

Briefings on priority areas for the Women's Affairs portfolio

Purpose

1 Attached are initial briefings on the Ministry of Women's Affairs' priority areas. These briefings provide an overview of the status of women and key issues in each area. We look forward to discussing these issues and our work programme with you.

The attached briefings are:

- Women in leadership
- Violence against women
- Women in the economy
- Ministry of Women's Affairs' international leadership role.

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Chief Executive

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Date.....

Women in leadership

Executive summary

Increasing the number of women in leadership is a priority for the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) as this work aligns with government's broader goal of lifting New Zealand's economic performance. A growing body of international evidence suggests a positive correlation between women in leadership and corporate performance.¹

Currently, women are under-represented in almost all leadership roles in New Zealand. Women's participation in leadership varies by sector, being extremely low in the private sector, low in some areas of the public sector, high in the community sector, and unknown in the Māori sector (due to a lack of data).

MWA's work in the area of leadership has focused on governance, historically in the state sector and expanding over the last two years to include the private sector as well.

Women's participation on state sector boards has risen from 12.1 percent of ministerial appointees in 1981² to 41.5 percent in 2009. While high by international standards, women's participation varies across the state sector and in some sub-sectors women are particularly under-represented.

Women make up only 9.3 percent of the boards of the top 100 companies on the New Zealand Stock Market (NZSX).³ New Zealand is behind other developed economies on this issue and government action has been effective in other countries. Our approach to this issue has been to work with the private sector to find business-led solutions to increasing women's participation on company boards.

There are opportunities to further influence and progress work in the area of women in leadership. We see opportunities to develop further by:

- increasing women's participation in governance
- informing decision-makers of the economic and social cost of under-utilising women's leadership skills
- understanding and promoting Māori women's leadership.

¹ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2009) *Women on Boards: Why women on company boards are good for business*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

² The Women's Appointment File (1983) *A Guide to Getting On: A Booklet to Assist the Appointment of Women to Boards* p.7.

³ Human Rights Commission (2010), *New Zealand Census of Women's Participation 2010*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission.

Women in leadership

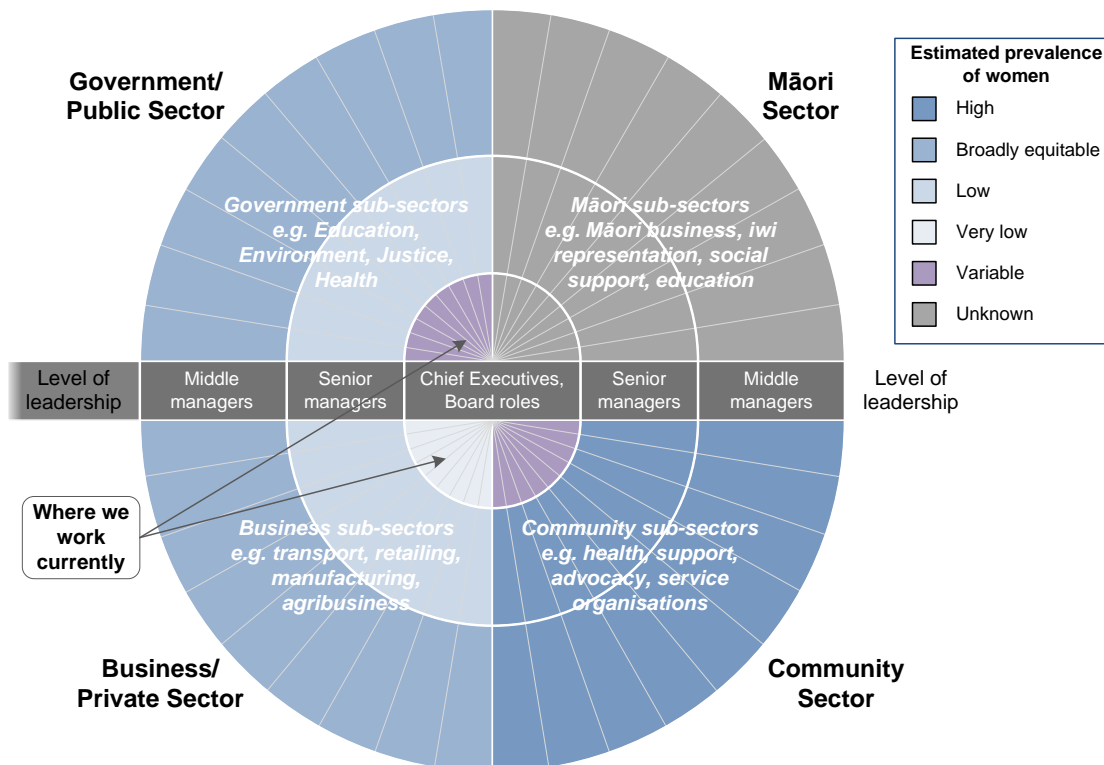
Purpose

- One of the priorities of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) is increasing the participation of women in leadership roles across the economy. Women are under-represented in almost every area of leadership in New Zealand. This briefing provides you with further information on:
 - the low participation of women in leadership roles in New Zealand
 - why this issue is a priority for MWA
 - the work of MWA in state sector and private sector governance
 - opportunities to make a difference.

The picture of women in leadership in New Zealand

- We see leadership as any role involving decision-making and responsibility for an organisation or group of people. The diagram below conceptualises leadership in New Zealand. The participation of women varies by sector, sub-sector, and level of leadership, as shown below.

Leadership in New Zealand by sector, with example sub-sectors



Women are under-represented in leadership roles in New Zealand

- 3 Men outnumber women in almost every area of leadership measured in New Zealand, as shown in the attached table (Appendix A). Generally, the percentage of women decreases as the seniority of positions increases in each of the four sectors identified above. The number of women in leadership varies greatly by sector and sub-sector, as we summarise below.

Women's participation in private sector leadership roles is extremely low

- 4 The table below shows the percentage of women in leadership, from senior management through to board level, in the top 100 companies on the New Zealand Stock Market (NZSX).⁴

Private sector governance and employment	
Position of leadership	Percentage of women
NZSX top 100 company board roles	9.3%
Chief executives of NZSX top 100 companies	4%
Management positions reporting to chief executives of NZSX top 100 companies	21%

- 5 While we do not have data for women's participation in senior management and on boards of privately-owned companies and co-operatives, we expect these would be in a similar range to the NZSX figures.
- 6 NZX companies⁵ have a total market capitalisation/GDP ratio of 40 percent. This represents a substantial proportion of the New Zealand economy to which women have low levels of leadership input.

Women's participation in public sector leadership roles is low in some areas

- 7 Women have varied levels of participation in leadership in the public sector. Women made up 41.5 percent of ministerial appointees on state sector boards and committees (state sector boards) as at 2009,⁶ but this overall percentage masks a lower range of participation in some sub-sectors.

⁴ Human Rights Commission, *ibid*.

⁵ The NZX comprises three securities markets – the New Zealand Stock Market (NZSX), the New Zealand Debt Market (NZDX) and the New Zealand Alternative Market (NZAX).

⁶ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2010) *Gender Stock-take of State Sector Boards and Committees 2009*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

- 8 In public sector senior management, the percentage of women decreases as the seniority of positions increases. The table below shows this effect.⁷

State sector employment	
Position	Percentage of women
Public servants	59%
Public service senior managers	39.8%
Public service chief executives	17.1%

Women's participation in community sector leadership roles is thought to be high

- 9 While there are no comprehensive measures of women's participation in leadership roles in the community sector, anecdotal evidence suggests it is high. This echoes the wider employment profile of the community sector where both paid and unpaid roles have a high proportion of women.

Women's participation in Māori sector leadership roles is unknown

- 10 Women's participation in leadership roles in the Māori sector is not measured, and we are interested in finding out more about this area. Similarly, there are gaps in information around the participation of Māori women in the other sectors. Data on leadership in New Zealand is seldom disaggregated by ethnicity or factors other than gender.

Why women in leadership is a priority

- 11 Efforts to increase the number of women in leadership align with government's broader goal of lifting New Zealand's economic performance. A growing body of international evidence suggests a positive correlation between women in leadership and corporate performance.⁸ For example, a recent study by Australia's Reibey Institute found that:
- ASX500 companies with women directors delivered a higher average return on equity (ROE) than those without women directors – 10.7 percent higher over three years, and 11.1 percent higher over five years
 - in eight out of ten sectors, companies with women directors demonstrated higher ROE than those without women directors.⁹
- 12 The long-term fiscal implications of the recent recession and the movement to close the income gap with Australia both contribute to the need to fully utilise women's talents. As the OECD has recognised, the recent economic crisis has made it even more

⁷ State Services Commission (2010) *Human Resource Capability Survey 2010*. Wellington: State Services Commission.

