

# UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM)

## Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: July 2006 to June 2007

### Strengthening the coordination mechanisms

UNIFEM is a member of the NEPAD Gender Task Force that was set up to develop a framework for mainstreaming gender in NEPAD policies, programmes and activities. The Task Force draws gender experts from networks, academic and professional institutions from 20 countries, 25 women organisations, nine representatives from Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and ten representatives from UN agencies.

The objectives of the Task Force are as follows:

- develop gender mainstreaming tools, guidelines and protocols;
- provide assistance to sectors on gender mainstreaming;
- conduct gender audit of the institutional structures; and
- carry out a comprehensive needs assessment of NEPAD priority sectors.

NEPAD participated in UNIFEM consultations on new aid modalities. As a follow-up to UNIFEM and Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) joint consultations on gender and new aid modalities in November 2006, it was agreed that IGAD will undertake a peer review mechanism as part of its gender work with support from NEPAD.

UNIFEM and the NEPAD Secretariat in Rwanda partnered to produce an *Independent Report on progress and prospects of Gender Mainstreaming in Rwanda* in response to an emerging need for consolidated, accessible information on the gender mainstreaming work being done in Rwanda across several key sectors, initially expressed in the information gathering process for the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The report highlights the key achievements: the existence of political will to empower women as equal partners in development, the establishment of a Ministry of Gender to lead governmental gender mainstreaming efforts, the highly gender-sensitive 2003 Constitution, the partnership between government and non-government actors on initiatives to promote gender equality, and the achievement of parity between girls and boys in primary school enrolment. Persisting challenges include the need to strengthen institutional capacities, address crippling – particularly feminized – poverty, increase food security and raise national literacy levels.

### Contribution towards the first goal of NEPAD: to eradicate poverty

UNIFEM contributes to the creation of a more conducive policy environment for addressing feminized poverty by supporting the strengthening of the gender equality

perspective in Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). UNIFEM support has focused on expanding women's participation in the PRS process, ensuring greater attention to gender equality in PRS analysis, and linking the PRS to gender equality norms and tools, such as gender responsive budgets (GRB). Through efforts by UNIFEM and women's organizations, the Mozambique PRS includes items on GRB; legislative reform to eliminate sex-based discrimination; integrating women into private sector development; the use of gender disaggregated data; and promoting women's leadership. This work has opened entry points to ensure that priority gender equality gaps were addressed in the recently approved poverty reduction strategy (PARPA).

In Senegal, the new poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) contains many of the recommendations that women's organizations had formulated with UNIFEM support. A GRB assessment of five pilot ministries will serve as a basis for a tailored support programme that covers all programmatic aspects.

In Nigeria, a manual on mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in the PRS was developed and launched by the National Planning Commission with UNIFEM support. The manual introduces tools for gender analysis and priority setting, gender sensitive budgeting, and monitoring of the PRSP at state level. The manual is being used by the states, the Commission itself and its partners, as well as UN agencies.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), UNIFEM's technical advice and support was sought to engender the PRSP process. UNIFEM identified a National Gender Expert who provided gender training to the PRSP team led by the Ministry of Planning and other government counterparts. The team was equipped with skills in identifying, collecting and analyzing gender-responsive tools dealing with access and control, social, qualitative and quantitative poverty analysis. The PRSP was officially adopted by the Transitional Government in August 2006.

## **Empowerment of women**

### Participation of women in peace negotiations and reconstruction processes

Despite universal endorsement of Security Council resolution 1325, formal reviews and various country level experiences have demonstrated time and again that their gender equality dimensions are inadequate. UNIFEM supported the participation of women's organizations in the joint needs assessment (JNA) in Somalia. UNIFEM technical briefs, a monitoring framework and other tools are being used by stakeholders. UNIFEM partnered with IGAD to bring over 40 women and gender experts together to elaborate on key priorities for gender in the post-conflict reconstruction agenda for Somalia at an Experts Group Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. As a result, IGAD ministers of gender adopted a declaration on the importance of including women in the JNA. The declaration was included in the cluster reports and the draft Reconstruction and Development Framework. Through advocacy, two women were appointed to be gender experts to the JNA cluster on Social Services and Protection of Vulnerable Groups. UNIFEM engaged the JNA coordinators to agree on at least a minimum of four key result areas on gender

equality that must be included for each of the clusters for subsequent costing.

