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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women
and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace
for the twenty-first century”**

Statement submitted by Center for Practice-Oriented Feminist Science, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.



Statement

A suggestion as to how the process of implementing human rights for women, gender equality and women's empowerment might be speeded up is provided below.

Experience seems to show that new strategies are slow to spread and become better known in global society, whether in the context of United Nations agencies, international organizations or donor groups, even if thousands of beneficiaries have been saying for years that this strategy works sustainably and on a large scale. This is a serious challenge to the implementation and achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund publication, *The Dynamics of Social Change: Towards the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Five African Countries*, among the wide range of interventions and approaches implemented in Kenya, the review identified a project in south-west Kenya (the Fulda-Mosocho project) that has generated important changes in attitudes towards violence against women and has also led to collective abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting in the area of intervention.

The senior chief in the region reported that the project had brought peace to families.

The study emphasizes that the value-centred approach has been a key factor in the project's sustainable success in the entire study region in Kenya.

In the Mosocho division, an area of about 130,000 inhabitants that had a 98 per cent prevalence rate of the practice at the beginning of the project, several thousands of families are happy with the change. They see and experience it as "new growth" in their Kisii culture and already enjoy the economic improvements in their communities.

The demand for this approach in the regions near the area of intervention, namely, all of the Kisii and Massai regions, has not been met with any response from those who provide funding.

Since learning about the Fulda-Mosocho project, the men in those regions, especially the chiefs, clan elders, church leaders, teachers and head teachers, as well as women, want education and training units based on the value-centred approach in all fields and at all levels.

The active participation of men in these processes has proved to be a key element in the successful implementation of human rights for women.

Strategies such as the value-centred approach bring about such change through education and training programmes. Such an approach, provided by trained and qualified experts throughout a region benefits men and women on equal terms.

As the 20-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action shows, the required change in behaviour does not occur, of course, by itself, whether among women or men. Education is needed.

The innovative strategy of the value-centred approach was presented at the fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in 2007. The presentation focused on the strategy's solid scientific foundation and practical sustainable efficiency.

The Fulda-Mosocho project involves the participation of a Kenyan grass-roots community-based organization, a German non-governmental organization and the Center for Practice-Oriented Feminist Science.

In Beijing, in a number of speeches and workshops, the Center drew attention to the potential of the value-centred approach for implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, using the motto, “Transformation of Education — Education for Transformation”, which is drawn from the Non-Governmental Organization Forum on Women, held in Huairou, China, in 1995.

There is an urgent need to develop mechanisms, systems, innovative strategies and approaches for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and, once they have proved to be effective, to make them available at the local level as quickly as possible.
