

**QUESTIONNAIRE TO GOVERNMENTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

SINGAPORE'S RESPONSE

**Part One: Overview of trends in achieving gender equality and
women's advancement**

1.1 As a small nation with no natural resources, Singapore has to make
the best use of its people to develop, create wealth and progress in a

its score on a composite index comprising the per capita GNP, life expectancy, literacy and educational levels. Singapore was also ranked 42nd out of 102 countries by the Gender-Empowerment Measure (GEM) in the same Report. The GEM measures women's participation in decision-making i.e. in the professional, economic and political domains as compared to men. Singapore is first on the GEM ranking among the ASEAN nations, followed by Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia.

6 Education, training and upgrading of skills are underpins of economic progress in a competitive global economy and these are given great emphasis by government. The budgetary allocation of government

of the economic crisis, making up 20.95% of the national budget. Financial Year 1998/99 (for S\$5.7 billion).

ities to training and upgrading. In 1997, Women are given e

12 127 participants of the courses

of the Singapore Vocational and Standards Board's Institute for

for Productivity Training (This figure matches the overall participation rate

of the workers in the workforce in 1997 which was 41%.

employment. Details can be found in our response to Part 3 of the questionnaire under 'Women and Poverty' (Annex C).

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SINGAPORE'S RESPONSE

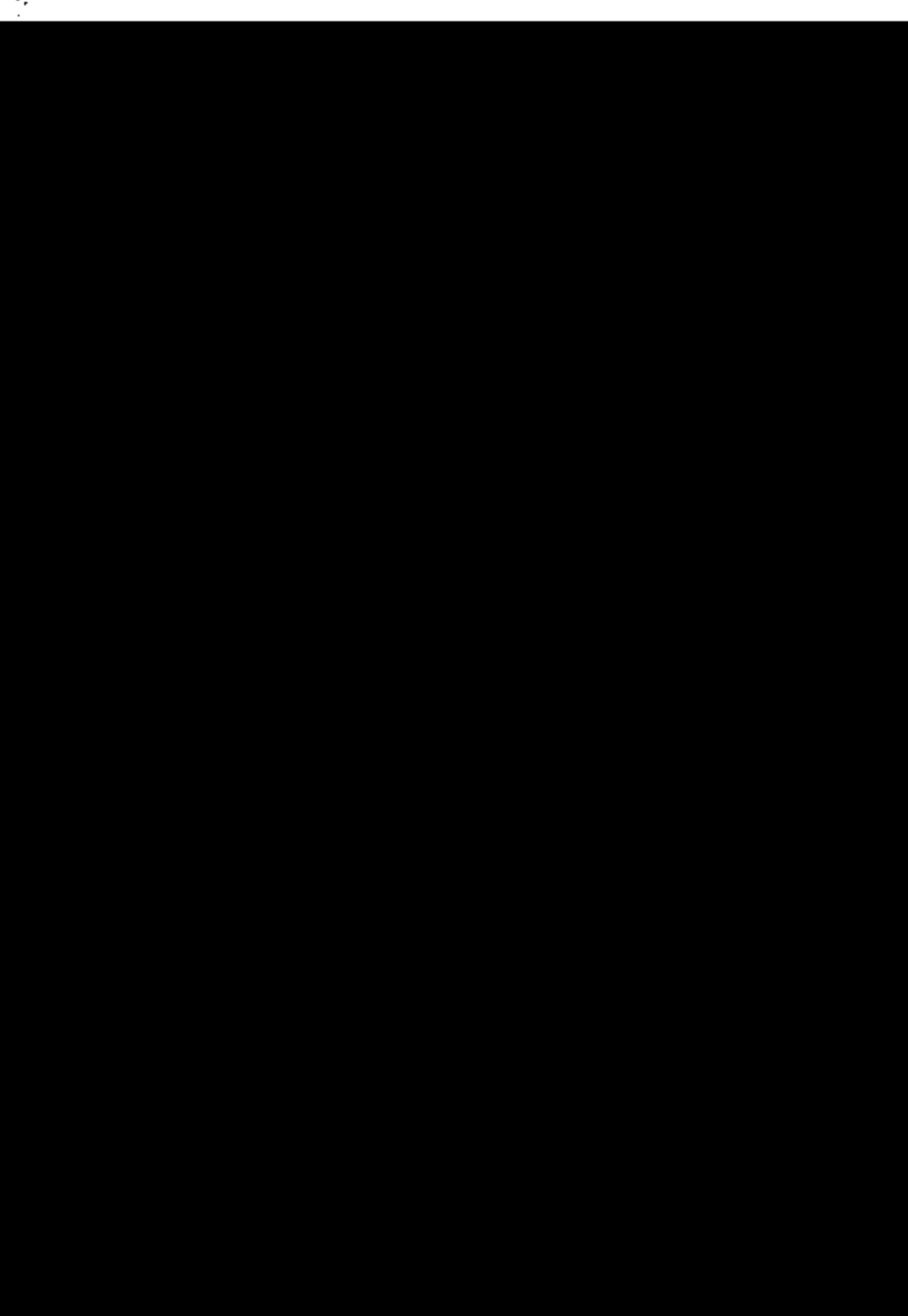
and institutional measures	::	Part Two
national budget for women	::	1 Alloc
Annex A, we do not see the need to have a	::	1.1 As
<p>The national budget is allocated based on the relative merits of the various programmes and our national needs and priorities. We do not see the need to establish a national machinery to advance the status of women. The Family Services Branch, Family Development Division, Ministry of Community Development, and 13 other Ministries and agencies concerned with women are responsible for the planning and implementation of women's matters and works. Each Ministry is responsible for its own policies and programmes. None of our programmes implemented for women such as crisis shelters, upgrading of skills, are funded by international or bilateral agencies.</p>	::	
Such schemes relate to	::	1.2 As a pro-family society, many families and these invariably benefit from housing, tax incentives, family life
family support services	::	services
of family support services that come under the Ministry of	::	
Community Development	::	view are the Child Care Programme and the

