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## **I. Introduction**

1. Gender mainstreaming was endorsed as a strategy for promoting equality between women and men by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The Economic and Social Council adopted agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system at its coordination segment on 18 July 1997.<sup>1</sup>

in 1995 or its follow-up, the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in



programmes and operational activities. Diverse gender mainstreaming initiatives at the operational level have been undertaken by United Nations entities, including funds and programmes, specialized agencies and Secretariat departments that engage in technical cooperation programmes. Entities have worked at the operational level to draw attention to gender perspectives in data collection, research and analysis, and training activities undertaken across the system.

18. Progress has been made in gender mainstreaming in sector areas where systematic consideration of gender perspectives had not taken place prior to 1997, including peace and security, humanitarian issues and reconstruction work, democratic governance, information and communication technologies, and HIV/AIDS.

19. Gaps between policies and programming — that is, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation — still exist in many sector areas. Even where gender concerns are integrated into the design of programmes and operational activities, this does not always translate into gender-sensitive implementation. Despite the availability of materials, resources and tools on gender mainstreaming, programme officers and field staff of many entities lack capacity to use these tools in their daily work and implement gender mainstreaming. The documentation and dissemination of practical experience, lessons learned and good practices is critical for successful implementation of gender mainstreaming in programmes and operational activities.

20. The monitoring by headquarters of progress in the field is a major challenge, especially at the levels of outcomes and long-term impact. Results-based reporting systems have supported more accurate monitoring. However, difficulties persist in accurately capturing cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality.

21. As Governments make efforts to address gender issues in their programmes, the demand for technical support and capacity-building at the country and regional levels has risen. Resources have, however, remained limited. The need for greater coordination and collaboration among entities on gender mainstreaming in operational activities has become increasingly apparent. The establishment of United Nations country team structures and theme groups, including gender theme groups, has provided opportunities to enhance the integration of cross-cutting issues, including gender perspectives, into programmes and operational activities. Resident Coordinators have an important role to play in ensuring the commitment of country teams to systematic gender mainstreaming. Assessment of annual reports by Resident Coordinators reveals that capacity-building initiatives to sensitize government officials and United Nations staff and NGOs, have included training on gender-responsive budgeting and legislation. Other initiatives were undertaken to support the development of national capacity on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, including for national statistics offices on sex-disaggregated data.

22. A recent survey reported an increase in the number of country-level gender theme groups.<sup>7</sup> The activities of these groups cover advocacy, technical support, capacity-building and community-level interventions. Gender theme groups have, however, faced constraints due to limited mandates, lack of capacity and lack of seniority of their members.

23. Less has been done to ensure that other country theme groups, for example on HIV/AIDS, give adequate attention to gender perspectives. Theme groups for other

sectoral areas should include gender specialists who can provide technical advice and support.

24. Operational instruments constitute important entry points for the integration of cross-cutting issues, including gender equality, into development processes. Progress in mainstreaming gender perspectives into Common Country Assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes has been evidenced by the positive changes in the CCA/UNDAF guidelines — from the acknowledgement of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in 1999, to establishing gender equality as one of the guiding principles in 2002. The importance of incorporating attention to the gender inequalities identified in the CCA into the development assistance framework was highlighted in the revised guidelines of 2003. However, despite progress made to include gender perspectives in these guidelines, major gaps still exist in the integration of gender perspectives into CCA/UNDAF documents and in country programming follow-up. The attention to gender issues remains limited to a few sectoral areas, such as education, health and microeconomic issues. Gender perspectives are not systematically addressed in other critical areas, such as macroeconomics, taxation, employment, agriculture, transport, water, environment and housing.

25. Successful mainstreaming of gender perspectives in CCAs/UNDAFs requires systematic use of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated statistics; consultation with national machineries for the advancement of women and with women's groups and networks; and formulation of concrete recommendations to address the gender inequalities identified. The Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, should be utilized as critical resources in the process.

26. A recent desk review<sup>8</sup> found that the proportion of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) that gave attention to gender inequalities increased substantially in 2003 compared with 2002. United Nations entities can provide effective support to gender mainstreaming in PRSPs, in collaboration with national machineries for the advancement of women, and women's groups and networks. The United Nations can raise gender issues in the country dialogue, promote access to gender analysis methodologies and tools, provide capacity-building in monitoring and implementation, and fund gender experts.

