**Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:
An Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming
in UN Operational Activities for Development**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	**African Development Bank**
CCA	**Common Country Assessment**
CEB	**Chief Executives' Board for Coordination**
CEDAW	**Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women**
DAO	**Delivering as One**
DAW	**Division for the Advancement of Women**
ECA	**Economic Commission for Africa**
ECOSOC	**Economic and Social Council**
GTG	**Gender Theme Group**
JP	**Joint Programme**
MDG	**Millennium Development Goal**
MDGF	**Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund**
OIOS	**Office of Internal Oversight Services**
OSAGI	**Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women**
PFA	**Platform for Action**
QCPR	**Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review**
RBM	**Results-based Management**
RIO+20	**World Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, 2012**
RC	**Resident Coordinator**
TCPR	**Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review**
SWAP	**System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment AND/OR Sector-Wide Action Plan**
UN	**United Nations**
UN Women	**United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**
UNDAF	**United Nations Development Assistance Framework**
UNDG	**United Nations Development Group**
UNDP	**United Nations Development Programme**
UNCT	**United Nations Country Team**
UNICEF	**United Nations Children's Fund**
UNIFEM	**United Nations Fund for Women**

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Executive Summary

i.   This paper reviews progress in gender mainstreaming by the United Nations development cooperation system, and considers the effectiveness of the approach as a means to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

ii.   Gender mainstreaming is a combined organizational change and programming approach through which the United Nations, and most other entities engaged in development cooperation, seek to implement global commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

iii.   The approach was formally endorsed in 1995 at the World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace[1] by all signatories to its outcome document, the Beijing Platform for Action and further developed by ECOSOC two years later. The central text that has shaped the operationalization of the gender mainstreaming is:

> *Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality…Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points. [2]*

iv.   This paper consolidates the findings of several reports, syntheses and assessments that have been prepared over recent years by various entities of the development cooperation system. Their findings are remarkably consistent, across entities and over time.

v.   Three principal groups of documents have been reviewed: formal United Nations reports; evaluations by entities engaged in operational activities for development; and, three recent reviews of UNCT development activities.

vi.   After reviewing the evidence provided by these reports, their findings are summarized in accordance with the principal elements of gender mainstreaming identified by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination in the United Nations System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as follows:[3]

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[1] Humanitarian and peace-building activities are also subject to the gender mainstreaming mandate, but the main focus of this paper is operational activities for development.

[2] *Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997* (A/52/3, 18 September, 1997). Agreed Conclusions of the Coordination Segment

[3] CEB/2006/2

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Accountability

vii.   Senior leaders have not translated formal commitments to gender mainstreaming into significant programme action by their respective entities. There is need for intensive measures by leaders at all levels, supported by capacity development where necessary, to create the needed enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, and the concrete accountability mechanisms that will ensure improved performance.

viii.   Across the system there is very limited incentive to perform well in gender mainstreaming because such action is not rewarded, and very little sanction for failure to take action. However, the system-wide Accountability Framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and similar entity-specific instruments, are now at an advanced stage of development, and must be fully operationalized.

ix.   New development co-operation modalities, the Delivering as One approach and on-going dialogue on future development directions provide opportunities and entry points for enhanced gender mainstreaming, which must be leveraged consistently by senior management.

Oversight of country assessments and programme design, monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting

x.   All of the assessments summarized here identify serious shortcomings in oversight, especially of monitoring, evaluation and reporting on gender related issues. They also identify broad deficiencies in the use of accepted results-based programme management methods.

xi.   It is the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator and the entire UNCT, supported by UN Women, to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, and the constraints to achieving them, are recognized and addressed in all substantive programming and the assessments and diagnostics that inform them, including the Common Country Assessment. Oversight is needed at the highest level and must be comprehensive covering assessment and diagnosis, programme design and implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

xii.   Evaluation teams are typically not required to review the gender equality implications of all programmes, which should be done as a matter of course, using standard processes as defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group.

Human and Financial Resources

xiii.   The needed gender mainstreaming architecture of specialist personnel at headquarters, regional and country levels (for those entities that have such presence) is now better understood and largely in place (and recently augmented at the global level by the establishment of UN Women). Close correlations between the availability of relevant expertise and gender mainstreaming result have been identified.

xiv.   Financial resources at all levels are generally insufficient for the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming commensurate with the policy requirements. The capacity to monitor and track the allocation and disbursement of financial resources is generally weak or non-existent, especially in integrated interventions. However the Gender Marker, currently being tested by several entities in consultation with each other, shows promise as an effective tool.

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The system-wide use of a common gender marker would enhance coherence and accountability significantly.

Staff Capacity Development

xv.   There is need for continued capacity development of all personnel in understanding of the gender mainstreaming approach and in its application to specific sectors, with renewed attention to the Secretary General's 2007 Report on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations System, which focused on gender mainstreaming capacity development.[4]

xvi. Internal gender audits and instruments such as the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard (which is part of the System-wide Accountability Framework) provide opportunity for the applied and contextualized forms of capacity development needed, and could be leveraged systematically for this purpose, in addition to their accountability functions. Several learning opportunities for senior leaders address the adaptive and innovative forms of leadership that provide the kind of enabling environment that advances gender mainstreaming, and could address this element of leadership responsibility more explicitly.

Coherence, coordination and knowledge & information management.

xvii. The system-wide use of common gender mainstreaming instruments is an important means to advance coherence and accountability both within entities and at the global level. It is important to advance common system tools, having due regard to the mandate specificities of all entities. Use of UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard reveals that country teams are not yet performing on gender mainstreaming to the required standard, while clearly demonstrating necessary action to improve performance.

xviii. Limitations in sharing of information on good practices and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming were widely noted, both between organizations and within them, particularly between field and headquarters levels.

Results-based Management for Gender Equality

xix. Under-representation of gender equality considerations in planning and reporting is generic across the United Nations system. Many entities are committed in principle to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, and yet these issues are not reflected in their strategic documents, programme priorities or reporting frameworks, placing the seriousness of the commitment in question.

xx.   Poor results-based procedures make it impossible to assess concretely how far gender mainstreaming has contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women outcomes.

xxi. From the available evidence, it appears that interventions targeted to women are more likely to use sound results-based management processes and to score better against performance standards than integrated interventions. It would be appropriate to explore more fully how far and why this is so, and whether there are any lessons that could be applied to integrated approaches.

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[4] E/2007/64

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xxii. Gender budgeting can be a key analytical instrument and effective entry point for the United Nations system to support gender mainstreaming across all national policies and planning frameworks and in all themes and sectors of work, including alignment with national priorities and working in the context of new development co-operation modalities.

Recommendations

xxiii. Finally, recommendations are made to:

- Strengthen the coordination of gender mainstreaming actions in United Nations operational activities for development, in alignment with national priorities
- Strengthen the accountability for gender mainstreaming actions in United Nations operational activities for development,
- Maximize the potential for strong programme performance by developing capacity for gender mainstreaming at all levels.
- Improve design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and sharing of information in programmes for gender equality
- Promote and strengthen system-wide corporate accountability and incentives for gender mainstreaming

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Introduction

1.   This Assessment reviews progress in gender mainstreaming by the United Nations development cooperation system, and considers the effectiveness of the approach as a means to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is a contribution to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) currently in preparation for the General Assembly, and is also timely in suggesting issues that may be relevant for consideration by the development community for the post-2015 development agenda.

2.   The review consolidates the findings of several reports, syntheses and assessments that have been prepared over recent years. The focus is on the use of gender mainstreaming by United Nations entities engaged in operational activities for development, although reviews by other entities are included for comparative purposes.[5] Their findings are remarkably consistent, across entities and over time.

3.   Many of these assessments suggest a need for urgent action by the United Nations system to re-invigorate gender mainstreaming, after a decade of less than optimal (and some have said declining[6]) performance. Significant shortcomings in the areas of institutional attitudes, arrangements and practices (leadership, accountability, capacity and resources), and in all aspects of programming are described, with serious limitations in monitoring and reporting being noted in particular. These are resilient deficits that have been recorded over a number of years.

4.   The establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), with an explicit coordination and accountability mandate, including gender mainstreaming, signals a very positive response by the United Nations system as a whole to the identified challenges. To this several specific operational steps must now be added, at both system-wide and entity levels.

5.   It is also clear that considerable knowledge of the means to address these deficits has developed, and the understanding, tools and processes that could stimulate a positive change in performance are available and ready to be implemented. This however is dependent upon the needed political will and capacity within the United Nations entities involved in development cooperation.

Methodology

6.   This Assessment was undertaken as a desk-review. Data was drawn principally from formal United Nations reports and from evaluations of United Nations entities engaged in development activity. One review synthesized findings from evaluations undertaken by partners, as well as those by development organizations, which proved useful for comparative purposes: the findings were remarkably similar and tended to confirm the experiences of United Nations system entities engaged in operational activities for development.

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[5] A full list of the documents reviewed for this study is provided in the bibliography

[6] UNDP (2006) , UNIFEC (2008), ADB (2011).

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7. The focus has been on the most recent findings, although in some cases key documents date from as far back as 2005/6, and several early documents on gender mainstreaming still shape its content and meaning.

8. The findings of these reviews, evaluations and assessments derive from a range of data collection methods (questionnaires completed by individual entities, consolidation of reports submitted by entities, standardized assessment of sample documentation and formal evaluation). Nevertheless, they develop similar analyses, and achieve a marked consensus on where the gender mainstreaming challenges lie.

9. The gender mainstreaming framework (outlined in paragraph 18) is used to shape the discussion, which therefore focuses on gender mainstreaming at the levels of organizational practice (or institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming), programme interventions, and result or impact in the partner community.

10. A limitation, widely noted in the literature, is that most organizations do not have gender-sensitive knowledge management systems in place capable of tracking, recording and reporting upon the gender-related outputs and outcomes of programme interventions. It has not been possible therefore to clearly identify the impact of gender mainstreaming interventions on changes in gender equality and women's empowerment in programme countries. However, it has been possible to pinpoint areas for immediate action that could now take gender mainstreaming to the next level of evidence-based reporting.

11. The effort to achieve gender parity in staffing across the United Nations system is an aspect of human resource management rather than of substantive development programming, and is therefore not considered in this review. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the management understandings and capacities that have been identified as pre-conditions for effective gender equality programming also create an enabling environment for gender equality within an organization. This kind of management underpins both gender parity internally, and stronger gender mainstreaming in operational activities, producing a double dividend for organizations.

