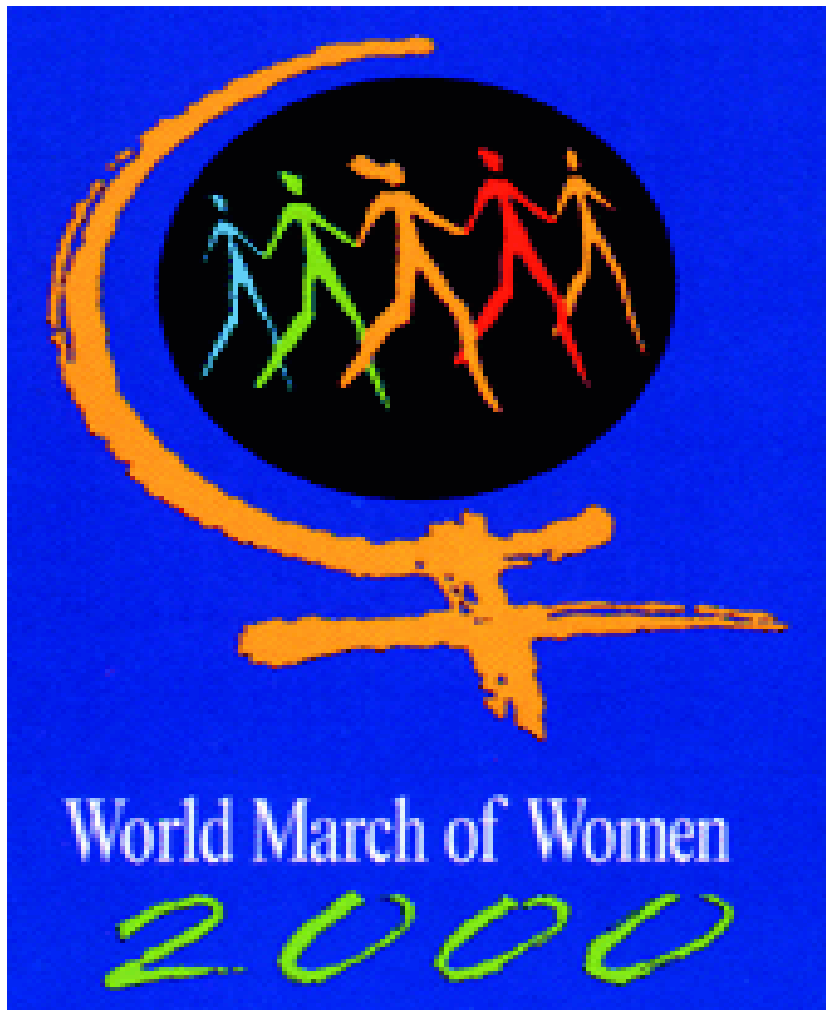


AEU NTU - WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN 2000



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World March of Women 2000

" 2000 Good Reasons to March: Eliminating Poverty & Violence"

A kit prepared by the Australian Education Union

The World March of Women in the year 2000 is about women gathering around the globe to take part in international actions for and on behalf of women. It will give women the opportunity to develop lasting local, national and international alliances which are inclusive and respectful of women's diversity.

The 2000 Federal Conference of the Australian Education Union determined to support the World March of Women 2000 and to work with women activists towards the furthering of World March aims. In addition, the Federal Conference decided that, as a union of educators, the AEU would develop a kit around the World March of Women, which would provide members, students and the wider community with access to information about the March and its objectives.

The kit has been prepared by the Women's Officers of the Australian Education Union from each state and territory. Each section of the kit contains suggested activities and resources which will enable you to explore the issues further. The final section gives you further ideas about how you can get involved and provides state, national and international contact information for the World March of Women 2000.

We hope that you will find this Kit useful and informative, and that it will encourage you to join the many thousands of women in Australia and around the world who are working together throughout 2000 towards the achievement of the March's objectives and a fairer world for women and men.

Contents:

Why a World March of Women in the year 2000?

Why focus on the United Nations?

World poverty

World education

Employment

Eradicating violence against women

What you can do to support the World March of Women 2000

The kit can be accessed on the AEU web site: www.aeufederal.org.au

Why a World March of Women in the Year 2000?

- C To stimulate a vast movement of solidarity among women's groups worldwide.
- C To promote equality between women and men.
- C To promote the claims and alternative claims commonly presented by women's movements on the theme of poverty and violence.
- C To urge governments, decision-makers and members of civil societies, to support and implement changes necessary for an improvement in the living conditions of women throughout the world.
- C To mark the start of the 21st century by showing the determination of women to change the world.

What is the World March of Women 2000?

The idea for a World March of Women began in Quebec and has spread around the world. Women from over 3500 groups and over 146 countries are already involved in the March. There are many activities planned in each country to highlight the demands which are central to the March.

A signature and postcard campaign provide a unifying focus across the world. The petition and postcards will be delivered to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, October 17 2000.

Australian activities will culminate on Saturday October 7, with song and dance fests around the country.

World March 2000 demands

The World March takes issue with poverty and all forms of violence against women.

Demand 1:

Against Poverty: For the Sharing of Wealth

Women are demanding that poverty is eliminated and that the planet's wealth is shared equitably and fairly between rich and poor and between women and men.

Demand 2:

Against Violence Against Women: For Respect of Women's Physical and Mental Integrity

Women are demanding the elimination of all forms of violence against them and equality between women and men.

BACKGROUND NOTES: WHY A WORLD MARCH 2000?

Origins of the World March of Women in the Year 2000.

The idea to hold a World March of Women in the Year 2000 was initiated by the Federation des Femmes du Quebec (FFQ).

It evolved from the Women's Bread and Roses March Against Poverty which took place in Quebec in May 1995 as a lead-up to the UN's Fourth Women's Conference. For ten days 850 women marched from Ottawa to Toronto, mobilising community support for a list of nine key demands related to economic and social justice and for an end to poverty and violence against women.