⁸ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2009) *Women on Boards: Why women on company boards are good for business*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

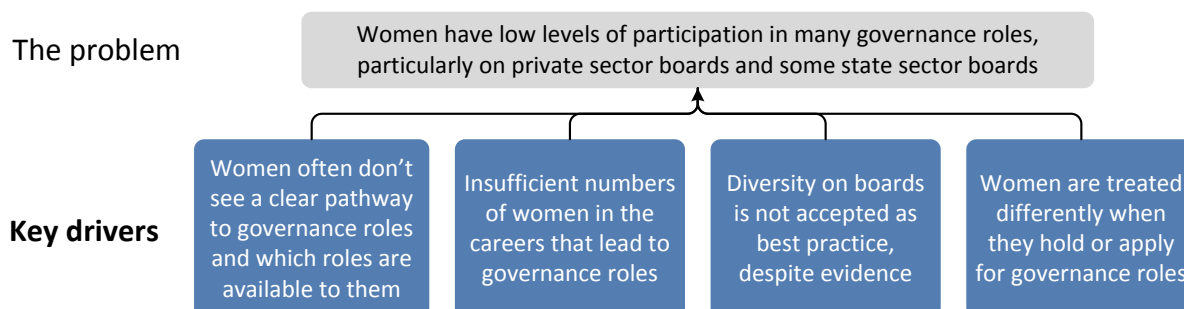
⁹ Reibey Institute (2010) *ASX 500 Women Leaders Preliminary Research Note*. Reibey Institute.

obvious that failing to realise the full potential of women carries a huge economic and social cost.¹⁰

- 13 MWA's priority is to increase women in leadership roles across the economy. We focus on the sectors or sub-sectors where women are most under-represented at the highest levels of leadership. For example, the private sector, where women's participation is extremely low at the highest level, stands out as a sector where a significant impact can be made.

MWA's work in leadership has focused on governance

- 14 MWA's work in the area of leadership has focused on governance, historically in the state sector and expanding over the last two years to include the private sector as well. This new private sector focus is due to the particularly low numbers of women on private sector boards.
- 15 The table below describes how we see the issue of women in governance. Our work to date has addressed the drivers as identified.



Women's participation on state sector boards has increased significantly

- 16 A focus by successive governments on this issue has meant that women have a high level of participation on state sector boards compared with the private sector. Women's participation on state sector boards has risen markedly over time, from 12.1 percent of ministerial appointees in 1981¹¹ to 41.5 percent in 2009.
- 17 Women's participation on state sector boards is also high by international standards. For instance, women made up 33.4 per cent of sitting members on Australian government boards as at 30 June 2009,¹² and the Australian Labor party promised to set targets of at least 40 percent women on federal government boards over the next five years as part of its election campaign.¹³

¹⁰ OECD (2010) *Strategic Orientations by the Secretary General*. Meeting of the Council at Ministerial Level, 2010, C/MIN (2010)1.

¹¹ The Women's Appointment File, *op cit*, p.7.

¹² The Australian Government Office for Women (2009) *Women on Australian Government Boards Report 2008-2009*. Canberra: The Australian Government Office for Women, p. 3.

¹³ Tanya Plibersek, 'More women on Australian boards', Australian Labor website, 29 July 2010.

- 18 The 41.5 percent average masks a wide range of participation across sub-sectors. Our most recent gender stock-take of state sector boards (December 2009) shows there is relatively low participation by women in sub-sectors such as research, science and technology and economic development (30 percent and under). Women's participation is greater than 50 percent in sub-sectors such as health and social development. A summary table of the 2009 stock-take results across the various sub-sectors is attached as Appendix B.

The Nominations Service has played a significant role in increasing women's participation and continues to evolve

- 19 The Nominations Service (the Service) has been instrumental in significantly increasing the percentage of women serving on state sector boards over time.
- 20 More recently, the Service has evolved from a reactive nominating role to a strategic role in increasing women's participation on state sector boards. The Service now sees our role as ensuring that key decision-makers in the state sector value the appointment of women to boards.
- 21 The Service puts greater resource into nominations processes for boards in under-represented sub-sectors. We have also placed an emphasis on recruiting new Māori women candidates and connecting them to decision-makers.

Women do not participate in significant numbers on top private sector boards

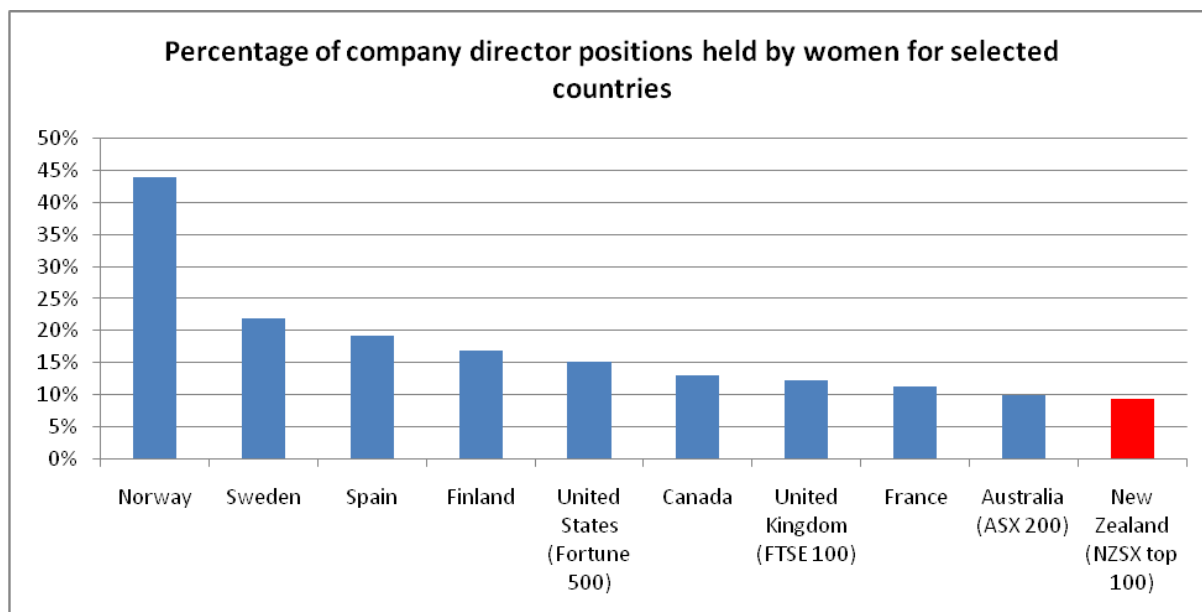
- 22 A small number of directorships are held by an even smaller number of women on New Zealand's top 100 listed companies. Women make up just 9.3 percent of directors on the New Zealand Stock Market (NZSX) top 100 listed companies. This comprises 58 directorships held by 45 women out of a total of 622 directorships.¹⁴ Approximately 20 of the 45 women who hold NZSX directorships are based in Australia. We are unaware of any Māori women directors on NZSX boards. Fifty-seven of the top 100 companies have no women directors, including five of the top ten companies.
- 23 Women's participation on the NZSX boards has increased slowly: from 5.1 percent in 2003 to 9.3 percent in 2010.

Why should government care about the number of women on private sector boards?

- 24 As shown in the table below, New Zealand has been overtaken by other developed economies in furthering the participation of women on company boards.¹⁵ This issue presents potential reputational risks for New Zealand and is monitored as part of New Zealand's international obligations through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

¹⁴ Human Rights Commission, *op cit*, p. 14

¹⁵ Human Rights Commission, *op cit*, p. 6



- 25 Government action to actively increase women's participation on company boards has been effective in other countries such as Norway, Spain, and France. These countries have used quotas and related directive measures to force companies to address this issue.
- 26 In Australia, government recommendations stimulated a business-led response. The Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) Corporate Governance Council has enacted changes to its Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations, which require each listed company to adopt and disclose a diversity policy, including
- the company's achievement against the gender objectives set by the board
 - the number of women employees in the whole organisation, in senior management and on the board.
- 27 As a result of the new guidelines, the number of women on ASX 200 boards rapidly increased to 10.3 percent as at November 2010, up from 8.3 percent in January 2010.

Our approach to this issue

- 28 Since 2009, we have worked with the private sector to find sustainable, business-led solutions to increasing women's participation on company boards. We believe this is a more durable and constructive approach than seeking to impose solutions such as quotas, or solely act as a critical voice on this issue.
- 29 The results of our actions are still emerging. We have built partnerships with private sector organisations, including the New Zealand Shareholders' Association (NZSA), the Institute of Directors in New Zealand (IoD), and Business New Zealand. These partnerships have helped build awareness of the issue among business leaders, most notably the launch of the business case for more women on boards by the Prime Minister in May 2009.

- 30 MWA's approach is complementary to that of others working to increase women's participation on company boards. For example, the Human Rights Commission plays a significant watchdog role on this issue, while the EEO Trust and Global Women New Zealand have leadership development and mentoring programmes for potential women directors.

Further opportunities to make a difference

- 31 There are opportunities to further influence and progress work in the area of women in leadership. We see opportunities to develop further in:
- increasing women's participation in governance
 - informing decision-makers of the economic and social cost of under-utilising women's leadership skills
 - understanding and promoting Māori women's leadership.
- 32 Governance remains a worthwhile focus for our work. There is scope for increased participation by women on state sector boards in the areas where they are currently under-represented. In the private sector, our work has built valuable relationships and insights that have potential for further development. In addition, the rapid increase in women's participation on ASX boards can be a useful leverage point to encourage concerted action by the private sector in New Zealand.
- 33 We can do more to inform decision-makers in the public and private sectors of the economic and social cost of under-utilising women's leadership skills. This may link to MWA's women in the economy work; for example, it could be an extension of work on the link between women's fuller participation in the labour market and productivity.
- 34 There is room for MWA to take a strong role in understanding and promoting Māori women's leadership in the Māori and other sectors. Addressing the information gaps on women's participation rates in leadership in the Māori sector would be a useful place to start.