12. Part I gives a brief overview of gender mainstreaming, and summarizes some contextual factors that are currently shaping its practice. In Part II the broad findings of the assessments examined in this desk review are provided. This is followed in Part III by an overview of the United Nations system-wide response to the noted deficits. In Part IV the overall findings are consolidated, together with a brief assessment of the continuing rationale for gender mainstreaming, followed by recommendations for the definitive action now needed to enable the United Nations system to address the identified challenges, so that member states can reap the continuing benefits that achievement of the gender equality goal will bring to United Nations System operational activities for development.

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Part I.   Background

The Definition and Normative Context for Gender Mainstreaming

13.   Gender mainstreaming is a combined organizational change and programming approach through which the United Nations, and most other entities engaged in development cooperation, seek to implement global commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The approach is applied through results-based programming principles, supported by various institutional arrangements, such as capacity development and tracking mechanisms, designed to develop strategic focus and clarity on gender equality and women's empowerment, and to ensure results.

14.   The approach was formally endorsed in 1995 at the World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace[7] by all signatories to its outcome document, the Beijing Platform for Action. In this document Member States agreed that: ".… governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."[8]

15.   Two years later the term was explicitly defined by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which also set out six principles governing gender mainstreaming activity, and broad guidance in operationalizing the approach.[9] The central text that has shaped the operationalization of the approach for fifteen years is the following:

> *Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.*

> *Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points*

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[7] Humanitarian and peace-building activities are also subject to the gender mainstreaming mandate, but the main focus of this paper is operational activities for development.

[8] Beijing Platform for Action (1995). This paragraph was repeated for each thematic area, or Critical Area of Concern, except "women and poverty" (which appears to be an anomaly) in paragraphs: 79 (education and training of women); 105 (women and health); 123 (violence against women); 141 (women and armed conflict); 189 (women in power and decision-making); 202 (institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women); 229 (human rights of women); 238 (women and the media); 252 (women and the environment); 273 (the girl-child). The paragraph is provided as the closing statement of the diagnosis of the corresponding critical area of concern, modeling the methodological imperative that activity for gender equality and women's empowerment follows, and must be based upon, solid analysis. The women and poverty critical area of concern does not refer specifically to gender mainstreaming, but instead describes the actions that must be taken to integrate the analysis into action, and can be taken as an early definition of the gender mainstreaming process (paragraph 57).

[9] *Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997* (A/52/3, 18 September, 1997). Agreed Conclusions of the Coordination Segment

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16. The ECOSOC definition established a distinction between "targeted, women-specific interventions" and gender mainstreaming, which was re-asserted by several United Nations instruments, standards and resolutions, most notably the outcome document of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly in 2000 (Beijing +5).[10] However, in practice all programme action to address gender-specific gaps (such as affirmative action and interventions in which women and girls are the sole or main beneficiaries) are part of the gender mainstreaming approach provided that they are identified as a result of gender analysis and are part of a broader process promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

17. The foundation of gender mainstreaming is gender-based research and analysis, which brings three-fold benefits: it identifies the gender equality dimensions of development challenges; it establishes clear benchmarks against which progress can be measured; and it enables decision regarding the most holistic, strategic and effective responses to these challenges, including whether to adopted targeted, women-specific approaches, or action to integrate gender equality considerations within broader programming activities.

18. An early and influential paper identified gender mainstreaming strategies as being relevant in three linked arenas or "spheres": 1) in an organization's structures, policies, procedures and culture – its institutional arrangements; 2) in the substantive activity that it undertakes - its programme; and 3) in the impact of this work on increased gender equality and women's empowerment in the broader community.[11] It is important not to conflate these three spheres, as different strategies and indicators of change apply to each.[12] However, "at times strategies and assessments have tended to blur these three arenas, and have often lost sight of the fact that change in the third level is the final goal".[13] Although some other perspectives have also been suggested[14], this triple framework for gender mainstreaming interventions has been broadly adopted by the United Nations system.

19. The Beijing Platform for Action continues to be the principal normative instrument governing the effort to bring about gender equality and women's empowerment through all areas of United Nations system activity, using the gender mainstreaming modality as defined by ECOSOC. The Beijing PFA upheld the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW - 1979), which provides the legal framework for gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming therefore extends to all three pillars of United Nations activity, although only development cooperation is discussed here[15].

20. Broad commitments to promote gender equality and women's empowerment have been made by Member States: 186 countries have ratified CEDAW; 139 constitutions guarantee gender equality; 117 countries have equal pay laws; 115 countries guarantee women's equal property

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[10] A/RES/65/191. Paragraph 65.

[11] Shalkwyk et al. (1996) page 3

[12] For example, indicators of institutional arrangements are given in the UNDG Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard (described below), at the programme level by UNDAF and entity programme result frameworks and at the national level by national statistical data, National Human Development Reports, and similar sources.

[13] Ibid. page 4

[14] RAO and Kelleher (2002), quoted in ICRW (2006). *Gender Mainstreaming: Making it Happen*. UNDP (2005). A Conceptual Framework for Gender Mainstreaming" . Unpublished.

[15] The three pillars are: Security, Development and Human Rights.

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rights; and 125 countries outlaw domestic violence[16]. However, it is widely recognized in the documents reviewed in this paper, and others such as periodic national CEDAW reports, that in a number of countries progress towards *de facto* gender equality is not commensurate with *de jure* provisions.

21.   United Nations operational activities for development are dedicated to supporting governments in bridging the gap between normative commitments and their implementation, using the gender mainstreaming approach, but also fall short in many instances, with significant gaps of their own between policy and performance, as summarized below.

The Global Environment for Enhanced Coordination and Coherence

22.   Gender mainstreaming takes place within a highly dynamic development context that offers both challenges and opportunities. Three prominent strands of innovation in the current situation include the United Nations system Delivering as One (DAO) modality, inter-governmental efforts to enhance development co-operation effectiveness, and on-going discourse on the full implications of sustainable development and the growing need for countries to build their resilience to shocks and disasters of all kinds. The latter is driven in part by the Rio+20 process and preparations for the post-2015 period.

Delivering as One

23.   The DAO modality, initiated in 2007, is designed to harmonize United Nations responsiveness to national concerns and priorities by coordinating action through several consolidated instruments, driven by the Resident Coordinator system. The interventions of "One UN" are articulated by One Leader, One Voice, One Programme, One Budget and One Office. DAO is currently being pilot tested in eight countries, seven of which have prepared a country-level evaluation. An independent overall evaluation of lessons learned during the DAO pilot phase is currently being completed.

24.   The DAO initiative presents an opportunity for enhanced coordination of gender equality and women's empowerment responses, and for a strengthened implementation of gender mainstreaming. This has been taken up by Country Teams engaged in the pilot process, especially through joint programming and pooled resources. However the challenges are considerable. There is still overlap and duplication between agencies, including with regard to gender mainstreaming activities in social sectors such as health and women's human rights, and there are difficulties tracking resource allocations and reporting results.

25.   The designation of gender equality and women's empowerment as a "cross-cutting" issue in UN development cooperation presents both an opportunity for greater integration under the DAO modality, and also a risk of greater marginalization, as the effort required to integrate gender quality across all "the Ones" instruments can be considerable. This dilemma can be resolved where there is active support of leadership and high levels of gender mainstreaming energy and engagement among UNCT members. In some cases, DAO pilot country evaluations indicate that joint work for gender equality and women's empowerment was more advanced than for other crosscutting issues.[17]

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[16] UNDG (2010). UN Country Coordination: Jointly Achieving Development Results. Page 18.

[17] DAO Country Evaluation Malawi. (2010)

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New Development Co-operation Modalities

26. At the intergovernmental level, decades of work to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of development assistance culminated in The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, endorsed in 2005, and the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008. The two major impulses of this effort have been to align development co-operation more closely and coherently with the needs and budgetary procedures of member states, and enhance the transparency of the process. It enshrines five principles: even though both the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda were largely gender-insensitive, each of these principles are also intrinsic to gender mainstreaming, so individually and collectively they provide significant avenues for dialogue and action to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. The principles are the following:

- Ownership of interventions by partner countries

- Alignment of interventions with national priorities

- Harmonization (coordination and responsiveness of donor organizations)

- Managing for Results

- Mutual Accountability (transparency)

27. This modality presents real opportunities to mainstream gender issues more systematically in national development efforts. The Sector-wide Approach, for example, is a vital tool to foster equal opportunities and benefits for women and men in the development process, using planning and financial instruments that are at the heart of mainstream national development strategies.[18] It is the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator and the entire UNCT, supported by UN Women, to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are "recognized as a key component of national development planning, including poverty reduction policies": under the "mutual accountability' principle there is a joint obligation on all parties to support gender-sensitive development policies, while ensuring the allocation of adequate human and financial resources.[19]

28. Gender mainstreaming is in large part itself a process of alignment, and so should blend well with efforts to align technical cooperation activity with national priorities. Nevertheless, vigorous and sustained commitment on the part of all UNCT members is necessary if gender equality is to become established as a central goal of harmonized approaches[20] and indications of declining flows of resources to women's organizations through mainstream development co-operation entities are to be reversed.[21] Focus on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and on follow-up to Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee in respect of periodic national reports can provide guidance and direction directly relevant to national priorities in gender equality and women's empowerment.

29. Gender budgeting can be a key analytical instrument and effective entry point for the United Nations system to support gender mainstreaming across all national policies and planning

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[18] ECA (2009a). Page 26

[19] ECA. (2009b). Page 8

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frameworks and in all themes and sectors of work, including alignment with national priorities and working in the context of new development co-operation modalities. Since budget analysis involves all government ministries and departments, it provides a practical opportunity to engage officials across all government agencies in the integration of gender perspectives into their areas of work.[22]

30. Strong partnership between United Nations entities and women's organizations is an essential means of identifying areas for alignment and common interest, and can enhance monitoring and accountability. A UN Women (UNIFEM) review of countries that are implementing gender-responsive financing strategies found that the practices that triggered positive responses include: facilitating the roles of gender equality advocates in policy development; investing in women's analytical capacity to support policy-making; providing financial support for advocacy and gender-related capacity development, all of which centre on collaboration with women's organizations.[23]

The Changing Development Landscape

31. The development cooperation system is currently going through a period of intensive debate in response to rapid and profound change in the development landscape. While the precise outcomes of this discourse are still unknown, they are certain to influence, and perhaps profoundly re-shape, development priorities, and hence the future trajectory of gender mainstreaming. There are distinct conceptual and substantive synergies between the priority themes that are likely to emerge as pre-eminent in this discourse (including, for example, "resilience", 'inclusiveness", "empowerment" and "sustainable development") and gender mainstreaming goals and activity. As with the MDGs, little progress can be made in promoting these themes, including in areas afflicted by crisis, unless they draw squarely on greater gender equality.[24]

32. It is critical that these linkages be explored, clarified and reflected in the agreements reached. In this way the dialogue can be directly leveraged into a stronger foundation of understanding, consensus and commitment on gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the re-articulated priorities and action. In this way the potential for system-wide progress and result in the new landscape will be maximized.

