Party

(Original Seite 14)

Latin America:

Media form opinions, and women and men form the media

The power of the media grows. During the nineties, they have developed into a fourth power in Latin American states. Through their choice of subjects, perspectives, images and through the people who are heard and seen the media create their own reality and make other realities disappear. They influence the political agenda, start new fashions and patterns of consumption, and reinforce existing role concepts of men and women.

Women in Latin America's media vary along the scale of stereotypes ranging from seductive Eve to compassionate Saint Mary. The themes and the general drift are largely determined by male thoughts. The everyday lives of the majority of Latin American women who have to make a living as domestic employees, small farmers or street vendors have hardly anything in common with what is shown in telenovelas, front page stories and commercials. Strong women find no patterns of identification in the media, where women mainly figure as victims or objects.

Bild: Journalists, editors and directors learn to scrutinise the clandestine sexism in their field of work which affects anything from the choice of themes, wording, information sources to camera settings.

In view of the considerable social problems in Latin America, non-governmental organisations play an ever increasing role. The FES is helping them improve their media appearance, as well as motivating journalists from the major channels to cover NGO activities and the issues they are dealing with.

(Original Seite 15)

In their past endeavours to cater for the female audience's "needs", the media put a stronger focus on "typical" women's subjects such as cooking recipes, beauty, and celebrity talk – which did nothing to put an end to the stereotypes. By contrast, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung's media project in Latin America wants to make specific use of media leverage to break up gender stereotypes. Gender mainstreaming happens at different levels.

The willingness to reflect is widespread among the media professions. Many want to create a "different" form of journalism but do not know how. How, in an article on violence against women, could one show not only the woman's role as a victim but also her courage to fight back? How can a story on teenage pregnancy be made to look neither sterile nor

sensationalist? Journalists, a profession under constant threat of redundancy, are grateful for good inputs and for bridges out into the world beyond the newsrooms and government offices.

Skill programmes – ranging from courses on news production and programming to management workshops – are of specific benefit to women. Having attended these programmes often makes the difference in the life of a woman journalist, and becomes the one asset that gets her into a cutting edge position.

Kasten: Latin America today has the highest density and the best networking capability of citizens' radio and TV stations. These alternative media are used by neighbourhood organisations and local authorities, women and youth groups as well as indigenous communities to build their own communication structures. Their importance lies not in the product but in the process, as they discuss issues and realities 95 % of which would not make it into the commercial media. It is not the president, or technical expert, that uses up large amounts of their air time but voices from the community. The FES sponsors these media activities amongst other reasons because they offer women an opportunity to make themselves heard and share their thoughts.

NGOs, and women's groups in particular, learn how to use new communication technology and to cross over from online activities to the other media. In collaboration with the International Association of Community Radio Stations (AMARC) an internet-based network was established in which women's groups and women radio producers from all over Latin America can exchange news, knowledge and experiences through their own channels and share them with women even in the remotest rural districts.

(Original Seite 16)

South Africa:

Bare facts and odd realities

Front page of the Star, South Africa's biggest daily newspaper. Headline: "Women work in mining for four Marks (A.d.Ü.: Soll das in dieser Währung stehen bleiben? Oder two Dollars? Oder der entsprechende Betrag in Rand?) a day". Subtitle: "Pioneers in male domain are not complaining". Really?

The event is worth a front page article. For the first time women have gone underground into one of the pit shaft that make or break South Africa's economy. A big factor in the South African gender situation was that men migrated into mining regions and stayed at hostels without their families. Women stayed behind in their villages with the children the elderly and the responsibility for survival.

Women mine workers for the first time – a milestone of gender equity? Certainly not. Because women were not hired out of generosity, in pursuit of equal rights, but simply and exclusively because they are prepared to work for lower wages than men. This clearly constitutes an act of discrimination.

The Star's front page story does not let itself in for this paradox. Apparently it is too complex for the author to understand. One single worker is quoted who was interviewed while her boss was standing next to her. Not much of a surprise that she says she is pleased with her new job. No questions asked to a trade unionist, no mention made of labour law regulations, not a

single different opinion. The article is based on what meets the eye and the simple message: If women break into a male domain, they should jolly well be grateful.

June 17, Father's Day. A competition in a Johannesburg daily paper: "Who is the best Daddy?" The winner is a father from Alexandra Township who looks after his daughter and helps in the home. Banner headline: Daddy is the ideal Mummy" Wrong. This man is the ideal Daddy. The headline turns the message of the article around which is that men even without changing their sex can and should assume responsibility for their children.