These demands were consistent with the United Nation's Fourth World Women's Conference's Beijing Platform for Action which was being developed at the time. In Beijing in October that year, the women from Quebec proposed an ambitious international rallying plan to fight violence and poverty against women.

Objectives for the World March of Women in the Year 2000

- C To undertake an education campaign where all women can analyse by, and for themselves, the causes of their oppression and to seek possible liberating alternatives.
- C To work at local, national and international levels to identify demands related to the issues of poverty and violence against women and to act on these demands.
- C To foster solidarity among women of all continents through common projects and actions, and between women from developed and developing countries.
- C To promote the demands of the World March by presenting them to governments that have the responsibility to take these demands into account and act upon them.
- C To lay the foundations of an international feminist network where dedicated, militant and creative women will unite to provoke major changes in the order and disorder of the world.

Demands

Women are still oppressed by patriarchal regimes and conservative policies and, in many countries, still have to fight for their most basic rights; water, food, shelter, paid work, health, education and the right to control their own fertility. Women are the majority of the 1.5 billion people in the world who live in absolute poverty.

The World March demands that the United Nations and its member States take concrete measures to:

- C ELIMINATE poverty and ENSURE a fair distribution of the planet's wealth between the rich and the poor, and between men and women.
- C ELIMINATE violence against women and ENSURE equality between women and men.

The full list of World Demands of the March are to be found on the World March web site.

They include:

- C That all States adopt a legal framework and strategies aimed at eliminating poverty.
- C The urgent implementation of measures such as the Tobin Tax on speculative currency transactions, investment of 0.7% of the rich countries' gross national product in aid for developing countries, and an end to structural adjustment programs.
 - Cancellation of the debt of all Third World countries, taking into account the principles of responsibility, transparency of information and accountability.
- C That States implement action plans, effective policies and programs equipped with adequate financial and other means to end all forms of violence against women.
- C That the United Nations bring extraordinary pressure to bear on member States to ratify without reservation and implement the conventions and covenants relating to the rights of women and children.

C That the right to asylum for women victims of sexist discrimination and persecution and sexual violence be adopted as soon as possible.

Participating countries

Since the International Liaison Committee was created in October 1998, initially through e-mail and fax, over 3500 groups and over 146 countries have become involved in the World March.

They include:

Peru	Mozambique
Brazil	Philippines
India	Hong Kong
Morocco	Australia
France	Canada
Nepal	Japan

Western and Eastern European countries
The United States of America

The wide support is testament to the international solidarity and common goals among women globally.

In Australia, a national committee comprising many Non-Government Organisations is coordinating our response for WMW 2000.

There are at least 65 coordinating committees that are planning activities around Australia.

Strategies For the World March of Women in the Year 2000

The World March was launched around the world on International Women's Day, March 8 2000 and involved marches and actions around the globe. This included launches across Australia.

At the International Preparatory Meeting in October 1998 in Montreal it was decided that three main international bodies be targeted as the focal points for the world rally:

- C the United Nations in New York City, New York
- C the World Bank in Washington DC
- C the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC.

In Washington on Sunday, October 15, 2000, an international delegation will join a US women's national rally and parade outside the World Bank and the IMF. The international delegation will then travel to New York for a world rally outside the United Nations Headquarters on October 17, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. It is here that the Secretary -General of the UN, Kofi Annan has been asked to meet members of the international delegation.

A signature campaign and postcard campaign to support the world demands was also launched on March 8, 2000. The petition and postcards will be delivered to Kofi Annan at the UN on October 17, 2000.

Australian activities will culminate on Saturday 7 October when song and dance fests and other events will be held around the country.

Sources:

Australia: www.uq.net.au/march2000/

Overseas:

<http://www.ffq.qc.ca/marche2000>

Why focus on the United Nations?

The United Nations was formed in 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War. Promotion and protection of human rights has been a central role of the UN.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

(1948) Article 1:

'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards each other in a spirit of brotherhood.'

Networks of UN bodies and treaties have been established to develop and protect human rights.

Many of the international covenants/treaties are legally binding. When countries sign, they assume a legal obligation to report on the measures they have taken to ensure the rights contained in the treaty.

Women's human rights

The rights sought for and by women are essential human rights: the right to fairness and equality, to a decent standard of life, to a reasonable income and to employment, to education, to health services, to participation in the life of the community, to safety and a life free of violence.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women:(1981)

Article 3

'State parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.'

BACKGROUND NOTES: Why focus on the United Nations?

The United Nations was formed in 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War. The preamble to its charter said:

*We the peoples of the United Nations [are] determined -
...to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.*

Over the years a network of bodies and instruments have been developed to try to ensure the primacy of human rights.

Women's Rights are Human Rights

All major human rights instruments include sex as one of the grounds upon which states may not discriminate.

Many women continue to be denied access to fundamental human rights. Women disproportionately experience poverty, they often have lesser access to education, health, employment and income.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is the most widely accepted statement of human rights in the world. The Declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948 and outlines the civil and political, and economic, social and cultural rights of all people.

Article 1 sets the underpinning principle:

'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights...'

Article 2

'Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status...'

The 30 Articles of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* include:

- C the right to life, liberty and security;
- C freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- C freedom of opinion, expression and association;
- C the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work and the right to form and join trade unions;
- C the right to education, free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages;
- C No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

While the *Declaration of Human Rights* is not in itself a legally binding statement, many of its provisions have been included in the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which are legally binding human rights agreements.

The objectives of the World March of Women 2000 build on the belief in the inherent value of all human beings that is reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

The principles affirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provide the basis for the United Nation's work on women's issues. The Commission on Women was established in 1946 and there have been a number of specific conventions since that time.

