



# Gender Equality

## *PRACTICE NOTE*

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## Acknowledgements

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

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<b>CEDAW</b>	<b>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>Information and Communication Technologies</b>
<b>MDGs</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goals</b>
<b>NHDRs</b>	<b>National Human Development Reports</b>
<b>RC</b>	<b>Resident Co-ordinator</b>
<b>RCA</b>	<b>Results and Competency Assessment</b>
<b>ROAR</b>	<b>Results-Oriented Annual Report</b>
<b>SURFs</b>	<b>Sub-regional Resource Facilities</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>UNIFEM</b>	<b>United Nations Development Fund for Women</b>
<b>UNV</b>	<b>United Nations Volunteers</b>

## Executive summary

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Gender equality is not merely a desirable by-product of human development; it is a core goal in its own right. Gender discrimination is the source of endemic poverty, of inequitable and low economic growth, of high HIV prevalence, and of inadequate governance. Any form of gender discrimination is a denial of human rights, an obstacle to human development. Gender mainstreaming means being deliberate in giving visibility and support to women's contributions and addressing the differential impact of strategies, policies, programmes and projects on women compared with men. It requires a focus on actual results in terms of gender equality in the practice areas at all levels.

While the record shows good progress in the recent years, UNDP continues to confront challenges in translating its commitment to gender equality into action. The present practice note attempts to demystify gender mainstreaming by providing straightforward suggestions on how to focus attention on gender. It covers effective entry points for advancing gender equality; the relationship between gender and the six practice areas; resources for gender mainstreaming; and the responsibility of senior management and all staff members. To move from rhetoric to reality, commitment is needed throughout the organisation. To have an impact, gender mainstreaming must be everyone's responsibility, everybody's job.

En-gendering UNDP's agenda includes the development of capacity — both in-country and in-house — to integrate gender concerns in the practice areas; the provision of policy advice that is both pro-poor and pro-women; and the support for stand-alone gender projects and programmes in close partnership with UNIFEM.

## Introduction

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Making gender equality a reality is a core commitment of UNDP. As a crosscutting issue, gender must be addressed in everything the organisation does. Why? Because equality between women and men is just, fair and right — it is a worthy goal in and of itself, one that lies at the heart of human development and human rights. And because gender inequality is an obstacle to progress, a roadblock on the path of human development. When development is not 'en-gendered' it is 'endangered'.

The international community made strong commitments for women's equality and empowerment at the world summits and global conferences of the 1990s. UNDP must help countries to translate these commitments into practical realities. It must contribute in expressing the noble goals set forth in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into specific policy reforms and operational programmes that make a difference for women, poor women in particular.

There are two complementary approaches to achieving gender equality: mainstreaming gender and promoting women's empowerment. Both are critical. Gender mainstreaming is "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, [...] making women's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes [...] so that women and men benefit equally", according to a 1997 Report of the Economic and Social Council.

Women's empowerment is central to human development. Human development, as a process of enlarging people's choices, cannot occur when the choices of half of humanity are restricted. Targeted actions aimed at empowering women and righting gender inequities in the social and economic sphere, as well as in terms of civil and political rights, must be taken alongside efforts to en-gender the development process.

Gender mainstreaming means being deliberate in giving visibility and support to women's contributions rather than making the assumption that women will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions. Policies and programmes that ignore differential impact on gender groups are often gender-blind; potentially harmful for human development. Gender mainstreaming requires a focus on results to improve the well-being of poor women.

It is no longer the 'why' but the 'how' of gender work that needs to be addressed to make it a practical reality. Where are the most promising entry points? How does gender fit into the six practice areas? What are the resources to help with gender

mainstreaming? UNDP's close partnership with UNIFEM allows the organisation to draw on gender expertise in areas of UNIFEM's comparative advantage and provides opportunities to mainstream gender into the practice areas. Ultimately, however, gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all UNDP staff. Commitment, capacity and focus on results are crucial; otherwise gender issues will remain submerged and secondary.

### **Gender work at UNDP: some facts and figures**

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Gender discrimination, unequal access to resources and opportunities, violence, lack of basic services, women's paltry representation in politics and business, and the power imbalances that characterise personal relationships between men and women hamper the progress of not just women but of society at large. It is clear that holding hostage the talents, energies and aspirations of half the society impedes human development.