Sixteen male and female journalists analysed these articles in a course on gender awareness in journalism. Conclusion: the stories should have been told in a different way. The way they have been written distorts the facts. Reality is more complex than what meets the eye. The experienced journalists admitted that they often write their stories in a "gender blind" manner too, and do not pay attention to gender specific needs and are not willing to spend much time on complex and contradictory facts.

In South Africa only one-fifth of the people working in the media are women. Only five per cent of media managers are women. After the Fourth International Conference on Women a number of newspapers introduced a "women's page" once a week. While this is a laudable additional service, this is not gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming means that each and every story must be told from a gender aware perspective. Both by men and women. One important step to achieve this is to reform the curricula of journalist training.

The Foundation's local partner organisation, Gender Links, offers a learning package in three parts:

- a manual
- specific workshops on gender and violence, culture and human rights,
- the inclusion of the gender perspective in all courses of South Africa's largest training institute for journalists.
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(Original Seite 17)

Kenya:

Struggle against sexual harassment in communal taxis

A project in Kenya shows how a daily paper can play a key role in making people aware of disrespectful and sexually violent behaviour against women. And how this behaviour is not a minor offence. It is all about an individual's right to bodily integrity and freedom from harm.

A *matatu* is a high-risk device on four wheels. The minibus services used as communal taxis to double up for urban public transport in Kenya, ignore every part of the highway code and are driven in free-for-all style. But to the major part of the population they are the only form of transport available. The official seating capacity, so it says, is 15, and even then one would feel very crowded. But you are far more likely to find 20 passengers squeezed into these battered vehicles – and never mind their feelings. The *touts*, or conductor, who is mostly a young man, is willing to assist you in boarding with a gentle push from outside.

Where spaces get tight is where intruders get their chance. A woman's shriek makes the offender beam with pride, look around in glee, which earns him male co-passenger acknowledgement – and a burst of laughter. The *touts* appear to have a particular liking for the

"human touch". What can women do? There is no passenger majority for getting rid of the misbehaving traveller, and there is no driver with a mind to sort things out.

The Kenyan Human Rights Commission KHRC and "Whispers", the daily paper columnist who tells his stories from the city in the form of rumours, have both joined the women's camp. As part of their campaign, women lawyers from KHRC have put together a list of the most common chatting-up lines and forms of harassment on certain especially ill-rumoured *matatu* services in Kenya's capital Nairobi. They are planning to give a "sour lemon" award to particularly high-risk routes and high-risk *matatus* so as to make them known in public. It is not yet clear however if drivers and *touts* will find sour lemons at all embarrassing.

"Whispers" the popular columnist has come up with yet another technique. With some funding from the FES he produces "Matatu Whispers: A newsletter for passengers, drivers, and conductors" in which he takes an ironic look at the risky vehicles from outside. He does not preach but makes the men with the groping hands appear ridiculous. He is aware of the fact that drivers and conductors want to transport as much human mass as possible, but also sympathises with the women, who mean no when they say no. "Whispers" relies on laughter to encourage respectful behaviour.

(Original Seite 18)

Egypt

Legal action

Back in 1980 the Egyptian government signed the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW. In 1999 it was Egypt's turn to present a report to the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention. In a joint effort, twenty-five women's rights NGOs produced a shadow report.

For women's NGOs in Egypt, CEDAW is an important political milestone. It offers them a solid platform to stand on as they join the international debate, to which women from the Arab world would otherwise have little access. And it entitles them to claim rights for women, based on standards that were set at an international level– away from the Islamic world.

However, this is also an extremely sensitive point. Because Egypt has signed the convention under the proviso that its implementation be carried out in accordance with the Sharia. Egyptian laws on marriage and family relations are based on the Sharia, the Islamic legal code. In its reservation clause attached to the Convention, the Egyptian government declares in no uncertain terms that the rules of the Sharia on marriage are "sacrosanct principles" which "must not be challenged". One of these rules is that a woman in Egypt cannot travel abroad without her husband's consent. Another one is that a man can divorce his wife by saying the word "talaq" three times.

Kasten1:

States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law. CEDAW, Article 15

Kasten2

Egypt is violating Article 16 of the Convention based on the Sharia. It was recommended that the government withdraw its reservation.