The *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) entered into force in 1981 and for Australia in 1983, although Australia has stated that it is not at present in a position to introduce maternity leave with pay throughout Australia.

The States Parties to the Convention recalled
'that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity...

And expressed concern

'that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs.'

Article 3 gives the overall commitment to taking action to ensure that women are given equality with men.

The 30 Articles contained within the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women include:

- C taking measures to suppress all forms of traffic in women
- C the right to equality in education including equal access to educational resources and the revision of any stereo-typed concept of the roles of men and women
- C the right to equality in employment including the right to equal conditions, job security, equal remuneration, health and safety in working conditions, and the right to social security
- C taking measures to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity
- C taking measures to ensure equal access to health care
- C taking particular measures to address the problems faced by rural women.

The Beijing Platform for Action

The UN Fourth World Conference of Women was held in Beijing in 1995. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action provides guidelines to assist in the formulation of policies and national action plans for the advancement of women in twelve critical areas: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, environment, and the girl child.

In June 2000 the UN General Assembly held a

plenary review to assess progress since Beijing. The advance unedited version of the Report of the Secretary General, *Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action*, points to the fact that the 1990s have seen profound political, social and economic changes. While many countries have reported improvements for women, others showed stagnation or decline.

The report indicates that key obstacles to the implementation of the Platform for Action have included:

- C conflict and human displacement
- C economic instability and change
- C institutional discrimination against women
- C the persistence of gender stereotypes and negative attitudes toward women
- C the absence of targets, data and monitoring mechanisms
- C shortage of financial and technical resources.

In Beijing, women from Quebec proposed an ambitious international plan to fight poverty and violence against women, through the World March for Women.

Sources:

- C <http://www.un.org/rights/> gives access to UN human rights documents
- C <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/index.html> gives access to UN documents on women, including the Report of the Secretary General, *Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action*
- C Joyce Marshall, 2000, *Human Rights Training Manual*, Australian Education Union and Amnesty International Australia.

Why focus on the United Nations?

Suggested activities

Student research project

Investigate the Beijing Plan of Action and the reports and/or outcomes of the June 2000 review of progress: how far have we come and what are the challenges still facing us?

Classroom discussion

What are the essential human rights and how far has the world come in implementing the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*?

Other activities

- C design a web page about human rights and the World March of Women
- C write poems or short stories about human rights issues
- C identify a human rights issue about which the class might like to develop a plan of action (eg. check out the Amnesty International web site at <http://www.amnesty.org/>)

World Poverty

Inequality within and between countries has been increasing.

In 1960, the income gap between the fifth of the world's people living in the richest countries and the fifth in the poorest was 30 to 1. In 1997 it was 74 to 1.

'Poverty is everywhere. Measured by the human poverty index (HPI-1), more than 4.5 billion people in developing countries still do not have some of life's most basic choices -survival beyond age 40, access to knowledge and minimum private and public services.'

Inequality within countries is also increasing. One person in eight in the richest countries is affected by poverty: long term unemployment, life shorter than 60 years, very low income or a lack of literacy.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1999

Women and poverty

‘...women are still the greatest and fastest growing share of the world’s poor, are two-thirds of the world’s illiterate and own about one per cent of the world’s land. ... nowhere in the world are women represented in government in proportion to their population’.

(International Women’s Development Agency Annual Report 1997, in Marshall 2000)

‘The president of Nike owns US\$4.5 billion in assets, including an annual salary of \$1 million. An Indonesian woman working for Nike in one of the many sub-contracting firms throughout the world (for a total of 75,000 workers, of whom 70% are women aged 17 to 21 years old) earns the equivalent of US \$360 per year. She would have to work for 15 centuries to have the same salary as the president.’

(World March of Women in the Year 2000 Advocacy Guide)

Poverty in Australia

The wealthiest 10% of Australians hold more than 50% of Australia's wealth, while the poorest fifth of households exist on gross weekly incomes as low as \$100. The gap between the richest and poorest incomes in Australia is equal largest of all industrialised countries.

(United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1999)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a group fall far below the level of well-being enjoyed by the wider community.

'From the time of the colonial invasion they have been dispossessed, oppressed and systematically denied both their fundamental rights and identity...In the words of the Stolen Generation report, " the present plight, in terms of health, employment, education, living conditions and self esteem, of so many Aborigines must be acknowledged as largely flowing from what happened in the past... "

(ACTU Congress 2000)

Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation

We, the peoples of Australia, of many origins as we are, make a commitment to go on together in a spirit of reconciliation.

We value the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters.

We recognise this land and its waters were settled as colonies without treaty or consent.

Reaffirming the human rights of all Australians, we respect and recognise continuing customary laws, beliefs and traditions.

Through understanding the spiritual relationship between the land and its first peoples, we share our future and live in harmony.

Our nation must have the courage to own the truth, to heal the wounds of its past so that we can move on together at peace with ourselves.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians. Many steps have been taken, many steps remain as we learn our shared histories.

As we walk the journey of healing, one part of the nation apologises and expresses its sorrow and sincere regret for the injustices of the past, so the other part accepts the apologies and forgives.

We desire a future where all Australians enjoy their rights, accept their responsibilities, and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

And so, we pledge ourselves to stop injustice, overcome disadvantage, and respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to self-determination within the life of the nation.

Our hope is for a united Australia that respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/orgs/car/towards/pg3.htm>

BACKGROUND NOTES: World Poverty

This is the United Nations decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006). In 1999, there were 1.5 billion people in the world living in absolute poverty. Some 70% are women.

In 1999 the Commission on Human Rights received a report on human rights and poverty and 'reaffirmed that the elimination of extreme poverty and exclusion from society require urgent national and international action and, welcoming the observations [...] to the effect that the lack of political commitment, not financial resources, is the real obstacle to poverty eradication...' (CHR 2000)

Inequality between countries

The 1999 report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shows that inequality between countries has been increasing. While some countries have seized the opportunities of economic and technological globalization, other countries are becoming more marginal and have per capita incomes lower than they were a decade or more ago.