Women's participation in a selection of leadership roles in New Zealand

Position of leadership	Percentage of women	Trend from 2008 figure
Governance		
NZSX top 100 (New Zealand Stock Market)	9.32%	Slightly up
NZDX (New Zealand Debt Market)	9.57%	Almost double (volatile)
NZAX (New Zealand Alternative Market)	6.82%	Up (volatile)
Agribusiness boards	11.84%	New figure
State Sector Boards and Committees	41.50%	Stable
National Sports Boards	24%	Down
District Health Boards	44.14%	Slightly up
Employment		
Management positions reporting to Chief Executives of NZSX top 100 companies	21%	New figure
Chief Executives of NZSX top 100 companies	4%	New figure
Editors	11.54%	Down (by 1 person)
Accountancy	12.71%	New figure
Top Legal Partnerships	18.24%	Slightly up
University Professors and Associate Professors	22.45%	Up
Judges	26.03%	Stable
New Zealand Police	29.30%	Stable
National Executives – Trade Unions	33.98%	Down
Politics		
Members of Parliament	32%	Slightly down
Cabinet	30%	Slightly down
Select Committee Chairs	20%	Nearly half previous
Local Government	28.30%	Slightly down
Education		
Teachers	72%	Stable
School Principals	47%	Up
School Boards of Trustees	51%	Slightly down

Extracted from the Human Rights Commission's *New Zealand Census of Women's Participation 2010*.

Gender stock-take of state sector boards and committees 2009
Summary table by administering agency

Administering Agency	# Boards	# Ministerial Appointees	# Women Ministerial Appointees	Percentage of Women
Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)	1	22	12	54.5%
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	14	72	26	36.1%
Archives New Zealand	1	7	2	28.6%
Department of Building and Housing	8	57	16	28.1%
Crown Ownership Monitoring Unit (COMU)	48	283	93	32.9%
Department of Conservation	20	166	63	38.0%
Ministry of Consumer Affairs	5	8	6	75.0%
Ministry of Culture and Heritage	15	97	33	34.0%
Defence Force	1	11	1	9.1%
Ministry of Economic Development	15	89	27	30.3%
Ministry of Education	11	75	34	45.3%
Ministry for the Environment	5	38	11	28.9%
Ministry of Fisheries	1	6	2	33.3%
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	11	51	12	23.5%
Ministry of Health	69	611	328	53.7%
Department of Internal Affairs	46	307	166	54.1%
Ministry of Justice	56	335	101	30.1%
Department of Labour	11	84	44	52.4%
Land Information New Zealand	3	19	4	21.1%
National Library	2	11	4	36.4%
New Zealand Qualifications Authority	2	2	0	0.0%
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs	2	18	10	55.6%
Ministry of Research, Science and Technology	3	20	5	25.0%
Ministry of Social Development	16	49	28	57.1%
SPARC	1	9	4	44.4%
Statistics New Zealand	1	12	2	16.7%
Te Puni Kōkiri	5	34	15	44.1%
Tertiary Education Commission	32	125	51	40.8%
Ministry of Tourism	2	15	4	26.7%
Ministry of Transport	9	43	10	23.3%
Veterans' Affairs New Zealand	3	14	3	21.4%
	419	2690	1117	41.5%

The stock-take is dated 20 December 2009. It includes only New Zealand ministerial appointments that are required to be considered through the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee (APH) or other Cabinet committees. The stock-take does include appointments made by the Governor-General on the recommendation of a Minister. It does not include members who have been elected, appointed as members of professional groups without ministerial right of approval, ex-officio members, or current Members of Parliament. The stock-take does not include temporary boards or committees i.e. bodies set up for a particular project that is expected to take no more than a year, and that are intended to disband as soon as that project is completed.

Violence against women

Executive summary

Violence against women is a serious criminal justice, public health, and social problem. It is responsible for a tremendous amount of wasted potential, and exacts enormous costs from victim/survivors, their social networks, the wider community, and the New Zealand economy.

Violence against women is widespread, but not all women are at equal risk of victimisation. The 2006 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey found that around one-third of New Zealand women will experience physical, sexual or psychological violence by a male partner in their lifetime. One-third of women will also experience some form of sexual violence, from unwanted sexual touching to rape, in their lifetime. Rates of violence appear to have been relatively stable since 2001. While it is difficult to make international comparisons, these rates seem to be roughly similar to some survey estimates from Canada and Australia. Many women will experience repeated violence, and/or different forms of violence, across the life course. Rates are particularly high among young women and Māori women.

The impacts of violence against women can be widespread and long-lasting. Violence undermines women's physical and mental health, affects their ability to participate in education and employment, has an impact on families and whānau, and is a drain on the economy. High-quality services that draw on women's strengths can promote recovery, but many women might not be getting the help they need.

The causes of violence against women are complex and involve interactions between a range of personal, situational, and socio-cultural factors. Accordingly, responding to violence requires a multi-faceted, comprehensive response. Low rates of reporting to the police and low conviction rates highlight that effective responses to violence against women need to be more broadly based than just the criminal justice system. The Ministry of Women's Affairs brings a unique, victim-centred perspective to this issue. Our primary focus is the development of evidence-based policies that work well for women and that focus on the range of services that are needed to restore women to well-being.

Reducing violence against women will have far-reaching benefits for New Zealand as a whole. There are opportunities to contribute to current government initiatives to end violence, and to lead in key areas that will make a big difference to New Zealand, such as reducing the extent and impact of sexual violence.

Violence against women

Purpose

- 1 One of the priorities of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) is reducing the damaging impact of violence against women, particularly sexual violence. This is an issue on which stakeholders and your colleagues are likely to look to you for leadership. This briefing provides you with further information on:
 - violence against women – what it is and what we know about it
 - the impacts on women, families, and New Zealand as a whole
 - MWA's unique approach to understanding violence against women
 - what we are currently doing and opportunities for the future.

What is violence against women?

- 2 The two main forms of violence against women are often described as family violence and sexual violence. Family violence is a broad term that includes child abuse and neglect, elder abuse and neglect, sibling abuse, and intimate partner violence, or domestic violence.
- 3 Within family violence, MWA has a particular focus on intimate partner violence, as most victim/survivors are women and most perpetrators are men. Intimate partner violence includes physical violence, sexual violence, and psychological violence;¹ social isolation; and economic deprivation, including stopping a woman from getting or keeping a job.
- 4 Sexual violence is a broad term that covers a continuum of unwanted sexual acts, from unwanted sexual advances to criminal acts such as rape.² Again, the overwhelming majority of victims are women and most perpetrators are men. Contrary to widespread myths, at least three-quarters of perpetrators know their victims.³ Many incidents of sexual violence take place in the context of partner violence.

¹ Domestic Violence Act 1995.

² This definition is based on the one used by the World Health Organisation.

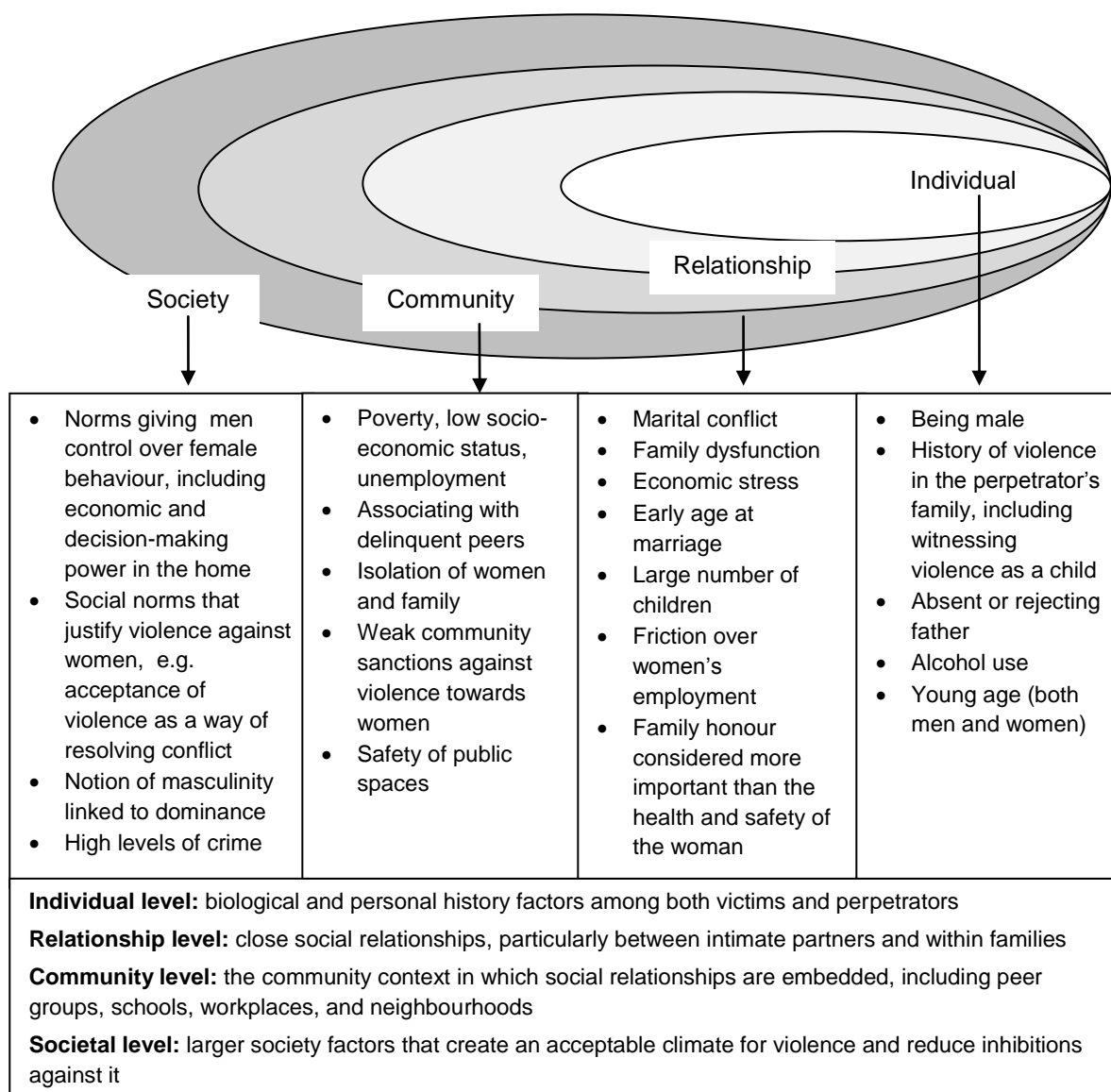
³ Mayhew, P. and Reilly, J. (2009) 'Interpersonal violence: results from the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey 2006', in Families Commission (Ed.), *Family Violence Statistics Report*. Wellington: Families Commission.