Using 1325 resolution consistently for advocacy purposes, a number of women are participating as peace keepers in Darfur. Also, women ex-combatants have been able to access the funds through the vulnerability support window of the demobilisation commission. Women from Rwanda and Burundi have been able to raise gender concerns in peace processes at the Security Council level.

The West Africa Anglophone sub-region is actively involved in AU-led development strategies and activities. Under the leadership of Nigeria and Ghana, ECOWAS has mediated the end to the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and is involved in the peace efforts in Cote d'Ivoire. Conflict resolution and peace building are central to the overall strategy for addressing poverty and human insecurity in Africa. This presents an opportunity for promoting the systematic implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for mainstreaming of gender equality in peacekeeping operations.

### Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

UNIFEM's sustained support to gender mainstreaming of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development for the Great Lakes Region has led to the endorsement of two model legislations that protect women from SGBV and ensure property rights of returning women refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

In Cameroon, after UNIFEM organized a Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) implementation workshop with the Center for Human Rights and Peace Advocacy (CHRAPA), lawyers from 20 law firms in Cameroon are citing CEDAW in the law courts to defend women's rights. The Cameroon Bar Association is working with UNIFEM to institutionalize training lawyers on CEDAW in their bi-annual work plan and the Minister of Justice appointed a top-ranking magistrate to work with UNIFEM to develop an action plan to train the judiciary on using CEDAW in the courts.

In Rwanda, UNIFEM supported training on gender and human rights law for 774 mayors and their deputies, directors of good governance, executive secretaries, and representatives of national women's councils, youth and local defense forces. With UNIFEM's continued support, the Gender Desk at the National Police now records over 150 calls in a month from victims of SGBV. In a recent visit by the UN Country Team to the Gender Desk, the Assistant Commissioner General of Police credited UNIFEM for outstanding collaboration in addressing social ills in Rwanda. The Resident Coordinator (RC) and other UN agency heads have all expressed a desire to strengthen this initiative.

### **Governance**

During 2006, the main priority in the Anglophone West Africa sub-region was supporting the women's machineries to consolidate the gains of the 2005 electoral processes that led to the swearing-in in January 2006 of Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as Liberia

and Africa's first elected female president. For the first time in the sub-region, women leaders in the three arms of government (legislature, judiciary and executive) come together to work as a team in transforming leadership and express joint accountability to the constituency of women.

In 2006, following a request by the donors, UNIFEM started the management of the Gender and Governance basket fund, which promotes gender equality and women's rights in Kenya governance. Kenyan women are now looking to UNIFEM and its partners in the Gender and Governance Programme to broaden the space for women's political participation within the political parties through training and advocacy.

In terms of governance, it is worth noting that three countries in the Francophone West Africa sub-region (Gambia, Mauritania and DRC) organized successful and peaceful elections. The biggest result is the increased representation of women in political instances. The post elections period offers opportunities to women to play a crucial role in bringing about sustainable peace and development.

### **Engendering legislative and policy initiatives**

In Cameroon, UNIFEM has supported advocacy, sensitization and capacity building on gender mainstreaming; as a result, the Ministries of Justice, Commerce and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have included gender equality actions in their 2007 action plans.

The work on legislation and policies has seen some major achievements. In Rwanda, the Bill on GBV was unanimously adopted by the chamber of deputies in August 2006. The law establishing the gender observatory was adopted in December 2006.

In partnership with the ECOWAS Gender Center, UNIFEM provided technical and financial support to the consultative workshop with the African Women Lawyers Federation on enforcement of the ratification, domestication and implementation of the African Protocol.

### **HIV/AIDS**

As part of the Trust Fund to end violence against women, UNIFEM supported Mother Tongue, an organization based in South Africa, to pilot an arts-based project which worked with women survivors of violence or HIV/AIDS. The outreach performances which were conducted between June and August 2006, engaged the community in dialogue around socio-cultural issues that contribute to gender disparity in the society and which in turn impact on women being disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS.

In Zimbabwe, in response to the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Women, Girls and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa, UNIFEM provided complimentary funding and technical support in engendering national responses to HIV and AIDS by supporting National AIDS Councils' gender audits and gender mainstreaming training.