By the late 1990s the fifth of the world's people living in the richest countries had 82% of world export markets, while the bottom fifth had 1%.

Some poverty indicators:

- C nearly 1.3 billion people do not have access to clean water
- C one in 7 primary age children is out of school
- C 840 million people are malnourished
- C about 1.3 billion people live on incomes of less than \$1 a day
- C The infant mortality rate is 104 per 1000 live births in the least developed countries, compared to 6 per 1000 in industrialised countries.
- C In 1997, the Gross National Product per capita was \$US260 in the least developed countries compared to \$US27,174 in the industrialised countries.

The assets of the top three billionaires are more than the combined Gross National Product of the 48 least developed countries and their 600 million people. (UNDP 1999)

Inequality within countries

Inequality within countries has also been increasing and one person in 8 in the richest countries is affected by poverty. In the developed countries, both unemployment and underemployment or low-paid and often precarious work have been major factors in the growth of poverty.

The advance version of the 2000 Report of the Secretary General on the Review of the Beijing Platform notes the emergence of a 'new poor', who face a combination of factors such as 'inadequate incomes, lack of or difficult access to welfare services, and the deterioration of the economic, social and ecological environment.'

- C In OECD countries, more than 35 million people are unemployed and another 10 million have given up looking for a job. One in five is unemployed among youth
- C In the United Kingdom, the number of families below the poverty line increased by 60% in the 1980s.
- C In Australia, Canada the United Kingdom and the United States at least half the single-parent households with children have incomes below the poverty line.
- C There are large income inequalities between men and women. Women in most countries end up carrying the "double burden" of care services and employment (UNDP 1999)

The Report on the Review of Beijing notes:

'... The situation has been aggravated by the growing inequality between regions, countries, income groups and sexes. The caution expressed in the Beijing Platform for Action that women might bear disproportionately the negative cost of the transformation in the world economy has been confirmed by the analysis of the government's replies.'

Poverty in Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

The wealthiest 10% of Australians hold more than 50% of Australia's wealth, while the poorest fifth of households exist on gross weekly incomes as low as \$100. The gap between the richest and poorest incomes in Australia and the UK are the equal largest of all industrialised countries. (UNDP 1999)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a group fall far below the level of well-being -through health, education, employment and economic independence - enjoyed by the wider community. The AEU recognises that this is in large part the result of colonisation and the resulting dislocation, oppression and racism. (Burrow 2000)

The 1999 Australia Institute report shows:

- C the Indigenous unemployment rate is approximately 40.2% compared to 9% for non-Indigenous Australians.
- C 72% of Indigenous families in the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey had adjusted family incomes within the range of the poorest 40% of all families in the 1990 National Health Survey.
- C Life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men is about 17 years less than for other Australian males and the difference is slightly more for women.
- C In 1998, 32% of Indigenous students remained to year 12 at school, compared to 73% of non-Indigenous students. (CGA 2000)

The Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation pledges to 'to stop injustice, overcome disadvantage, and respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to self-determination within the life of the nation.'

Finding strategies to end poverty

The net worth of the world's 200 richest people increased from \$440 billion in 1994 to more than \$1 trillion in 1998. If they provided a yearly contribution of 1% of their wealth, the 200 richest people could provide universal access to primary education for all children (7-8 billion) (data from *Forbes Magazine*, in UNDP 1999)

The final report of the independent expert to the Commission on Human Rights stresses the need to incorporate a human and social dimension into globalization and proposes a range of recommendations, including the establishment of a world alliance for the eradication of extreme poverty and special measures to help the poorest communities, in particular women, children, the elderly, and ethnic minorities.

The World March of Women 2000 proposes a number of specific demands, including:

- C cancellation of the debt of Third World countries
- C 20% of international aid to be spent on social programs
- C an end to cut backs in social programs and public services
- C a new world financial system geared towards a fair and equitable sharing of the planet's wealth.

Sources:

- AEU Annual Conference 2000, President's Opening Address
- Commonwealth Government of Australia, 2000, *National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2000-2004*
- The Australia Institute Ltd, 1999, *Public Expenditure on Services for Indigenous People, Education, Employment, Health and Housing*, Discussion Paper No. 24
- Commission on Human Rights, 'Human rights and extreme poverty', report submitted by Ms A.-M. Lizin, independent expert, pursuant to Commission resolution 1996/26, United Nations.
- United Nations Development Program, 1999, *Human Development Report 1999*, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford.

World Poverty

Suggested activities

Student research project

Investigate the reasons for the growing income gap between rich and poor in Australia: who is poor, and why?

Classroom discussion

How do living standards in Australia compare with those in other parts of the world?

Other activities

- C watch the video on the Fair Wear Campaign, explore the Fair School Wear Campaign in NSW;
- C undertake fund-raising for East Timor or another country in urgent need: make contact with aid agencies such as Apheda or Community Aid Abroad;
- C arrange for a speaker on issues confronting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including Reconciliation.

World Education

The United Nations recognises that education is an essential tool for achieving equality, sustainable development and peace. Literacy of women is also an important key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family.

The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right to education, including compulsory and free primary education and access to secondary and higher education.

Poverty is the single most important factor explaining the inability to meet target goals set by governments.

