

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

Good practice

An example of successful partnership has been in the preparation of the UN Conference on Financing for Development. UNDP has prepared a gender and FfD kit, in collaboration with UNIFEM and the Women Environment and Development Organization, for advocacy and awareness-raising on key gender concerns as they relate to financing for development. The kit has been widely disseminated and is used for advocacy and policy.

UNDP's existing network of gender focal points (142) and gender specialists is its most extensive professional network, and a proto-matrix. It forms the core of UNDP's activity on gender, providing a focused cadre of specialists offering substantive advice and guidance to country offices. The network at the Headquarters level comprises the gender team in the BDP Social Development Group, Gender Programme Team composed of the gender focal points of regional and other bureaux and representatives of all units at Headquarters.

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Recent policy statements

Gender equality and women's empowerment remain priorities in the UNDP Strategic Results Framework (SRF) 2000-2003. It focuses on policy dialogue, advocacy, networking and partnerships, and institutionalization of tools and methods to track and measure progress in women's equality.

Programme objectives

The Strategic Results Framework and its annual report are a tool for advocacy on gender equality at UNDP and its mainstreaming into the six practice areas: democratic governance; poverty reduction; environment and energy; conflict and post-conflict; HIV/AIDS; and ICTs. Moreover, UNDP support for gender equality builds on the priority themes of the UNDP Global Co-operation Framework (GCF): namely, globalization - risks and opportunities; participation - governance and democracy; growth - equity and sustainability; crises - knowledge for prevention and management and HIV/AIDS. UNDP fulfils this responsibility by providing policy guidance, and through commitment to build the capacity of all staff and counterparts for mainstreaming gender into their work.

Operational activities

In the Resident Coordinator (RC) system, UNDP has the responsibility, under the Secretary General's reform initiatives, for coordinating UN system activity in programme countries, including the development of common strategies for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at country level. Within the RC system, UNDP has the responsibility to encourage and facilitate the establishment of representative and inclusive Thematic Groups on Gender comprised of national stakeholders and international multilateral and bilateral organizations.

An increasing number of UNDP country offices have made gender equality their common crosscutting concern with specific targets built into each development programme. UNDP-support to programme countries on gender equality, as reflected in the ROAR 2001, is successful and sustainable when it is comprehensive and targets national capacity development, policy and programming support, advocacy and facilitation of dialogue among stakeholders and mainstreams gender across sectors and thematic areas.

UNDP has the responsibility to ensure that its own policy, operations and internal procedures support and advance gender equality. Gender mainstreaming capacity development within the organization, the development of monitoring mechanisms and evaluation tools, as well as gender balance in human resources policy and zero tolerance for sexual harassment remain a priority for UNDP. The purpose of developing gender competence in UNDP is to enable the organization to provide gender-sensitive policy and programme support to countries.

UNDP integrates gender through a series of multi-sectoral and cross-thematic interventions to achieve key development goals. Thus, UNDP develops a holistic approach to gender equality by mainstreaming gender concerns across all programme areas; fosters networks and partnerships and the creation of a wide

community of knowledge among developing countries; draws upon pioneering work initiated by UNIFEM and other partners and upscales successful pilot interventions throughout its field network; coordinates the UN response to country demands with strategic and high impact interventions that bring UN agencies and development partners together around the Millennium Development Goals and the CCA/UNDAF.

UNDP's three-pronged strategy focuses on national capacity-building within all programme countries; scaling up innovation and successful pilots; in-house knowledge and capacity-building in Country Offices and through its global networks of policy specialists and electronic knowledge networking.

In order to implement its gender mainstreaming strategy UNDP is working towards the delivery of four major products, namely:

- En-gendered poverty reduction strategies, including PSRPs, and macroeconomic policy frameworks to address feminised poverty and the socio-economic impact of globalization.
- Gender-sensitive indicators and statistics, including gender sensitive budgeting, to track progress towards gender equality, using CCA/UNDAF and National Human Development Reports to set benchmarks and monitor trends in reaching the Millennium Development Goals
- Legal and institutional capacity building for the implementation of CEDAW, including support to legal reform (land and inheritance rights); legal literacy and advocacy for women's human rights; and training for judicial and law enforcement officials for the protection of women's rights.
- Vulnerability and opportunity assessment as a tool to measure the feminisation of poverty, the gender impact of crisis, including HIV/AIDS and the impact of globalization and retrenchment on women's access to markets, employment and natural resources, such as land, water and energy. This rights based approach is a comprehensive framework for addressing the linkages between the six practice areas of UNDP as they affect women's lives.

These are being delivered through UNDP support to programme countries in en-gendering policy, en-gendering legal frameworks, en-gendering institutions, and en-gendering methodologies and knowledge bases.

Other recent activities

UNDP Business Plans 2000-2003 reaffirm the importance of partnerships within the United Nations for sharing knowledge, developing synergies, building upon respective comparative advantages, and avoiding duplication of efforts. The Plans note UNDP's collaboration with UNIFEM as an example of the successful application of these principles and call attention to UNDP's intention to maximize the unique strengths of both organizations to advance gender equality and implement effective programmes to achieve women's empowerment.

The gender competence of UNDP staff in fact plays an important role in the success of partnerships between UNDP and UNIFEM. Guidance to the organization in fulfilling this responsibility is provided by the Bureau for Development Policy, which offers policy advice and a gender focal point network for support at the country level.

UNDP has set up an electronic global gender knowledge network of nearly 500 regular subscribers. UNDP has an electronic newsletter Gender Beat which has become very popular and used by UNDP staff widely. ■