1.3 Non-profit making organisations are encouraged to set up SCCs to prevent young children from falling into bad company when left unattended before and after school hours by working parents. These organisations are provided funding support from government for renovation costs for converting void deck spaces to such centres and for the purchase and equipping of new centres. From December 1996 to December 1998, a total of S\$778,007 was disbursed by government for

2.1.3 Follow-up on 4th UN World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995 and the World Summit For Social Development, Copenhagen, March 1995.

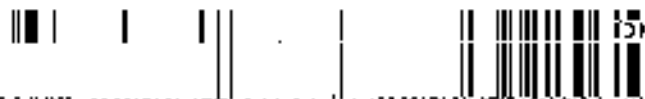
2.1 Two Inter-Ministry Committees have been set up under the Ministry for Community (MCD) to monitor Singapore's implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The recommendations of the Beijing POA and the Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development have been taken into consideration in the formulation of our policies.

2.2 The progress of the implementation of the Beijing POA is also being monitored at the national level. In ASEAN, Singapore signed the Declaration for the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region in July 1998. Together with its ASEAN neighbours, the progress of implementing the Beijing POA is being monitored at the annual meeting of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Women. The first regional declaration was presented to the First ASEAN Informal Summit held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 1996. The second regional report is expected to be published next year.



men in the 21st Century" in

poists, parents and teachers: and



a seminar on "Educ

October 1997 invbl

Further in the field	Other
<p>Examples of successful people, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Pictate any rights and strategies set out in the Platform and related achievements)</p> <p>disputed in 1980 and 1981 respectively. "BIB</p> <p>case, Appendix 5</p>	<p>Further in the field</p> <p>Other</p>
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Key messages for
the Commission
on the
state of the
economy
in 2008

Global Economic Outlook

The global economic outlook is uncertain. The world economy is slowing down, and there is a risk of a global recession. The Commission will continue to monitor the situation closely and will take appropriate action to support the economy.

Monetary and Fiscal Policy

The Commission will continue to monitor the monetary and fiscal policy of the major economies. It will also continue to monitor the impact of these policies on the global economy and on the UK economy in particular.