Despite progress:

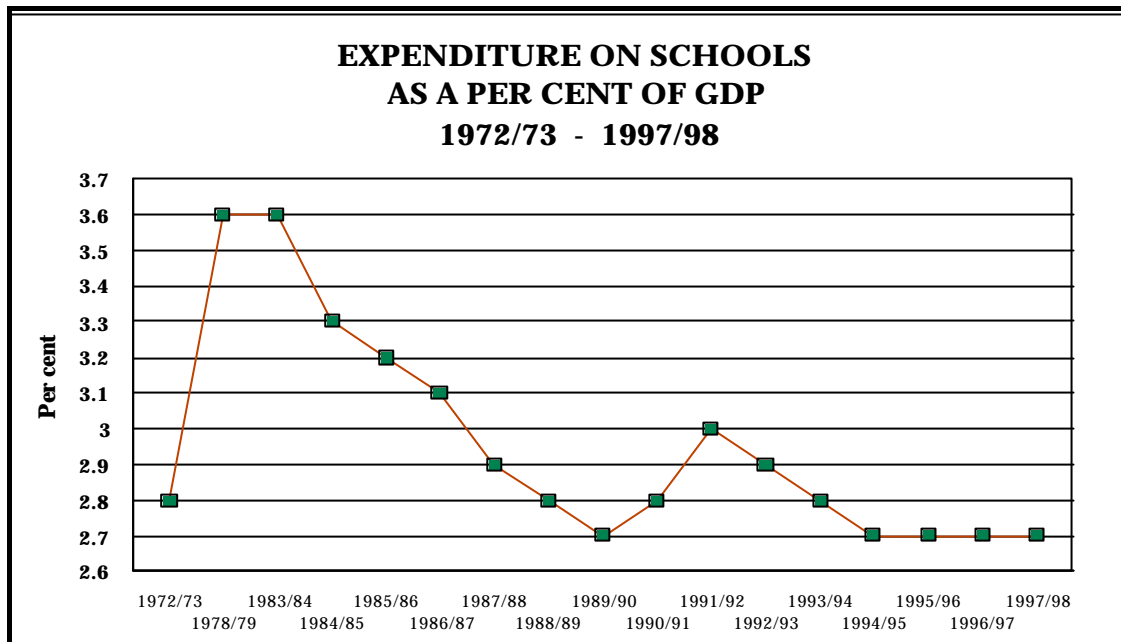
○ 125 million children never see the inside of a classroom;

○ two-thirds are girls and millions more will join the 880 million illiterate adults, of whom two-thirds are women.

Global Campaign for Education

Education in Australia

C Australia's spending on education is declining as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product.



C The rate of retention of high school students in Australia is declining.

C The incidence of marginalised activity (ie unemployment, part-time work not linked to study, or no education or labour market involvement at all) is more than twice as high among early leavers as it is among those who completed year 12.

(Dusseldorp Skills Forum: Australia's Youth: Reality and Risk, March 1998)

BACKGROUND NOTES: EDUCATION

World education

Since the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was adopted in 1948, education has been recognised as an essential element of human rights and a key strategy for achieving greater equality and reducing poverty.

As the 1999 World Bank report on World Development Indicators noted:

'Inequalities in the allocation of such resources as education, health care and nutrition matter because of the strong association of these resources with well-being, productivity, and growth. Girls in many developing countries are allowed less education by their families than boys are, and this is reflected in lower female primary school enrolment and higher female illiteracy. As a result women have fewer employment opportunities, especially in the formal sector.'

In 1990, the Education For All Conference in Jomtien, Thailand led to promises by almost all of the world's governments that every child would be in school by 2000, that International Monetary Fund programmes would be 'joined up' with commitments to education, and that aid for basic education would be increased.

The Global Campaign for Education, which is a coalition of 400 Development Non Government Organisations and teacher unions in 180 countries, has pointed out that such targets were spectacularly missed. The Campaign points out:

- C 125 million children, mainly girls, are not in school
- C Education aid to Africa alone has plummeted US\$3 billion since 1990.
- C The IMF has conceded that at least 12 African countries had slashed their education budget under IMF programmes. In Indonesia

IMF - sponsored austerity measures pushed 1 million children out of school.

- C The World Bank has increased lending for education but it remains committed to charging parents for education -- one of the most important reasons why poor children never go to school. (GCE 2000)

The reality is that access to education and to literacy are linked to levels of wealth/development.

- C There are still 60% more illiterate women than men in developing countries.
- C In industrialised countries, the adult literacy rate in 1997 was 98.6% for women and 98.9% for men. In the least developed countries, the adult literacy rate was 38.1% for women and 58.8% for men.
- C In the least developed countries, 54.8% of primary aged girls and 24.6% of secondary aged girls are enrolled in school while in industrialised countries 99.9% of primary aged and 96.3% of secondary aged girls are enrolled.(UNDP 1999)

Although education remains an unfulfilled promise for too many people, some countries have made considerable headway in the last ten years.

- C Since 1990, some 10 million more children go to school every year, which is nearly double the 1980-90 average.
- C East Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean are now close to achieving universal primary education.

Africa and South Asia are the two regions with the longest way to go to achieve Education for All. Persistent poverty, conflicts and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have had profound effects on their education systems.

Some African countries devote one third of their national budget to education but several others spend as much on debt repayment as they do on health and basic education combined.

The Global Campaign for Education proposes a Global Action Plan to achieve Education for All at an additional cost of US\$8 billion per year - less than four days' global military spending.

Education in Australia

Australia's expenditure effort in relation to education is declining.

Between 1978/79 and 1983/84 Australia spent 3.6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education. This is now only 2.7%, less even than the 2.8% in 1972/73, despite the larger workforce, increased student population and much higher student numbers in tertiary education.

Retention rates

The rate of retention of Australian students to year 12 has also been declining. Overall retention to year 12 has fallen from 77.1% since 1992 to 72.3% in 1999.

There are significant differences within that general figure. The government school retention rate in 1999 was 66.4%. Participation rates are lower for students in rural and remote areas. Retention rates for Indigenous students are significantly below those for non-Indigenous students.

In 1996, of those school leavers who did not pursue further education, 8% of those who had completed Year 12 were unemployed or not in the labour force. Of those who did not complete Year 12, 28% were unemployed or not in the labour force. (Ainley 1998).

