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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

**Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development**

Fourth session, 13 and 14 February 2003

Sub-item 4.4.1 of the provisional agenda

**TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Progress Report**

1. On 21-22 March 2001, at its second session the Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development (WP.8) established a new Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship.
2. At its first meeting held on 12 and 15 February 2002, the Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship elected its officials, discussed a draft Terms of Reference and work plan for 2002-2003, proposed by the UNECE secretariat. Summary report from the first meeting was prepared by the TOS Secretary (OPA/2002/NONE/3).
3. In accordance with its mandate, approved by the Working party on Industry and Enterprise Development on 14 February 2002 (OPA.2002.NONE.1), the major goals of the Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship are to:
  - collect information on the situation of women-entrepreneurs and identify gender specific barriers to entrepreneurship in countries and sub-regions;
  - collect best practices of national policies supporting women's entrepreneurship in the ECE region;
  - organize the exchange of information and experiences involving governments, business community and civil society;

- prepare recommendations on how to incorporate concerns of women-entrepreneurs into institutional and legal frameworks for business activities, and address other gender specific barriers;
- promote organization of training courses and life-long learning for women-entrepreneurs to facilitate start-ups and developing business activities under the conditions of globalization and rapid progress in information and communication technologies (ICT);
- create a web-site within the framework of the UNECE web-system to expand networks among women-entrepreneurs, improve access to information; and
- raise the awareness in the member States on women's entrepreneurship through the enlargement of the UNECE Portrait Gallery of Excellent Women Entrepreneurs and other relevant activities.

4. The second meeting of the Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship was organized on 30 August 2002 at the Palais des Nations in connection with the First Regional Forum on Youth: "Security, Opportunity and Prosperity". The TOS Secretary prepared the secretariat note (TRADE/WP.8/AC.2/2002/1). Experts from Azerbaijan, France, Israel, Poland, the Kyrgyz Republic, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America attended the meeting.

5. The TOS Secretary informed the meeting that in accordance with the work plan, a TOS home page was established at the UNECE website [www.unece.org/operact/entrep/women/team.htm](http://www.unece.org/operact/entrep/women/team.htm). It includes the information on TOS mandate, officials, meetings and results of its work. The information relevant to the TOS work, such as economic data collected and analysis of the situation in ECE region, gender statistics website, information on the Beijing process and up-coming events is also available at the UNECE website ([www.unece.org/oes/gender/welcome.htm](http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/welcome.htm)).

6. The participants agreed to establish a task force on Best Practices and Projects to be chaired by Mr. Andrew Fiddaman (UK). Its main objective is to develop methodology, collect background information and launch pilot projects. Its activities include the preparation of criteria for selecting countries, projects and best practices; evaluation of project proposals, identification of countries, pilot projects and proposal for action plan, as well as the initiation of pilot projects in selected countries. The outcome will be a publication of best practices and data bank of viable projects prepared according to established criteria, which will be then implemented in pilot countries (see Annex).

7. It was also agreed to establish a task force on Networks and Contacts to be chaired by Ms. Jamby Djusubalieva (Kyrgyzstan). Its main objective is to develop a network of women entrepreneurs in the ECE region. Its activities include the preparation of a standard questionnaire, collection of data and evaluation of existing sub-regional and national networks (such as women's business associations). The expected outcome is a TOS women's network database (see Annex).

8. The two task forces will work in cooperation with TOS Chair, Deputy Chairs and TOS Secretary and will use e-mail to communicate. They should present draft reports on their work by the end of December 2002 (TRADE/WP.8/AC.4/2002/2).

9. So far, according to the work plan, the following documents serving the work of two sub-committees were prepared (i) criteria for selecting countries for pilot projects, (ii) criteria for selecting best practices, (iii) criteria for selecting projects; (iv) standard format for project proposals and (v) questionnaire for the women's network data bank. All these documents were prepared under the guidance of Ms. Ronit Dolev, TOS Deputy-Chair and send to Chairs and members of Sub-committees. The documents are presented at the TOS home page. They are also available at request from the TOS Secretary.