The results-oriented annual reports (ROAR) for 2000 and 2001 show signs of increased gender activities in UNDP, both in terms of number of countries reporting and in the scope of activities. Ninety programme countries (representing about 60% of all country programmes) reported gender specific programmes in 2001, compared with 75 in 2000. Eighty-nine programme countries reported on gender across other goals, an increase of 25 per cent in comparison with 2000, and 51 (or 57%) reported on joint UNDP/UNIFEM initiatives, a marked increase from the previous year. Specific interventions related to women's empowerment feature more prominently — both numerically and substantively — in the ROAR for 2001. The 2001 global staff survey shows an increase in the number of staff who believe that UNDP supports the advancement of women and who think that men and women receive equal treatment within the organisation.

Yet, the organisation has a way to go before gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment become an operational reality. The ROAR 2001 also contains some dispiriting findings, chief among them the suggestion that financial allocations for gender amount to a mere 1 per cent of UNDP's resources. However, the coding of projects and programmes and the recording of their expenditure does not allow meaningful conclusions to be drawn about the organisation's commitment towards gender equality. Programmes in which gender is mainstreamed, or in which gender is not the primary focus, are not counted as gender expenditure; rather they are classified according to their main sector of intervention. Only stand-alone women's projects are recorded as spending on gender. Thus, saying that UNDP spends only 1 per cent of its budget on gender may be incorrect; it underestimates the real share of UNDP's resources devoted to the goal of gender equality.

Nonetheless, the scope for improving UNDP's gender response remains considerable. An in-depth analysis of a sample (10%) of the 2001 ROAR reports found significantly fewer progress statements for the gender goal than for the other goals. Furthermore, what was reported for gender tended to be less specific than what was reported for the other goals.

## En-gendering UNDP's agenda

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UNDP made the deliberate choice not to establish a separate practice area for gender equality, but to pursue the goal through gender mainstreaming. Mainstreaming is not a licence for inaction, but includes the responsibility to ensure that the organisation's activities and policies are fully in line with that objective; that compartmentalisation does not entrench the marginalisation of women's concerns. For mainstreaming to be meaningful and credible, it must show that vulnerable and disadvantaged women benefit from poverty reduction, from environmental sustainability, from HIV reduction, from decentralised and democratic governance, from conflict prevention or recovery, and from access to information and communication technology.

UNDP has a special responsibility to help upscale and expand innovative models that are developed and tested by UNIFEM — through its global network and through its role of UN co-ordinator. At the country level, the national budget is a good gauge for measuring political commitment vis-à-vis gender equality. No commitment speaks louder than financial commitments. UNDP is collaborating closely with UNIFEM and its partners in support of gender-sensitive budgeting. Other macro-economic policies and statistics seldom recognise poor women's contributions to economic growth, the care economy, exports and human capital; nor do they address the many dimensions of gender discrimination in the labour market. Disaggregated data analysis is an excellent starting point for making policies and programmes less gender-blind.

As a cross-cutting dimension of human development, gender equality must underpin the six practice areas. Many countries undertake excellent initiatives; such as the Philippines where a law was adopted allocating 5 per cent of decentralised budgets to gender; Chile increased civil service salaries by up to 4 per cent as an incentive to demonstrate results in gender mainstreaming; and the United Kingdom where the Women's Budget Group provides annual comments to the Treasury on the national budgets. It is important for UNDP to report on such initiatives and examine their impact.

UNDP's agenda for gender equality follows a three-pronged approach:

- develop capacity — both in-country and in-house — to integrate gender concerns in the six practice areas;
- provide policy advice that is both pro-poor and pro-women; and
- support stand-alone operational interventions for gender equality in collaboration with UNIFEM.

Specific entry points for UNDP include gender-disaggregated MDG monitoring at the country level; gender-sensitive budgeting; reducing the incidence of HIV among vulnerable women, incorporating gender dimensions into macro-economic policies and trade negotiations; and linking women's empowerment to

democratic governance, decentralisation and civil society participation. Capacity development includes sensitisation, training, knowledge sharing, networking and twinning.