Early school leavers experience a longer duration of unemployment, as do those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. (MacDonald 1998) They are more likely to enter part-time work, most of which is casual. (Dusseldorp Skills

Forum 1998) The effect of Year 12 completion on decreasing the likelihood of unemployment is independent of the effect of school achievement.

Completion of Year 12 also had an effect on hourly earnings, net of school achievement, other qualifications and social background factors. (Ainley and McKenzie 1999)

Teachers

Teaching has tended to be one of the first professions open to women and the World Bank data sees the proportion of female teachers as 'a revealing indicator of employment opportunities for women'. Women teachers provide role models for girls particularly where female education is not encouraged or men are forbidden to teach girls. In 1996, 35% of primary teachers in low income countries were women, while 77% of primary teachers in high income countries were women. 38% of lower middle income countries' secondary teachers were women, while this was true of 55% of secondary teachers in high income countries.

International research is providing evidence that there can be no Education for All without motivated, competent and committed teachers.

Sources

UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org>
Global Campaign for Education 2000:
<http://www.ei-ie.org/main/english/index.html>
United Nations Development Program., 1999, *Human Development Report 1999*, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford.
World Bank, 1999 *World Development Indicators*:
<http://genderstats.worldbank.org/menu.asp>
Dusseldorp Skills Forum: <http://www.dsf.org.au>
(see eg Ainley J., Ainley & McKenzie)
Macdonald H., 1998, Brotherhood of St Laurence, paper presented to the 5th National Conference on Unemployment, RMIT University
Exploring Gender: Student Services and Equity Programs, NSW Dept of Education and Training
APHEDA (Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad – ACTU Overseas Aid Agency) Box 3, Trades Hall, 4 Goulburn St, Sydney 2000 Ph: 02 264 9343)

World Education

Suggested activities

Student research project

- C Investigate the differences in education access across the Pacific region.
- C Investigate what factors affect women's and girls' access to education around the world.
- C Research what happens if you leave school early. Using a case study of 2 girls; 1 who leaves school at 15, 1 who goes on to complete a university degree; investigate the outcomes for both when they are 25 and 40 years old.

Classroom discussion

- C Is having an education important and why?
- C At what age did your parents leave school, what has changed?
- C Why is it important to have access to education?
- C What subjects are students choosing in your school, or in your children's school?
- C What is needed to ensure access to lifelong education and training for girls and women?

Other activities

- C Collect data in your school on what subjects students are choosing. Is there a gender pattern in the choice of subjects? If boys or girls are choosing a narrow range of subjects, what are the implications? How can they be challenged and supported to choose more broadly?
- C Adopt a school in East Timor.

Employment

There are growing inequalities both between and within countries as a result of global economic restructure. Industrial restructuring and changed employment patterns have aggravated poverty in developed countries like Australia.

The restructure of traditional industries, the transfer of jobs to developing countries, lower taxes and massive reductions in public spending, have caused unemployment and a growth in low paid jobs.

‘The groups most affected are women, young people and pensioners.’

The advance copy of the Report of the UN Secretary General on *Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform For Action*, 2000, Advance unedited version.

Employment in Australia

Australia has the second highest rate of casualisation in the OECD - about 26% of all employed persons.

One in three women employees are now casual.
Nearly one in five male employees are now casual.

(ACCIRT 1998, Work Time Life: Reclaiming the working time agenda, An issues paper for the Australian union movement)

‘26 per cent of Australian workers now work as casuals. A lot of them are women and what particularly galls me is that everything we fought for; maternity leave, carer’s leave, parental leave, are now being subverted. This creeping casualisation is producing a new form of systemic discrimination against women’.

Jennie George, former President ACTU, 7 March 2000

Women and work in Australia

In 1972 the principle of equal pay for work of equal value was won and separate male and female pay rates in awards were abolished.

In May 1996 women earned 91.6% of men's rates when comparing award rates of full time non-managerial adult workers.

However women earn only 48.2% of male over-award payments.

Unionised women earn 24.5% more than women who are not in unions.

Australia has one of the most sex-segregated work forces in the world. Women are 77% of workers in Health and Community Services and 51% of workers in retail trade, but only 10% of mining workers and 13% of construction workers.

ACTU 1999, *Equal Pay: A Union Priority*

BACKGROUND NOTES: EMPLOYMENT

Industrial restructuring and changed employment patterns as a result of globalization have often had a particular impact on women and on children.

The number of child workers between the age of 4-15 years is now estimated at 250 million. (APHEDA)

In countries like Australia, both unemployment and underemployment or low paid and often precarious employment have been major factors in the growth of poverty and inequity. And at the same time, those who do have ongoing employment have found themselves working ever longer hours, often unpaid and without real choice.

Countries have responded differently to this crisis. There is strong movement in Europe for a shorter working week of 35 hours, which is seen as a significant measure in the fight against unemployment. In France for example, the Government has legislated for the reduction of the working week to 35 hours by this year for companies with more than 20 employees and by the year 2002 for others. There are other examples. (www.actu.asn.au/campaigns/wtl/work.htm)

In Australia, the general emphasis has been more on deregulation, privatisation and cuts to public expenditure as the ways to prosperity. The current Federal Government has done its best to amend industrial legislation in ways which restrict the capacity to regulate employment conditions and to hamper the rights of workers to negotiate conditions collectively via their unions.

Not only does Australia now have the second highest level of casualisation in the OECD, it also has the second largest group of workers regularly working 45 hours or more. (ACCIRT 1998)

The number of employees who are casual in their main job has doubled from 1982 to 1996 and casual employees are now about 26% of all employees.

Australia's young adults

Research by the Dusseldorp Skills Forum shows that the rapid changes in the nature of work have particularly hit young workers.

'More than any other age group, young people are more exposed to casual work, to employment that is part time or temporary in nature, in general they are experiencing static or declining levels of earnings from work, and the work they are being offered is increasingly low skilled.' (DSF 1999)

Indigenous young people have lower rates of school completion and higher rates of unemployment than other young Australians do.

