

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS! **Gender & Development: Beijing + 25 issue**

In June 2020, the international journal *Gender & Development* will publish a Beijing + 25 issue, marking a quarter of a century since the UN Fourth Conference on Women at Beijing saw unprecedented global buy-in for feminist visions of development. The Beijing Platform for Action, signed by 189 governments, articulated a commitment to human development centred on women's advancement and the realisation of gender equality worldwide. It seemed that the battle had been won, and 'gender' was widely accepted as a legitimate focus for governments and global governance and financial institutions.

In the years since, women's movements have worked with governments to institutionalise commitments made at Beijing. The 'gender mainstreaming' agenda across public policy included establishing gender equality ministries and 'national women's machineries', raising resources to support women's rights, and supporting gender quotas in politics. At the UN, regular reviews of progress since Beijing tracked the implementation of commitments.

But challenges to implementing the Platform for Action appeared swiftly. The 2000 – 2015 Millennium Development Goals, with only one target for adult women (addressing maternal mortality), quickly eclipsed implementation of the Platform for Action. And a right-wing backlash, objecting to the notion that 'gender' is a social construct, not a natural phenomenon, gathered momentum. Anxieties about the growing influence of this backlash contributed to the UN's decision not to hold a 20-year follow-on conference in 2015.

Throughout 2020, there will be a host of events that are intended to contribute to reviewing and updating the agenda for gender equality and women's rights. These include deliberations at the 2020 UN Commission on the Status of Women in March, a major civil society conference convened by the UN in Paris in July, and a high-level review by the UN General Assembly in September. However, there will be no globally-endorsed agenda for gender equality equivalent to what was produced in Beijing, in part because of the remarkable spread of opposition to women's rights and the resurgent support for traditional families, a binary understanding of gender identity, and support for male authoritarianism in private and public. Understanding this development is important for the future of feminism and for identifying the implications of de-linking a global reflection on women's rights from multilateral decision-making.

G&D, a unique journal, is a forum for the sharing of analysis and experience between feminist activists involved in development research, policy, and practice. This future-facing issue will be written by leading feminists and women's rights activists of all generations. We know that to struggle today and tomorrow involves reassessing where we've come from, and the lessons that herstory holds for us. The huge and daunting new challenges that face feminists today and tomorrow require reflection, analysis and debate. What can we

learn at this 25th anniversary of Beijing, to help us in our current struggles, priorities and strategies?

If you are an activist, policymaker, practitioner or researcher with feminist values and experience to share, please send a paragraph outlining your proposed article for the issue. Ideas include:

- Organising for the 21st century to deliver on women's rights in the post-Beijing era: what's happening in 2020 and how does it reflect what's needed now?
- What would today's Beijing Platform for Action look like? How has 1995's agenda been realised, what remains to be done and what are the new items on feminist agendas in 2020?
- (A multi-generational dialogue): What and where are the movements and ideas that are feeding inspiration and collective power into our movements today that we could not have imagined in 1995? And what kinds of new movements and ideas do we need for the future?
- Feminist donors' money played an important role before and during Beijing (**investing in creating spaces for feminists, in generating feminist knowledge, data and research, in facilitating women convening and accessing Beijing**). How has the role of feminist donors evolved and changed in the years since Beijing?
- **Exploring the tensions and synergies between government strategies to implement Beijing, and the agendas of local women's rights movements. How have government strategies advanced – or otherwise - the goals of local activists?**
- The role of the UN: tracing the impact and importance of UN bodies and events in delivering progress for women and girls.
- UN reform: What has to change in the UN and its global policy-making machinery (especially the CSW) to make it a positive force for women's rights? Have UN Women and the rest of the UN system delivered?
- Sex and gender – then and now – right wing and reactionary forces fought against the concept of gender as a social construct at Beijing and its lead-up – and they are gaining ground now amid the resurgence of conservatism and fundamentalisms. How can progressives develop their understanding of sex and gender beyond binaries without losing the fight for women's rights?
- Given a seriously troubled world (conflicts, massive migrations, failing economies, global erosion of rights, climate change,...) how do we make sure that Beijing + 25 is inclusive, addresses and challenges global issues as they impact the rights and position of women in different contexts worldwide including the most marginalized?
- New strategies of today's international feminist movements, harnessing the power of ICTs and social media to realise real change on the ground for women

Please send a paragraph outlining your proposed idea for an article for this issue, in an email (no attachments please) to csweetman@oxfam.org.uk as soon as possible and by 15 August 2019. Commissioned articles (of around 6-7,000 words plus references) will need to be completed for a deadline of 1 December 2019. Guidelines for contributors can be found at www.genderanddevelopment.org