27. United Nations entities also have an important role to play in joint staff assessments in the preparation of PRSPs. The guidelines for joint staff assessments emphasize the importance both of ensuring the participation of women's groups in the PRSP process and of identifying the gender perspectives of poverty. However, based on a review of joint staff assessments of 21 interim PRSPs and 33 PRSPs, there were Tj collabo

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Progress has been made since the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) adopted the CAP guidelines in 1994, in which no reference was made to gender equality. A number of reviews have been carried out since then to further improve these guidelines which have highlighted the lack of attention to gender perspectives. The revised guidelines of 2003 also benefited from a report commissioned by the IASC Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance to review gender mainstreaming in the CAP. The report emphasized major gaps in gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data in CAP documents and the lack of concrete initiatives to promote gender equality. The report also identified the need for further capacity-building and training on the integration of gender perspectives. OCHA is currently carrying out a review of the 1999 IASC gender policy in time for the humanitarian segment of the Economic and Social Council in 2004.

29. National Millennium Development Goal reports present trends and identify achievements and continuing challenges. The preparation of these reports provide an important opportunity for raising awareness, forming alliances and developing national capacity on gender mainstreaming, and for assessing the extent to which gender perspectives are taken into consideration in national development policies. Recent assessments<sup>10</sup> indicate that country-level reports have focused on education and health and, to a lesser extent, on economic and political participation. It is important to consider gender equality as critical for the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals, rather than solely in the context of Millennium Development Goal 3. Constraints are faced in relation to data analysis and capacity-building. These are being addressed by a number of entities, including through the development of indicators and monitoring methodologies that take gender perspectives into account.

30. A recent assessment of national Millennium Development Goal reports undertaken by UNDP in 13 countries concludes that gender issues were not reflected as a cross-cutting issue in any of the reports. Only in relation to Goal 3, which specifically deals with gender equality, had gender issues been consistently addressed across countries.

## **C. Institutional arrangements**

31. United Nations entities have developed institutional mechanisms to facilitate effective implementation of gender mainstreaming, including specialist resources and gender focal points, capacity-building activities, methodologies and tools, statistics and indicators, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

### **1. Gender specialist resources**

32. The use of gender specialist resources has varied considerably across the United Nations system since 1997. Common challenges have, however, been experienced with regard to level of positions, mandates, access to resources and decision-making, and the extent of senior management support. Many larger United Nations entities have gender advisers and/or gender units. A number of entities have established internal or external advisory bodies with high-level participation. These groups guide policy-making and programming. In general, specialist resource levels have remained constant since 1997. Some entities have seen an increase in gender



specialists, while a number have reported a decrease in resources, including because of reorganization.

33. Experience has shown that the need for specialist support can increase with the introduction of gender mainstreaming and the shift of responsibility for promoting gender equality to all staff, including senior management. Gender specialists should not be seen as solely responsible for gender mainstreaming. Their role is to support senior managers in fulfilling their management responsibilities for gender mainstreaming. Gender specialists should promote, support and monitor progress in gender mainstreaming. Technical advice and support, including on methodologies and tools for gender analysis and capacity-building, is critical. For gender

**2. Capacity-building, including development of methodologies and tools**

38. One of the main areas of activity undertaken across the United Nations system to support gender mainstreaming has been capacity-building. The majority of entities have invested in training programmes for staff and partners and the development of methodologies and tools. Training programmes and resource materials have been developed for different categories of staff: budget staff, technical and sectoral staff, senior managers, and gender specialists and focal points. Different types of training have been used, including generic gender mainstreaming training and training specifically tailored to sectoral areas. A variety of training methodologies and tools have been developed. A number of entities have compiled training resources and other tools for gender mainstreaming on their web sites.<sup>13</sup>

39. Capacity-building efforts in the United Nations have not always been as effective as could be desired. While some entities have reported successful outcomes of their training programmes, inend3 -0.0886 Tw ( )87 0 0 1 o progra (39.) TD 0 Tc 109676 Tw ( comp5tive as 502

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### **3. Sex-disaggregated data, gender-specific information and indicators**

43. Entities have placed emphasis on the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information, as well as on the related development of indicators. Efforts in the field of sex-disaggregated data, gender-specific information and gender-sensitive indicators have taken on increased importance in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the elaboration and implementation of operational instruments, such as CCAs, UNDAFs, and PRSPs. Recently, efforts have been made to develop gender-sensitive indicators for measuring progress in the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. It is too early to evaluate the extent to which the use of newly developed indicators has influenced policy-making and programming and gender equality outcomes. It is, however, important to develop criteria for monitoring and evaluating such impacts.