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[22] UNDP (2008) Page 18. ECA (2009a)

[23] ECA (2009b). Pages 2-32

[24] United Nations (2012)

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Part II. Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming in Operational Activities for Development

Ideally, gender mainstreaming would include: understanding a development problem through a recognition of socially-prescribed gender roles; recognizing ways in which gender discrimination impedes progress, and developing techniques to break down gendered roles or barriers.

UNDP (2006) *Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP*

Overview.

33. The consensus among the documents reviewed is that there have been successes in some areas, but these are patchy, and the overall picture is one of limited achievement.

34. Broadly speaking, in terms of the gender mainstreaming framework used, there has been widespread but very uneven improvement at the level of institutional arrangements; there has been action at the level of projects and programmes, but there are serious and widespread shortcomings in the use of sound results-based management principles, so there is little reporting of gender mainstreaming programme outputs, and even less of outcomes. Consequently the reviews were unable to identify the extent of progress at the country level, and the aggregate impact of gender mainstreaming on national institutions and culture is impossible to assess. There are some individual examples of good practice, but the overall extent of change in gender equality and women's empowerment is largely unknown.

35. There are legitimate explanations for this: the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment is a long-term endeavour. Because in many cases entities are still at the stage of establishing the necessary institutional arrangements, results so far will necessarily be of an intermediate nature, while many exogenous factors also obstruct or obscure progress in gender mainstreaming.[25] However, there are clear indications of failures within the United Nations system that contribute directly to this shortfall in result – lack of political will, inertia, inadequate funding and continuing capacity limitations at all levels – and require decisive remedy.

Findings of Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews (TCPRs) 1998-2007

36. Since the adoption of the gender mainstreaming approach in 1995, there have been four Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews (TCPRs), in 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007, commissioned by the General Assembly to review the effectiveness of United Nations development cooperation operations. The TCPRs have addressed the repeated shortfalls in gender mainstreaming achievement in an increasingly robust and specific manner.

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[25] These factors include: the national and local financial and economic situation: the extent of women's access to education, health and other public services; the extent of women's economic empowerment and political empowerment; cultural values; extent of openness to change and innovation; presence or otherwise of committed governmental or civil society leadership for gender equality and women's empowerment.

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37. In 1998 the General Assembly simply stressed: "the need for gender mainstreaming in operational activities of the United Nations system in all fields, in particular in support of poverty eradication":[26]

38. The next TCPR in 2001 was slightly more specific, calling for "renewed and accelerated efforts in gender mainstreaming in … all fields, particularly in support of poverty eradication, and encourages empowerment of women as a priority for operational activities for development"[27].

39. By 2004 an external review had noted several shortcomings in the incorporation of gender equality in the CCA/UNDAF process. The reported shortcomings were in accountability, in reporting, in the use of sex-disaggregated data and in the various phases of programme development, including formative evaluation, design, monitoring and evaluation. A concern that reporting was descriptive rather than analytic was also voiced. That year the General Assembly made more detailed requests in terms of institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming. It called upon all entities to provide and strengthen gender-related human resources, including Gender Specialists, Focal Points and Gender Theme Groups, by providing clear mandates, adequate training, access to information, and adequate and stable resources, and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff[28].

40. In 2007 the Gender Chapter of the Report of the Secretary General to the TCPR was focused in even greater depth on the pre-requisites for the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming and measurement of its effects. It's initial subchapter focused on strategies for gender mainstreaming in programmes, while the remainder addressed institutional arrangements: enhancing gender expertise; gender-responsive budgeting, including tracking allocations and expenditures; and accountability mechanisms. It noted continuing limitations in the inclusion of gender analysis in programme planning, and significant challenges in reporting actual gender mainstreaming results in national policies, legislation and programmes, as well as in changed social attitudes and behaviours. It also addressed organizational culture, suggesting the difficulty of advocating for an equality that is only imperfectly practiced internally. The report noted modest progress in the provision of gender expertise and capacity, including through the development of monitoring tools, then at an early stage[29].

41. The corresponding resolution requested the United Nations development cooperation system to "further enhance the effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups, inter alia, by establishing clear mandates, ensuring adequate training, access to information and to adequate and stable resources and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff"[30].

42. It also called on entities to improve "institutional accountability mechanisms and to include inter-governmentally agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their

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[26] A/RES/53/192, Paragraph 47

[27] A/RES/56/201. Paragraph 87.

[28] A/RES/59/250. Paragraphs 126-131 and 87-89.

[29] A/RES/62/208. Paragraphs 72-84

[30] A/RES/62/208 Paragraph 60

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strategic frameworks". In particular the Resolution requested the Secretary General to "ensure that the annual report of Resident Coordinators includes adequate and concise information on progress in these areas" [31].

43. Thus, by 2007 the TCPR process had noted some progress in capacity development, and in gender-responsive budgeting and gender audit, but continuing challenges with regard to: accountability mechanisms; ability to track allocations and resources: use of gender analysis in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes; and in demonstrating the results of gender mainstreaming in changes in programme countries. The General Assembly called upon the entities of the United Nations development cooperation system to respond by strengthening capacity in various ways, ensuring stable resources and more vigorous leadership by senior staff, as well as by enhancing the monitoring and reporting of results.[32]

Reports of the Secretary General to ECOSOC on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations system 2007-2011

44. For several years, the biennial reports of the Secretary General on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations" have made similar findings, even though individual reports emphasized different themes, in response to ECOSOC request or in accordance with prevailing concerns. They are developed on the basis of data provided by about 40 United Nations entities in response to a questionnaire distributed by UN Women (OSAGI), and would be enhanced if mechanisms were in place to address selected core issues consistently, and to track the responses of individual entities, over time.

45. In 2007 the Secretary General's report to ECOSOC concentrated on capacity development for gender mainstreaming. The findings indicate considerable variation in the efforts of various entities to strengthen these capacities, and in particular a widespread difficulty among personnel in understanding how gender mainstreaming requirements apply to their actual day-to-day work. The Secretary General urged concerted effort to build individual and organizational capacity in the following areas:[33]

- Development of the knowledge of senior leadership, including at the field level, on their specific role and responsibility in operationalizing gender mainstreaming policies;

- The establishment of indicators for measuring changes in knowledge and attitudes;

- Availability of specialized expertise in Gender Units to undertake learning needs assessments, develop learning materials and conduct training;

- Establishment of a database of gender experts, facilitators and trainers;

- Action to address the "woefully insufficient" funding for capacity development in gender mainstreaming.

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[31] A/RES/62/208. Paragraphs 56-66.

[32] A/RES/62/208. Paragraphs 83,84.

[33] E/2007/64. Paragraphs 63-64

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46. The report noted a major lesson: the development of gender mainstreaming capacity will not in itself bring about stronger results unless the increased capacity is directly applied to implementing the System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It is the direct responsibility of management to ensure that this applied action takes place. The report also revealed that capacity development programmes that experience more resistance are those that presuppose the most organizational change, in such areas as accountability, strategic planning, leadership, funding, programme design and evaluation.

47. The report called for strengthened accountability, use of results-based management arrangements, enhanced oversight, allocation of sufficient financial and human resources, capacity development, and strengthened coordination and cooperation among entities, including a system-wide action plan. The system-wide gender mainstreaming capacity development programme currently in development under the auspices of UN Women shows promise to provide central level impetus to gender mainstreaming.

48. In 2009 the Secretary General emphasized the need for greater harmonization of approaches to gender mainstreaming, noting that harmonization holds the key to ensuring accountability, and is central to system wide coherence and to the DAO modality. While the United Nations Evaluation Group has been working to standardize approaches to gender mainstreaming in evaluations, overall progress in harmonization has been slow. In addition, it was reported that capacity building for gender specialists and gender focal points is inadequate, so such personnel may not be well equipped for their gender mainstreaming responsibilities. Overall progress was found to have been uneven, due in large part to under-resourcing of gender equality activities, and unpredictability of human and financial allocations.

49. In his 2011 report the Secretary General was able to note that the United Nations system has responded to the earlier reported (and long-standing) concerns over system-wide coherence, coordination and accountability for gender mainstreaming by establishing UN Women, with particular responsibility to address these issues. Notwithstanding this, the report noted also three particular gaps that require attention at both the system-wide and entity levels, those between: the normative requirements and the development and implementation of programmes at country level; between stated organizational commitment to gender mainstreaming and its reflection in entity work plans; and especially between the decisions to strengthen accountability and the slow progress of common monitoring tools, in terms of both programmes and personnel performance (at all levels). Continued under-resourcing of gender mainstreaming was also noted.

50. Thus successive reports of the Secretary General have highlighted specific areas as requiring attention, with emphasis on institutional arrangements: uncertain leadership of gender mainstreaming, capacity shortcomings of various kinds, limitations in resources and poor accountability mechanisms, accentuated by the uneven and widely varied approaches to gender mainstreaming in use across the system.

Evaluations of Gender Mainstreaming by Entities Engaged in the Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations system

51. Several United Nations entities engaged in operational activities for development have undertaken formal evaluations of their gender mainstreaming activities in recent years.

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Among the most influential have been those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)[34], the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a survey of entities with the United Nations Secretariat by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)[35] and an evaluation synthesis undertaken by the African Development Bank (ADB).[36] Their findings are consolidated here as a good representation of the available evidence.

Programming

52. The reviewed evaluations all point to a similar finding: gender mainstreaming is a complex activity that has not been widely carried out by entities engaged in development activity. Because of severe monitoring and evaluation challenges demonstrated in almost all organizations it is not possible to identify how far gender mainstreaming had impacted upon gender equality.