- 5 While there are differences between intimate partner violence and sexual violence, there are also overlaps. The critical component of all violence against women is that perpetrators exercise power and control over their victims through fear. It is fear that often distinguishes men's violence against women from women's violence against men.

The causes of violence against women are complex

- 6 The causes of violence are complex. The ecological model, shown below, is often used to explain the occurrence of violence against women. It looks at the interplay of personal, situational, and socio-cultural factors that combine to cause violence.

An ecological model of factors associated with violence against women⁴



⁴ Interagency Gender Working Group (no date) *Gender-based Violence: A Primer*
http://www.igwg.org/igwg_media/gbv/ecological-model.pdf

- 7 The Drivers of Crime work, undertaken by the Ministry of Justice, makes it clear that a single risk factor alone, such as alcohol use or poverty, is unlikely to lead to violent offending. Rather, risk factors at different levels of the social environment accumulate and interact in complex ways over time and at key life stages. Risk factors that have been identified at the societal or population level may operate differently at the individual level.⁵

What we know about violence against women in New Zealand

- 8 Violence against women is a complex issue, but our knowledge base is better than it has ever been. Our most recent estimates of the extent of violence against women come from the 2006 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS).⁶

Recorded rates of family violence have increased

- 9 Rates of family violence recorded by New Zealand Police have increased over the past few years, but this may reflect factors such as a lower tolerance of violence and a greater willingness to report, as a result of public awareness campaigns and better police training. These initiatives are aimed at reducing rates of violence over time. Information from the 2006 NZCASS suggests that rates of intimate partner violence and sexual violence may have been relatively stable between 2001 and 2005.⁷

How we compare internationally

- 10 It is difficult to assess how we compare to other countries. New Zealand ranks highly on OECD measures for partner violence and for violent crime generally, but even the OECD notes that 'cross-national comparisons are far from straightforward'.⁸ A number of countries have crime surveys that estimate the extent of violence against women. We do not know whether the results are precisely comparable, because the surveys use different definitions and methods. Therefore, we need to be cautious in making international comparisons. The NZCASS suggests that New Zealand estimates are roughly similar to estimates of partner violence found in a Canadian survey, and estimates of sexual violence from an Australian survey.⁹

⁵ Ministry of Justice (2009) *Risk Factors and Causal Mechanisms for Offending*. Strategic Policy Brief. <http://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector/drivers-of-crime/documents/spb-risk-factors-and-causal-mechanisms>

⁶ The 2009 NZCASS will be released later this week.

⁷ Mayhew and Reilly, 2009, op. cit.

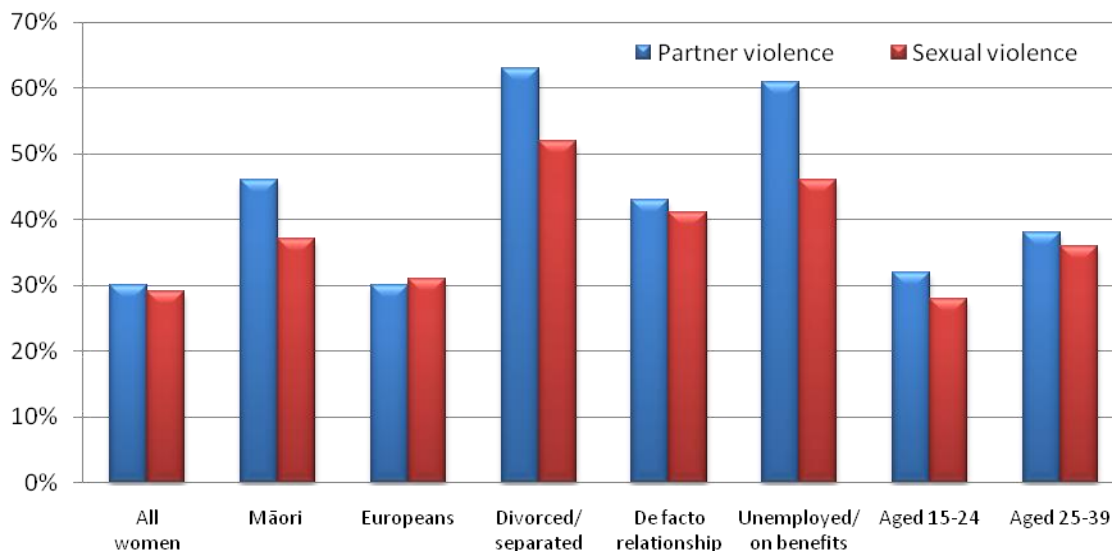
⁸ OECD Family Database <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/26/45583188.pdf>

⁹ Mayhew and Reilly, 2009, op. cit.

Violence against women is widespread, but not all women are at equal risk

- 11 The 2006 NZCASS found that around one-third of New Zealand women will experience partner violence or sexual violence in their lifetimes.¹⁰ Groups of women most likely to experience violence are shown below.¹¹

Proportion of women victimised once or more in their lifetime



- 12 Family violence, intimate partner violence and sexual violence often co-occur. Some women experience repeated violence across the life course. While many people believe that sexual violence tends to be a one-off incident, this is often not the case. It often begins in childhood or adolescence, to the extent that it has been called ‘a crime against youth’.¹² In 2005, 15- to 24-year-old women in New Zealand were three times more likely to say they had been sexually violated in the previous year than women overall.¹³ A history of sexual violence is one of the strongest predictors of sexual victimisation as an adult. Repeat sexual victimisation could be crucial for

¹⁰ Mayhew, P. and Reilly, J. (2007) *The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey 2006*. Wellington: Ministry of Justice.

Definition of partner violence. Survey respondents were asked whether their current partner, or any partner, had used or threatened to use force or violence on them in a way that frightened them; deliberately destroyed or damaged, or threatened to destroy or damage, something belonging to them; or used psychological violence against them.

Definition of sexual violence. Survey respondents were asked whether anyone had forced them or attempted to force them to have sexual intercourse; touched them sexually when they did not want them to in a way that was distressing; or was sexually violent or threatened to be sexually violent towards them in any other way.

¹¹ Mayhew and Reilly, 2009, op cit.

¹² Tjaden, P. and Thoennes, N. (1998) *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

¹³ Mayhew and Reilly, 2009, op cit.

understanding which victims are likely to have high and complex medical, mental health, and social support needs.¹⁴

Many offenders are not held accountable

- 13 Most incidents of sexual and partner violence are not reported to the police. There are many reasons for this. Some victim/survivors feel the violence is a private matter, or do not think it is a crime. Others are embarrassed, do not want to get the offender into trouble, or are afraid of retaliation. For victim/survivors of sexual violence, major barriers to reporting include fear of disbelief and of how they might be treated within the criminal justice system.
- 14 Sexual violence is regarded by criminal justice agencies as second only to murder in seriousness, yet it is the least likely crime to be reported. Of the 10 percent of sexual offences against adults reported to New Zealand Police,¹⁵ only around 13 percent result in a conviction.¹⁶ These cases are often complex. Many victims and offenders have prior social or intimate relationships, and the issue at court is often whether the victim consented. However, there are usually no witnesses and little forensic evidence. Alcohol is often involved, and can be a major obstacle to the legal process, because it can impair the victim's memory of events.
- 15 Offenders who are not held accountable may pose further risk to victims and the public. Low conviction rates also send a message that violence against women is acceptable. Low reporting and conviction rates also highlight that effective responses to violence against women need to be more broadly based than the criminal justice system alone.

Violence against women is an issue for the entire community

- 16 Friends, family and whānau are often the first people women tell about violence. They can be an important source of help, but they do not always know how or where to get help. As a result of the 'It's not OK' campaign, more people are taking action on family violence, particularly Māori and Pacific women.¹⁷ There is less awareness about how to help victims of sexual violence. Victims are often not believed, or are blamed for their own victimisation, largely because of widespread misunderstandings about sexual violence. Many victims might not get the help they need.

¹⁴ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2009) *Restoring Soul: Effective interventions for adult victim/survivors of sexual violence*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

¹⁵ Mayhew, P. and Reilly, J. (2007) *The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey 2006*. Wellington: Ministry of Justice.

¹⁶ Triggs, S., Mossman, E., Jordan, J., and Kingi, V. (2009) *Responding to Sexual Violence: Attrition in the New Zealand criminal justice system*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

¹⁷ Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. Campaign Update December 2010.

