**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY CELEBRATIONS**

**AT THE NAIROBI DUTY STATION**

In Nairobi, the celebrations for the International Women’s Day were coordinated by the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (JPGEWE). Some events planned in the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) compound included a **Multi-generational Dialogue** around the theme: *"Securing equal rights and opportunities for Kenyan women and girls through the MDGs: Gains, losses and opportunities"*on **6 March 2014, from 9.30 a.m. to 12 p.m., in Conference Room 1;** and a **Photo Exhibition.** The Multi-generational Dialogue event brought together over 200 university students and leading practitioners and researchers from the gender sector.

Thereafter, a **Photo Exhibition** of Kenyan women and men’s perceptions of gender equality was launched at the UNON main lobby, at 12.30 p.m on 6 March, by the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kenya, Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas’ representative . The photo exhibition was left on display until 7th March. The Ministry of Devolution and Planning followed with a Government celebration at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre on 8 March 2014. The occasion was graced by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya, Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta.

The Director General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, reminded all UN staff in Nairobi to recommit themselves as the United Nations community in Kenya as they celebrate International Women’s Day 2014, and to “do their utmost to advance gender equality, in the Host Country, in the region and around the globe, together as women and men -- because equality for women is progress for all”.

UNESCO as a member of the UN family in Kenya and specifically the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment joined the celebrations by contributing as member of the panellists during the multi-generational dialogue. Mr. Abdul Rahman Lamin, the Programme Specialist for Social and Human Sciences and I, as the Office’s Gender Focal point represented UNESCO at this event and contributed on the topic:

***“Opportunities that exist for engaging young men and women as advocates for gender equality, particularly using Technology”***

**Key Issues arising from Students'Reactions from the students**

The participating young people from the local universities were very vocal on issues that affect them directly and proposed the following:

1. There is a need to address the root cause of gender based violence – men should be made to account by being involved in the fight against GBV;
2. A multidisciplinary approach should be adopted in addressing gender equality issues;
3. E-violence is rampant and should be addressed as young people are key users of the social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.;
4. Gender should not be seen to mean only women’s empowerment. Currently, there is a general feeling that women are being empowered more than the men and yet there are also needy men and boys out there. It is therefore imperative that the stakeholders consider involving men in empowerment programmes as a strategic means of achieving gender equality
5. There is a need to also address the problems faced by women professionals who often go through a lot but in silence.

At the end of the discussions, it was unanimously agreed that young people need to change their attitude from viewing themselves as “ **leaders of tomorrow”** to **“today’s leaders”.** The slogan**- “YOU ARE ONE-- AND THE ONE”** was adopted for all young people for the post 2015 strategy.