53. There have been commendable efforts to mainstream gender equality considerations in most areas of programming, and while some progress has been made, in many cases organizations lack both the capacity and the institutional framework for a systematic and effective gender mainstreaming approach in programming. Few entities have developed gender mainstreaming strategies to interpret the policy requirements in the context of their own mandate and to guide staff; or when they had been provided they had not updated them sufficiently. Frequently, it was found that personnel did not seem to know how to apply a gender mainstreaming perspective to their programming activities. Gender analysis was not integrated into all monitoring processes and evaluations, and reporting on results was weak and inconsistent.

54. Where successful interventions were identified it was found to be on the basis of such factors as: strong commitment from management; a clear and proactive strategy and policy for gender mainstreaming; qualified expertise with sufficient seniority to advise on gender mainstreaming within the country programme; awareness of gender mainstreaming as a collective organizational responsibility; systematic capacity development in the gender mainstreaming concept, tools and issues; dedicated financial resources; and clear understanding of what is actually required to mainstream gender equality considerations into development programming. On the other hand, in some cases gender mainstreaming procedures and practices have been introduced by various entities and actively pursued for a short period, before gradually declining in use,

55. Most evaluations found that results reporting and learning have been seriously constrained by weak and/or inconsistent approaches to monitoring and evaluation. Where results are reported they tend to be for (small) women-specific projects rather than integrated interventions, and in sectors such as education and health in which gender relations are more visible and data more likely to be available. Evaluation teams are not routinely asked to explore the gender equality and women's empowerment dimensions of interventions under review, using the

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[34] UNDP (2006)

[35] UNICEF (2008)

[36] ADB 2011. This study consolidated the findings of evaluations prepared by United Nations and bilateral entities, including several United Nations entities engaged in operational activities for development (ILO 2005, UNDP 2006, UNFPA 2006, UNICEF 2008 and World Bank 2005 and 2010). (The complete set of synthesized documents is given in Annex 1).

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relevant norms and standards. Taken together, poor reporting and inconsistent approaches to monitoring and evaluation have negatively impacted the development of an overall knowledge base or institutional memory of gender mainstreaming contributions.

56.   The requirement to integrate gender equality into new development co-operation modalities presents many new challenges to development organizations. Sector-wide Approaches in education, health and social security sectors tend to show better integration of gender equality considerations than those in other sectors. Enhanced policy dialogue is the means to include gender equality considerations more effectively in the new development co-operation modalities.

Institutional Arrangements

57.   In several cases the accomplishments of some very committed individuals have been constrained by absence of leadership at a higher level, and opportunities for gender mainstreaming were missed because personnel were not clear what the term means, or how to do it. Differing interpretations of "gender mainstreaming" limit understanding, create confusion and impede progress. The term "policy evaporation", first introduced in 1995, is found to be still relevant.[37] Across organizations, senior management have not ensured gender mainstreaming takes place or introduced mechanisms to institutionalize it into policy. On the other hand, where management is engaged and supportive of gender mainstreaming, results can be achieved. However, there is neither the accountability which would facilitate the compliance of leadership with this requirement, nor the incentives for good performance.

58.   The need was identified to build capacity through the appointment of more specialized staff, and for training that addresses specific requirements tailored to individual job functions and geographical situations. Training and capacity development for all personnel would assist in the development of strong sustainable partnerships and in effective advocacy. At the field level, with few exceptions, the Resident Coordinator system had not been fully utilized to strengthen United Nations partnerships around gender equality considerations. Financial allocations to gender equality programming had generally worsened over the past decade, and were generally found to be insufficient. To enable effective mainstreaming in programme interventions.

Reviews of Gender Mainstreaming in UNCT activities

59.   Three reports in recent years have focused on various aspects of United Nations Country Team (UNCT) activity for gender mainstreaming, one on Common Country Assessments/Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) documents, one on joint programmes (JPs) funded through the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDGF) and one on the use of the UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard). As the UNCT lies at the heart of well-harmonized gender mainstreaming action at the country level, these reports are central to current understanding of the impact of gender mainstreaming in operational activities for development.

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[37] Longwe (1995)

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Consideration of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)[38]

60.   In 2010 UNDG examined all 51 CCA/UNDAFs) prepared between 2006 and 2009 to assess the extent to which they address gender equality considerations.

61.   The findings of the report derived from a quantitative tracking matrix, developed by the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality, adapted with an expanded set of indicators, in line with the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Performance Indicators (these are discussed in more detail below).[39] The report analyzed the presence or otherwise of these indicators, without reference to their quality.[40] In accordance with the indicators included in the matrix, the study examined programme issues only, and tracked resource allocations to gender equality, in both targeted and integrated interventions, even thought these were not then included in the matrix.

62.   Overall, UNDG found improvement over earlier years. Similar studies in 2006 had found that while the quality of gender analysis in CCAs had improved considerably up to that time, the programme response articulated in the UNDAFs was very inadequate, and that there was weak performance accountability, with no means of measuring performance beyond checklists.[41]

Problem Identification (Gender Analysis)

63.   All the CCAs in the 2006-2009 review period had identified women as a target group and used "gender differentiated" data, especially on women's health and education. Most of the UNDAFs cited underlying and root causes for gender-related development problems, such as traditional discriminatory norms, but few sought to address these foundational issues, demonstrating weak linkage between analysis and programming. Slightly over half of the UNDAFs mentioned gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, and those that did were also those that rated high in gender mainstreaming performance overall. Inclusion of gender equality as a consideration was also correlated with the presence of a strong Gender Theme Group. Very few engaged with CEDAW as either a diagnostic or accountability tool.

Programming

64.   With regard to programming, support to girls education and women's reproductive health predominated in the documentation, while about half the UNDAFs were found to focus on strengthening women's voice and participation in decision-making processes: very few engaged with economic empowerment. About one quarter address gender-based violence. About half the UNDAFs supported government efforts to improve data collection for planning and policy advocacy on gender equality and women's empowerment, and a similar proportion support monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in national

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[38] UNDG 2010

[39] UNIFEM (2005) *Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups.* The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Performance Indicators were developed by OSAGI

[40] The performance rating system now associated with this set of indicators had not yet been finalized (see discussion of the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard below, paragraphs 92-97)

[41] UNDG (2006) *Gender Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming in Common Country Programming.*

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development plans and processes, with about one third indicating support to national accountability mechanisms.

65.   The report notes improvements in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, citing the inclusion of clear gender equality outcomes in the documentation (about half the reviewed UNDAFs); gender equality outputs in the context of other outcome areas (also about half of the reviewed UNDAFs) and definition of indicators. Just over half of the reviewed documents indicated that the UNCT is monitoring progress in promoting gender quality and women's empowerment, especially using the Gender Scorecard described below. These findings are at variance with the report on implementation of the UNCT Performance Indicators described below. Few UNDAFs specify resource allocations to gender equality outcomes, and the question of capacity development were not addressed in the report.

66.   In sum, the review found that effective Gender Theme Groups are key drivers of change related to gender equality and women's empowerment at national level. For this reason it is critical to ensure that they are adequately resourced. They achieve the best results through programme documentation that connects cogent gender analysis with clear programme outcomes, a well-monitored implementation process with clear means to track performance and results.

Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming in UNCT Joint Programmes funded by the MDG Fund

67.   In 2011 UN Women undertook a review of all UNCT joint programmes funded by the Spanish Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDGF). It examined all 128 joint programmes funded by the MDGF, of which 13 were funded through the Gender Equality Window.[42] This is the most extensive review of gender-related UNCT programming activity currently available, providing information on gender analysis, results frameworks, implementation activities and beneficiaries, and the use of technical expertise in programme management.

68.   The review assessed the programmes according to a matrix of 21 indicators and 60 sub-indicators, based on the Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Like the above report on CCA/UNDAFs, the review provides quantitative information on the presence or otherwise of the indicators, without qualitative assessment.

69.   By distinguishing those in the Gender Equality window from the total of all programmes the report sought to identify any differential between targeted and integrated approaches to gender mainstreaming, and as able to demonstrate uniformly high scores in gender equality programming among the Gender Window projects, and very variable scores among remaining windows.

70.   The report indicates that over two thirds of joint programmes address women's economic empowerment, about one third each address women's health and women political participation and decision making, with lower levels of attention to women in peace processes, gender-based violence and gender-responsive statistics. Three main programme

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[42] The funding windows are (n declining order of their aggregate scores for gender mainstreaming in programme planning: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Conflict Prevention and Peace Building; Youth Employment and Migration; Children, Food Security and Nutrition; Culture and Development; Private Sector Development; Economic Governance; and Environment and Climate Change.

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strategies are identified: the collection and analysis of data on the situation of women (under two thirds); support to legal and policy change (about one third); and support to the implementation of gender equality legal frameworks (15-20 percent).

71. The review finds that the use of gender analysis as the basis for programming is uneven, partly constrained by limitations in the availability of data (this is especially marked in the area of gender-based violence). While about 45% of all programmes undertook a full gender analysis, fully one third make no use of sex-disaggregated data at all. The review indicates a positive relationship between the development of in-depth evidence-based gender analysis and the specification of gender equality outcomes, outputs and indicators in results frameworks. However, this relationship was not consistent: only 40 percent of those programmes with adequate gender analysis make reference to gender in their outcomes, 76 percent make such reference in their outputs, and only 20 percent make even token reference to gender equality or women's empowerment in their indicators.[43] Frequently no gender-related results or indicators are specified in programme documents. In some cases even where there was a reporting line for gender equality, it was not completed.

72. A further problem generated by poor application of gender analysis is that very often the results logic fails to clarify why women are selected as the beneficiary group, and how far this will contribute to reduction in structural or causal aspects of gender inequality. By failing to explore and clarify these linkages there is risk both that the programme will miss opportunities for meaningful change contributing to the achievement of gender equality that can be sustained beyond the life of the programme, and also that inequalities may be inadvertently deepened by the programme intervention.

73. The review notes that 35 percent of joint programmes are coordinating with other joint programmes with the intention of maximizing impact on gender equality and women's empowerment, which it identifies as a promising practice.

74. The active involvement of dedicated gender expertise, of UN Women or the Gender Theme Group is positively correlated with stronger programme management for the promotion of gender equality, and this finding holds true for the non-gender windows, especially for the presence of gender experts and UN Women.

75. In sum therefore, this review of gender mainstreaming in UNCT joint programmes found the most consistent performance among programmes funded through the gender window, serious problems across all programmes in linking programme design with the gender analysis: even where such analysis is undertaken it is not necessarily reflected in the result logic of the programme. The most significant problems were found in the definition of results, and reporting on them. There is a correlation between the availability of gender expertise and improved programme management for gender equality and women's empowerment.