10. Project proposals presented during the two TOS meetings, which will be further developed and evaluated in 2003-2004 according to the adopted criteria and methodology include among other: e-training for women in government positions and women living in remote areas (Kyrgyzstan); (ii) development of e-infrastructure based on credit and leasing arrangements (Azerbaijan); establishment of an e-learning center and preparation of training materials (Russia, Poland), preparation of a "blue print" for the feasibility study on business opportunities in local context (Poland). Organization of sub-regional business to business meetings among women entrepreneurs and exchange of best practices in national programmes supporting women's SMEs is envisaged.

**Annex**

**POGRAMME OF WORK  
TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
2002-2004**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event/ Project</b>	<b>Organizer/Project Leader</b>
12.02.2002 15.02.2002	<b>First Meeting of TOS</b> Discussion and adoption of Terms of References (TOR), election of officials, preparation of the preliminary work plan <i>Geneva, Palais des Nations</i>	UNECE Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities (CUOA)/ Regional Adviser on Gender and Economy (E. Ruminska-Zimny)
14.02.2002	<b>Presentation of draft TOR and the plan of work for the approval of the Working Party WP.8 at its 3<sup>rd</sup> session</b> <i>Geneva, Palais des Nations</i>	Chair (M. Gannon)/CUOA
Spring 2002	<b>Establishing a TOS home page at the UNECE web-site</b>	TOS Secretary (E.Ruminska-Zimny) in cooperation with TOS officials
30 August 2002	<b>Second meeting of TOS</b> Adoption of methodology of work, discussion of new projects and action plan, including fund raising <i>Palais des Nations, Geneva</i>	TOS Secretary (E.Ruminska-Zimny) in cooperation with Chair (M. Gannon) and Deputy-Chairs (R. Dolev; S.Iskakova)
Fall 2002 –2004	<b>Project 1 : Best practices and projects</b> <i>Objective :</i> Develop methodology, background information and launching pilot projects <i>Activities :</i> -Preparation of criteria for selecting countries, projects and best pratices -Evaluation of project proposals, identification of countries, pilot projects and proposal for action plan -Launching pilot projects in selected countries <i>Expected output :</i> Publication on best practices ; data bank of viable projects ; pilot projects implemented (subject to the availability of financing)	Chair, Sub-Committee on Best practices and projects (A. Fiddaman) in cooperation with TOS Chair (M. Gannon), Deputy –Chairs (R. Dolev; S.Iskakova) and TOS Secretary

Fall 2002-2004	<p><b>Project 2: Networks and contacts</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Develop a network of women entrepreneurs in the ECE region</p> <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation of standard questionnaire</li> <li>- Collecting data</li> <li>- Evaluation of existing sub-regional and national networks (such as women's business associations)</li> </ul> <p><b>Expected output:</b> TOS women's network database</p>	Chair, Sub-Committee on Networks and contacts (J. Djusumbalieva) in cooperation with TOS Chair, Deputy –Chairs and TOS Secretary
March 2003	<p><b>Third meeting of TOS</b> Adoption of reports from chairs of sub-committees on best practices and on networks, discussion of project proposals, election of TOS officials for a new 2 year period, discussion and adoption of detailed plan of work for 2003-2004 and follow up activities.</p> <p><i>(subject to the renewal of TOS mandate for 2003-2004 at the 4<sup>th</sup> session of WP.8)</i></p>	TOS Secretary (E.Ruminska-Zimny) in cooperation with Chair (M. Gannon) and Deputy-Chairs (R. Dolev; S.Iskakova)
Fall 2003	<p><b>Round Table on best practices in E:business</b> <i>(place to be determined)</i></p>	TOS Secretary TOS Secretary (E.Ruminska-Zimny) in cooperation with Chair (M. Gannon) and Deputy-Chairs (R. Dolev; S.Iskakova)