Exchange Rates

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Trade and Investment

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government policies, such as the women leaders in Parliament, trade unions, J. d. city and grassroots organisations.

2. The Feedback Unit set up by the Ministry of Community Development (MCD) is another avenue of communication for women where ad-hoc sessions are conducted to gather feedback on areas of concern affecting working mothers. It has a

Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned

further activities

list 9.

Other

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements)	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned	Commitment to further action/new initiatives
		<p>Feedback Group on Families and Children and is chaired by a woman.</p> <p>3. A practical approach is adopted to address the responsibilities/roles of both men and women and how best to help them balance their obligations towards their families whilst participating in the market economy. Examples include family life education programmes introduced</p>	

<p>Commitment to further action/new Initiatives</p>	<p>Other</p>
<p>would, as and when the occasion arises, advise or prompt the media on the coverage of news and issues concerning women.</p>	

Woman and Poverty Initiatives/programmes that address Poverty with a gender perspective

The Small Families Improvement Scheme implemented by government in January 1994 is an example of an initiative containing a gender perspective. The objective of the scheme is to help low-income families with low education to provide a good home environment for their children to do well in school and in the long run, break the poverty cycle. It helps to pay for the children's education and for the family to buy their own public housing flat. The scheme aims to help the low-income families to intend to stay together and keep the family small. One of the criteria for the scheme is that the family

Women And Education And Training

on our young.

in education

ivity in addition to

the teaching of the sciences, the arts and moral education are given emphasis.

By the year 2000, it is expected that the level of instruction and training for all male and female students in schools and the institutes of higher learning will be upgraded.

2 There is almost even enrollment of both sexes in the school enrollment and this has led to an increase of number of females enrolling in tertiary institutions. Both

educational institutions that offer the same academic standards and have the same teachers teaching them and using the same resources. Male and female

and the President's level. The most prestigious

Students, purely based on merit. Scholarship is awarded to male

ships (or 40%) were awarded to

al Studies were being

males. This is part and

goals and will help to

promoted in the nation

market, upgrading the quality of

amount importance.

tion of workers are available to

27 participants of the

conducted by the Productivity and Standards Board's Institute for

ivity Training (PSB) were females. This figure matched the overall

of the female participation rate in the workforce in 1997 which was

Equal opportunities are also provided by the Institute of Technical

tion (ITE) for working adults, both male and female, to upgrade their

l education, on part-time basis to the General Certificate in Education

(GCE) Normal, Ordinary and Advanced levels. At the workplace, the

1 Singapore has been placing a high premium

Both female and male students have equal access

system in which Information and Technology sk

the teaching of the sciences, the arts and moral education are given emphasis.

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ships (or 40%) were awarded to

From 1995 to 1998, a out of

From 1997, both Home Economics

offered to all lower secondary pupils, both

parcel of a conscious effort not to gender-type

reinforce the concept of shared responsibility

family life education programme.

4 For Singapore to compete in

the workforce through continual tra

Opportunities for upgrading the skill

Men, Women and Children. In 1997, 43

Education for Skills Training (BEST) programme in 1983 and the Worker Improvement through Secondary Education programme (WISE) in 1987. In

ational Trade Union

Services launched

in Dec 96. This benefits both genders. Employers who sponsor workers

(Singaporeans and Permanent Residents) for approved courses are eligible for a

80% Skills Development Fund reimbursement of the course fees if their

trainees fulfill at least 75% course attendance and sat for course examinations.

If training is conducted during working hours, the employers will also receive a

70% absentee payroll grant (up to \$37.40

per training hour, of which the Skills Redevelo

programme (under NTUC)

Training in computer

ation rate of women in

"6" The Skills Redevelopment Programme

programmes constituted 0.7% and 0.2% of the

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Women And Education And Training – Example of

more than half of the annual intake of undergraduates were women. Over the last two years, more women have been encouraged to join engineering, a traditionally male domain, to meet the increasing demand for graduates. The intake of first year engineering students has risen by 10% over the last two years. Currently, only one third of the total intake of students in the Medical Faculty are women. This should be addressed in light of the high cost in training medical students (a factor that is not compared to male doctors). This trend, in terms of decreased intake of women and the need for more, can be found to minimise this trend. There are no quota in the number of women who can be employed. Women are also not

... women. ... the engine ... demand fo ... from 1 in 8 ... intake of s ... internatio ... for female doctors to stop practising. This trend has placed a strain on our health care system. A review of the availability of doctors. A review of the Medical Faculty will take place within the next few years. How to address this trend among female doctors. How to encourage more women doctors who practise medi...

