



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRADE/WP.8/AC.4/2002/2
25 September 2002

ENGLISH only

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COORDINATING UNIT FOR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Second Meeting of the Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship
Geneva, 30 August 2002**

SUMMARY REPORT

1. The second meeting of the Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship was held at the Palais de Nations, Geneva on 30 August 2002. It was organised by the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
2. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Marsha Gannon (USA), TOS Chairperson and Ms. Ronit Dolev, Deputy-Chair (Israel). It was attended by the following TOS members: Jamby Djusubalieva (Kyrgyzstan), Rachel Golden (USA), Ilhama Gulieva (Azerbaijan), Andrew Fiddaman (UK), Smadar Fogel (Israel), Marianna Knothe (Poland), Grania Mackie (Switzerland/ILO); Colette Schreiber (France) and Sayali Safarova (Azerbaijan).
3. The Deputy Chair, Ms. Saida Iskakova (Kazakhstan) and the following TOS members send their regrets the UNECE Secretariat for not being able to participate in the meeting: Maya Allazova (Azerbaijan), Nini Elizbarashvili (Georgia), Sonia Heptonstall (Switzerland), Ewa Lisowska (Poland), Lubica Mandicova (Slovakia), Alida Perkov (Croatia), Olga Politova (Russia), Anna Putnova (Czech Republic) and Philine Read (Switzerland). The change of the date of the TOS meeting, which initially was scheduled to take place in October after the Second Forum of Women Entrepreneurs, was mentioned as the main reason of absence by TOS members from Azerbaijan, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Russia and Switzerland. Other reasons were ill health (Kazakhstan) and the lack of travel funds (Croatia and Georgia).
4. The meeting was also attended by invited guests from Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine.
5. The revisions of the agenda were proposed. It was stressed that the priority should be given to discuss methodology of TOS work and action plan. The revised agenda was the base

for further discussion. The meeting agreed to establish two sub-committees with concrete tasks and deadlines for their implementation. Their work will be included into the work plan for 2001-2002. Concerns were expressed about the level of participation in TOS meetings, the lack of travel funds and procedural matters.

6. Summary of the discussion by the revised agenda items

6.1 Opening remarks by the Chair

6.2 Information on establishing a TOS home page at the UNECE website

6.3 Evaluation of the situation of women entrepreneurs by sub-regions and project proposals

6.4 Methodology of work

6.5 Participation in TOS meeting and fund raising

6.6 Information on the Second Forum of Women Entrepreneurs and other events

6.7 Other matters

Ad.6.1

The Chair stressed that the lack of travel funds for TOS members is a serious problem, which needs immediate attention. The problem of financial constraints of governments to finance travel expenses of TOS members was discussed. It was pointed out that these difficulties increase when TOS meetings are too closely spaced. The Chair informed the participants on the training project in Azerbaijan developed by Ms. Thelma Tadjirian.

Ad. 6.2

TOS Secretary, Ewa Ruminska-Zimny, informed on establishing a TOS home page at the UNECE website (www.unece.org/operact/entrep/women/team.htm), which includes the information on TOS officials, mandate and meetings. She informed that there is also web page, which presents all ECE gender programmes, documents and publications related to statistics, analysis, the Beijing process, cooperation with civil society and up-coming events (www.unece.org/oes/gender/welcome.htm)

Ad. 6.3

Statements were made by TOS members from Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan and two ideas for projects were presented (i) E: training for women in government positions and women living in remote areas (Kyrgyzstan) and (ii) development of E: infrastructure based on credit and leasing arrangements (Azerbaijan). TOS Secretary presented also a proposal on behalf of Ms. Politiva (Russia) for developing a E:learning project. A copy of the project was distributed among TOS members.

Ad. 6.4

The need for clear methodology and action plan for TOS was stressed by the Deputy Chair (R.Dolev) and other TOS members. As a result of a discussion it was agreed to establish two teams and elect their chairs. Team I Best practices and projects, Chair: A.Fiddaman. Its task will be to collect best practices and projects, evaluate them and propose action plan. 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. Ms. Dolev offered to prepare the format and criteria for project proposals (they will be also used for TOS on Youth and Poverty Alleviation).

Team II Network building and contacts with TOS members. Chair: Jamby Djusubalieva.

Its task will be to develop a network of women entrepreneurs according to a standard questionnaire (Ms. Dolev offered to provide it). The outcome will be TOS women's network data base.

Chairs of both teams are responsible for collecting relevant information by the end of November and presenting reports on their activities by the end of December 2002. The teams will be working in close cooperation with TOS officials (Chair and Deputy-Chairs) and TOS members. Teams are open to all members and interested members should contact respective chairs. Doubts were expressed by the Chair and several TOS members that these deadlines may not be realistic given the problems with communication.

Ad. 6.5

The need for establishing a committed team, who will participate in all meetings was underlined by the Chair. It was agreed that TOS Secretary would send a letter to TOS members, who were not present at the meeting, to clarify if they would continue to serve on TOS. The updated list will be send to the Chair, Deputy-Chairs and all members.

The need for fund raising was discussed. The funds are necessary to cover administrative costs and travel of TOS members as well as costs of projects. It was recommended to make efforts to maximize economies on travel costs through careful scheduling of TOS meetings and to investigate concrete solutions to fund TOS activities.

Ad.6.6

TOS Secretary informed that new dates for the Second ECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs are 17-18 March 2003. She invited TOS members to events, which will be organized by ECE in Bucharest, 7-9 November, 2002 (Round Table on Building a Gender sensitive Information Society, at WSIS prepcom) and in Skopje 13 November 2002 (Round table sessions on Women's Entrepreneurship at the CEI Economic Summit). Updated list of events organized by UNECE to which all TOS members are invited is available at www.unece.org/oes/gender.

Ad. 6.7

The Secretariat was requested to organize TOS meetings in coordination with meetings of TOS on Youth, meetings of WP.8 and the Forum of Women Entrepreneur. TOS Secretary informed that this effort will be made, but may not always be possible. For 2003 the following dates have already been confirmed: TOS Youth 10-11 February; W.P8, 13-14 February; Second Forum of Women Entrepreneurs, 17-18 March. The Chair and several TOS members expressed the view that it would be very difficult for them to participate in the Youth TOS meeting and the WP. meeting in February and the return to Geneva for the Forum of Women Entrepreneurs in March.