CEDAW Forum, Cairo, May 2000

In early 2000 the Egyptian parliament adopted a reform of family law. Its intention was to improve the legal status of women. The new law provides that a newly married couple can

sign a marriage contract on a number of matters that have led to conflicts in many marriages. These include the wife's vocational education, work after marriage, travelling abroad as well as the option of a divorce at the wife's request. Here is the snag: women will only get a divorce if they renounce any claims for financial support.

Women's right experts complain that this legal reform does not deserve its title. They want more than "patching up the gaps in the law". The new law is miles from according equality before the law. And in the entire parliamentary debate on legal reform, not a single reference was made to CEDAW.

The highly conservative nature of public opinion in Egypt – not only that of men but also that of women – makes it difficult for women's rights activists to condemn discrimination. They can, however, argue from a safe place now, taking recourse to CEDAW, which, after all, has been signed by their government

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The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung supported the process of the NGO shadow report which was to be published in time for the official Country Report on CEDAW, by hosting a dialogue. In 11 conferences held between May 1999 and May 2000, the CEDAW Forum in Cairo brought together experts from government, NGOs and the media. Their aim was to share information on CEDAW and prepare an enabling environment for its implementation.

At first, the meetings were attended only by NGOs from the capital, then there was more and more demand from rural organisations, too. All in all, 121 NGOs took part. By contrast, the participation of religious and parliamentary representatives left much to be desired. At the end the NGOs agreed on a priority task for the future: Promoting legal literacy among women across the entire country.

Kasten1

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations.

Kasten2

The weekly paper Al-Ahram conducted a survey in Egypt together with a national research centre. It shows how conservative the population, both male and female, is with regard to gender issues:

75 %	of respondents:	A woman should not be allowed her own passport without her husband's approval
90 %		A woman does not have the right to travel without her husband's permission.
55 %		It does not constitute case for a divorce if a husband denies his wife an education.
73 %		It is not a legally sufficient ground for divorce if a woman's husband denies her the right to work
55 %		It does not constitute a cause for a divorce if a wife is beaten by her husband.
88 %		A divorced husband should go to prison if he fails to pay alimony.

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Tanzania

Staging the drama of land ownership rights: From exclusion to property

The crowd on the village green is raging with anger. "That's exactly how it is in real life. How can he do that to her?" Some speak to the actors directly: "But you must think of the family!"

Quite obviously the theatre company is touching open wounds. What they play is real life. And the audience in Tanzania's Morogoro District joins in after a short while.

The group of actors is composed of a number of 'barefoot lawyers' and voluntary social workers. These so-called 'paralegals' are on a tour visiting rural communities in a legal literacy campaign focussing mainly on women's rights. Their main interest is inheritance law, customary law and modern statutory legislation on women land ownership, the rights of a girl child, and the right to personal and physical integrity in a context of domestic violence, female genital mutilation as well as HIV/AIDS.

With the assistance of the FES, the Women Legal Aid Centre in Dar es Salaam set up eight groups of paralegals and trained some of them not only in common law and modern law but also in writing plays and acting. The play that has heated the minds in the Morogoro District so much is part of a three-day workshop on legal education and counselling. It offers an opportunity to the village women to show a spontaneous public reaction regarding a controversial issue, to speak their mind, and to talk in the presence of men about problems they dare not speak about at home.

(Original Seite 21)

Community theatres like this one pick up the tradition of African storytellers, folk theatre, and traditional music. Popular songs sung between the scenes sum up and comment the play's dramatic story. The key words of these well-known songs are altered to become door-openers for new thoughts. Slight alterations in the words of habitual songs can trigger a change in mindsets.

Land ownership rights – in many countries of Africa this is the hottest equal rights issue. 85 per cent of Tanzanian women live on agriculture. But common law traditions exclude women from having their own land. After the reform of modern national law in 1999, women, like men, have the right to own, use, buy and sell land. But this is precisely what not only local clans but also local authorities are preventing.

The paralegals' play in the Morogoro District aims at involving local authorities in a process of renewal, a renewal based on a change in mindsets, so that women can claim their right to land ownership and men agree. Lay helpers assist women by means of an information package on their new rights, i.e. to own land jointly with their husbands in an officially certified joint ownership, and by offering legal advice at a Law clinic in the nearest provincial town. Lay lawyers help women gain certainty – both on their legal situation and on their land.

Zimbabwe

The Women and Land Lobby Group (WLLG) was founded in Zimbabwe in 1998. Since then the FES has sponsored its campaigns. The group's main aspiration was to introduce into the land reform process a right for women to own and inherit land.