Women And Health

1. There has been an increasing government budgetary allocation for health 1.78% of the GDP and 4.52% of the National budget for 1998. Women's health needs are included in the Health Sector for the population. The exception is maternal health and family planning policies which specifically address issues concerning women.

2. There are legislative provisions that women are equally protected and compensated for work.

The Workmen's Compensation Act and its subsidiary legislation comes under the definition of the Workmen's Compensation Act to enable an employer to pay workmen's compensation.

5 School children during their primary and secondary school years are taught a wide range of health topics such as growth and development, nutrition, exercise, dental health, avoiding smoking and other substance abuse, mental health, sexually transmitted disease/AIDS, female cancers and breast self-examination, preparation for puberty and family life. These topics are covered in subjects such as health education and

and physical
schools. The
ty of audio-visual
for teaching, free

science in primary schools and home ec
education, general science and biology in
Ministry of Health's Resource Centre pro
vides and displays that are available for
of charge.

of programmes on these topics are also available
from free competition and education through drama are
organized regularly by the schools with the assistance
from the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations like

the Singapore Cancer Society and the Singapore Franchise Association.

7 Education on health issues and special concerns for women like family

adulthood through programmes in healthcare institutions, the workplace,
community centres and places of worship. All couples registering for
marriage are invited to talks on human reproduction, contraception and
family relationships, in the government polyclinics, health education
sessions for pregnant women on antenatal care, preparation for
childbirth, and care of the infant are available. Under the Well-Women
Programme, women are taught breast self-examination and screened for
hypertension, diabetes, breast and cervical cancers.

ty
on

8 Health education and health promotion for all Singapore
concern of the Ministry of health, The National Healthy
Programme and the National Smoking Control Campaign
on diabetes, cancer, mental and dental health and AIDS

programmes reaching all adults.

9 Women and voluntary welfare organisations have been actively engaged in collaborative activities with the Ministry of Health to address issues and make recommendations concerning the health of women. Examples are :-

i) a series of talks, "Know Your Health", in 1997 on health and health-related topics relevant for women organised by the

Singapore Council of Women's Organisations; and

ii) The Third Heart Health Conference organised by the

Association of Banks in Singapore from 30 August 1998 to

Appendix 5
women and violence

and administrative measures are in place
against women and to provide extensive
protection to women from

1 Legislation, police
to punish those who commit
protection to women from

Legislation

in the Penal Code (Chapter 224) and
provisions for child abuse and the
the Children and Young Persons Act

2 The legal provision
the Women's Charter (Ch
protection of children can
(Chapter 38).

der the Penal Code make unlawful, the
strait, wrongful confinement, criminal
contains provisions specifically related
sing miscarriage without a woman's

3 General provisions
causing of hurt, murder, w
force and assault. The Pe
to violence against women

was reviewed and amended in 1996. The new
provisions concerning family violence. In relation
amendments cover the following areas:

consent (section 312), outrage
(sections 272 a
The Wo
1997. The
amendments came
alia, the enhance
to family violence

f family violence beyond physical violence or
violence.

a) widening
threats of

to other family members other than spouses and
in the Court regards as family members.

b) extending

the Court to issue a Personal Protection Order (PPO) on

amount of punishment to which he would otherwise have been liable for that offence. The offences are, causing hurt or grievous hurt to any domestic maid employed by the employer; wrongfully confining any domestic maid employed by the employer; assaulting or using criminal force to any domestic maid employed by the employer; doing any act that is intended to insult the modesty of any domestic maid employed by the employer; or an offence of attempting to commit, abetting the commission of, bringing a party to a criminal conspiracy to commit, an offence described above.