### **Gender equality: where can UNDP make a difference?**

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Gender mainstreaming does not have to be complicated. Training in gender awareness to demystify the concept and to raise the level of gender-responsiveness has been conducted across the organisation. Many tools and resources are accessible online in the dedicated gender resource corner. Over 400 UNDP colleagues are sharing ideas, good practice and strategies for effectively addressing gender equality through the electronic knowledge network. While it is true that gender analysis and gender studies need more attention, it is equally true that there are many experienced colleagues who can provide valuable gender expertise.

The key to addressing gender equality lies in not making assumptions. It is frequently wrong to assume that women will automatically benefit from a proposed intervention; that women's views are reflected by community leaders; that aggregate data and statistics paint an accurate picture of women's lives; or that what works for men will automatically work for women. Average household income, for instance, is an abstraction that only exists in the mind of an economist; it does not correspond with the reality faced by millions of women who have little or no control over how household income is used.

In the planning stage, gender mainstreaming means being explicit about the differing needs and experiences of men and women, making space for all stakeholders, giving voice and visibility to women's as well as men's perspectives, and ensuring that the design is informed by gender-disaggregated data. It means asking both women and men what they themselves see as the most pressing issues. In the implementation stage, it means making sure that both men and women are participating equally in the decision-making process and are treated with equal respect. In monitoring, it means tracking indicators that measure the differential impact of interventions by gender group. In evaluation, it means making sure that both women and men take part in determining the evaluation criteria, that gender equality is explicitly assessed, that the evaluation team is gender balanced and gender sensitive.

UNDP can make an impact on gender equality in four ways: through the integration of gender into the six practice areas; through its work as scorekeeper and champion for the Millennium Development Goals; through its stewardship of the resident co-ordinator system; and through the organisation's effective advocacy tool, namely the Human Development Report and the National Human Development Reports

#### ***Mainstreaming gender in the six practice areas***

Each of the six practice areas gives UNDP countless opportunities for advancing gender equality. Gender is increasingly viewed and treated as a cross cutting issue

in many UNDP interventions. Through technical support and policy dialogue, most countries have adopted an inter-sectoral approach to gender equality and established links between gender, poverty, governance and HIV/AIDS. Some opportunities on gender interventions across practice areas are highlighted below.

**i. Democratic governance.** The full participation of women is a prerequisite for governance that is truly democratic. Women continue to be under-represented in formal decision-making structures. Although women are increasingly active in community support systems, gender disparities persist in public positions at all levels: local, national, regional and global. Women's representation in national parliaments is above 25 per cent in only 16 countries. To address this issue, UNDP has been supporting greater participation of women in election processes, as for instance in Albania, where training sessions and seminars were organized in 15 municipalities together with a public awareness campaign on the participation of women in local elections. In Pakistan where the quota system of 30 percent of local government seats are reserved for women, UNDP provides the newly elected 30,000 women officials with leadership training and relevant skills that enable them to understand and influence decision-making.

UNDP has a key role to play in promoting legislative, electoral and judicial reform to ensure that women's rights are protected in law and in practice; in enhancing women's participation in the democratic process through decentralisation and the bolstering of local governance; in tapping the potential of information and communication technologies as a tool for women's political empowerment; in integrating women's rights into national development strategies; and in bringing women's voices into the national dialogue.

UNDP supports capacity development of women members of political parties and independent candidates who prepare to enter into politics. In Nepal UNDP supported the drafting of legislation to ensure women's inheritance rights. In 2001, in 12 programme countries, UNDP supported national capacity for the implementation of the CEDAW. UNDP and UNCDF supported a forum on local governance and decentralisation for members of Union Parishads in Sirajganj district in Bangladesh. In South Africa, where women reached the 13 per cent threshold in local council elections, UNDP provided capacity building for women's political participation.

**ii. Poverty reduction.** Poverty and gender discrimination are closely intertwined. Of the nearly 1 billion adults in the world who cannot read, two thirds are women. Girls are often the first to be pulled out of school when the family can ill afford school fees. They are also the last to be taken to the health centre when they need medical attention.