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[43] UN Women 2011. Page 16

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Implementation of the UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [44]

76.   As described in more detail below (paragraphs 92-97) UN Women has been collaborating with UNDG, at the request of the CEB, to prepare a coherent system-wide Accountability Framework for Gender Mainstreaming. A central component of this framework is a set of performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women: the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard.

77.   The UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard specifies the processes and practices that must be in place if gender mainstreaming is to be effectively implemented[45], together with standards of performance for each one and a rating system that defines the extent to which these standards are met (whether they exceed minimum standards, meet minimum standards, need improvement, are inadequate, are missing or not applicable). Thus Scorecard reports are able to indicate not simply the presence or otherwise of the needed processes and practices (as in the CCA/UNDAF and Joint Programme reports reviewed above), but the extent and quality of their use.

78.   A central lesson from the Scorecard process is that minimum standards for gender mainstreaming can be effectively set, based on existing UN mandates. The Scorecard has acted as both an accountability and planning tool. By clearly defining the performance areas that comprise effective gender mainstreaming the Scorecard facilitates not only monitoring and reporting but also planning and capacity development. It has been in use by a growing number of UNCTs (now in over 40 countries), and a recent review of its use by 20 UNCTs provides solid evidence–based information on gender mainstreaming performance. Because it provides the means to measure performance against agreed standards, the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard is the most meaningful tool for the analysis of gender mainstreaming performance so far available, generating a greater depth and detail of needed management information than has been possible to date.

79.   The report indicated that on average no UNCT was performing to minimum standards in any area, with the strongest performance found in planning and programming (both of which nevertheless need improvement in order to meet minimum standards), and the weakest in gender-responsive budgeting in UNCT programming (the lowest score), quality control and accountability, monitoring and evaluation and partnerships, which were all found to be inadequate (Table 1).

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[44] UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2011). *UNCT Performance Indicators and the Empowerment of Women: three year review of implementation.*
[45] See Annex 2 for the complete set of indicators

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Table 1: Average Gender Scorecard ratings for 20 UNCTs

Scorecard area	Average rating 1 is low, 5 is high 4 = meets minimum standards
1. Planning	3.3
2. Programming	3.67
3. Partnerships	2.95
4. UNCT capacities	3.0
5. Decision-making	3.4
6. Budgeting	2.5
7. Monitoring and evaluation	2.8
8. Quality control and accountability	2.7

The complete set of UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard indicators, and the full rating system, is provided in Annex 2.

80. During 2009, ten of the twenty reviewed UNCTs achieved the top level of performance (Standard 5 - exceeded performance expectations,) but only for a very small proportion (10%) of the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard indicators, further confirming the overall modest gender mainstreaming attainment by UNCTs.[46] Nevertheless, this datum indicates that there is good practice and capacity throughout the system, which can be leveraged.

81. The reasons for the general poor performance are principally related to weak monitoring and accountability, and to limitations in UNCT members' practical knowledge of gender mainstreaming and competency in results-based programming. The poor performance in establishing national partnerships is of concern, given UNCTs' coordination responsibility, and the importance of alliance building for effective gender mainstreaming, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

82. Nevertheless, through increasing and consistent use of the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard it is likely that UNCTS will improve both their gender mainstreaming performance and their ability to report upon it, over time.

Examples of Good Practice.

83. A central question posed by this paper was how far and in what ways has gender mainstreaming contributed to gender quality and women's empowerment in countries where United Nations funds and programmes operate. This is difficult to assess due to the general absence of data linking programme inputs and goals to overall gender equality outcomes, and so there is little systematic information on results. In addition, even where such linkages are made, a very long-term timeframe is required before results at the level of social change become visible. In many cases reporting cycles are just too short to show lasting changes in

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[46] UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2011). *UNDG Performance Indicators on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: three-year review of implementation*. Page 6.

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gender equality at outcome level.[47] Achievements in setting up the institutional arrangements that are the necessary pre-conditions for effective gender mainstreaming in programmes are necessary and important results, but only intermediate on the long road to improved gender equality and women's empowerment. On the other hand, the impact of such processes builds over time, but is reversible if not sustained.

84. Furthermore, some gender-related achievements may be *ad hoc* and opportunistic in nature, beyond the reach of formally defined result matrices. These include changes in attitudes and behaviour that are difficult to capture within the classic logical framework of programme design. Paradoxically, the fact that such positive processes are not discernible using formal data collection tools does not mean that they are not occurring as a result of programme interventions. They are better captured by less structured knowledge management techniques discussed below.[48]

85. Nevertheless, despite these challenges to measurement, there are indications that where the right structures, tools and expertise are in place, supported by understanding and commitment, the ability to implement gender mainstreaming is enhanced, and clear results in changed attitudes, structures and behaviours in partner countries can be discerned.[49] Several studies of individual good practice have described solid results, using interview and other knowledge management techniques rather than the classic result tracking mechanisms. The following selected examples of gender mainstreaming result, together with summary indication of the factors that contributed to them, are instructive.[50]

   a **In Ukraine** fifteen years of support with funding from SIDA and the EU, among others, has led to successive positive results over the past decade, despite a challenging national environment. Early and continuing results in strengthening national gender statistical capacity were followed by passage of Family Violence and Gender Equality Laws. More recently very successful campaigns on domestic violence have been launched, and there has been significant strengthening of national capacity through establishment of a comprehensive national machinery, a national cross-sectoral gender mainstreaming strategy, while a cascade training programme for police, educational and public administration personnel has been mainstreamed into the national in-service training processes, with very positive results in changed attitudes and behaviours. Key factors were: **extensive partnership** with national women's movements, academia and NGOs, rigorous use of **result-based management** principles, and diligent work to share this methodology with government, the availability of **expertise** among project staff and the NGO community, including resilience, regrouping and course correction in the face of set-backs, and the active support of UNDP **leadership.[51]**

   b **At the global level** several United National organizations played a coordinated role in mainstreaming gender equality considerations into the climate change negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in climate change finance mechanisms, rectifying the former complete absence of gender concerns within

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[47] See World Bank (2012) *World Development Report*, for multiple instances of the long-term nature of gender mainstreaming.

[48] UNDP (2008).

[49] OIOS (2010). Page 26

[50] Unless otherwise indicated, these examples are drawn from ECA (2009a).

[51] UNDP (2008-2011). Annual project progress reports.

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the climate change discourse. One outstanding and highly concrete result was the entrenchment of gender principles within climate policy, particularly the Cancun Agreement emerging out of the UNFCCC COP-16. The critical factor was an **innovative partnership** between UN and civil society organizations, entitled the *Global Gender and Climate Alliance*, (GGCA). This alliance shepherded gender equality considerations throughout the policy dialogues in a coordinated way at both national and global levels, resulting in widespread increase in understanding of gender and climate change issues, and a path-breaking opening of space for women's voices to be heard in the negotiations. The individual members of the GGCA are now active in taking the issues forward at national levels, and the group as a whole is preparing to play an active role in Rio+20.[52]

c   **In Nepal,** gender-responsive budgeting was a strategic component of the overall reform of the budget system. A gender budgeting audit in education, health and agriculture at central level and in three districts, including at the village level, was carried out in 2002. An inter-agency Gender-Responsive Budget Committee was formed within the Ministry of Finance and a follow-up study on how to make the annual national budget gender-responsive commissioned in 2006. This resulted in the preparation of guidelines by the National Planning Commission in consultation with the Ministry of Finance. A major result was the definition of a scoring system that classifies expenditures in all sectors according to their impact on women, and administrative arrangements for classification to be undertaken at the local level where funds are actually spent and information on impact is most readily available. Further steps will be needed to ensure that this innovation actually supports government disbursements that advance gender equality. This initiative is the result of a **partnership** between UN Women (UNIFEM), women's groups and gender experts and the women's ministry, in dialogue with the Planning Commission, sector ministries and the Ministry of Finance on the other.

d   **In Morocco** a reform-based National Human Development Initiative, which included the reduction of gender inequality as one of its goals, also provided opportunity to re-focus polices by introducing the practice of gender budgeting. Through research, capacity building and clear definition of gendered community-oriented budget targets and gender-sensitive indicators a policy environment has been created that is conducive to a range of organizations taking an interest in gender-responsive budgeting, thereby widening the space for gender mainstreaming within the overall reform process. The most concrete result was the institutionalization of the annual Gender Report as part of the National Economic and Financial Report. Changes have also been made to budgetary rules, and various ministerial departments and NGOs have progressively appropriated gender budgets. The key success factor was **sustained high level political will**, including active support and positive interventions by the Prime Minister.

e   **In Algeria** an intervention addressing unemployment and job insecurity through enterprise creation presented a major opportunity for gender mainstreaming. Through diverse approaches and the support of the United Nations system, the government funded several employment facilities that were primarily used by women. Nearly half of the beneficiaries of a local public service employment facility were women. Nearly

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[52] UNDP (2011a)

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7000 enterprises funded by the National Agency to Support Youth Employment were initiated and are run by women. Nearly 66 percent of the recipients of micro-credit are women. These successes were attributed to the clear **political support** of the government, **active canvassing of women and women's organizations**, and formal **partnerships** with a variety of associations and civil-society organizations to create awareness of the various programmes offered. An important outcome of these consultations was that the programme was able to fine tune and adapt its activities to respond to the needs of specific populations: the social reintegration of prisoners; the fight against stigmatization of people living with HIV; students; women in difficult circumstances; and, disabled women, among others.

f   **Nigeria** adopted a multisectoral response to HIV in 2001, and developed an enabling gender responsive National Strategic Results Framework, with the support of UNAIDS leadership, that included increased levels of gender awareness and gender-mainstreaming practice in HIV programming, legislative reform in the workplace to ensure human rights protection for those living with HIV, and initiatives to provide sex-disaggregated data, indicators and gender equality audits for HIV. Out of the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory, 11 have demonstrated measurable progress in gender mainstreaming. Six States have organized training in mainstreaming gender equality issues into HIV programming, while three others have taken further steps in mainstreaming gender equality considerations in their State strategic plans, thus providing an enabling policy and programming framework; four States have used the media to create awareness on linkages between gender equality and HIV. **Several factors led to these results.** The Government of Nigeria provided political support, ownership and strategic direction at the highest level. In addition to policy influence, this enabled entry points for gendered interventions by stakeholders. **Collaboration** among donors, government and local organizations was robust and effective, although a need for stronger coordination was identified. **Funding** from CIDA through the Nigerian AIDS Response Fund was sufficient and flexible, while **expertise** from UN Women (UNIFEM) in gender equality with regard to HIV programming sustained focus on women's empowerment.