Police mechanisms and administrative measures

Two committees, i.e. the Criminal Procedure Code Review Committee and the Review Committee chaired by the Attorney-General, were established and tasked with the responsibility of reviewing the Charter as and when the need arises. The Ministry of Community Development and the Police Chamber reviewing reviews' th

inter-Ministry Work Group on Spousal Violence chaired by the Home Affairs with representatives from the Ministry of Police and Women's Organizations was set up in April 1994 to look into immediate and long term measures for the better management of spousal violence. Many of these recommendations have either been implemented or in the pipeline. Examples are:

- a) A working system for family violence involving police, social service agencies and the hospitals implemented on an island wide basis to facilitate the management of spousal violence. Information to such informed choices
- b) A mechanism to assist victims to file a complaint report and to facilitate more prompt issuing of PPOs by the Courts.
- c) A Family Violence Response Force has been set up by the Ministry of Community Development to look into the development of a database on family violence that can be accessed by the Ministry of Community Development, the Police and hospitals to facilitate the management of family violence and child abuse cases. The database will cover information on spousal violence, elderly abuse and child abuse.
- d) The police has incorporated the management of spousal violence into the training syllabus for their trainees and family violence workshops were held for front-officers.

- e) Training is also provided to other front-line personnel including doctors and social workers handling such cases;
- f) The Ministry of Community Development with social welfare agencies and other government bodies are engaged in public education programmes to promote public awareness on family violence; These include pamphlets and a guide for professionals who may come into contact with such victims, These have been distributed to all government agencies and grassroots organizations;

The Rape Investigation Squad was set up on 1 October 1997 by the

Ministry of Home Affairs, as a specialised branch of the Criminal Investigation Department to investigate cases of rape, incest, carnal connection and unnatural

offences. The Squad has both male and female officers who are selected and trained for such investigations.

On Child Abuse, an Inter-Ministry Committee on Child Abuse was set up in January 1997 under the Ministry of Community Development to review and improve the inter-ministry procedures and guidelines for the management of child abuse cases. These include

- a) identifying the Violent Crime Squad of the Police as the agency responsible for the investigation of child abuse cases;
- b) forming an inter-agency working group on the Child Abuse Manual in November 1997 to scrutinize the protocols for the management of child abuse cases of the Ministries of Community Development, Home Affairs, Health, Education and Social Services;
- c) providing front-line officers with specialized training.

Women and Access to Resources

1 Singapore is a city-state and has no natural resources except a fine harbour. Women are given equal access to basic social services and equal opportunities to education and training, upgrading of skills, promotion based on employment opportunities. This equal opportunity policy has

Singapore became a sovereign state in 1965. In fact, the right to vote at the same time as men in 1948. Another example of equal pay for equal work adopted by the Civil

of equality and meritocracy in employment has been our Constitution which states in Article 12(1) that "all persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law" and implemented in the public and private

are given equal remuneration for doing the same job. With regard to education, female entrants into the labour market are on a par with their male counterparts on an equal footing. The wage differential between the two genders has also narrowed significantly over the years.

The Female Workers' Average Monthly Earnings was 68% of the males in 1986 and this improved to 76% in 1997. The existing wage differential is not due to discrimination at the workplace but rather because of work-related factors such as experience.

4 To further our efforts to promote the adoption of non-discriminatory recruitment practices, the Ministry of Manpower together with its social partners formulated and issued a set of tripartite guidelines to assist employers in putting up non-discriminatory job advertisements. The Guidelines have been disseminated to employers since 12 March 1999.

5 The national budget is allocated based on the relative merits of the various programmes and our national priorities. The Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports has increased over the last 3 financial years.

6 Many programmes and schemes have been set up for the benefit of women as well. Such schemes relate to housing, education and family support services. The percentage of the national budget allocated to the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports has increased from 0.31% for financial year 1996 to 0.34% for financial year 1998. Women and children from minority or marginalised groups becoming a

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Care Centres programme. Government's expenditure on child care subsidies totaled S\$48,745,575 in Financial Year 1997/98 and is expected to reach S\$52,014,800 in Financial Year 1998/99. This reflects government's strong commitment to support working mothers.

