

*inspiration*

*beijing*

*networking*

*rio*

*sustainable development*

*international policy-making*

# **The Stakeholder Toolkit**

## *A Resource for Women and NGOs*

*global plans of action*

*information*

*women's rights*

*united nations*

*conventions*

*world summits*

*international agreements*

*internet resources*

*women's caucus*

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**UNED Forum**

The project was carried out between 1998 and 2001, and the website is being updated on a regular basis.

The *Stakeholder Toolkit for Women* website:

[www.earthsummit2002.org/toolkits/women/index.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/toolkits/women/index.htm)

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*“I cannot think of a single issue we’re dealing with  
in the United Nations which is not a women’s issue”*

Kofi Annan, 8 March 1999

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	<i>page</i>
Acknowledgements _____	ii
<b>Part I Introduction</b> _____	<b>1</b>
What’s the <i>Stakeholder Toolkit for Women and NGOs</i> ? _____	3
Why Deal with the UN? _____	5
<b>Part II The United Nations</b> _____	<b>7</b>
What is the United Nations? _____	9
Institutions, Organisations, Commissions _____	12
Other Intergovernmental Fora _____	28
The United Nations World Conferences _____	30
Introduction to the Summits _____	32
<i>Example: The Rio Process</i> _____	35
Earth Summit 2002 Resources _____	38
<b>Part III NGOs &amp; Women’s Organisations</b> _____	<b>41</b>
NGOs and the United Nations _____	43
NGOs and Women in the Rio Process _____	45
NGOs at the United Nations _____	50
<i>Example: NGOs in the Rio Process</i> _____	51
<i>Example: An Issue Caucus: Tourism</i> _____	52
<i>Example: A Major Groups Caucus: CSD NGO Women’s Caucus</i> _____	53
Examples of Women’s Organisations, NGOs and Networks _____	57
<b>Part IV International Agreements on Women’s/Gender Issues</b> _____	<b>63</b>
UN Conferences on Women _____	65
Rio Process: Women & Sustainable Development _____	68
Relevant Agreements from other UN Conferences and Summits and Their Reviews _____	70
Other International Agreements on Women’s/Gender Issues _____	72
International Agreements on Particular Issues _____	73
<i>Example: Poverty</i> _____	73
<i>Example: Employment</i> _____	74
<i>Example: Land</i> _____	76
<b>Part V Networking</b> _____	<b>77</b>
What is Networking? What is Mentoring? _____	79
Networking Resources _____	79
<b>Annex I Glossary</b> _____	<b>85</b>
<b>Annex II UN Agencies and Intergovernmental Bodies working on issues relevant for a review on women &amp; sustainable development: by institutions</b> _____	<b>89</b>
<b>Annex III UN Agencies and Intergovernmental Bodies working on issues relevant for a review on women &amp; sustainable development: by issues</b> _____	<b>91</b>

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**Minu Hemmati & Kerstin Seliger**

## Part I

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# INTRODUCTION

**What's the Stakeholder Toolkit for Women and NGOs?** • *page 3*

**Why deal with the UN?** • *page 5*



# What's the Stakeholder Toolkit for Women and NGOs?

The toolkit aims to provide information, inspiration and networking opportunities. It is designed to help effectively monitor the progress made in implementing the Global Plans for Action, which have been agreed at the UN Global Summits and Conferences since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. It helps to understand the international agreements and is a tool for women's groups and NGOs who work to implement the global agreements and use them in their work, as well as those who aim to contribute to policy-making at local, national or international levels. We hope that the toolkit will contribute to making Global Plans for Action a reality in every part of the world.

The Toolkit comprises a large website and the present booklet, and has been the basis of developing workshop agendas and material.