Gender mainstreaming in poverty reduction strategies, and specifically PRSPs, is critical because poverty impacts differently on women and men, in particular when coupled with crisis and HIV/AIDS. Also critical is the need to value women's own strategies and to track how gender discrimination often widens when poverty deepens. Investing in poor women means recognizing these gaps.

Participatory approaches can produce more gender-sensitive budgets, that MDG monitoring must make an explicit distinction by gender groups, and that national capacity for gender-disaggregated analysis needs deliberate support. UNDP is increasingly supporting gender-sensitive budgeting initiatives to promote equitable distribution of resources, particularly to reach the poor and the vulnerable, the majority being women.

While gender analyses examine the ways that economic policies and budget allocations affect women as well as men, girls as well as boys, specific targets to reach MDGs should include gender equality and PRSPs should then set strategies to reach these goals and targets. Steps can then be taken to ensure equality in areas ranging from training and employment programmes to family policies. In Mauritius, for instance, UNDP supported the integration of a gender perspective in the budget of the ministry of education and the ministry of social security for the 2001-2002. In Viet Nam, UNDP supported the incorporation of gender equality in several 10-year sectoral strategies and 5-year action plans, including the incorporation of gender disaggregated socio-economic analysis into national and local development plans. To help raise gender awareness and effective implementation of plans of action, gender analysis was also included in the Viet Nam Living Standard Survey. A similar programme to integrate gender equality in sectoral economic and social policies was undertaken in Morocco and Turkey with UNDP support. In Mongolia, UNDP adopted a multi-disciplinary approach by focussing on poverty reduction, good governance and gender equality through vigorous advocacy and policy dialogue, technical and financial assistance in conceptualising these concerns and/or integrating them in overall development policies and strategies, including PRSPs.

**iii. Crisis prevention and recovery.** Women bear the brunt of physical and psychological suffering during and after crisis situations. An estimated 80 per cent of the world's 35 million refugees and displaced persons are women and children. Moreover, even as women seek respite following the acute phases of conflict and crisis, they often remain targets of violence, both as they flee and while they live in refugee camps. However, they have emerged as sole managers of broken families and effective leaders in peace processes. Crises can break down social barriers and loosen traditional holds on power, thus providing windows of opportunity for the reconstruction of a more just society and the formation of new structures and laws that promote women's political, economic, social and cultural rights. In countries undergoing a transition phase, UNDP can foster the nascent dynamism for social change, engage national stakeholders, in particular local women's associations, in the planning and execution of institutional reforms to empower women, respect their human rights and promote gender equality.

UNDP promotes a hands-on approach linking women's associations and major local NGOs to governments to better consider women's voices in the process of local institutional building, disarmament, demobilisation and recovery and community reintegration of internally displaced people. UNDP helps countries to realise the potential for positive change, reduce discrimination and reach gender equality by bringing women into the planning and institution-building processes.

In Guatemala, the National Women's Forum negotiated a place for women at the peace table. Consequently, the Peace Accord included women's right to land ownership, access to credit and participation in the political process. In war-torn regions of Tajikistan, UNDP supported a credit programme in a region where 87 per cent of the women lost their livelihoods as a result of conflict. The centre has grown into a training centre for businesswomen.

**iv. Energy and environment.** Poor women and children are more seriously affected by environmental hazards and environmental degradation than any other group. Women and girls also disproportionately suffer the consequences of poor energy services — the serious health problems caused by indoor air pollution, the tremendous amount of time and efforts spent in gathering fuel wood and fetching water, and the lack of electricity. Bringing their voices and views into the strategy for sustainable development processes, promoting participatory resource planning, strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks to protect poor women's access to natural resources, and shifting the focus from energy supply to the provision of energy services (heating, illumination, mechanisation) will help women as well as the environment. Energy can be used as an entry point to address multiple development objectives, including social (women and rural), economic (growth and poverty reduction) and environmental issues (indoor air pollution, regional and global air quality, and land use) issues.