Achievements:

- at a local and provincial level, women organisations carried out far reaching education and mobilisation campaigns among women.
- Lobbying activities with the woman minister and members of the Committee for Land Redistribution and other government officials, to have both husband and wife be recognised head of the household, with their property officially registered under both their names as co-owners, and to permit single women, daughters and widows, to inherit and own land.

Setbacks:

- In March 1999 the Supreme Court with a majority of 5:0 votes ruled that customary law ranges above any modern equal rights legislation that gives women the right to own land. The court found that, in accordance with customary law, a man cannot leave his land to a daughter if he also has a son.
- The violent conflicts over the land of white farmers in the year 2000 turned the land question turned into an all-out a black-versus-white dispute. As a result, the gender equality theme lost much of its public visibility and now appears insignificant compared to the other issues.

What comes next?

In future the WLLG will not only continue with its public education activities and conduct its lobbying at a national level, but it also intends to lobby at a regional level with the Southern Africa Development Community SADC to ensure that governments make a joint effort to write land ownership rights for women into their laws and develop instruments of political enforcement. A decisive step towards defeating customary law would be a review of the concepts of 'household' and 'family'. For as long as there is gender distinction and men are automatically considered the head of their household, women will not obtain their rights.

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Brazil

A chance for the women entrepreneurs in 'little crocodile'?

"Favela" stands for misery, hunger, violence, end exclusion. An old Brazilian-Portuguese dictionary defines Favela as "a hill in Rio de Janeiro, refuge of poverty, delinquency, idleness and frequent fights ... an area of social decay, maladjustment and disintegration." Over the decades, the hill has developed into 601 individual favelas sprawling on the territory of Rio alone, home to over a million inhabitants.

The older favelas have meanwhile turned into ordinary housing areas with electricity and TV antennas, schools, shops and churches. Families have lived there for generations and still struggle against the old stereotypes. Officially they are still regarded as "squatters" on the favela land without any official ownership documents and without any rights. Poverty, too, has stayed. Behind what appears as idleness there is massive structural unemployment.

To the North of Rio de Janeiro lies the Favela Jacarezinho, or 'little crocodile'. The adjacent residential and commercial quarter is called 'Jacaré', or crocodile. This is where the textile industry once flourished. Meanwhile, the mills have gone bankrupt or have been shut down and moved elsewhere. Ten years ago, men brought home a small but regular income as bus drivers or construction workers. Jobs that appeared to be secure at the time have now disappeared. The people first hit by the employment crisis were those with a low skill level, and women. They now organise their survival on an "informal labour market".

In the favela there are still many women and a few men who are excellent at tailoring. They now make clothes at their homes – earning a pittance. Three years ago, women at the favela, with some local government and FES funding, set up a tailors co-operative as part of the SERE project. The project intends to develop local business potential within the maze of the local favela economy.

Sewing machines rattle away at the head office of the "Cooperativa". Two dozen women, all of them mothers of several children, most of them single, are the owners of the small apparel factory with its eight electrical cutting, sewing, and hemstitching machines, a computer, a pocket calculator and a phone.

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The middle man pays me two Reais (less than a dollar) for a coat which sells at 40 Reais at the shop", says Musia, one of the seamstresses who can barely make a living from her clothesmaking at home. There is no point in arguing with the agents from whom they get their orders. No such thing as minimum wage!

"We help each other out and give each other the extra orders that one of us can't handle on her own. Large orders we split into several small ones so that we can produce larger quantities and deliver better quality faster." Women are proud of their strategy, they are self-confident and extremely eloquent.

Their next step will be to try and run their own manufacturing business. It is not as though they were lacking in skills. The women are full of ideas about cuts and styles. They want to do more than sew pre-fabricated pieces together. And they know that the biggest margins are taken by intermediate trade. They need capital, better machines, but above all access to secure markets.

Lower middle class people could be their customers. But how and where to reach them? These women know nothing about advertising and marketing. They would have to seek expert advice on textile product development and marketing.

As three other favelas have their own similarly efficient and motivated co-operatives in place as well, the women are finding the search for a market their most difficult challenge. At the time of writing, the women entrepreneurs of the 'Little Crocodile' are almost back on square one. The new local administration which took office early in 2001 has withdrawn its financial support from the project. For the time being, the women are thrown back on the informal favela sector.