Box 1 Mainstreaming Gender Equality into responses to HIV

Thirty years into the HIV epidemic gender equality has been, for the first time, formally mainstreamed in the response to the epidemic. In light of women's increased exposure to HIV infection due to factors such as harmful gender norms and gender-based violence, a global indicator on intimate partner violence against women has been added to the list of core indicators to monitor national progress in HIV response. Goals related to gender equality are also included in the UNAIDS strategy 2011-2015, namely: I) meeting the gender-specific needs of women and girls in HIV response and 2) zero tolerance for gender-based violence. Each goal has specified outcomes, outputs and activities, and there are indicators at impact, outcome and output levels. [53]

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[53] UNAIDS 2011. *UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015: Getting to Zero*, and *Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework 2011-2015*

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86.   Such examples illustrate the long-term nature of the gender mainstreaming endeavour (requiring a clear strategic vision on the part of personnel, and predictable funding), and the importance of partnership and of leadership, especially the full expression of national ownership. In this context, one assessment has identified the four most common types of effective gender mainstreaming practice to be:[54]

- **Research and analytical work** that is directed towards integrating "women's concerns' into national and sectoral development plans. This requires on-going political support, advocacy and active engagement if the outcomes of such analysis are to be actually translated into action;

- **Efforts to change unequal power relations** through the review, amendment and enactment of laws that mainstream commitments to women's rights and outlaw discrimination;

- **Organizational changes** that promote effective implementation of gender mainstreaming, such as: staff capacity development; visible signs of political will and management commitment; establishment of accountability mechanisms; development of guidelines, manuals and other tools; establishment of a resource base of gender mainstreaming expertise. Such interventions may be reported at the outset at different levels of success.

- **Dialogue and collaboration** between and among government agencies, civil society women's organizations, academia and donors, propelling the incorporation of gender perspectives into discussions, planning and implementation. In some countries, national policy agendas are increasingly informed by active participation of gender advocates in national priority-setting for a

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[54] ECA (2009a). Page 42

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PART III. THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE RESPONSE.

87.   The United Nations system has recently responded positively to the system-wide challenges identified above, through strengthened coordination and oversight. These innovations, if properly supported, offer the immediate possibility of improved coherence and accountability across the system, and accelerated progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Establishment of the United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women)

88.   The establishment of UN Women in 2011 reflects the desire of the United Nations system to renew its commitment to coherent and comprehensive operational activity to address these problems, and a determination to reinvigorate the gender mainstreaming agenda. The new organization unites the mandates of four pre-existing entities[55], inheriting from them the combined responsibility for support to United Nations inter-governmental norm-setting and operational activities at the field level, and for the system-wide coordination of activity for gender equality and women's empowerment.

89.   Moreover, a specific new responsibility was added: that of coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system, so that system-wide commitments on gender equality, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming translate into concrete actions and definite results at all levels within the United Nations system itself, and in partner countries.[56] In the same resolution, the GA decided that at country level, the entity would operate within the United Nations country team as part of the Resident Coordinator system, under the overall leadership of the Resident Coordinator.[57]

90.   The addition of coordination and accountability functions for UN Women at both corporate policy and development programme levels provides the United Nations system with a designated champion for the full implementation of gender mainstreaming policy commitments.

91.   The founding resolution is also explicit that the establishment of UN Women does not exonerate other entities from their own responsibility to mainstream gender quality considerations in the context of their own mandates. The test of UN Women's success will be how well it is able to support other agencies to work even more effectively in their respective mandated areas and leverage this into even a more broad-based harmonization of practices. UN Women's mandate to collaborate with national mechanisms for gender equality and women's civil society organizations in the identification of issues and interventions tailored to local needs, as well as with the UNCT, can be a major avenue to enhanced alignment and coherence of gender mainstreaming strategies.

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[55] The United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for theAdvancement of Women (INSTRAW).
[56] A/RES/64/289 (2010). Paragraph 53.

[57] Ibid. Paragraphs 51, 56 and 62.

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The System-wide Accountability Framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

92.   Over a number of years the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) has been overseeing, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), the development of a comprehensive mechanism to respond to the challenges described here, with a particular focus on accountability mechanisms. Responsibility for coordinating its operationalization and tracking has been assigned to UN Women.

93.   The cornerstone of this framework is the System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, endorsed by the CEB in 2006.[58] This policy identifies six key factors, or "elements", of gender mainstreaming that the United Nations system must put in place, in accordance with the various mandates of its entities, if it is to contribute meaningfully to greater results. These elements are:

   1.   **Accountability** for gender equality results among staff at all levels in order to close implementation gaps both in policy areas and in the field[59];

   2.   **Results-based management for gender equality** by utilizing common-system indicators and measurement protocols;

   3.   **Oversight through monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting** through, *inter alia*, peer reviews, gender audits as well as collection of sex-disaggregated baseline and monitoring data;

   4.   **Human and financial resources,** including better utilization of current resources, joint programming, allocation of additional resources where required, alignment of resources with expected outcomes and tracking the utilization of resources;

   5.   **Capacity Development:** developing and/or strengthening staff capacity and competency in gender mainstreaming by adopting both common-system and entity-specific capacity development approaches; and

   6.   **Coherence, coordination and knowledge and information management** at the global, regional and national levels.

94.   In light of this policy, three specific mechanisms are in use or in the process of development, to ensure that the six elements are effectively implemented across the system and lead more consistently to improved results. The components of this framework are:

   • **A System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** is being rolled out in 2012 with first reporting in 2013,

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[58] *United Nations System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: focusing on results and impact*. CEB/2006/2

[59] A/RES/64/259 defined accountability in its operative paragraph 8 as follows:

"*Accountability is the obligation of the Secretariat and its staff members to be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken by them, and to be responsible for honouring their commitments, without qualification or exception; accountability includes achieving objectives and high-quality results in a timely and cost-effective manner, in fully implementing and delivering on all mandates to the Secretariat approved by the United Nations intergovernmental bodies and other subsidiary organs established by them in compliance with all resolutions, regulations, rules and ethical standards; truthful, objective, accurate and timely reporting on performance results; responsible stewardship of funds and resources; all aspects of performance, including a clearly defined system of rewards and sanctions; and with due recognition to the important role of the oversight bodies and in full compliance with accepted recommendations.*"

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and specifies the corporate processes and institutional arrangements that must be in place for effective gender mainstreaming at the level of the organization. It provides a means to plan, monitor and report upon the establishment and use of gender mainstreaming processes across the United Nations system, in a consistent and comparable manner.[60]

- **A set of UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** (also known as "The UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard") were launched in 2008. The Scorecard defines clear performance standards for the processes and institutional arrangements that must be put in place by United Nations Country Teams when preparing CCA/UNDAFS and joint programmes. By defining good gender mainstreaming practice the Scorecard provides a clear and simple performance guideline, around which UNCTs can plan and organize their activity, as well as report upon results.

- **A programme results and accountability mechanism** is in discussion, to address the long-standing concerns about weaknesses in incorporating gender mainstreaming processes in programme results frameworks.

95. The results of early piloting of the SWAP and use of the Scorecard have been positive, suggesting that the Framework has potential to lead to significantly more systematic and productive levels of gender mainstreaming performance by the United Nations operational system for development. There are some concerns that the Scorecard is long, and can be burdensome to complete, so that a consultant may be required to support the review process. This challenge should be addressed by the recommended development of suitable guidelines and training materials. Furthermore, the self-analysis required to complete the Scorecard provided valuable opportunities for capacity development, especially instilling a more granular understanding of what gender mainstreaming means in every-day country office activity. It therefore has the potential to be a cost-effective investment, leveraging multiple benefits.

96. While each entity may draw on these instruments in connection with their own mandates, they are required to report upon both instruments in their complete form, at regular intervals through the appropriate channels.

97. The six elements of the System-wide Policy on Gender Mainstreaming and the Empowerment of Women are precisely the areas in which challenges to gender mainstreaming are still occurring, as summarized in this report (Part III). The three-part Accountability Framework shows promise in addressing several of these challenges, especially at the institutional level, and constitutes a significant step to a new plateau in the progress towards a full gender mainstreaming accountability mechanism, as recommended in this report. There is now need for further development, refinement and harmonization of the Accountability Framework.

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[60] The SWAP has been developed taking into account recent literature on accountability in the United Nations system, including the 2010 Report of the Secretary-General *Towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat* (A/64/640), individual UN entity accountability frameworks, and a draft of the Joint Inspection Unit review of accountability mechanisms in the UN system

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Box 2: Annual Resident Coordinator Reports
One area in which the system-wide Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework (Action Plan and Scorecard) may be of particular assistance is in supporting the preparation of annual Resident Coordinator (RC) Reports.
RCs were requested by the General Assembly to report specifically on designated aspects of gender mainstreaming among Country Teams (A/RES/62/208 paragraph 63). Such reporting has been constrained to date by the paucity of result data. For example, the UNDG consolidated RC reports of 2010 (*Jointly Achieving Development Results*), was able to describe and enumerate the types of intervention in which the Country Team had engaged, and the range of programme themes addressed. It was clear that several gender mainstreaming programmes and processes had been put in place, and that this is increasing over time, but the writers of the report were unable to identify the quality of results of any of these interventions. [61]
The availability to UNDG of comparable data on gender mainstreaming output from each Country Team, generated by systematic use of the Accountability Framework, will not only support RCs in responding to the request of the General Assembly, but also make a significant contribution to meaningful monitoring, reporting and accountability, and hence to development results overall.

The Gender Marker

98.   In a related endeavor, United Nations system entities have been researching a means to monitor financial allocations to gender equality work by adapting the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Gender Marker to their own specific circumstances.[62] Indications from the pilot tests undertaken so far are that the marker is an effective means to designate and track resource allocations to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, although it does not (yet) track actual disbursements. The UNDG Task Force on Gender Equality has been requested to identify possible criteria and common standards that could contribute to the development of a system-wide gender marker that would strengthen coordination, comparability and accountability.

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[61] UNDG (2010). UN Country Coordination: Jointly Achieving Development Results. Chapter 1.3. Achieving Gender Equality.
[62] The Gender Marker is a budget monitoring instrument, originally developed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Entities engaged in humanitarian and peacekeeping activities are developing similar financial tracking instruments, using approaches tailored to their own situations, in the contexts of the Secretary General's Seven Point Action Plan on Women's Participation in Peacekeeping and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Humanitarian Affairs.