This booklet mirrors some of the content of the toolkit website. The website offers easy access to relevant United Nations (UN) documents of all UN Summit processes since 1992, non-government organisation (NGO) position papers, examples of good practices and other useful information such as introductory texts on UN Summits and Conferences, UN and other intergovernmental agencies, networking opportunities, annotated links to related websites, etc. The download page offers all UN Documents from the cycle of UN conferences for quick and easy download – in one place. Searching the toolkit website allows you to search all these documents and related NGO documents at once.

You can also find the present booklet on the website and download it as a PDF file.

## The Toolkit Workshop

The national workshop held in Kajiado, Kenya in December 1999, was a collaborative effort between GROOTS Kenya and UNED-UK. Attended by over eighty grassroots women leaders from different parts of Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, the meeting provided a platform for grassroots women to meet and share experiences on sustainable develop-

## NGOs

A non-governmental organisation (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group that is organised on a local, national or international level. NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level.

ment. At the workshop, participants discussed implications of recent global agreements on the lives of grassroots women and to evaluate their involvement in global fora, especially UN Conferences where many of these agreements are made. Presentations provided grassroots women with information on international agreements that relate to sustainable development and the day-to-day work of grassroots women within their own communities. Participants discussed strategies for grassroots women to participate effectively in global meetings e.g. advocacy, lobbying and communication skills, and developed strategies to strengthen and expand peer learning and exchanges for capacity building.

The Toolkit was used as a basic material for this workshop, providing information about international processes and agreements, women's activities and networks, and compilations of international agreements on issues of particular relevance to the participants. The full report of the workshop is available at <http://www.unedforum.org/publi/kajiado/kajiadoreport.htm>. Contact UNED Forum if you wish to work on a similar workshop based on the toolkit.

## Focus on Women and Sustainable Development

The present booklet focuses primarily on **women's involvement in sustainable development**; hence a lot of examples are drawn from the so-called Rio-process on environment and development. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 adopted sustainable development as an over-arching theme of international policy-making. The Earth Summit was also the starting point for a number of UN Summits and Conferences in the 1990 (the so-called "cycle" of UN Conferences). Finally, the world is at this point

THE TOOLKIT WEBSITE:

[www.earthsummit2002.org/toolkits/women/index.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/toolkits/women/index.htm)

preparing for the next major UN Summit – the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 – a 10-year review of Agenda 21 and a forward looking Summit conference. This will be the first major UN Conference since the Food Summit in 1996.

## Sustainable Development

can be defined as development that allows the present generation to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.

Sustainable development needs to balance three goals: environmental protection, healthy economic growth, and social equity.

## Stakeholder

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups who have a stake in a certain policy or decision – they are impacting the decision or policy and/or are affected by it.

Agenda 21 recognises nine stakeholder groups (so-called “Major Groups”, see below), and women are one of them.

## Major Groups

Major Groups are groups of stakeholders in society whose involvement is essential to sustainable development. Agenda 21 acknowledges 9 Major Groups: women; children & youth; indigenous people; NGOs; local authorities; trade unions; business & industry; science & technology; farmers.

Many activities of governments, NGOs, women’s groups, business and industry, trade unions, local authorities, Indigenous Peoples groups, and other stakeholders are focusing on the preparations for this Summit, aiming to ensure that the spirit of Rio is re-kindled and to achieve feasible outcomes that will help the world to move towards sustainable development.

**Women have a major role to play in sustainable development.** In Rio, women were considered a “Major Group” whose involvement is necessary to achieve sustainable development. Today, there is a growing emphasis on “gender mainstreaming” – integrally incorporating both men’s and women’s concerns

and participation in the planning, implementation and monitoring of all development and environmental management programmes.

Women and sustainable development issues are an essential component of Agenda 21 and other international agreements. Chapter 24 of Agenda 21 – “Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development” – outlines strategies to achieve the necessary full and equal participation of women in order to bring about sustainable development. In addition to the Chapter, women’s and gender issues are being addressed throughout Agenda 21, reflecting the “gender mainstreaming” approach. There are over one hundred references and recommendations pertaining to women in the final agreement, recognising the importance of women’s full and equal participation, their rights and roles in relation to sustainable development in sectoral as well as cross-sectoral areas.