Profit-making organizations are encouraged by government to set up child care centres in their premises, such as in shopping malls, office buildings, and company premises, which are left unattended before and after school hours by working parents. These organizations are encouraged to provide child care services on a cost-recovery basis, including the cost of renovation and equipping of new centres. From December 1996 to December 1998, a total of S\$778,000 was allocated

Women and Decision-Making

1 We prefer to adopt a principle based on meritocracy rather than to adopt affirmative action to ensure women's representation in politics and in decision-making positions in government and public bodies.

2 There are no restrictions on the basis of gender on participation in the formulation and implementation of government policy. In the Singapore Service, a major employer of women, more than half, 56.7 per cent of Super scale and Division 1 officers were women in 1998. This reflects absence of social prejudice or women in public affairs.

3 In the judiciary, the participation of women has shown an improvement. A woman High Court Judge was appointed for the first time in 1994, and as at December 1997, 2 out of the 21 High Court judges were women. In the Subordinate Courts, 30 out of the 68 judges were women in 1997 as compared to none in 1980.

4 As at 14 April 1999, 4 out of the 84 elected Members of Parliament are women and 2 of the 9 Nominated Members of Parliament are women. All 16 Ministers in Cabinet are men. 1 of out 3 Senior Ministers of State is a woman. The qualifications of a candidate to be elected at the Presidential Elections are applicable to both men and women as in accordance to Articles 19, 44 and 45 of the Singapore Constitution.

5 Currently, 4 out of 21 members of the Central Committee of the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) are women as compared to only 1 of 26 such members in 1980. The NTUC Central Committee is the highest policy-making level in the trade union movement.

6 Women are increasingly participating in community development made up of about 23.5% management of the various grassroots organizations in Singapore providing a wide range of services and programmes to the less fortunate in society such as managing homes and the disabled. As at May 1997, women made up 27.5% of the 238 management committees of the affiliates under the National Council of Social Service, an umbrella body for voluntary welfare organizations.

Women and Decision - Making – Commitment to further activities/New Initiatives

- 1 The low representation of women in politics and in the higher leadership levels of the Trade Unions for example, are not due to the lack of opportunities for women but rather due to stereotyped attitudes on women's role in society and a matter of personal choice.
- 2 More women will be encouraged to participate in politics when men change their attitudes towards women's role as wife and homemaker and help out in housework.

Some measures have been implemented to promote women's participation in leadership positions. The National Trade Union Congress

Women's Committee has jointly with the Singapore Institute of Studies, designed a structured and progressive training course to

organise "Training To-day for Tomorrow". This is a three-phased programme

Team-Building, Self-confidence and the

3-day course, "Communicating from the Heart" for women officers in the Civil Service since

women officers often communicate in a more indirect manner. The objectives of the course are to

with confidence, sensitivity and understanding. The course is designed to help women officers to

develop effective women leadership skills. The course is titled "Women for To-morrow's Leadership" touching on topics such as Leadership, Legal Framework affecting women

4 The Civil Service Commission has launched the "Head and Heart" for women officers in September 1996. The Commission has adopted a style that sets them apart from men and helps participants handle people

Women and Advancement Status- Commitment to further activities/New

<p>Singapore is committed to the advancement of the status of women in the ASEAN region. Singapore declared the Declaration for Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region on the occasion of the First ASEAN Regional Informal Summit held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 1996. The first regional report on this Declaration was published in the year 2000.</p>		<p>Under the Ministry of Community Development</p>
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Women and Human Rights

1 Though there are no special laws or mechanism to promote women's rights as human rights per se, Singapore does incorporate many measures aimed to promote or protect women's right in specific areas. Examples are as follows:-

Sterilization Act	involving the new right of conscientious objection, which is provided for under (Chapter 34, Section 1)
Under the Employment Act, prohibition of employment of a pregnant female or of Female Workmen of dismissal during a woman's (section 81) and knowingly employ a female employee at any time during a period of 4 weeks immediately following her confinement (section 82). Any employee covered under the Act who considers himself/herself wrongfully dismissed by the employer, which includes discrimination of any kind, has recourse to	(b) securing certain employment (Chapter 91) by making a worker during the night (Regulations), employers presence whilst on maternity leave female employee at any time following her confinement (section 82). Any employee covered under the Act who considers himself/herself wrongfully dismissed by the employer, which includes discrimination of any kind, has recourse to

Women and the Media

1 There is equal portrayal of women in leadership roles in the media. Many examples of successful women are often made well-known by the media.