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Part IV.   Conclusions

Summary of Findings.

99.   The findings of this report are summarized below, according to the six elements of gender mainstreaming originally set out in the System Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women (see paragraph 94).

Institutional Arrangements for Gender Mainstreaming

Accountability

Leadership

100.   There is growing evidence that effective gender mainstreaming is highly correlated with pro-active leadership and the quality of management, with a near-universal finding that senior management across the United Nations system have not adequately supported gender mainstreaming beyond policy statements, resulting in clear organizational gaps between policy and performance. Mid-level leaders have also failed to provide guidance to their staff in linking the policy mandate with their day-to-day work.

101.   The creation by leadership of an inclusive and enabling working environment is an important factor in providing space and encouragement for the innovation and creatively needed for gender mainstreaming, and also to ensure the sustained policy dialogue with partners that is needed in many cases.[63] United Nations senior staff capacity development programmes increasingly foster the needed adaptive forms of leadership: and the linkages between these forms of management and gender mainstreaming could and should be more clearly articulated.[64]

102.   There have been modest but telling improvements in gender mainstreaming activity and enhanced coordination as a result of the DAO modality, which should now be expanded and systematized in the UNCTs concerned and leveraged to guide other UNCTs. The small islands of success identified in macro-level interventions under the aegis of new development co-operation modalities are indications that gender mainstreaming action at these levels is possible, provided that United Nations system leadership is active in identifying areas of alignment that can act as entry-points for gender mainstreaming.

Accountability

103.   Across the system, accountability for gender mainstreaming remains weak. There is a widespread perception that uptake of responsibility for gender mainstreaming by senior management is optional, with very few sanctions if they overlook the system-wide policy mandate, nor incentives for good performance. Appropriate accountability mechanisms have not been set up in a systematic manner, and in general the management information needed to

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[63] DAO Country Evaluation, Cap Verde. (2010). Page 34.

[64] For example, the Leadership Development Programme fielded by the UNSSC, and the senior and mid-level leadership programmes developed by UNICEF.

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enforce accountability has not been available due to poor result reporting in the case of programme results, and absence of a reporting framework in the case of institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming.

104. The UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard) now provide precisely the needed management information, enabling the establishment of a properly constituted system-wide accountability mechanism.

Incentives

105. United Nations system personnel have limited incentives to address the gender equality and women's empowerment goal, as the effort involved is rarely rewarded, and there is virtually no sanction for ignoring policy. Personnel are unwilling to devote time to gender mainstreaming if they perceive it to be not valued by the organization. Incentivizing good performance typically includes acknowledgement and recognition, and is often cost-free. The extent of gender mainstreaming achievement must be factored into performance assessment.

Oversight of programme design, monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting

106. While the quality of gender analysis found in CCAs and other country analysis and assessments has improved over the year the programme response was frequently inadequate. It is the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator and the entire UNCT, supported by UN Women, to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, and the constraints to achieving them, are recognized and addressed in all substantive programming and the assessments and diagnostics that inform them, including the Common Country Assessment.

107. All of the assessments summarized here identify serious shortcomings in oversight, monitoring and evaluation and reporting on gender related issues. Across the system management has not ensured meaningful gender-related monitoring of interventions, or appropriate use of the accepted results-based processes.[65] This performance limitation is a factor in much development activity, but may have a particularly severe impact in the case of gender mainstreaming, because meaningful monitoring and evaluation is the principal means to combat the widespread inertia and attrition that have been noted in relation to gender mainstreaming policy and implementation.

108. There is need for management at all levels to ensure programmes are designed to address identified gender inequalities and that the monitoring and evaluation of all gender mainstreaming programme implementation is greatly strengthened, using the recognized results-based management techniques.

109. Evaluation teams are typically not required to review the gender equality implications of all programmes, which should be done as a matter of course, using standard processes as defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group.

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[65] OIOS (2010) Page 20

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Human and Financial Resources

Human resources

110. The needed gender mainstreaming architecture of specialist personnel at headquarters, regional and country levels (for those entities that have such presence) is now better understood and largely in place (and recently augmented at the global level by the establishment of UN Women), although frequently under-resourced.

111. In some entities the architecture is not located at the level of seniority necessary to have impact, especially with regard to supporting senior management in the exercise of their accountability function.[66]

112. The availability of gender expertise, especially in the context of specific technical areas, is positively associated with stronger gender mainstreaming in programme development, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation, and entities have adopted various strategies to access such expertise.

113. A widespread approach is the assignment of gender focal point functions to selected individuals or units, however, this has not been shown to be particularly effective, mainly because the personnel appointed are often too junior to bring about change in organizational processes, and they are not supported by managers or with capacity development.[67] Nevertheless, it is often the only feasible approach, and better use must be made of capacity development to maximize the potential for positive results. Greater success in this modality has been noted when senior management is actively engaged in supporting the gender focal point mechanism.[68]

Financial resources

114. Financial resources at all levels are generally insufficient for the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming commensurate with the policy requirements. The complexity of the gender equality and women's empowerment goal, which spans several development sectors, as well the slow and cumulative nature of social change means that a very long-term perspective on funding is required and predictability of funding is critical.

115. The capacity to monitor and track the allocation and disbursement of financial resources is generally weak or non-existent, especially in integrated interventions.

116. The Gender Marker, currently being tested by several entities in consultation with each other, shows promise as an effective tool to track allocations to gender equality, including in integrated projects and programmes. Further developments will be needed to strengthen the monitoring of disbursements. The system-wide use of a common gender marker would enhance coherence and accountability significantly.

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[66] UNDP (2006)

[67] ADB (2010)

[68] UNDP (2006)

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Capacity Development

117. There is need for continued capacity development of all personnel, in understanding of the gender mainstreaming approach and in its application to specific sectors. The needed mix of competencies includes not only gender analysis but also a range of political, strategic, process management and communication skills relevant to the gender equality dimensions of the themes and sectors covered by the entity, so that all personnel are equipped to implement gender mainstreaming policy in accordance with their respective job descriptions.

118. Particular attention to the competency gaps of middle managers in programme design, management and leadership must be addressed and supplemented by entity-specific material on the basic requirements for effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. There is urgent need for capacity development in basic results-based management, and on the centrality of sound programme management to gender mainstreaming outputs and outcomes.

119. There is need for renewed attention to the Secretary General's 2007 Report on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in all Policies and Programmes of the United Nations System, which focused on gender mainstreaming capacity development.[69]

Coherence, coordination and knowledge & information management.

120. The system-wide use of common gender mainstreaming instruments is an important means to advance coherence and accountability both within entities and at the global level. It is important to advance common system tools, having due regard to the mandate specificities of all entities. Continued development and use of the System-wide Accountability Framework and Gender Marker by all UNCTs, and their adaptation to individual entity use, are important here.

121. Limitations in sharing of information on good practices and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming were widely noted, both between organizations and within them, particularly between field and headquarters levels.[70] The challenge is to record implicit and intermediate process-related results, through enhanced knowledge harvesting and management techniques, and participatory qualitative assessments such as gender audits and peer reviews.

122. Bearing in mind the need to ensure rigour and consistency, these forms of knowledge sharing are useful to capture the changes in relationships, attitude and behaviour that are central to progress towards gender equality, but elusive to formal results matrixes. Here the peer reviews and gender audits called for by the CEB are particularly powerful, and are included as part of the System-wide Action Plan (SWAP).[71]

123. Partnerships of all kinds, and especially with women's national machineries, women's organizations and activists, have been shown to be closely correlated with gender mainstreaming achievement, especially but not only at the national level. On the other hand, partnership is one of the most inadequate aspects of UNCT gender mainstreaming performance.

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[69] E/2007/64

[70] ADB (2011)

[71] CEB (2006). (See also paragraph 99 above)

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Programming for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Results-based Management for Gender Equality

124. Under-representation of gender equality considerations in planning and reporting is generic across the United Nations system. Many entities are committed in principle to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, and yet these issues are not reflected in their strategic documents, programme priorities or reporting frameworks, placing the seriousness of the commitment in question.

125. Poor results-based procedures make it impossible to assess concretely how far gender mainstreaming has contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women outcomes. This limitation in available result data appears to derive both from general weakness in gender statistics and in results-based management, and in specific difficulties in defining measurable gender-related outputs and indicators in integrated interventions and producing related data.

126. From the available evidence, it appears that interventions targeted to women are more likely to use sound results-based management processes and to score better against performance standards than integrated interventions.[72] It would be appropriate to explore more fully how far and why this is so, and whether there are any lessons that could be applied to integrated approaches.

Gender Budgeting

127. Gender budgeting can be a key analytical instrument and effective entry point for the United Nations system to support gender mainstreaming across all national policies and planning frameworks and in all themes and sectors of work, including alignment with national priorities and working in the context of new development co-operation modalities.

The Continuing Rationale for Gender Mainstreaming

128. Gender mainstreaming is a potentially powerful and practical means to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, provided that a long term and cumulative view is taken and that authentic action is derived from, and fully grounded in, robust gender analysis aided by research. Yet on-going confusion and misunderstanding over the gender mainstreaming approach, and the lack of delivery on this mandate have been regularly reported.

129. Partnership at all levels, especially, but not only, with national women's organizations and activists has been shown to be critical. Sufficient, secure and predictable funding sources are also important. Where these conditions apply, and where sound results-based programme management and performance monitoring are practiced, the evidence is that progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming is possible and does occur.

130. Shortfalls in result performance are ascribed by the documents reviewed here to failures of implementation rather than any problem inherent in the approach itself. Indeed, in many

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[72] UN Women 2011

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cases the cross-sectoral dialogue that is made necessary by the policy requirements of gender mainstreaming has been one of the key factors in the progress in understanding that has been achieved.

131. The ADB used a Theory of Change model to derive four main drivers of change that need to be present in each entity if it is to achieve results in gender mainstreaming. These are: effective leadership; a clear set of organizational incentives and accountability structures; adequate financial and human resources; and the availability of adequate (and well understood) procedures and processes. It is precisely in these areas that the most severe shortcomings in performance have been identified. With poor performance in its principal drivers, it is hardly surprising that gender mainstreaming results have been limited.