44. Progress has been made with regard to sex-disaggregated data and indicators in the field of socio-demographic, education and health statistics. Gaps remain in economic statistics, as well as for migration, energy, water, agriculture and food production, urban and rural developm





entities. Many entities have linked their organizational priorities to the Millennium Development Goals.

61. The specific attention paid to gender mainstreaming strategy in the annual reports of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and the resolutions on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly have provided important guidance to the United Nations system since 1997.

#### **A. Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit**

62. The conferences and summits of the past decade, including the Millennium Summit in 2000, the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, the United Nations Special Session on Children in 2002, the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003, have highlighted the cross-cutting nature of gender issues and the importance of gender equality for development. United Nations entities have explicitly used the outcomes of the conferences and summits as a basis for organizational priority setting. Although the extent of attention to gender perspectives has varied greatly in these processes, Governments have made commitments to gender equality and recommended action at the international, regional and national levels. Increased attention has to be given to gender perspectives in the reports which provide the basis for deliberations and recommendations by Member States.

63. The Millennium Declaration and its development goals transformed global agreements into specific time-bound targets and created a new platform for entities to coordinate their initiatives for the achievement of agreed objectives. The Declaration viewed progress towards gender equality as an objective in itself and as a goal that would contribute to the achievement of other development goals. Millennium Development Goal 3 focuses on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In assessing its implementation, progress should be measured in relation to each of the other interdependent and mutually reinforcing Millennium Development Goals. Gender perspectives should be taken into account in actions aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger, improving education, reducing maternal and child mortality, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and ensuring environmental sustainability and partnerships for development. Analysis of gender equality perspectives in relation to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals should be an important focus of the review and appraisal of the Millennium Declaration due to take place in 2005.

#### **B. The General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies**

64. Since the adoption of the agreed conclusions, the General Assembly has considered gender perspectives in discussions and resolutions adopted at its regular sessions. In plenary, the Assembly has considered gender perspectives in relation to development, international cooperation and humanitarian or political assistance to particular Member States. Since 2001, annual follow-up to the Millennium



capacity-building and resource mobilization for the participation of women in development.

70. Since 2001, the agenda of the general segment has included a sub-item on mainstreaming, which has raised the visibility of the issue in relation to the Council's review of the work of its functional commissions. In 2002 and 2003, interactive panel discussions on gender mainstreaming complemented the deliberations.

71. Since 1997, many of the Council's 10 functional commissions<sup>16</sup> have increasingly focused on gender issues in relation to their specific sectoral mandates. For example, the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development have made efforts to consider gender perspectives as an integrated component of their work programmes. The Commission on Human Rights has integrated gender perspectives into its work, both under a separate agenda item and by taking gender issues into account in its thematic or country resolutions. Gender mainstreaming could be further promoted through the regular meetings of the Council's Bureau with the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies.

72. Valuable synergies between the Commission on Human Rights and the



the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security in 2000. In that resolution, gender perspectives were identified in relation to peace negotiations, peacekeeping operations, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives. The resolution has provided an important framework for action on gender mainstreaming in the areas of peace and security for other intergovernmental bodies, United Nations entities and NGOs. Open debates and Arria Formula meetings of the Security Council have provided opportunities to assess progress and forge links between the Council and NGOs.

76. In compliance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), a study on women, peace and security was carried out by the Secretary-General in 2002. A report, based on the findings of the study was submitted to the Security Council and discussed in an open meeting of the Council in October 2002.<sup>17</sup> The President of the Security Council reiterated the support of the Council for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Concern was expressed at the slow progress in the appointment of women as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General and an increase in the number of women serving as high-level representatives was urged. Regular contacts with local women's groups and networks were encouraged, as well as efforts to ensure their full involvement in peace negotiations and reconstruction processes, particularly at decision-making levels.

