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Statement submitted by Intervention Council for Women in Africa, 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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Poverty is a 'female' gender, the reason being that the poorest man in the world has a woman under him to take care of. In Africa, majority of the women are either homemakers or employed in the informal economy. Even though women are the custodians of family welfare, the nurse, the cook, the cleaner and emotional supporter of all in the family, they are disproportionately regarded and hence unrewarded.

Consequently, they still wallow in poverty. Lack of empowerment has from culture and tradition is what placed African women under perpetual handicap when being handed over from father to husband without any economic head-start. That itself is the beginning of poverty.

But the good news is that they never give up. The society has gradually begun to acknowledge and support the critical role that women play in building the socio-economy of their environment since Beijing Declaration.

Today African women can speak out loudly even during their male counterparts, more girls have rolled in schools, women young girls are competing with boys in enrolments in medicine, sciences, and Engineering.

There is modest increase in political participation of women and girls in Africa. The credit must be ascribed to affirmative action of Platform. Maternal mortality ratio has decreased significantly in Africa because a good number of women in Africa now take part in deciding the number of children, they want to give birth to. Marriage of underaged girls has drastically reduced.

Our organization: Intervention Council for Women in Africa (ICWA) is in the forefront of promoting women socio-economic empowerment towards overcoming some of their negative circumstances. There is no doubt that accelerated gain will be recorded in no-distant future.

ICWA aims to entrench the spirit of team work among women, organizing training, skills development, female youth re-orientation, within local clusters. It advocates for better policy aimed at making gender equivalence and empowerment, which can be achieved in-line with United Nations and African strategies for better food production, processing, packaging, promotion and preservation among others, towards improving the lives of women and girls.