UNDP published "Generating Opportunities: Case Studies on Energy and Women" that looks at critical policy and programme design options to improve women's access to modern energy services, based on the lessons learned from eight case studies. The quest for sustainability has led over the last few years to a consensus that factors leading to sustainability include, *inter alia*, participation of both men and women in the development process not as passive recipients of assistance but as strategic partners. This has invariably led to the use of gender-sensitive approaches in the water and sanitation programmes and more recently in Integrated Water Resources Management. UNDP is currently piloting a tool kit on gender mainstreaming in integrated water resource management. In Malawi and Myanmar UNDP is supporting the development of local capacity for environmental planning and monitoring through a holistic approach linking environment, poverty and gender.

**v. Information and communication technologies (ICT).** As ICT transform the world in which we live, it creates new opportunities and challenges for gender equity and women's empowerment. The potential of ICT to enhance access to knowledge resources and networks, facilitate participation in decision-making and leverage economic opportunities by women is tremendous. Yet harnessing the potential of the ICT revolution for the empowerment of women remains as a challenge. The speed of global technological and economic transformation has created a huge chasm — the so-called digital divide that builds on the existing social and economic divides, and where women suffer from a triple divide — as citizens of low-income countries, as proportionately poorer residents within their societies, and as the result of being specifically disadvantaged as women. National ICT strategies to harness digital opportunities and address the divide need to specifically tackle gender disparities and unequal access and set specific

targets for enhancing opportunities for women. UNDP also has a role to play in supporting policies and programmes that promote women's capacity to use and apply ICT, that empower women entrepreneurs with ICT tools and access to networks, and that arm women with the skills they need to participate in e-democracy and the emerging information economy. This needs to take place both through initiatives that specifically adopt a women's empowerment "lens" as well as through mainstreaming gender equity considerations into e-governance and other e-initiatives. Examples of the former include a UNDP supported project in Lithuania involving five regional cyber centers, which reach out to women's organizations and develop training modules, an ICT handbook, and a portal site with a digital library, a database of women's groups, mailing lists, and a search engine. In the Ukraine, through a UNDP project, women farmers have been able to increase their income generation capacity and women cooperative members have been able to empower themselves to assume various positions in various local bodies of power. In Bhutan a UNDP initiative is focusing on increasing women's capacity to benefit from on e-commerce. By way of skill development, a UNDP supported Cisco Academy Initiative in Cameroon has set a model of women-focused ICT training initiative through a partnership with a well-known women's NGO. Deployment of ICT in the context of gender budgets, e-parliaments and decentralization initiatives, as well as to enhance access to information on HIV/AIDS and enhance women's leadership voice are other emerging areas where ICT is and can make a difference in terms in UNDP's areas of intervention and practice.

**vi. HIV/AIDS.** The pandemic, raging in Africa and spreading fast in other regions, is among the greatest impediments to human development in the world today. The spread of HIV/AIDS is increasing among young girls and women because of their vulnerability and their lack of power and means to protect themselves from unsafe sexual relations. Gender inequality must be central in the fight against the pandemic. Women represent a growing proportion of people living with HIV/AIDS; and in countries with high HIV prevalence, young women and girls with little or no education — i.e., those with the least power in society — are at a much higher risk than men. Studies in Africa show that teenage girls are 5-6 times more likely to be infected by the HIV virus than boys their age. Strategies must address women's and girls' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS as well as mitigate the socio-economic impact on women caretakers. Promoting the use of participatory methods and tools for changing gender relations and enhancing women's control of their lives is key. Equally, discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS has exacerbated gender inequalities.

UNDP is supporting the development of multisectoral poverty reduction strategies to address the economic and social impact of HIV/AIDS at the individual, community and national levels through a gender lens. It assists in developing national capacity to create and implement gender-sensitive national strategies, to translate them into the national budget and to conduct public information campaigns and within that the formulation of anti-discriminatory legislation. In Ethiopia UNDP is supporting the integration of HIV/AIDS into the development planning process, including poverty reduction strategies, both from mitigation and a prevention perspective. UNDP reports from Burundi document that women are

the main beneficiaries of HIV/AIDS intervention, as well as from work on education for peace and national reconciliation. Associations and groups assisted by direct support projects benefited from training and sensitisation to combat HIV/AIDS. A project in Botswana and Brazil initially covers 100 primary and secondary schools with a curriculum that targets the socio-economic aspects of HIV/AIDS and gender equality.