What are the impacts of violence against women?

- 17 Violence against women crosses all social and ethnic boundaries and affects everyone. Reducing it will have far-reaching benefits for New Zealand as a whole.

The impacts can be widespread and long-lasting, but women are resilient

- 18 Violence against women is a major public health and social problem. The impacts tend to be more serious and longer-lasting for women who experience severe, long-term, or repeated violence. Violence undermines women's ability to participate in education and the labour market. It is a direct cause of physical and mental health problems. It has an impact on relationships and loved ones. For Māori, sexual violence has implications for whakamā and mana, whānau and whakapapa.¹⁸ However, women are resilient, and high-quality, early, and appropriate interventions that draw on their strengths can promote recovery.¹⁹

There are large costs to the economy

- 19 Violence against women is a significant cost to the New Zealand economy. It has been estimated that family violence costs up to \$5.3 billion per year.²⁰ Sexual violence costs an estimated \$1.2 billion per year, making it New Zealand's most costly crime per incident.²¹

MWA has a unique perspective on violence against women

- 20 Violence against women is a complex issue, which requires a multi-faceted response. These responses are often developed by other government agencies, which tend to focus on the roles of individual systems. MWA takes a broad view of what works to reduce violence and its impacts. We keep the big picture in mind in developing our policy advice, and we bring a unique perspective to this work.
- 21 We bring a **victim-centred perspective** to our work, supporting the development of evidence-based policies that work well for women.
- 22 We take a **gendered approach**. Terms such as 'family violence' can disguise the gendered nature of partner violence. Without the understanding that most violence against women is perpetrated by men, and that this violence tends to be more severe and to have more severe outcomes, we lose our ability to understand why it happens and how to end it. We recognise that women's lives and choices are not all the same,

¹⁸ Kingi, V., and Jordan, J. (with Moeke-Maxwell, T., and Fairbairn-Dunlop, P.) (2009) *Responding to Sexual Violence: Pathways to recovery*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

¹⁹ Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2009, op. cit.

²⁰ Snively, S. (1994) *The New Zealand Economic Cost of Family Violence*. New Zealand: Department of Social Welfare.

²¹ Roper, T. And Thompson, A. (2006) *Estimating the Costs of Crime in New Zealand in 2003/04*. *New Zealand Treasury Working Paper 06/04*. Wellington: New Zealand Treasury.

and that most men are not violent; rather, they are part of the solution. This is important for Māori, as women cannot be taken as separate from their whānau, hapū and iwi.²²

- 23 We have developed a unique **systems approach** that focuses on the range of circumstances that allow violence to happen and affect women's access to help. The figure below shows an idealised prevention and response system. At the centre is the goal of healthy and safe individuals, whānau and communities. To achieve the goal, the surrounding subsystems need to work together. Our current focus is the subsystems that provide support for victim/survivors.

Violence against women needs a systems view



What we are doing

- 24 MWA's recent work has had a particular focus on sexual violence. In 2009, we published the findings of a ground-breaking research project that looked at effective interventions for adult victim/survivors of sexual violence. The project addressed major gaps in the New Zealand evidence base. It has earned us a reputation as experts in sexual violence and for policy excellence in victim-related advice. The research was welcomed by government and community agencies and is influencing policy and practice. For example, the Court of Appeal cited the research in its review of sentencing guidelines for rape.

²² Mossman, E., Jordan, J., MacGibbon, L., Kingi, V., and Moore, L. (2009) *Responding to Sexual Violence: A review of literature on good practice*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs.

- 25 Part of our core business is to assist other efforts in this area. In respect of sexual violence, we are actively disseminating our research findings, helping other agencies understand the implications for their work. Most recently, the findings have informed the government response to the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence, including a stock-take of government expenditure on sexual violence services, led by the Ministry of Social Development.
- 26 We are building on the research, documenting evidence on what works to reduce the impacts of sexual violence. We are also working in niche areas. This has included a report on what is known about young Māori in relation to resilience and sexual coercion. As a scoping review, it provides us with a clear understanding of current knowledge, and highlights significant research gaps around young Māori and sexuality. This Māori-centred review provides a basis for future engagement with agencies working in this area. Other work, which will be completed soon, has focused on intimate partner violence in refugee and migrant communities.
- 27 MWA is actively involved in the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. The Taskforce has an action-oriented work programme, aimed at ending family violence and promoting stable, healthy families. It includes representatives from government, community organisations and the judiciary. The Chief Executive of MWA is a member. She is supported by MWA officials to bring our specialist knowledge to the work. The work of the Taskforce is overseen by the Family Violence Ministerial Group, of which you are a member.

There are further opportunities to make a difference

- 28 There are opportunities to further influence and progress government work in this area. Preventing violence against women, and reducing its impacts on individuals and the community, requires a comprehensive approach.
- 29 A number of government agencies are working within the family violence area, and they are well-aligned in their responses. However, we are concerned that the gendered nature of intimate partner violence tends to be overlooked; that we do not seem to be gaining traction in this area; and that women are still finding it difficult to get help.²³
- 30 There is an opportunity to lead or contribute to thinking around what works to prevent both intimate partner violence and sexual violence. At present they are treated as distinct issues, even though the underlying causes are similar. MWA can use its expertise to develop analyses and advice that highlight the commonalities and differences between both forms of violence, particularly given their gendered nature.
- 31 There are significant opportunities to continue work that will make a difference in regards to sexual violence. Given our expertise in this area, our work could have major impacts. MWA is keen to ensure that government and community services for victims of sexual violence are evidence-based, deliver good outcomes for women, and are

²³ It's Still Not OK! (2010) *Protecting Victims, Rebuilding Lives, Sending the Right Messages. A discussion paper written by survivors of domestic violence.*

cost-effective for government. We are particularly interested in leading work that will improve our understanding of what an effective response system might look like, and the elements of services that are most likely to deliver effective outcomes.

- 32 There are opportunities to progress our understanding of and responses to sexual violence in vulnerable groups, such as young women, Māori women, and victims of repeat sexual violence. Work in these areas could reduce the burden on social and health resources, and on the New Zealand economy.

Women in the economy

Executive summary

The role of women in the New Zealand economy has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. In 1980 women were more likely to be contributing to the unpaid economy than they were to be in the labour force, particularly if they were married and had children. The largest single contribution to New Zealand's productivity over the past 30 years has come from an increase in women's labour market participation in the economy.

Women have also increased their levels of academic achievement and comprise almost two-thirds of the country's university graduates (64 percent). They now outnumber men in almost every field of study including law, accounting and medicine. However, women's increasingly higher skills are not translating into significant labour market improvement. This means women's skills are under-utilised in the economy, representing lost opportunities for women, their families and for the country as a whole.

Patterns of labour market participation vary among women by age and ethnicity and are affected by levels of education, access to quality childcare and workplace inflexibility. Overall, women are still paid less than men, and are still responsible for the majority of unpaid work in the community, particularly unpaid caring for children, the elderly and the disabled.

Given that women have lower median hourly earnings, are more likely to work part time, and are more likely to take time out of the workforce to care for children, their lifetime earnings are lower than men's.

As a result of having lower earnings than men, being out of the workforce for longer, and the tendency to take responsibility for children when relationships break up, women tend to be more affected by social assistance policies. Women are more likely to receive income support and housing assistance than men, and are more likely to be constrained in their ability to save for retirement.

A key priority for the Ministry of Women's Affairs is to ensure all women can be fully engaged in the economy. This aligns well with the government's overarching objective of fostering New Zealand's economic growth. Currently there are numerous policy initiatives across government, including work on welfare and on economic productivity. These initiatives provide opportunities to promote policies aimed at enhancing women's participation in the paid economy and broadening the occupational opportunities available to them.

Women in the economy

Purpose

- 1 One of the priorities of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) is to ensure all women can be fully engaged in the economy and contribute to the country's economic growth. This briefing provides you with information on the critical issues that affect women in the economy, including:
 - women in employment – status quo and key drivers of participation and earnings
 - what work we are doing in relation to women and employment
 - other issues that impact on women's engagement in the economy including:
 - income support
 - housing
 - retirement
 - further opportunities to make a difference.

Women in employment

- 2 Employment has far-reaching and positive outcomes for women and their families, as well as being important for growing the New Zealand economy. Participation in employment enables women to have independent access to income, and has a direct effect on the economic well-being of families.¹
- 3 Women are participating in employment at higher rates than ever before. Since 1986 the female labour force has increased by more than 50 percent (from 710,800 to 1,082,500)² and internationally our female labour force participation rate is above the OECD average.³
- 4 In 2009, women made up 47 percent of the labour force.⁴ At 72 percent for women aged 15 to 64, our female labour force participation rate is ninth in the OECD but well behind the Scandinavian countries.⁵
- 5 Women and men have quite different patterns of participation in the labour market, principally because women take time out to have children. Specifically, women have

¹ Welfare Working Group (2010) *Long-term benefit dependency: the issues*. Available online at: <http://ips.ac.nz/WelfareWorkingGroup/Downloads/Issues%20Paper/Welfare-Working-Group-Long-Term-Benefit-Dependency-The%20Issues.pdf>

² Statistics New Zealand (2010) *Infoshare – Household Labour Force Survey*, table 'Labour Force Status by Sex by Age Group (Annual-Dec)'. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) *OECD Employment Outlook 2010*. Paris: OECD.

