



# Gender Mainstreaming

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND  
THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)**

## Good practice

ESCAP, in cooperation with women's groups, has been organizing a series of ICT training workshops for women information officers in the region. The fourth workshop is scheduled to take place in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in August 2002. The workshops pay particular attention to both technical and social aspects of the use of ICTs for women's empowerment. Following the three earlier training courses, many participants set up their own websites, mailing lists, databases, online discussion groups, and conducted follow-up training for others. They have maintained communications with each other and with their trainers as a self-support group. ESCAP monitors and evaluates the follow-up activities undertaken by participants through e-mail. ESCAP has also initiated research on how the initiatives of equal ICT access have translated into gender-sensitive policies in the region.

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## Recent policy statements

Resolution 57/3 on the Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly which was adopted by the Commission at its fifty-seventh session in 2001 called for the promotion of gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender concerns into the public policy agenda

## Programme objectives

The objective of subprogramme 3 (Social Development) for the current biennium is "to accelerate attainment by member countries of the goals and targets of poverty alleviation, employment expansion and social integration (in pursuance of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development), including the implementation of global and regional plans of action related to women, youth, human resources development, disabled persons and older persons, and to promote effective partnerships with both governments and civil society". One of the expected accomplishments specifically refers to "advancement of the status of women in the region and promotion of gender equality through mainstreaming gender in the development process in pursuance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its regional and global review outcome".

ESCAP has been trying to ensure that all its projects incorporate gender concerns to the extent possible. Its new project formulation guidelines will include a practical framework to mainstreaming gender.

## Operational activities

ESCAP's ongoing activities with a particular focus on advancement of women and/or gender mainstreaming includes a "Resource Guide on Using Legal Instruments to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children". The Guide aims at raising the awareness of and the application of a variety of legal and international human rights instruments as they pertain to trafficking. Emphasis is placed on the trafficking of women and children as a violation of their rights, using the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Resource Guide is expected to be used as a monitoring tool as well as an instrument to harmonize anti-trafficking legislation in the region. A draft Resource Guide was launched and field-tested at three subregional seminars. ESCAP will revise the draft Resource Guide based on the recommendations provided by the three subregional seminars. The final publication is expected by end 2002/early 2003.

A forthcoming publication entitled "Social Protection for Women", will document a previous study which reviewed the gender aspects and impact of social safety nets, with particular reference to the situation in the ESCAP region following the 1997/98 financial crisis. Social safety nets implemented in Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Thailand in response to the crisis were examined. The study raised the question of how well these programmes served the poor, in particular, women; if programmes were designed with a gender perspective; and

whether programmes benefited women, if at all, and how. It is hoped that this study will help define future courses of action, and improve gender sensitivity in the design of social safety nets.

### **Other recent activities**

In December 2001, ESCAP and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the Division for the Advancement of Women convened the "Asian and Pacific Regional Symposium on Gender Mainstreaming" at which participants exchanged ideas, experiences and good practices on gender mainstreaming. Stronger links between the gender mainstreaming work of the United Nations and efforts at national and regional levels were established.

In April 2002, ESCAP organized two Competence Development Workshops on Gender Mainstreaming for staff members from two substantive divisions. The Workshops were based on the United Nations Gender Mainstreaming Competence Development Framework. The participants of the Workshops acquired professional understanding and knowledge on the relevance of a gender perspective for their specific areas of work, as well as the practical application of gender mainstreaming tools and methodologies in their work. ■