Scorekeeping and campaigning for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) offer other entry points for gender mainstreaming. The MDGs are ambitious global targets to be achieved between 1990s and 2015. They include halving extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality; reducing child mortality by two-thirds; reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; ensuring environmental sustainability; and building a global partnership for development.

The relevance of gender goes well beyond the targets of achieving universal primary education and reducing maternal mortality. All MDGs have critical gender dimensions. The majority of the people who struggle to survive on less than \$1 per day are women and girls. Poverty is closely associated with gender discrimination and power imbalances between men and women. Women are disproportionately affected — both in terms of their health and their workload — by environmental degradation, and it is difficult to image a crisis more rooted in gender inequality than HIV/AIDS. As MDG champion, both within the UN system and beyond, UNDP has an opportunity to focus global attention and financial resources on the gender dimensions of human development.

Monitoring disparities between men and women, flagging gender gaps, and ensuring gender monitoring of all targets is a concrete example of gender mainstreaming. For example, recent reports have found that even when there is a decline in the overall rate of HIV/AIDS infection, the large majority of the newly infected remain illiterate young women. Similarly, when aggregate improvements in education and health are registered, they do not necessarily imply that women's access to school or reproductive health has improved.

An essential fact is that gender discrimination does not occur indiscriminately; but it is mediated through a multitude of channels (e.g. age, ethnicity, education, socio-economic status, and urban-rural location). Gender, for example, is more of a liability to a poor girl than to her non-poor counterpart; to a rural girl than to an urban one. There is no marked difference, for instance, between girls and boys in terms of under-5 mortality. But surveys show that baby-boys face a higher risk of infant mortality than baby-girls — sometimes 50 per cent higher. After infancy, the gender gap gradually reverses. The widening gender gap is particularly pronounced for girls from poor families. In the absence of a biological explanation, environmental factors must be examined to understand the causes for this reversal. Evidence suggests that baby-boys are more likely to be vaccinated and breastfed than baby-girls — suggesting a greater commitment on the part of parents and service providers to the health and development of boys compared with girls.

Therefore, MDG monitoring must deconstruct—and thereby expose—the various dimensions of gender discrimination.

It is difficult to overstate the significance of UNDP's co-ordinating role of the UN system at the country level. UNDP hosts and manages the resident co-ordinator system and also chairs the UN Development Group. These roles offer a major potential for influencing the gender sensitive nature of the UN's operational activities on the ground. This carries serious responsibilities, not least of which is to mainstream gender into the work of the individual bodies of the UN system in their work with programme countries.

UNDP's stewardship of the resident co-ordinator system gives the organisation the responsibility to promote gender mainstreaming systemically — not only through its own programmes but also through the work of the UN Country Team. Particularly critical is the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the chief mechanism for fostering policy coherence among UN entities and the fundamental framework for programming at the country level. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) also provides an opportunity for the systematic introduction of gender concerns. Participation in these important exercises is an extension of UNDP's role in policy dialogue on pro-poor reforms that are also pro-women. The number of UN Thematic Groups on Gender, often spearheaded by UNDP and UNIFEM, has in 2001 increased by 25 per cent.

### **Human Development Reports**

The 1995 Human Development Report provided concrete tools and examples of analysis for measuring gender discrimination through the GDI (gender-related development index) and the GEM (gender empowerment measure).

Country Offices are increasingly issuing National Human Development Reports (NHDRs). UNDP has recently completed an assessment of NHDR to inform future work. For NHDRs to advance gender equality, it is critical that they demonstrate how gender concerns are relevant to the themes and development issues discussed — both in analysis and in recommendations — as well as explicitly ask policy makers to spell out the main elements of gender mainstreaming. Questions of gender can be considered in different ways in the NHDR: by mainstreaming gender into the discussion of other themes, by specifically raising the links between gender and human development, and by including gender experts and activists at various stages of drafting the NHDR. This may involve commissioning specific research, applying innovative, gender disaggregated analyses or highlighting case studies that expose the various dimensions of gender discrimination. Policy recommendations and follow-up discussions on the NHDR can also consider how best to promote gender equality.