2 Women play a significant role in the media in Singapore. Prominent newscasters on the national television network are women. Many women also work as journalists in print and electronic newspapers.

Pornographic materials are banned in Singapore. The industry of promoting the exploitation and stereotyping of women is prohibited.

The only area in the media where sex role stereotyping is likely to exist is in the advertising industry.

The Ministry of Information & the Arts does not have jurisdiction over the advertising industry but will intervene in cases where advertising standards are breached.

Advertisements in print and on television is provided by the Advertising Standards of Singapore, a non-profit and independent organisation affiliated to the Consumer Association of Singapore. The ASAS comprises of 15 organisations including the Ministries of Health, Environment and the Television Corporation of Singapore.

There is no specific code on sex role stereotyping in its

standards which do not unfairly discriminate against, cast in a derogatory light or defigrate any race, religion or sex. Also, under

Women and the Environment

1 Singapore does not face the problem of displacement of communities due to deterioration of natural resources, nor is there a problem of public health risk posed by industrial pollution. Singaporeans, men and women alike, enjoy a high standard of public health and are well-protected from occupational

health hazards at their workplaces.

equal footing as men in policy, mental matters. In fact, women mental NGOs

2 Women in Singapore participate in formulation and decision-making in dominant roles in the

3 Singapore has not introduced any legislation on the traditional medicine. As such, there is no inequality practice between genders on all intellectual property rights of the traditional medicine. Women in such fields.

Women and Violations of the Rights of the Girl-Child

Child Welfare in General

1. An Inter-Ministry Committee on the Rights of the Child has been set up under the Ministry of Community Development to look at Singapore's position in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Government and non-governmental sector agencies that promote and have policies and programmes for children will be invited to general, the approach taken by Singapore to safeguard the rights of children to human rights and other conventions is to ensure that domestic legislation

initially all children below 15 years of age are in school or receiving a similar form of education. If these children do work, it will be mainly during the school holidays to supplement their pocket money as well as to spend their

The employment terms of children (between the ages of 14 & 16) in regards to the nature of work are regulated by Part VII of the Employment

and forced labour are prohibited under our Constitution. Commercial sexual exploitation of children is also not rife in Singapore. There has only been one case of teenage prostitution since June 1995.

3. Besides legislation, there is network of services and programmes where children of such circumstances can be assisted. Medical services, counselling, psychological and psychiatric services and recreational services are provided by the government and non-governmental bodies.

Right to name and nationality

A. The Registration of Births and Deaths Act provides for, amongst other things, the registration of every child born in Singapore. The penalties imposed on parents for failing to register a birth without reasonable cause, range from a fine not exceeding \$3,000 to a further fine not exceeding \$40 for every day during which such failure persists after conviction.

nationality for children born in Singapore and of Singapore citizens at birth. Children born to Singapore citizens are provided in Singapore.

Singapore to a person who is a Singapore citizen shall acquire Singapore citizenship by birth.

7 Article 122 of the Constitution allows a foreign-born child to be registered as a Singaporean citizen by descent if the father is a Singapore citizen. A foreign-born child of a female Singapore citizen may be granted citizenship by registration under Article 124(2) of the constitution.

Minimum age of marriage

8 Provisions in the Women's Charter requires a minimum age of marriage of 18 years (section 9). The Minister for Community Development has the discretion to permit a person below 18 years to marry on application to him (section 20). Any party to be married, if aged 18 years to less than 21 years, will need the consent of parents or other legally approved persons (as provided