Thailand

Women are like the hind legs of an elephant: they carry most of the weight but they do not control the direction. (Thai saying)

Women are a significant force in Thailand's economy. Women employment is 60 per cent, they constitute a majority in the major exporting sectors, textiles and electronics, in the informal sectors they constitute a vast majority, most home-based work is done by women. And their numbers are increasing – in the unprotected sector, one must add, where fair pay does not exist and health and safety conditions do not comply even with minimum standards.

Therefore the FES is trying, in collaboration with Homenet, an international trade union organisation, the ILO and the Office for Home-Based Workers of the Thai Ministry of Labour, to improve the situation of women in the informal sector, and in particular those who work at home. What these women need is protection by employment legislation and access to the social security system. With this aim in mind, an effective lobbying group has been set up to work in particular with political parties, ministries, and government. It is time for politicians to become aware of these women's problems and deliver solutions to match their importance for the economy.

(ORIGINAL SEITE 24)

Columbia

No women, no peace

The guerrilla war in Columbia has been going on for close to forty years now. All attempts to stop it have had little success. New hope for the peace process arose when President Pastrana took office in 1998. Not only did he begin negotiations with the two largest guerrilla organisations, FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and ELN (Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional), but FARC was actually granted a de-militarised zone the size of Switzerland. This zone is used both as a venue for negotiations with government as well as for public hearings in which civil-society organisations can present their positions on themes such as social and cultural policy, women, employment and economic growth.

Peace negotiations have been held in FARC's de-militarised zone for over two years now. Even though several women's groups were able to present their comments and proposals at the public hearings, talks were not about gender issues. There was no adequate representation of women at the negotiation table itself, nor have gender issues ever played a part in them as yet.

In all violent disputes and armed conflicts so far it has been evident that women and men, be they fighters or victims, are affected differently by a war. In order to permit women to contribute their specific war experiences and interests, their participation and input must be included in the processes of conflict management and peace securing.

In most peace processes, however, the different roles of the genders in normal life and crises either play no part at all, or are considered only in very general terms. The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Columbia (FESCOL) considers women to be the pioneers of peace and tries to help them participate in the negotiation process as well as including gender issues on the peace-talk agenda.

The participation of women in peace negotiations is the only guarantee to have women's interest seen to in the treaties."

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As a kick-off event, the Foundation hosted an international seminar entitled "Women and the gender perspective of peace negotiations". Some well known speakers were invited such as the co-ordinator of Guatemala's national women's forum (Foro Nacional de la Mujer), and a former female commander of FMNL the guerrilla group from El Salvador who had taken part in peace negotiations with her government. Both gave a compelling account on what the consequences are if peace securing and reconstruction efforts are made without considering the gender perspective. In their countries, more women than elsewhere had been involved in the negotiations. But in the period that followed they found that nothing had changed in their countries with regard to discrimination against women in society and above all in business.

In Columbia three points will be crucial:

- commitments to include gender specific interests
- an agreement on definite implementation mechanisms
- the institutionalisation of women participation at all political levels

Having learnt from the experience of Guatemala, it is now being considered to set up a women's forum to serve as a platform to present proposals and demands of women's organisations in the peace process. Moreover, FESCOL is planning to host a series of expert talks, seminars and international meetings.

Angola

Peacemakers

Speakers suddenly cancelled their speeches, the conference had to be moved to another venue, several power failures occurred during a single speech, and yet the first international conference on the role of women in peace processes was a great success. 320 people took part in three days of debating in Angola's capital Luanda. The meeting had been hosted by the women peace movement Mulheres Paz e Desenvolvimento (MPD). The effect of civil war on women was discussed just as intensely as were creative approaches to conflict resolution and strategies for including women constructively in the various phases of conflict management. The primary intention was to break up the encrusted and self-centred lines of reasoning of the different societal groups, and to open them up for bridge-building and minimum consensus. The latter was laid down in a final declaration which announces the formation of a civil women's commission, and calls on the two factions to include that commission when they conduct their peace negotiations.

"During times of armed conflict and the collapse of communities, the role of women is crucial. They often work to preserve social order in the midst of armed and other conflicts."