For instance, in Iran, in order to increase the impact of the 1<sup>st</sup> NHDR, UNDP took the lead to organise three workshops for NGOs and the academia to publicise the report and its messages on the empowerment of women. The UNDP human rights project in Iran, for example, supported a follow-up workshop to NHDR on the subject of women and poverty, in addition to pursuing its own objective of

strengthening the knowledge base on human rights. This workshop provided a unique opportunity to discuss the linkages between, and implications of, gender and poverty and related rights issues.

### Resources for supporting gender equality

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UNDP has several types of resources available to assist staff in addressing gender equality: the Global Knowledge Network, the Gender Programme Team, the Thematic Trust Fund, its close partnership with the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and a variety of tools and publications developed both within and outside the organisation.

- **Global Knowledge Network:** includes over 400 colleagues and the 134 gender focal points in country offices and 20 United Nations Volunteers (UNV) gender specialists. It is electronically linked with the UNIFEM Regional Programme Directors. The Network is facilitated by the Gender Programme Team, which provides support to gender policy advisers based in the sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs) and in country offices.
- **Gender Programme Team:** guides UNDP policies and programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment. It promotes the core objective of gender equality across practice areas, regional bureaux and through existing UN inter-agency networks. The Team works at different levels to ensure organisation-wide alignment of the implementation of gender goals.
- **Thematic Trust Fund:** is designed to support gender-sensitive activities across the practice areas. It will build cross-country experience and expertise, and support regional and global initiatives. The Fund has four service lines: (i) strategies for poverty reduction, including macro-economic policies, trade and globalisation; (ii) statistics and indicators for tracking progress towards national targets, including gender audits of budgets; (iii) legal reforms and the building of institutional capacity to address women's human rights, including land and property rights, legal protection and advocacy; and (iv) assessment of women's vulnerability, including the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the identification of ways to bring women into peace-building and conflict resolution.
- **UNIFEM:** A vital and invaluable partner, UNIFEM is the women's fund in the United Nations. As part of the UNDP's global development network, it provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's economic security and rights, women's leadership in peace and security, and women's human rights, including ending violence against women and addressing the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. Within the UN system, UNIFEM promotes gender equality and links women's issues and concerns to national, regional and global agendas by fostering collaboration and providing technical expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies.

The unique relationship between UNIFEM and UNDP, established and maintained through the common oversight of the Administrator and through the funding and management of the resident coordinator system, is synergistic and complementary. UNDP benefits from UNIFEM's innovative approaches to addressing the feminisation of poverty, applying gender analysis to national and local budgets, and monitoring progress in implementing the gender dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals. UNIFEM has 14 sub-regional offices and a wide network of partners and has set up knowledge communities in thematic areas that UNDP can draw upon in implementing programmes and policies. Through their partnership, UNDP and UNIFEM can strengthen support to UN Country Teams and benefit from better co-ordinated gender advisory services, knowledge networks and gender expertise.

- **Tools and publications:** The organisation has numerous resource materials for gender equality. Many can be found in the resource corner of the UNDP gender site at <http://www.undp.org/gender/resources>. These include, among others, the Learning, Consultation and Briefing Gender Mainstreaming generic manual, Gender mainstreaming manual developed by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, the gender module of the LRC Virtual Development Academy and the UNDP-BCPR module on Gender approaches in conflict and post-conflict situations to support and strengthen the capacity of UNDP staff working on recovery and rehabilitations activities in crisis and post — conflict situations to mainstream gender equality objectives. Tools, methodologies and publications that have been developed at the country level can be found through a request to the Global Knowledge Network at [surf-gender@groups.undp.org](mailto:surf-gender@groups.undp.org). The UNIFEM web site has many valuable resources at [www.unifem.undp.org/resour.htm](http://www.unifem.undp.org/resour.htm)

## Gender equality: human resource policy at UNDP

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On the first anniversary of the Beijing Conference, the then Administrator issued a memorandum on Gender Equality and Advancement of Women, which provided guidelines to promote gender equality in programmes funded by UNDP. Targets were set for the Gender Balance in Management.