*“Human development, if not engendered, is endangered.”*

(UNDP Human Development Report 1995: 1)

## example

**MAMA-86**, an NGO founded after the accident at the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine, has been working to provide information on air, food, and water quality, particularly for women. MAMA-86 has also used the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (popularly called the Aarhus Convention because it was adopted in Aarhus, Denmark, in 1998) for their work. For example, they have provided information about the Convention and its implications for local governments to local authorities in the Ukraine (a signatory to the Aarhus Convention), raising awareness about the rights of citizens to access information about the quality of their environment. At the same time, MAMA86 has supported local groups in forwarding inquiries to their local authorities about environmental quality. The group has thus helped the implementation of the Convention by empowering the citizens, environmental NGOs and women’s groups, as well as local authorities.

## FACTS on Women in Political Life: the Bad News

- In 1998, only ten of the world's heads of State were women. (*Contemporary Women Leaders, July, 1998*)
- As of 1994 just twenty-four women had been elected heads of state in the twentieth century, half of them in the 1990s alone.
- In 1998 only 12.7% of the world's cabinet ministers were women (*Inter-Parliamentary Union: July 1998*). As of March 1998, the number of women in senior management at the United Nations Secretariat was 28.7%. (*Focal Point for Women in the Secretariat, "Gender Distribution of Staff in the United Nations Secretariat", New York: United Nations, March 1998*)
- Women occupy less than 5% of the top positions in international organisations, including the United Nations and the European Community.
- At the end of 1993 the number of women in senior management at the United Nations Secretariat was only 13%.
- Even when women are appointed to high positions, they are mainly assigned to jobs related to "women's issues" such as education, health and social welfare.
- Although women have contributed to many political revolutions throughout the world, they have rarely been appointed to political office in the new governments born of those struggles.  
(*All above from United Nations Fact Sheets, Press Kit for the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 1995*)
- In 1993 the Dutch right-wing Protestant party SGP banned women from membership because the members believe the Bible forbids women to be politically active. (*Newsheet, Women Living under Muslim Laws, Vol. VI, No. 2, 1994, p. 28. France, Women Living Under Muslim Laws*)
- In Eastern Europe women's participation in parliament has dropped sharply recently from 22% in 1987 to 6.5 % in 1993.  
(*United Nations, Department of Public Information, The Advancement of Women: Notes for Speakers, January 1995*)

<http://www.whrnet.org/issues.html>

## Gender Mainstreaming

**"Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."**

*(E.1997.L.10.Para.4. Adopted by ECOSOC 17.7.97)*

None of the three aspects of the goal of sustainable development or their balance can be achieved without solving the prevailing problems of gender inequality and inequity. Clearly, without gender mainstreaming of all work towards sustainable development, we will not be able to bring about sustainable development.

## Why Deal with the UN?

**How the UN affects women's daily lives:** UN resolutions are a main backbone for the formulation of policies that impact directly and indirectly on the development of communities. International agreements have to be implemented at the local level depending on culture and other local conditions. For that to happen everybody has to know about them and governments and donors have to provide support for everybody concerned to get involved in implementation. That is the main reason why women should be informed about what has been agreed at the international level and use these agreements in their communities.

## *example*

**IN KENYA**, grassroots women's groups have used international agreements dealing with women's rights to own and inherit land, and to access and control land, in arguing for their requirements and to defend their rights towards their local authorities, traditional chiefs, and municipalities. For example, a group of women from a Kenyan village shared a small roadside business, selling food and drinks to travellers on the road between Nairobi and the Tanzanian border. When the local authority demanded that the group remove their stall and discontinue their business, they informed them about various agreements which the Kenyan government had signed up to. Locally, nobody had been aware of these agreements, which formed the basis of the group arguing to keep their stall and business. The international agreements proved a powerful tool for these women to argue their case.

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