



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (DESA)--DIVISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (DAW)

Good practice

DAW supports gender mainstreaming through the annual joint workplan with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The joint workplan, which has been prepared since 1995, is submitted to both the Commissions on the Status of Women and Human Rights, most recently under a joint symbol number. The joint workplan provides a framework for the integration of a gender perspective in the human rights activities through collaboration and cooperation among the Offices involved. The joint workplan also allows for regular monitoring of those activities and assessment of their impact.

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Recent policy statements

In its work in support of gender mainstreaming, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) is guided by intergovernmental mandates that include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). More recent policy statements include the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (June 2000), and ECOSOC resolution 2002/23.

Programme objectives

The Division's programme objectives include the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of their review by the General Assembly in 2000. The Division is also responsible for the technical and substantive servicing of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in its work under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol. It supports the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the work programmes and activities of intergovernmental forums, entities of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and Member States.

Recent activities

In order to achieve its programme objectives, the Division for the Advancement of Women collaborates with relevant actors in a catalytic approach to identify gender perspectives, and facilitate actions to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy. These activities aim at highlighting the gender perspectives in sectoral areas, and identifying concrete steps that could be taken to integrate such perspectives in policies, programmes, operational and other activities in areas as diverse as human rights, sustainable development, ageing, children, information and communication technologies, and financing for development. The Division also supports competence development programmes for staff of the United Nations to enhance their capacity to reflect gender perspectives in their work.

Reports of the Secretary-General are prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women giving comprehensive overviews and analyses of steps taken to mainstream gender perspectives in all policies and programmes of the United Nations. These cover the activities of the entities of the United Nations system (for example E/CN.6/2003/2, with contributions from UN entities); those of intergovernmental bodies (for example, analysing the attention given to gender perspectives by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, E/2003/69); and the General Assembly and its main committees (A/57/286).

The Division organizes and participates in panel discussions and other meetings to highlight gender perspectives, and to identify opportunities for action and to overcome challenges in gender mainstreaming. Examples of such activities include:

Gender mainstreaming in the functional commissions of the ECOSOC, a panel discussion covering the areas of social development, forestry and crime prevention and criminal justice, organized by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, in preparation for the Council's consideration of its new sub-item on gender mainstreaming (June 2002). This discussion provided an opportunity to share experiences on lessons learned, good practices and challenges ahead with regard to gender mainstreaming through interactive discussions. Member States recommended the holding similar panels in future ECOSOC sessions.

Women and children: from international law to national realities, a panel organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women in collaboration with the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the United Nations Children's Fund as a side event to the General Assembly's twenty-seventh special session on children (May 2002).

Gender perspectives in sustainable development, a panel discussion organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) as a side event during the third meeting of the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (April 2002).

DAW serves as the Chair of the Task Force of the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) on gender perspectives in programme budgets, which includes preparation of studies and convening of workshops. A workshop entitled "Meeting the challenge of gender mainstreaming in programme budget processes" was held in New York in June 2003 with representatives of budget offices and gender focal points from 24 UN entities attending.

The Division collaborates with other parts of the UN Secretariat to promote gender mainstreaming. For example, DAW collaborated with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) in 2002 on the preparation and implementation of training programmes on gender mainstreaming in DESA, the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). DAW also provides advice and support on gender mainstreaming to entities in the UN Secretariat upon request. For example to the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) on the development of the action plan for gender mainstreaming (2002-2003). ■