132. Like all change management processes, gender mainstreaming is complex, requiring not only technical ability in gender analysis and programme management, but also strategic insight, political "savvy" and great personal and professional resilience. Progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment is placed at risk in the hands of personnel at all levels without the full spectrum of needed competencies, or understanding of the relationship between gender equality and the achievement of the broad spectrum of development goals, and drive to share this understanding.

133. The fundamental requirements of gender mainstreaming are to combine a systematic approach to gender-aware programming, using the established, well-tested and practical methods, combined with a transformative political agenda, in order to engage consciously with systems of power and discrimination within institutions, organizations and communities. For this purpose, consensus and partnership building are also essential to ensure long-term sustained change towards gender equality.

134. Here the United Nations system, and the UNCT in particular, can play a leadership role in encouraging contacts and communications and sustaining dialogue on direction and purpose; this is in line with the innovative, creative and adaptive leadership style currently being promoted within the system.[73] This perspective enables leaders at all levels, but especially in senior positions, to support staff in understanding the importance of the gender equality goal and in embracing "out of the box" creativity and innovation, while insisting on minimum performance standards and ensuring absolute rigour and mutual transparency among all partners.

135. As the experience of a Delivering as One pilot country shows: "in the area of gender the UN is well positioned to achieve results. This is due to the convergence of several factors: contracting of a national gender advisor; direction and support of the Resident Coordinator; funding available from UNIFEM. These factors in combination with a work spirit aimed at inter-agency cooperation and *shift in thinking* from single issue to a multi-dimensional approach to development issues, has made inclusion of cross-cutting issues easier.[74]

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[73] For example, in the system-wide United Nations Leaders Programme fielded by UNSSC and the Senior Leader Development Programme and delivered by UNICEF in partnership with Cambridge University Judge Business School. The latter is complemented by similar programmes for mid-level and first time managers, which also encourage new, innovative and adaptive forms of leadership.
[74] DAO Country Evaluation Cap Verde (2010). Page 34 (emphasis added).

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136. Yet, serious and long-standing questions remain about the willingness and capacity of the United Nations system to respond in this way to the compelling policy mandate it has been given. These concerns are likely to intensify if the system as a whole is unable to integrate gender equality considerations in the emerging new directions for development, and to go beyond formal statements of commitment to actually ensuring compliance with policy.

137. There is now need for decisive action in three broad areas in particular:

- Further develop coordination and coherence as the foundation of system-wide achievement and accountability for gender mainstreaming;

- Rapidly develop and/or expand broad-based capacity building programmes of all kinds that address the conceptual fundamentals of gender mainstreaming described above and their manifestation in administrative and programme practice at both leadership and operational levels, including a major push on strengthening results-based management; and

- Institute the needed accountability mechanisms without further delay and establish a culture of zero tolerance for inaction.

138. In light of the above findings and conclusions the following recommendations are made:

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Strengthen the coordination of gender mainstreaming actions in United Nations operational activities for development, in alignment with national priorities

a   Ensure that gender quality considerations are fully reflected in the on-going dialogue on new policy directions, to ensure that the multiple opportunities it presents for accelerating progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment are not missed.

b   Strengthen policy dialogue on the alignment United Nations system interventions with national priorities, and on harmonizing the activity of all entities by ensuring full consultation with national machineries, women's organizations and activists for gender equality and women's empowerment.

c   Ensure that the Periodic National Reports of CEDAW are systematically included in dialogue with national partners, in order to assist in the diagnosis of priorities.

d   Member entities of the Resident Coordinator system should ensure that their representatives at country level have sufficient dedicated financial and human resources to enable them to contribute meaningfully to coordinated and joint activities on gender issues.

e   The establishment of UN Women with responsibility for system-wide coordination of activities for gender equality and the empowerment of women does not absolve other entities from responsibility for gender mainstreaming in the context of their own mandates. Resident Coordinators should take steps to ensure that gender mainstreaming activities are harmonized and overlap minimized.

f   Entities of the United Nations system should continue to strengthen their gender mainstreaming action and result throughout the institutional and programme-related

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dimensions of their development activity, drawing on the common instruments to the extent possible, and contributing to their further development and harmonization.

B. *Maximize the Potential for Strong Programme Performance by Developing Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming at all Levels.*

a   Explore further the links and relationships among strong and committed leadership, results-base programme management, the availability of gender expertise and the use of targeted or integrated approaches, and with a view to learning lessons on their respective roles and contributions in the achievement of gender quality and women's empowerment that can guide and strengthen future implementation. The results of this work should be widely disseminated.

b   In further developing system-wide gender mainstreaming capacity particular attention should be paid to the factors and competencies that support strong leadership of gender mainstreaming processes, including the development of gender mainstreaming competency profiles and their use in recruitment, selection and performance appraisal of senior personnel.

c   Take measures, such as training programmes, to increase the awareness, knowledge and capacity of all staff to incorporate gender perspectives into their work and to deliver results on gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender audits and instruments such as the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard have been shown to have an important capacity development effect, which could be leveraged.

d   Incorporate attention to the leadership of gender mainstreaming processes into the professional development opportunities offered to senior management.

e   Intensify and upscale, as a matter of urgency, the training of all personnel directly engaged in programme management in results-based management techniques, including the capacity to mainstream gender equality considerations throughout the programme cycle.

C. *Improve Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Sharing of Information In Programmes for Gender Equality*

a   Ensure greater focus on deliverables and the development of clear gender equality outcomes and outputs in programming activities, including in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, so as to ensure that attention is paid to the needs and priorities of women and girls at the country level.

b   Strive to fully implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework guidelines and continue to promote consistent attention to developing clear gender equality outcomes and outputs in the United Nations development assistance frameworks;

c   Encourage the United Nations country teams to use data disaggregated by sex whenever possible in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and in indicators to measure progress, and support the development of national capacity to collect, analyze and use disaggregated data.

d   Encourage improvements in formal and informal knowledge management techniques, systems and technologies, including through the documentation of processes and results not captured by formal monitoring mechanisms, as well as data on country programmes,

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planning instruments, sector-wide approaches, and the results of programme interventions, so that all relevant information on the range of effective gender mainstreaming activity is widely disseminated.

D. Promote and Strengthen System-Wide Corporate Accountability and Incentives for Gender Mainstreaming

a   Promote accountability for gender equality results in evaluations conducted by UNCTs; in particular, ensuring the application of United Nations Evaluation Groups gender related norms and standards as well as guidance on the integration of gender perspective in evaluations.

b   Designate a high-level coordinating body as the responsible accountability mechanism for the United Nations system, with authority to review all relevant monitoring data, including that generated by the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard and Gender Marker, and issue appropriate reward and sanction.

c   Strengthen tracking of resource allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment, including through the further development of the Gender Marker for system-wide use

d   Establish the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard as a mandatory planning and reporting tool for all UNCTs, with annual review of Scorecard recommendations so that they are systematically included in UNCT work plans.

e   Require Resident Coordinators to provide in their annual reports adequate and precise information on progress in gender mainstreaming, including the results demonstrated by the System Wide Action Plan and the UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard, as well as progress made at national level in achieving gender equality goals in accordance with national development plans, policies and priorities.

f   Include gender-mainstreaming performance in performance appraisal reviews of all staff to promote system-wide accountability for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

g   United Nations development system must make greater efforts to promote equality in the workplace and to change organizational culture, its norms and values, so as to achieve an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming.

h   Implementing HR policies such as work life, women's participation in decisions making, gender parity or prevention of sexual harassment, etc. is central to creating a supportive environment for the implementation of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

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Annex 2: UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality Performance Indicators (Scorecard)

The scorecard uses a six-point rating system:

     5 = exceeds minimum standards

     4 = meets minimum standards.

     3 = Needs improvement

     2 = Inadequate

     1 = Missing

     0 = Not applicable.

Scorecard ratings by indicator

Scorecard dimension	Average rating
1.a - Adequate UNCT review of country context related to gender equality and women's empowerment	3.3
1.b- Gender equality and women's empowerment in UNDAF outcomes	3.7
1.c - Gender equality and women's empowerment in UNDAF outputs	3.3
1.d - Indicators to track UNDAF results are gender-sensitive	3.5
1.e - Baselines are gender-sensitive	3
2.a - Gender perspectives are adequately reflected in joint programming	3.9
2.b – Joint programmes	3.6
2.c - UNCT support for national priorities related to gender equality and women's empowerment	3.8
2.d - UNCT support to gender mainstreaming in programme based approaches	3.4
2.e - UNCT support to gender mainstreaming in aid effectiveness processes	3.4
3.a - Involvement of National Machineries for Women / Gender Equality and women's departments at the sub-national level	3
3.b - Involvement of women's NGOs and networks	2.6
3.c - Women from excluded groups included as programme partners and beneficiaries in key UNCT initiatives	2.6
4.a - Multi-stakeholder Gender Theme Group is effective	3.1
4.b - Capacity assessment and development of UNCTs in gender equality and women's empowerment programming	2.7
4.c - Gender expert roster with national, regional and international expertise used by UNCT members	3
5.a - Gender Theme Group coordinator is part of UNCT Heads of Agency group	In 9 out of 16 cases[75]
5.b - UNCT Heads of Agency meetings regularly take up gender equality programming and support issues	3.4
6.a - UNCT Gender responsive budgeting system instituted	2
6.b - Specific budgets allocated to stimulate stronger programming on gender equality and women's empowerment	3.2
7.a - Monitoring and evaluation includes adequate attention to gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment	2.8
8.a - CCA/UNDAF quality control	2.7

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[75] Four Scorecards did not disaggregate the indicators in Dimension 5 so their rating for 5.a is not known.

Extract From the United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution 1997/2: Agreed Conclusions[76]

A. Definition of the concept of gender mainstreaming

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

B. Principles for mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system

Issues across all areas of activity should be defined in such a manner that gender differences can be diagnosed - that is, an assumption of gender-neutrality should not be made.

Responsibility for translating gender mainstreaming into practice is system-wide and rests at the highest levels. Accountability for outcomes needs to be monitored constantly.

Gender mainstreaming also requires that every effort be made to broaden women's participation at all levels of decision-making.

Gender mainstreaming must be institutionalized through concrete steps, mechanisms and processes in all parts of the United Nations system.

Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points.

Clear political will and the allocation of adequate and, if need be, additional human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming from all available funding sources are important for the successful translation of the concept into practice.

.[76] UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), *UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 1997/2: Agreed Conclusions* , 18 July 1997, 1997/2

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