

IANWGE Workshop
on
“Ten-year review of gender mainstreaming: Focusing on results”

Summary of SAW PowerPoint presentation in NY
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ESCWA Centre for Women (ECW), in the context of the development of indicators and criteria for measurement of changes in the status of Arab women, had undertaken the ambitious task of formulating a compound indicator of the status of women in the Arab countries that was based on previous studies and activities in the sphere and, in particular that undertaken by ESCWA since 1998 with UNIFEM and UNDP with regard to the formulation of indicators for the measurement of the status of women. The contribution of ESCWA to the process of development of the indicator was the addition of two new, subsidiary indicators to the basic package, which included an indicator composed of income, education and health. The two new indicators are legal and cultural indicators, which measure customs, traditions and conventions. The Commission has relied on a multi-disciplinary team in order to develop this indicator, which had been scientifically tested and evaluated in Lebanon. The indicator is still at the primary, experimental stage. The indicator was discussed during the First session of the Committee on Women (Beirut, 4-5 December 2003). Representatives from member states called for support for this effort and emphasized the importance of developing indicators and criteria that would allow for a more precise measurement of achievements and development in the status of women and express the actual and cultural specificity of Arab society and makes it distinct from other societies.

The following are the most important points regarding the indicator:

1. The need to adopt an integrated and comprehensive method in the sphere of indicators in view of their importance in the monitoring and follow-up on development;
2. The need to identify technical terms, concepts, indicators and cultural content for the quantitative measurement of customs and tradition and analysis of their impact on the situation of women and to identify the factors that contribute to their utilization for the measurement of the situation of women, so that the proposed indicator could be used as a tool for improvement of the status of women rather than simply a means of evaluation;
3. The need to revise the indicator using an advanced scientific method and to test it in all the Arab countries using the statistical means prior its adoption;
4. The need to harmonize the indicators with the provisions of CEDAW.