



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISER ON GENDER ISSUES AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (OSAGI)

Good practice

At the request of the Secretary-General, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women coordinated the preparation of the study on women, peace and security, mandated by Security Council resolution 1325, in close cooperation with the Taskforce on Women Peace and Security. The Secretary-General presented his report on women, peace and security (S/2002/1154), based on the findings of the study, to the Security Council during an open debate on 28 October 2002. The report includes 21 recommendations which are primarily addressed to the Council. In the Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2002/32), adopted on 31 October 2002, the Security Council reaffirmed its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 and the importance of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations and post-conflict reconstruction. The study and report have been widely distributed to Member States, the UN system, and civil society, and both documents are being used for education, training and advocacy purposes by a variety of actors.

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Recent policy statements

In its work in support of gender mainstreaming, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is guided by intergovernmental mandates that include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). More recent policy statements include the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, June 2000, ECOSOC resolution 2001/41 and resolution 2002/42, and, in the area of women, peace and security, Security Council resolution 1325.

Programme objectives

The Office of the Special Adviser's programme objectives include promotion of the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of their review by the General Assembly in 2000, in particular implementation, monitoring and reporting on the gender mainstreaming strategy in all programmes, policies and activities throughout the UN system.

Recent activities

The Office of the Special Adviser has systematically encouraged and supported the departments in the Secretariat, the regional commissions and the United Nations Offices in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, as well as other parts of the United Nations system, to increase attention to gender perspectives in their substantive work. The Special Adviser reports to the Secretary-General on progress in gender mainstreaming on a regular basis. She participates at the policy-making level of the Executive Committees for Humanitarian Affairs, Peace and Security, and Economic and Social Affairs, to ensure a gender perspective is taken into account in their work.

Within the United Nations Secretariat, including the regional commissions, the work of the Office of the Special Adviser has focused on advocacy, providing briefings and advice to senior management to promote a greater understanding of gender mainstreaming; developing methodologies and tools, including concept notes and briefing notes on gender perspectives in different sectors and issues; developing competencies and a resource base of consultants to support training on gender mainstreaming; working with institutional arrangements to develop a conducive environment; and establishing contacts and partnerships with entities in the United Nations system, Member States' delegations, NGOs and academics.

Discussions have been held with the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts on ways and means of promoting greater attention to gender perspectives in the instructions for the preparation of medium-term plans and programme budgets, and more effective follow-up on implementation of intentions at the level of programme activities. In the preparations for the programme budget for 2002-2003 guidance on gender mainstreaming were incorporated in the budget instructions and concerted efforts were made by all parts of the United Nations to comply with the guidelines and incorporate gender perspec-

tives in at least one sub-programme, with accompanying indicators of achievement. Specific consultations have been held with the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs on mainstreaming gender perspectives into programme budgets.

Building on collaboration established with the Department of Disarmament Affairs on the development of gender perspectives in relation to small arms, landmines, weapons of mass destruction, DDR (disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation), disarmament initiatives for development and women's advocacy roles in disarmament, the department has recently issued a comprehensive five-year Gender Action Plan, the first of this kind. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is elaborating a similar action plan for humanitarian affairs.

A United Nations publication: "Gender mainstreaming: an overview" has been produced and translated in all UN official languages. The publication focuses on promotion of gender mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations Secretariat and includes attention to policy analysis and development, research, technical assistance, servicing intergovernmental bodies, data collection, analysis and dissemination. It also gives attention to institutional development and capacity-building for gender mainstreaming.

Regional symposia on gender mainstreaming are planned for Africa, Europe, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. These symposia bring together representatives of Governments, regional-level intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and civil society groups, the private sector and academia, and United Nations personnel for a constructive dialogue on gender mainstreaming in the regions.

Interagency activities

The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women chairs the Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality which has worked consistently to ensure greater collaboration and coordination in promoting gender mainstreaming. The work of the interagency group is organized through taskforces which have focused on inventories of good practices in gender mainstreaming, gender focal points and training materials; development of methods to incorporate gender perspectives in programme budgets; and collaborative efforts to influence processes such as CCA/UNDAF, and the implementation of the Security Council resolution 1325.

At its annual meeting in 2003, the Network established three new taskforces: gender and the Millennium Development Goals; gender and trade; and gender and water. Ongoing taskforces are: gender and information and communication technologies; women, peace and security; mainstreaming of a gender perspective in CCA/UNDAF; gender mainstreaming in programme budgets; database activities including WomenWatch; and working methods and the link between CEB and the Network. ■