Young women are more likely than young men to be full time students and to be employed part time, while young men are more likely to be in the labour force and to be unemployed.(DSF 1999)

Gender pay equity

In 1969 unions won the principle of equal pay for equal work. In 1972, the principle of equal pay for work of equal value was won and separate pay rates for men and women in awards were abolished.

When comparing award rates of pay for full time, non-managerial workers, in 1996 women earned 91.6% of men's rates. However in practice women still don't receive pay equity and there is some evidence that the steady progression in reducing the gender gap is now stalling. (ACTU 1999)

Women earn only 48.2% of male over-award payments.

The Australian work force is strongly sex - segregated. Women are the majority of employees in industries such as Education, Health and Community Services, Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants and Retail Trade. They are only 10% of employees in Mining, 31% in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and 26% in Manufacturing. (ACTU 1999)

The NSW Industrial Relations Commission undertook a Pay Equity Inquiry in 1997-1998. The Inquiry compared seven areas of traditionally female work with traditionally male work. It found under-valuation of women's work in child care, seafood processors, public sector librarians, hairdressers, beauty therapists and clothing outworkers.

The Inquiry found that women's work is undervalued for many related reasons, including the following factors:

- ⊞ historically women's skills have not been recognised as skilled
- ⊞ women are less unionised than men, concentrated in small work places and therefore have had less opportunity for seeking recognition of their skills
- ⊞ women's work is less 'visible' in service industries
- ⊞ lack of access to paid overtime
- ⊞ low industry regulation to ensure women are paid their entitlements (eg clothing outworkers). (Labor Council of NSW et al)

A recent survey has revealed that women in senior positions earn substantially less than men doing the same jobs. Male customer service managers were earning 29% more than females, and similar gaps were found in jobs such as sales managers, branch managers, sales clerks and administration managers. (Herald Sun 14/5/00)

In many industries, men tend to dominate the senior management and executive positions. A mere 4% of private company board members and only 1% of executive company directors are women, and 75% of Australian companies have no women directors. (Pocock 1997)

Australian Workplace Agreements give employers discretion over the pay rates they will offer workers. Assumptions about the value of women's work and about the role of women in the work force can result in demonstrably lower rates of pay. (ACTU 1999)

Home-based outworkers are one group who often face low pay and very long hours. There are

about 300,000 home-based outworkers in the textile, clothing and footwear industries in Australia. Many are women. The Fair Wear Campaign is a coalition of Churches, Community Organisations and Unions which aims to assist workers achieve a living wage, to organise and to work in a safe and healthy environment.

The role of unions

The ACTU and affiliate unions have fought for equal pay for women and won the equal pay test cases which enshrined equal pay principles.

The ACTU Living Wage Strategy is important to women, who are more likely to be on award rates of pay. Specific cases for equal remuneration have been negotiated.

Women union members earn on average \$543 per week compared to women non-union members who earn \$436 per week. (ACTU 1999)

Sources

- ACCIRT 1998, *Work Time Life: Reclaiming the working time agenda*, www.actu.asn.au
- <http://www.worksite.actu.asn.au/index.htm>
- ACTU 1999, *Equal Pay: A Union Priority*
- APHEDA et al, *Child Labour in the Global Economy*
- Dusseldorp Skills Forum, *The Deepening Divide*, www.dsf.org.au
- Fair Wear Campaign, www.awatw.org.au/fairwear
- The Labor Council of NSW, National Pay Equity Coalition and PSA Communications section, *At Last! A chance for pay equity*
- Pocock B., 'United we stand: Women, unions and the new industrial relations system', *RefractoryGirl* Summer/winter 1997

Employment

Suggested activities

Student research project

- C Investigate the employment trends for young people.
(The ACTU site for students and teachers at <http://www.worksite.actu.asn.au/index.htm> and the work of the Dusseldorp Skills Forum www.dsf.org.au are useful starts)
- C Research the findings of the NSW Pay Equity Inquiry.

Classroom discussion

- C Discuss rights that women have in the work place now that they did not have in the 1950s.
- C Discuss changes in work available in your local community: what has changed, and why?
- C Invite an older woman to talk with the class about changes in employment opportunities and rights for women and girls in her life time.

Other activities

- C Investigate the Fairwear Campaign and consider how you might be involved.
- C Find out about the work of APHEDA - Union Aid Abroad and consider making a donation to support the fight against child labour.

Eradicating Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a universal reality that has developed as a consequence of the historically unequal power relations between women and men.

‘The term ‘violence against women’ means any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.’

Paragraph 113 of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World UN World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence against women occurs:

• within a couple;

• within the family;

• within the general community;

• is often perpetrated or tolerated by governments;

• is used as a weapon in situations of armed conflict.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence manifest themselves in some of the following ways:

• battery

• sexual abuse

• sexual assault

• incest

• rape

• sexual harassment and intimidation at work

• social exclusion

• sexual slavery

• forced marriage

• female genital mutilation

BACKGROUND NOTES: ERADICATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The World March of Women 2000 wants to eliminate violence against women by:

- C demanding the application of commitments made by the world's nations through international instruments with regard to women. These instruments include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Beijing Platform for Action 1995 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- C Promoting the International Criminal Court
- C Promoting peace building
- C Favouring the right to asylum for reasons of discrimination on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation
- C Urging member States of the UN to establish a national plan to counter violence against women.

Although many countries have signed conventions and covenants to protect women and their rights, many have not implemented them in full.