Action platform of the Fourth International Conference on Women , Beijing 1995, E 139

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Things differ everywhere

"It is quite different at our place," was one of the standard phrases at a gender workshop the FES held in Rabat for its staff from the Arab region. And yet, participants were also able to

discover some common ground. This will provide a basis for a regional gender policy in its north Africa and Middle East activities. One proposal made was to get the debate on gender equity going by inviting contributions from liberal teachers of Islam, who might offer a progressive interpretation of women's rights in the Quran that would counterbalance the conservative thoughts on the matter. Public opinion, it was said, needed to be faced, and challenged, where it stands right now: based on religiously motivated traditional rules for a patriarchal relationship between the genders.

Zimbabwe's Supreme Court rejected an inheritance lawsuit filed by a woman who had been forced out of the premises left to her by her father. In his comment of the court decision, Judge Muchechtete said: Customary Law has ruled African life for a long time. And it still does so in rural areas where most Zimbabweans live ". Women's organisations in Zimbabwe say that this

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"We know what gender is and what the term means. But what we also know is that the absolute majority among the Egyptian population does not have the faintest idea about its meaning. It is an alien term and an alien concept. If we talk about the role of women in society, everybody knows what we mean. It is our philosophy not to cause confrontation and not to use any terms that are totally foreign to Egyptian and Arab ears. Only thus can we reach our goals.

I do not really care about feminism. But I know what is going wrong between the two genders in our society, and how the problem should be dealt with. I have a distinct feeling that the first thing we must do is convince people and get popular support for our cause."

Hoda Roshad
Member of the National Womens Council
Egypt

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court ruling is "unfair both on women and on customary law as it wants to prevent its change".

African customs have continually changed over time, and customary law changed accordingly. Under pre-colonial customary law women were entitled to land ownership and land use. Under the present customary law jurisdiction, male heirs have to provide for the widows and needy unmarried daughters of their deceased father. However, they have long abandoned this custom. "Consequently", argue women's rights activists, "customary law, too, needs to be adjusted to a changed world."

Experience in all countries has shown that there is no universal solution for women's rights and gender policies. What works wonderfully for the Philippines can go miserably wrong in Ghana. A model project from Peru cannot be transplanted to Bangladesh. Things differ everywhere.

A policy to change gender relations attacks the very essence of societal orders and cultural identities. What steps can or need to be taken, and at what pace, can only be decided in a local context. But the strategy has to be clear, and the direction must be right.

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Gender work in progress

Gender policy cuts across all disciplines. It is neither witchcraft nor surprise tactics. It cannot be decreed from above but works only through the ranks. But in order to make it happen systematically in all fields and at all levels of politics, you need a set of instruments, or a box full of tools.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung has developed or adopted a range of useful instruments. It is not the one instrument that makes the music but the well orchestrated combined sound of a large number of them that does. In its final document called the Platform for Action, the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing outlined two strategies by which to attain the goal of gender equity:

- Women empowerment programmes to help women accumulate the necessary power to enter positions in social, economic cultural and political life, thus bringing about a better balance between the genders.
- Gender mainstreaming, i.e. to integrate a gender policy in political office and to have women participate in all key areas, especially those where decisions are taken.

The EU, too, has ever since been following the dual women's rights/gender strategy but is putting more emphasis on gender mainstreaming.

Gender work does not render specific women empowerment activities obsolete. Affirmative action must be used to fill gaps wherever a broader gender approach fails. But gender policy is more than women empowerment. The gender approach is a strategy that opens up a much wider range of options on the road to gender equity. The gender toolbox can be used to open doors.

A Toolbox for gender policy: 11 instruments

- Acceptance of the gender approach and gender equity as an internal policy within the FES
- A strong political will to act on all levels of the organisation and by all staff members

Gender training and gender specific capacity building

- within the FES
- for local partner organisations

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Combining the policy of gender equity with other FES policy goals:

- social justice
- democracy
- solidarity

Gender co-ordination at headquarters

Gender-based analysis

Gender specific statistics

Gender specific work-sharing

Access to resources and the right to earn an income and to own property

Problems and needs

Concepts and solutions

Participation in policy decisions

Effect of political activities

Public-private

Gender conscious planning of programmes and activities

Formulation of objectives

Target group definition

Choice of local partners/ forming alliances

Selection of subjects

Handling of subjects

Resource persons, gender experts

Documentation

Gender indicators to be used in
monitoring and reporting

Gender balance

- in working teams
- among target groups (seminar participants)

Publications

Information sharing

and public Relations from a gender perspective

Gender-based evaluation
planning
implementation
results

Gender dialogue

- with partner organisations
- public discussion

Publications

Basic documents and guidelines

Publication series

"Gender policy in international
development co-operation"

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Published conference documents