⁴ Statistics New Zealand (2010) *Infoshare – Household Labour Force Survey*, table 'Labour Force Status by Sex by Age Group (Annual-Dec)'. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) *OECD Employment Outlook 2010*. Paris: OECD.

lower labour force participation, are more likely to work part time, and earn less than men. This section sets out the key issues for women's participation in employment.

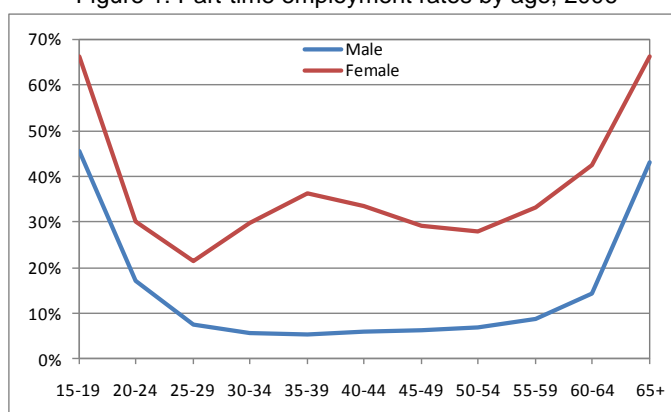
Women's labour force participation rates vary by ethnicity

- 6 In 2009 labour force participation rates for women aged over 15 ranged from 54.2 percent for Pacific Island women to 63.9 percent for European women. The participation rates for Asian women were 58.8 percent and Maori women 61.5 percent.⁶

Many women are engaged in part-time work

- 7 More than one in three employed women worked part-time compared with just 12 percent of employed men in 2009.⁷ Internationally, New Zealand has the seventh-highest female rate of part-time work in the OECD.⁸ While this in part reflects women choosing to combine employment with caring responsibilities, many of the part-time roles held by women are lower skilled and lower paid.⁹

Figure 1: Part-time employment rates by age, 2006



Source: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings

Women's participation drops when they have children

- 8 Women's responsibility for unpaid care is also evident in the variation of labour force participation rates by age. While labour force participation rates for men peak in the 30- to 34-year age group at 92.6 percent, the participation rate for women in the same age group is 72.7 percent, a 20 percentage point difference.¹⁰ This reflects the impact of having children on women's participation. New Zealand's participation rate of women aged 30-34 is low by international standards – twenty-third in the OECD.¹¹

⁶ Statistics New Zealand (2010) *Infoshare – Household Labour Force Survey*, table 'Labour Force Status by Sex by Total Resp Ethnic Group (Annual-Dec)'. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

⁷ Statistics New Zealand (2010) *Infoshare – Household Labour Force Survey*, table 'Employed Persons, Full & Part-Time Status by Sex (Annual-Dec)'. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

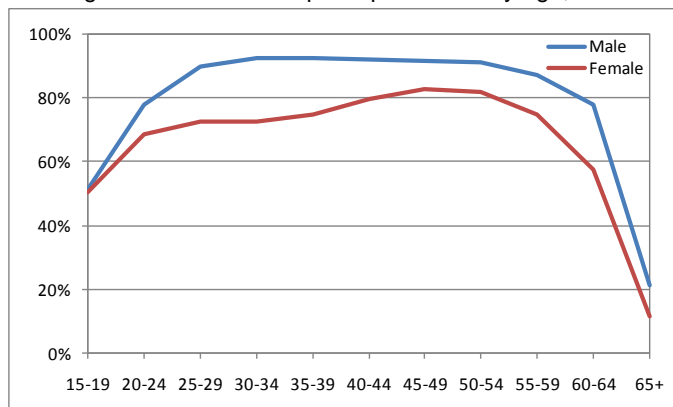
⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) *OECD employment outlook 2010*. Paris: OECD.

⁹ National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (2009) *New Zealand women's employment outcomes: the relationship between shorter hours and low-paid female-dominated occupations*. Wellington: National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women.

¹⁰ Statistics New Zealand (2010) *Infoshare – Household Labour Force Survey*, table 'Labour Force Status by Sex by Age Group (Annual-Dec)'. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

¹¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) *OECD Employment Outlook 2010*. Paris: OECD.

Figure 2: Labour force participation rate by age, 2009



Source: Household Labour Force Survey

Participation rates are low for sole parents

- 9 Labour force participation rates for sole mothers are also low, at 60.2 percent compared with 73.5 percent for partnered mothers.¹² New Zealand's employment rate for sole parents is one of the lowest in the OECD.¹³

Drivers of participation

- 10 Given women tend to take more responsibility for the care of children, supports and provisions that enable parents to combine paid work and caring are key drivers of labour force participation for women. While parental choice is the aim of nearly all OECD countries, including New Zealand,¹⁴ the reality is that parents need to have access to a range of supports to enable them to make the decision whether and how they organise their paid work and care arrangements. These include the following factors.
- **Paid parental leave:** Women are more likely to return to paid work after the birth of a child if they have the opportunity to take paid parental leave.¹⁵ New Zealand currently offers 14 weeks paid parental leave at \$441.62 gross per week. An international comparison of parental leave schemes ranked New Zealand within the countries that had the least generous parental leave schemes.¹⁶
 - **Childcare:** Access to affordable quality early childcare and out-of-school care is important, both to enable parents to participate in the labour market, and also to ensure children have access to educational opportunities. We anticipate the 2010 Childcare Survey due to be published this month will show access to childcare remains a key barrier to participation in the labour market for some women.
 - **Flexible work:** In addition to parental leave and childcare, a more flexible approach to employment across the life course has been shown to improve the balance between mothers and fathers in their capacity to both earn and care.¹⁷

¹² Statistics New Zealand. 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings – unpublished data. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

¹³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) *OECD family database*. table 'LMF1.3.A Sole-parents in paid employment by year, sex and age'. Paris: OECD.

¹⁴ OECD (2008) *Babies and Bosses: Balancing work and family life*. OECD Observer Policy Brief, July 2008.

¹⁵ OECD (2007) *Babies and Bosses – Reconciling work and family life: a synthesis of findings*. Paris: OECD.

¹⁶ European Commission (2009) – cited in Families Commission (2010) *Paid Parental Leave – Issues for today's economic times*. Available online at: <http://www.familiescommission.govt.nz/sites/default/files/downloads/Paid-Parental-Leave.pdf>

¹⁷ OECD (2008) *Babies and Bosses: Balancing work and family life*. OECD Observer Policy Brief, July 2008.

- **Financial assistance:** Ensuring that everyone gains an adequate net return from involvement in paid work encourages participation in the labour force and supports ongoing economic growth. Changes to net effective marginal tax rates greatly influence shifts in participation rates for women.
- 11 Many European countries are actively encouraging men to take more of a role in caring for children in order to help women increase their labour force participation and improve outcomes for children. Accordingly, a number of these countries have introduced periods of parental leave for exclusive use of the father and actively support flexible work for both parents.¹⁸

At all levels of education women are qualifying at higher rates than men

- 12 Over the last decade women have been outperforming men in terms of qualifications achieved. In 2009 almost two-thirds (64 percent)¹⁹ of our university graduates were women and, at the time of the 2006 Census, women aged under 50 were better qualified than men.²⁰ This progress is significant as levels of educational attainment positively affect both labour force participation rates and income levels.
- 13 Like labour force participation, educational qualifications vary by ethnicity. However, differences between groups of women have begun to lessen over the last decade. Since 2002 there has been a 120 percent increase in the number of Pacific women completing tertiary qualifications, a 92 percent increase in the number of Asian women, a 31 percent increase in the number of Māori women and a 22 percent increase in the number of European women.²¹ In 2009, 41 percent of European and Asian women graduated with a bachelor's degree or above, as did 15 percent of Māori women and 18 percent of Pacific women.^{22 23}
- 14 The gap in educational attainment at secondary level between young European women and young Māori and Pacific women is also narrowing.
- 15 While more women are graduating from university, gendered patterns of study remain. Women are significantly less likely than men to graduate from university in engineering and information technology. These patterns of study contribute to occupational segregation and can contribute to skills shortages in highly lucrative fields.

¹⁸ OECD (2008) Ibid

¹⁹ Education Counts (2010) *Gaining Qualifications*, table 'COM.3'. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

²⁰ Statistics New Zealand (2008) *QuickStats About Education and Training*, table 3. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

²¹ Ministry of Education (2010) *Gaining Qualifications*, table 'COM.2'. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

²² Education Counts (2010) *Gaining Qualifications*, table 'COM.3'. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

²³ However both Māori and Pacific women were more likely than Māori and Pacific men to have qualifications with 62 percent of all educational qualifications among each ethnic group achieved by women in 2009.