Australia is a signatory to these UN covenants and conventions and over the last decades Australian Governments have endeavoured to enact aspects of these instruments. However there is still a considerable amount of work that needs to be done to protect women against violence. The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is the Australian organisation that administers Federal Government legislation in the areas of human rights and anti-discrimination. In particular, it has responsibility for observing seven international instruments ratified by Australia.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 gives effect to Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The provisions of this Act:

- C promote equality between women and men;
- C eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status or pregnancy and with respect to

dismissals, family responsibilities; and
C eliminate sexual harassment at work, in educational institutions, in the provision of goods and services, in the provision of accommodation and the delivery of Commonwealth programs.

Australia, like many other countries, has not yet been able to universally protect women from domestic violence, sexual assault and sexual abuse.

There are many women's organisations in this country working to eliminate these forms of violence against women. These include:

- C Domestic Violence Crisis Services
- C Rape Crisis Services
- C Women's Refuges
- C Counselling services for women who are victims of violence.

Violence against women is a universal reality, a historical consequence of unequal power relationships between women and men.

Those who are particularly vulnerable are women and girls who live in precarious conditions and who are discriminated against on the basis of race, language, ethnicity, culture, age, opinion, social condition, religion, sexuality, physical and intellectual disability, membership of minority groups and women and girls who are migrants, refugees or who are living under a foreign occupation.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence against women and girls occurs within marriages and within families.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurs against women and girls within the general community.

Community violence against women and girls includes contraception imposed by constraint or

force, forced sterilisation or abortion,

selective abortion of female foetuses, female genital mutilation and female infanticide.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurs against women and girls as a result of the exploitation and commercialisation of women's bodies.

Physical, sexual and psychological violence is often perpetuated and tolerated by the State - the prioritisation of custom or tradition over the respect of fundamental human freedoms.

Violence against women is also used as a weapon of war.

The UN's Advance Unedited Version of the Report of the Secretary General on the *Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action* notes that: *'Significant steps have been taken in the last ten years to address violence against women with many strategies being adopted since the Platform's adoption to translate its recommendations into action.'*

At the international level, for example, the UN General Assembly in 1999 adopted an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women which allows women the right to seek redress for violations of their human rights, including with regard to gender-based violence.

The UN report indicates that approaches at the national level to gender-based violence against women emphasize policy and law reform; the provision of services and assistance; sector-specific and public-education and programmes; training; and advocacy campaigns to address values, attitudes and actions related to violence against women.

That Report concludes that:

'While much has been achieved in the context of the elimination of violence

against women, there remains much to be done. While legal provisions have been

introduced in many countries, others have yet to introduce effective legal provisions and procedures to address the various forms of violence against women...

Consistent effort is required, moreover, to ensure that sectors which come in contact with violent behaviour are equipped to act effectively and sensitively. Most importantly, work is still required to ensure that the overarching attitudes to women which entrench stereotypical notions of inferiority to men are addressed, so that violence, the most obvious manifestation of these attitudes can be eliminated. In this regard, innovative programmes to raise the consciousness of all members of society, in particular, children, to the importance of non-violent conflict resolution should be priorities.'

Sources

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission:
www.hreoc.gov.au

RAWA - Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan: www.rawa.org/index.html

(RAWA is a political/social organisation of Afghan women struggling for peace, freedom, democracy and women's rights in Afghanistan.)

Amnesty International: www.amnesty.org/

Amnesty International Australia:

www.amnesty.org.au

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/index.html> gives access to UN documents on women, including the Report of the Secretary General, *Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action*

Eradicating violence against women

Suggested activities

Student research project

Investigate the services available in your city or location that support women who are victims of violence. Find out what services and support they provide for their women clients.

Classroom discussion

Discuss in small groups issues within your own school that you can identify that constitute violence against girls and women. Think of ways that students and staff could work together to eradicate those forms of violence.

Other activities

C Look up the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission web page and find out more about its work.
www.hreoc.gov.au

C Look up the Amnesty International Australia web page and find out if there are any activities that you or your class could participate in to support Amnesty Campaigns.
www.amnesty.org.au

What you can do to support the World March of Women 2000.

Schools and TAFE Colleges are asked to participate in the World March by planning and coordinating activities in and among workplaces.

C Sign the World March of Women postcards and return to:
Support Cards Campaign
World March of Women 2000
6 Lancaster Ave
Redcliffe QLD 4020
Australia
Or sign on the World March website.

! Become involved in local activities on October 7.

Activities could include:

- Art exhibitions and displays with the theme of women and girls' work.
- C Special articles in the local press written by students.
- C Mural painting with the theme of women, girls and diversity
- C A special event on October 17 such as a song and dance fest or a luncheon with an international theme in which parents and community members could participate.
- C Linking with neighbouring schools and community organisations to stage a street march, event or display in a community centre.
- C Essays on the plight of women and girls in developing countries.
- C Research into the "Stolen Generation" and its ongoing effect upon indigenous women and girls.
- C Plays, performances, street theatre, film or video making on the themes of poverty and violence.
- C Asking a newly arrived, displaced refugee or indigenous woman to address students, and staff and parents.
- C Use the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Report *Bringing Them Home* as a text and resource document for activities and events.
- C Wear the suffragette colours of green, violet and white on October 17
- C Planning a violet, green or white lunch on October 17
- C A women's only dinner on October 17 to celebrate the official conclusion of the World March.
- Compose a song based on the World March musical theme expressing your demands for the elimination of poverty and violence against women.
- Use the World March publication *Changing the World Step by Step (Mosaic in Tribute to Women's Struggles World Wide)* as a basis of school and community activities. Copies may be obtained by contacting the World March web site.

World March contact details

The World March of Women 2000 can be contacted via :

web site for Australia: <http://www.uq.net.au/march2000/>

web site for overseas: <http://www.ffq.qc.ca/marche2000/>

To get involved at the local level in the work of organising for the October 7th main events (Women's Song and Dance Fests - Cultural Sharings) and/or in the campaign against poverty and violence against women, there are local contact persons listed on the Australian World March web site.

This kit can be accessed on the AEU web site:

www.aeufederal.org.au