Achievements as of mid-2002, are as follows with targets in parentheses: senior managers in headquarters (Directors, Deputy Directors and Chiefs): 33% (40%), Resident Representatives: 25% (38%), and Deputy Resident Representatives: 36% (40%), with an overall achievement of 41% (40%) professional women — nationals and internationals. The Work/Life Policy and the updated family leave policy (including adoption, maternity and paternity leave) have also been issued. UNDP has a policy on sexual harassment, which calls for zero tolerance (<http://intra.undp.org/ohr/policies/policies.html>). The Resident Co-ordinator Assessment Centre (RCAC) — a strategic tool in our talent management — was carefully designed to ensure that both content and process are gender sensitive. Assessors are given special training in gender awareness in the evaluation process. Participants are probed for their gender awareness.

The main objectives of the revised policy will be to:

- 1) address issues that tend to increase gender gaps at all levels of decision making, and
- 2) address qualitative problems encountered by staff through non-numerical targets.

At the request of the current Administrator, the Gender Balance in Management Task Force has been created. The Task Force is now in the midst of its review; looking at all aspects of the traditional levers of entry/movement/departure at UNDP, including: recruitment, promotions, retention, conversions and attrition. While UNDP has made progress in the balance of women in management, imbalances persist. Setting clearly defined corporate targets is key, as is monitoring them. The distinct impression of the Task Force, to date, is that alternative methodologies and new approaches need to be considered; such as behavioural change, or attitude modification, mentoring, retention tools, more flexible mobility requirements, concerted efforts at succession planning and work planning. The Task Force's recommendations are expected in early 2003, after which review and implementation will follow soon.

## From words to deeds: leadership, investment and results

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UNDP has the human, institutional and financial resources, the partnerships and the personal commitment of its staff to make a real difference for gender equality. What is needed to move from rhetoric to reality and to realise the potential, is active leadership within the UN system, greater investment and a focus on results.

UNDP senior managers — particularly the Administrator, the Associate Administrator, Regional and Bureau Directors, Practice Leaders, Resident Representatives and Deputy Resident Representatives — have a key role to play in highlighting the centrality of gender equality to human development and in advocating for women's rights. Speeches, memos, interviews, articles — all are opportunities to champion the gender cause. Such a high-level focus will bring needed visibility to the issue and reinforce the notion that, in UNDP, gender equality is everyone's job, everybody's responsibility.

The personal actions of senior managers make a difference: by making time to attend to gender issues and participate in gender training, by assigning gender responsibilities to trusted and experienced staff, by publicly acknowledging and rewarding those who are successful in gender mainstreaming, and by raising gender issues themselves. In doing so, senior managers signal their own as well as the organisation's commitment to gender equality.

The UN Resident Co-ordinator (RC) has a vital role to play in making sure that gender is fully mainstreamed into country programmes and that the UN Country Team is fulfilling its commitments to gender equality. The RC has five responsibilities that are particularly important for gender equality:

- making the design of the poverty reduction strategy an opportunity for systematic gender mainstreaming;
- ensuring that all inter-agency thematic group address gender issues;
- supporting the inter-agency thematic group on gender;
- becoming personally involved in gender work; and
- ensuring gender balance in recruitment and zero tolerance for gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace.

The way in which the gender share of total UNDP expenditure is monitored must be based on an appropriate 'marker' system. A gender budget analysis of selected UNDP programmes at the country level is a first step to estimate the gender share in UNDP's budget. Subsequently, the establishment of realistic yet ambitious targets for resources allocation to gender will help the organisation to mainstream gender equality.

All staff are responsible for gender results. When staff do not believe that gender equality is a corporate priority, competing demands on their time will crowd out gender work. In the end, staff will focus on the areas against which they know they will be appraised — particularly those set forth in the results and competency

assessment (RCA). Thus every staff person's RCA needs to be 'en-gendered' and staff must be measured against gender-specific results. Requiring that gender mainstreaming be explicit in the RCA will improve the ability of staff to negotiate with supervisors regarding workload priorities, helping them to free time and space to give gender mainstreaming the attention it deserves.

Gender mainstreaming does not have to be complicated nor is it the task of specialists. Lack of resources is seldom a valid excuse for paying inadequate attention to the gender dimension of every development intervention. Gender mainstreaming is everybody's responsibility, everyone's job.

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