Women are segregated in lower paid occupations

- 16 The New Zealand workforce has a clear pattern of occupational segregation (as do all other OECD countries) – with around half of all women and men working in occupations where at least 70 percent of workers are of the same gender.²⁴ Female-dominated occupations include carers, nurses, cleaners, and administrative roles, while males dominate in more technical and manual roles. Māori and Pacific women are particularly concentrated in occupations that are low skilled and low paid.
- 17 A pattern of vertical occupational segregation is also evident as men are more prevalent in managerial positions. Research by Canberra University found that occupational segregation accounted for 25 percent of the gender pay gap in Australia.²⁵ This is because female-dominated occupations tend to be lower paid than those dominated by men.
- 18 Occupational segregation may also have negative implications for the economy. For example, occupational segregation may reduce labour market flexibility and lead to an inefficient utilisation of skills if job choice is based on gender rather than skills and abilities.
- 19 The economic costs of occupational segregation may become even more important as the population ages. Many male-dominated occupations have an ageing workforce, and may experience increased skills shortages in the future.²⁶

Women continue to earn less than men

- 20 In comparison to other OECD countries, New Zealand has one of the lowest gender pay gaps.²⁷ Since the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1972, the gender pay gap has more than halved (from 27.2 percent). Progress has been slow over the past decade, although in the last two years the gap has begun to reduce. The most recent figures from the New Zealand Income Survey June 2010 quarter show a gender pay gap of 10.6 percent.²⁸
- 21 The gender pay gap is the result of a wide range of factors, including differences in the jobs men and women do (occupational segregation), labour force participation, work experience and ‘unexplained factors’. ‘Unexplained factors’ are believed to capture the presence of discrimination in the labour market.
- 22 Historically, women’s lower levels of educational attainment explained some of the difference in men’s and women’s employment outcomes. This is no longer the case, as women’s educational attainment now exceeds men’s. In spite of these gains, a pay gap for women remains, regardless of the level of qualification achieved, as the following graph shows.

²⁴ Statistics New Zealand. 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings – unpublished data. Statistics New Zealand: Wellington.

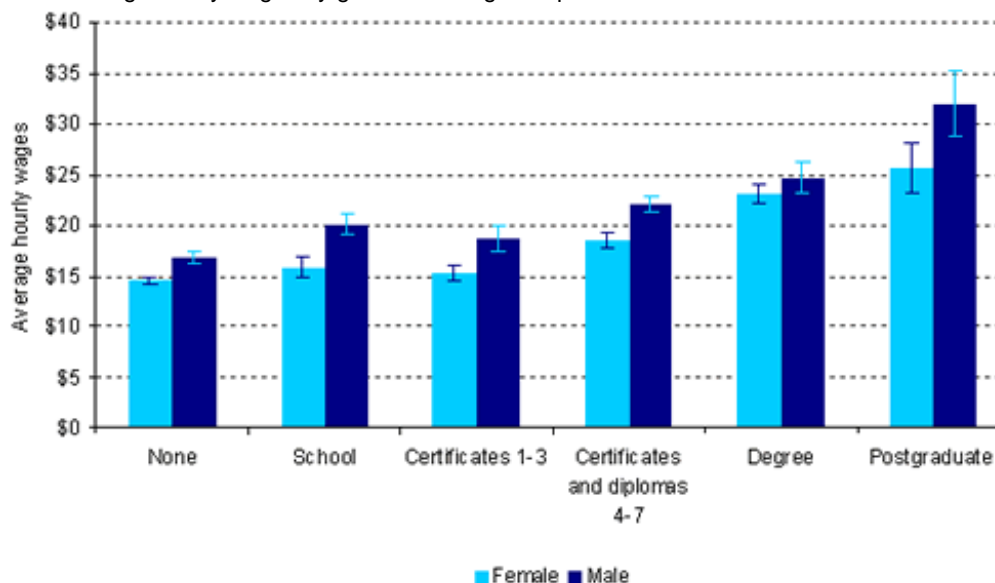
²⁵ National Centre of Social and Economic Modelling (2009) *The impact of a sustained gender wage gap on the Australian economy: Report to the Office for Women, Department of Families, Community Services, Housing and Indigenous Affairs* Available online at - http://fahcsia.gov.au/sa/women/pubs/general/gender_wage_gap/Documents/gender_wage_gap.pdf

²⁶ For example the current average age of a qualified electrician is 47 years (private communication, Electrotechnology Industry Training Organisation).

²⁷ The gender pay gap measures the difference between the median hourly earnings of men and women. The gender pay gap is an internationally accepted indicator of women’s status, relative to men, within the labour market.

²⁸ Statistics New Zealand (2010) New Zealand Income Survey: June 2010 quarter, Table 10. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

Figure 3: Average hourly wages by gender and highest qualification



Source: David Earle (2010), Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis and Reporting Division. Ministry of Education: Wellington

- 23 Research conducted by MWA earlier this year showed an average income gap of 6 percent emerging between men and women just one year after university, increasing to an average of 17 percent after five years.²⁹
- 24 The gender pay gap matters because it impacts on the ability of women to support themselves and their families.

Our work is focused on reducing the barriers to employment and addressing the causes of the gender pay gap

- 25 As outlined above, a number of factors are integral to supporting positive employment outcomes for women and the economy. We have a keen interest in research and policies such as paid parental leave, quality and affordable childcare, flexible work and a tax/benefit system that impacts positively on women participating in paid employment.
- 26 Given the impact such policies can have for women, we are active in providing evidence and analysis to inform and assist other agencies in their work in these areas. The review of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act and the review of early childhood education are two examples of work we have an active interest in.
- 27 We also promote and highlight mechanisms that support women's employment. In the area of flexible work, for example, we have conducted research and used this evidence to actively promote exemplars of how flexible work can work for employers and employees.

²⁹ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2010) *An analysis of graduate incomes 2002-2007*. Wellington: Ministry of Women's Affairs. D-131848

- 28 We are also focused on broadening the occupational opportunities available to women. This work includes:
- investigating gender segregation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and in emerging industries and
 - encouraging women to move into less-traditional careers and addressing the barriers to women's retention in these careers.

Key issues that impact on women's contribution to the economy

- 29 Social policies tend to impact more on women than men. For example, women are more likely to be receiving income support than men, more likely to receive housing assistance, and, as women live longer, more likely to be affected by retirement income policies. This section discusses some key social policies and their impacts on women.

Women and income support

- 30 Since 1976 the percentage of households headed by a sole parent has increased from 11 percent to 28 percent in 2006.³⁰ More than four in five of those households are headed by women. In 2009, 90 percent of sole parent families had incomes below the median income for all households with or without children.³¹
- 31 The relatively low incomes for sole parent families reflect the relatively low numbers of sole parents in full-time employment (35 percent). An estimated 73 percent of working-age sole parents were receiving a main benefit in 2009, and women comprised 87.8 percent of working age Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) recipients. Almost 43 percent of women on the DPB were Māori.
- 32 Labour force participation has been identified as a key pathway out of poverty for sole parents. Evidence shows that a number of supports are vital to increasing labour force participation for sole parents. In particular, labour-force participation is enabled by increased education and skills, the availability of quality and affordable childcare and out-of-school care, the availability of flexible work, and benefit abatement rates that incentivise participation in paid work.

Women and housing

- 33 Affordable, secure and quality housing is a key component of well-being. Given their lower household incomes, sole parents are more likely to face issues in relation to home ownership and housing affordability. Sole parent families, largely headed by women, also represent a significant proportion of Housing New Zealand's primary tenants (68 percent of Housing New Zealand's primary tenants are women).³²

³⁰ Ministry of Social Development (2010) *Sole parenting in New Zealand: An update on key trends and what helps reduce disadvantage*. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development.

³¹ Ibid

³² Statistics provided by Housing New Zealand Statistics.

- 34 In New Zealand, home ownership has typically been associated with greater security of tenure, financial security and a reduced risk of housing inaffordability. Over the past two decades, however, home ownership in New Zealand has been steadily declining. At the time of the 2006 Census, 66.9 percent of households owned the dwelling within which they lived, compared with 73.8 percent in 1991. Home ownership rates for sole parents are particularly low. Only 40.3 percent of sole parents owned their own home in 2006.³³
- 35 Since the late 1980s, there has also been a substantial increase in the proportion of households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing. For lower-income households in particular, high housing costs relative to income are often associated with severe financial hardship. While men and women are equally likely to live in households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing (25 percent in 2009), sole parent households are particularly at risk of housing inaffordability due to lower median household incomes.³⁴

Women and retirement income

- 36 While New Zealand Superannuation offers a universal pension, life-long wealth accumulation impacts upon an individual or household's standard of living into retirement. Gender imbalances can be generated through differences in men's and women's work histories. Women have lower median hourly earnings, are more likely to work part time, and are more likely to take time out of the workforce to care for children, which means their lifetime earnings are generally lower than men's. Research from Australia has estimated the lifetime earnings of married women with children are almost half the earnings of married men (\$1.3m compared with \$2.5m).³⁵ Overall women's ability to contribute to a personal retirement savings scheme, such as KiwiSaver, is constrained.
- 37 In addition, higher life expectancy for women means they tend to be in retirement longer than men. Women are therefore likely to require more savings to maintain their standard of living. Income sufficiency in retirement can be exacerbated if those entering retirement do not have mortgage-free ownership of their family home.
- 38 At present, men's and women's income during retirement appears to be relatively even. For example, in 2010, the median weekly incomes of men and women aged 65 years and over were \$357 and \$352 respectively.³⁶ It is important to note, however, that this does not include assets which, for many older people, are a significant component of wealth.

³³ Statistics New Zealand. 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings, QuickStats about Housing. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

³⁴ Ministry of Social Development (2010) *The Social Report*. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development.

³⁵ National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (2009) *She works hard for the money: Australian women and the gender divide*. Available online at <http://nfaw.org/assets/Socialpolicy/Tax/NATSEM-AMP-2009.pdf>

³⁶ Statistics New Zealand (2010) New Zealand Income Survey: June 2010 quarter. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand. D-131848

What we are doing in these areas

- 39 We work across government to provide evidence and advice to support our colleagues in developing policies that enhance women's economic standard of living and well-being. In terms of income support, we provide advice on policies that may assist sole parents to move into the labour market and remain there.