77. The Security Council has increasingly addressed gender perspectives in its missions. The Council consulted with local women's groups during all three missions in 2003, to West Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, and Afghanistan. This can be compared with the fact that between 2000 and 2002 the Council consulted with women's groups on four out of a total of 10 missions. Assessment missions for the formulation of new peace operations in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and the Sudan have benefited from briefings on gender issues, the preparation of checklists relating to the inclusion of gender perspectives, and the participation of gender advisers.

78. Challenges remain in relation to ensuring that gender issues are fully mainstreamed into the work of the Security Council. In relation to reports submitted to the Security Council, an analysis of 264 reports by the Secretary-General from January 2000 to September 2003 revealed that two thirds make only one or no mention of women or gender issues. The majority of reports referred to women and girls primarily as victims, not as potential actors who can and do make substantial contributions to peace and security. An analysis of resolutions adopted by the Security Council between January 2000 and March 2004 revealed that only 14.2 per cent include language on women or gender issues. Resolutions mandating new peace operations in 2003 and 2004 referred to the need for gender mainstreaming and included provisions for the establishment of gender units.

79. Monitoring of gender mainstreaming in peace operations has been identified as a particular challenge both at headquarters and in the field. A report by the Secretary-General, due in October 2004, will review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It will enable the Council to assess progress made in systematically incorporating attention to gender perspectives in all areas of work on peace and security, and to identify remaining challenges in gender mainstreaming in reports and resolutions, missions, peace negotiations, and the establishment and monitoring of multidimensional peace operations.

## **V. Conclusions and recommendations**

80. The agreed conclusions remain a valid framework for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations. United Nations entities and intergovernmental bodies have made progress in mainstreaming gender perspectives into all policies and programmes since 1997. However, further

*Programmes and operational activities*

- **Increase the demand for and capacity to carry out and systematically utilize gender analysis, including in operational activities;**
- **Fully incorporate gender perspectives in all reports prepared for intergovernmental bodies, including the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, the General Assembly and the Security Council;**
- **Ensure increased integration of gender perspectives into all operational mechanisms, such as CCAs, UNDAFs, PRSPs, and other processes, for example in relation to the Millennium Development Goals, including through enhanced inter-agency cooperation;**
- **Enhance the effectiveness of the gender theme groups by increasing the level of seniority of members, establishing clear mandates, developing links to other theme groups and providing adequate resources;**
- **Ensure attention to gender perspectives in all theme groups at the country level;**
- **Ensure, in addition to specific monitoring and evaluation of progress in gender mainstreaming, systematic integration of reporting on gender mainstreaming into existing monitoring and evaluation processes, including on the Millennium Development Goals;**

*Institutional arrangements*

- **Ensure adequate mandates, decision-making powers, access to information and resources and support from senior management for specialist gender resources, including gender focal points and theme groups in the field, and increase the number of men involved in this work;**
- **Increase awareness of the responsibilities of all staff for gender mainstreaming, including senior management, and develop effective accountability mechanisms;**
- **Develop more effective specialized training programmes, including adequate attention to follow-up, and integrate gender perspectives into all existing training programmes;**
- **Ensure systematic and effective dissemination, utilization and monitoring of the relevance of, methodologies, tools and good practice examples, including through inter-agency collaboration;**
- **Increase availability and use of sex-disaggregated data, gender-specific information and indicators in all sectors, including through inter-agency collaboration and increased collaboration with national statistical bodies.**

The Council may wish to encourage the governing bodies of agencies, funds and programmes to:

- **Ensure increased attention to gender mainstreaming in the exercise of their monitoring functions in medium-term plans, multi-year funding frameworks and programme budgets, and in the implementation and monitoring of operational activities.**

**The Council may wish to establish consideration of gender mainstreaming as a regular agenda item in meetings of its bureau with the bureaux of functional commissions, and to encourage its functional commissions to:**

- Take further measures to integrate gender perspectives into their respective sector areas, including through their annual or multi**

*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3 and addendum (A/52/3/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1)*, chap. IV, para. 4.

<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-*

<sup>16</sup> Commission for Social Development, Statistical Commission, Commission on Human Rights, Commission on Population and Development, Commission on Sustainable Development, Commission on Narco