
United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-sixth session
27 February – 9 March 2012
New York

INTERACTIVE EXPERT PANEL

Review theme: Evaluation of progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions of CSW 52 on "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women"

Panel 4: Progress in financing for gender equality from the perspective of international organizations and multilateral development partners

**Enhancing performance of UN Programmes towards women's rights:
tracking investments and beyond**

by

Saraswathi Menon

Director, Policy Division

UN Women

Implementing governments' commitments towards gender equality and women's rights entails introducing measures that would increase women's access to services and resources; creating opportunities that increase women's economic and political participation, and providing protection to women and girls from exclusion, discrimination and violence.

Introduction:

Applying “gender markers” to institutional programming and financing instruments is one of the good practices that have been adopted by development agencies, national governments, and more recently the UN system. The experience in several UN agencies has increasingly pointed to the added value of these markers not only in mobilizing and coordinating financing towards realizing women's rights, but also in improving the effectiveness of development assistance and more broadly improving the design and implementation of programmes.

The challenge:

The UN MDG Report 2010 which reviewed progress towards achieving the MDGs showed significant gaps, particularly on the gender dimensions of many of the goals. The report showed that

In 2009, UNDP rolled out an adapted version of the OECD DAC gender marker. In 2010, the Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) applied a marker on select financing mechanisms in pilot countries (CAPs, CERFs and CHFs in Ethiopia and Myanmar). The OCHA marker was based on the marker developed by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Efforts to develop and apply gender marker are also underway by the Peace Building Fund (PBF), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). These efforts are in line with policy commitments at the highest level within the UN system including the Secretary General report on peacebuilding, the UN Security Council resolutions on women in post conflict and general assembly deliberations. The undg Task Team on Gender Equality chaired by UN Women includes a subgroup on "Accounting for Resources for Gender Equality" co-chaired by UNDP and UNICEF which serves as the platform for discussions on improving and expanding the use of gender markers in the UN system.

The significance of these efforts lies in the evidence generated using sex disaggregated data related to outcome and output level indicators, budget information and administrative data. This evidence provides a useful resource for policy making in relation to budget allocations and implementation of commitments towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. The data generated also provides gender equality advocates with much needed evidence on gaps and deficiencies in addressing gender equality priorities.

Those systems have been applied to monitor the implementation of the Secretary General's Seven Point Action Plan on Women's Participation in Peace building. Following the Policy Committee's decision in 2011 that 'at least 15% of UN-managed funds in support of peace building dedicated to projects whose principal objective, consistent with organizational mandates, is to address women's specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women'¹, seven UN entities (PBSO/PBF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP) prepared case studies on GEEW financing in Burundi and Nepal.

In the Humanitarian assistance field, the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) created its gender marker in 2009/2010, for its application to the global funding appeal mechanisms for humanitarian action including the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), pooled funding for humanitarian action and response to natural disaster. The adoption of this marker by the interagency Sub working groups (SWGs) involved a coordinated commitment by actors within the UN system, the NGOs and donor community. The implementation of the IASC Gender Marker in 2009 and 2010 in ten countries was assessed in early 2011. The assessment showed that the implementation was highly successful with variations across clusters². In the 2011 CAP preparation cycle, the marker was applied in

the use of gender expertise and resources to enable strengthened mainstreaming of gender