Further opportunities to make a difference

- 40 MWA has a cross-government perspective that enables us to draw linkages between the objectives and policy work of numerous government agencies. For example, in the area of childcare and early childhood education, we are well placed to provide robust, evidence-based advice that considers and integrates the objectives of early childhood education as an enabler for women's participation in paid work, as well as a foundation for children's well-being.
- 41 There are also potential links between MWA's focus on flexible work and policies that support older people's participation in the paid economy. The Cabinet Social Policy Committee has directed the Ministry of Social Development and the Treasury to look at the potential future economic contribution of older people, including participation in paid employment. Flexible work is one strategy that would enable older male and female workers to remain in the labour force longer, while at the same time supporting the objective of enhanced labour force participation for women.
- 42 There are also opportunities in relation to policy pertaining to economic growth, productivity and skills shortages. For example, the work of the Productivity Commission provides an opportunity to link increased utilisation of women's skills to the government's overarching goal of lifting the country's economic performance. Policies directed at removing the barriers to women's fuller participation in the labour market are likely to improve productivity, while supporting women's entry into less-traditional careers is likely to reduce skills shortages in highly productive, wealth-generating industries.

Ministry of Women's Affairs' international leadership role

Purpose

- 1 This briefing provides you with an overview of:
 - New Zealand's role internationally to improve the status of women, and why it is important
 - the Ministry of Women's Affairs' (MWA's) international work priorities for 2011
 - upcoming opportunities in the international arena.
- 2 We will provide you with a separate briefing on arrangements for New Zealand's participation at the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 55), to be held from 22 February to 4 March 2011 in New York.

New Zealand's role internationally in promoting the status of women

- 3 MWA leads New Zealand's international role on the status and rights of women, in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Our international role has a dual focus: within New Zealand, we promote the development of domestic policy that is consistent with New Zealand's international obligations; and internationally, we support New Zealand's contribution to improving women's rights, well-being and status worldwide.

Why our international work is important

- 4 New Zealand is respected internationally for promoting women's rights, and we consistently rank highly in respect of gender equality. This allows us to take a leadership role in supporting the improvement of women's rights and well-being in other countries. For example at the United Nations (UN) New Zealand, along with other countries, advocated for a human rights approach to address maternal mortality and to give this issue greater attention.
- 5 While much of our work stems from New Zealand's international obligations, we do it because it is important and provides an opportunity to enhance our own profile in this area. This year New Zealand strongly advocated for the establishment of a new UN gender entity, known as UN Women, which will be a more focused and effective body to advance women's issues than has previously existed.

- 6 Gender equality is an increasingly significant priority area not only for international bodies such as the UN but also for more economically focused organisations such as the OECD and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In international meetings, New Zealand has been strongly supportive of resolutions and UN action on advancing the rights of women, especially ending violence against women and promoting women into leadership roles. New Zealand has also been forthcoming in speaking about the challenges we face in combating violence against women and what we are doing to overcome these problems.

MWA's advice sought by other jurisdictions

- 7 MWA is often asked to assist other countries' efforts to advance gender equality and women's rights by attending international conferences, hosting delegations in New Zealand or contributing to country reviews overseas. We regularly receive requests for information on our approach to gender equality.
- 8 This year we hosted an official delegation from Vietnam and groups from the Republic of Korea. The Chief Executive recently participated in an OECD review of gender equality in the United Arab Emirates.

The international framework for improving the status of women

- 9 New Zealand's international role stems from the following international agreements that we are a signatory to or bodies that we participate in:
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
 - the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
 - the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
 - the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- 10 The table in Appendix A provides details of these instruments and bodies, and the roles for MWA and the Minister of Women's Affairs.

MWA's Caucus on International Women's issues

- 11 To enhance New Zealand's capacity to participate in and contribute to international forums, we convene an international caucus biannually. The caucus provides a forum for those with an interest in human rights, including government agencies, NGOs and the Human Rights Commission, to collaborate by:
- sharing information on issues and institutions
 - co-ordinating participation in international forums

- co-ordinating dissemination of relevant information domestically.
- 12 Member groups include the National Council of Women of New Zealand, the Māori Women's Welfare League, the New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women, Zonta International, and the YWCA. A number of these organisations are also regular participants in international meetings, particularly CSW.

Priorities of MWA's international work

- 13 MWA's international work is guided by the government's priorities, particularly in relation to our foreign affairs and trade interests, in addition to reporting on our progress in relation to international agreements such as CEDAW.

Presenting the CEDAW report to the CEDAW Committee

- 14 As you know, MWA recently submitted New Zealand's seventh periodic report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to the UN. The CEDAW report provides an excellent opportunity to highlight and widely promote New Zealand women's progress, both overseas and domestically. The report also responds to the issues raised by the CEDAW Committee following New Zealand's presentation of its sixth periodic report in 2007.
- 15 The CEDAW Committee will invite government and NGO representatives to meet and discuss the contents of the report. This is likely to take place in late 2011 or early 2012. We will keep you informed as details become available, and on preparations for the presentation including the composition of the New Zealand delegation.
- 16 NGOs can submit independent 'shadow country reports' to the CEDAW Committee at any time up until the presentation of the government's report. MWA is aware of reports being prepared by the National Council of Women of New Zealand (on behalf of a group of NGOs), the Māori Women's Welfare League, the Abortion Law Reform Association of New Zealand, and Pacific Women's Watch Inc. The Human Rights Commission is also likely to submit an independent Human Rights Institution Report to the CEDAW Committee.

Attending the Commission on the Status of Women 2011

- 17 MWA has started preparations for New Zealand's participation at the fifty-fifth session of CSW (CSW 55), to be held from 22 February to 4 March 2011 in New York. The meeting's priority theme is 'Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work'.
- 18 We will shortly provide you with a separate briefing on arrangements for New Zealand's participation at CSW 55.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings

- 19 Previous Ministers of Women's Affairs have had some involvement with business and trade issues through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation's (APEC's) Women Leaders' Network (WLN) and Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN) meetings. The most recent meeting attended was the APEC WLN meeting in September 2010 in Japan.
- 20 In 2011, APEC will be hosted by the USA. [Withheld under Section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act 1982].
To prepare for this renewed focus within APEC on gender issues, the USA hosted APEC's first-ever 'Women's Entrepreneurship Summit' in October 2010.
- 21 Given the focus of the New Zealand Government on economic growth and productivity as a tool to advance gender equality, it may be useful for you to attend an APEC gender-related meeting in 2011. MWA and MFAT will keep you informed about the dates and focus of these meetings.

Other international meetings

- 22 There are numerous other international meetings that New Zealand is regularly asked to attend. Our participation is largely guided by government's priorities and influenced by the costs involved. Meetings include:
- Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers' Meetings (WAMM) convened by the Commonwealth Secretariat and held every three years, most recently in Barbados in 2010; New Zealand did not attend on this occasion
 - Australian Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand Ministers' Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO). Until recently, New Zealand attended these meetings, to discuss work areas of shared interest. However, these meetings are currently under review along with all Ministerial Councils. If MINCO is disestablished, as is expected, MWA has signalled continuing interest in some form of annual high-level trans-Tasman meeting.

Further opportunities

- 23 As noted above, attending an APEC gender-related meeting in 2011 would provide an opportunity to further New Zealand's domestic and international interests.
- 24 There are also opportunities to leverage off New Zealand's reputation as a world leader in gender equality as a platform for other international foreign affairs and trade discussions. We will be discussing the possibilities with MFAT, including in relation to implementing UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and New Zealand's role on the bureau of UN Women in 2012 and 2014.

The framework for Zealand's international obligations

<i>Background</i>	<i>Country obligations</i>	<i>Minister's role and MWA's role</i>
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)		
CEDAW is one of the United Nations' (UN's) core human rights conventions, ratified by New Zealand in 1985. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets out obligations concerning what states must do to prevent and eliminate discrimination against women and promote their equality.	Countries report every four years on progress.	MWA works with government agencies to prepare New Zealand's periodic reports on its implementation of CEDAW. New Zealand recently submitted its seventh periodic report. New Zealand government representatives will appear in person before the CEDAW Committee in late 2011 or early 2012 to present the seventh report.
United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)		
CSW is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women. CSW was established in 1946 to prepare recommendations and reports to the Council on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. CSW also makes recommendations to the Council on problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights. CSW meets annually in New York.	The New Zealand Government sends a delegation to CSW's annual meetings.	MWA is a regular attendee at CSW. We will brief you shortly on the proposed composition of the New Zealand Government delegation to CSW. Ministers generally attend only when significant events are being marked, for example every five years to review the Beijing Declaration.
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action		
The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were the result of the fourth UN World Conference on Women in 1995. The Platform for Action sets out a number of actions to remove the obstacles to women's participation in all spheres of public and		MWA attends CSW sessions reviewing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

<p>private lives through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. The UN General Assembly mandated CSW to integrate a follow-up process into its programme, and it is reviewed every five years, most recently in 2010 (Beijing +15).</p>		
United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)		
<p>The MDGs were adopted by world leaders in 2000 under the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The eight MDGs provide concrete, numerical benchmarks for tackling extreme poverty in its many dimensions. While all MDGs have a gender dimension, Goal 3 (MDG3) deals specifically with the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women</p>	<p>New Zealand reports against progress to the UN. MFAT leads this work.</p>	<p>Progress against relevant MDGs is reported as part of the CEDAW report process.</p>