

# **GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY**

A summary review of UNESCO's accomplishments  
since the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995)

Unit for the Promotion of the Status of Women and Gender Equality  
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II. **The ACC Statement on Gender Mainstreaming** (to serve as input for the Special Session of the General Assembly on "Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century", 5-9 June 2000, New York)

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"The time is past when a women's movement had to exclude men in the fight 'against' patriarchy. The time has come rather for women's visions to restructure and redefine work in order to fashion a new society for women and men based on women's experience and skills as care-givers and reproducers. It is not a question of adding gender to the world's major cosmologies, but rather of rewriting the latter at their very roots."

Wendy Harcourt  
*Our Creative Diversity*  
Report of the World Commission on Culture  
And Development, 1995, p.129.

## Preface

The current process of reform of UNESCO and the preparation of a new six-year strategy for 2001-2006 provide a unique opportunity to integrate fully into its planning, programming, implementation and evaluation a *gender mainstreaming practice*, which is advocated by the United Nations and other major intergovernmental bodies (OECD, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Union, the Council of Europe, etc.), private foundations and non-governmental organisations, especially since the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China, in September 1995.

The implementation in the period between 1995 and 2000 of UNESCO's major commitments regarding the achievement of gender equity and equality is presented in three parts. **Part I** outlines major policy decisions, adopted since 1995 by the General Conference, linked to relevant UN decisions on matters concerning the advancement of women and gender equality, and explains what *gender mainstreaming* means. **Part II** summarises UNESCO's achievements of the past five years, while **Part III**, "Elements for UNESCO's Future Gender Mainstreaming Strategy" is a preliminary outline, indicating (i) gender equality issues that have emerged as priorities and for which UNESCO has a comparative advantage because of its multidisciplinary mandate, and (ii) how a *gender mainstreaming* can be integrated into the Organisation's work both in terms of policy and organisational/practical considerations.

It will be noted that throughout the text, the term *gender equity/equality* is used rather than "the advancement of women" or other terms emphasising women, because of its broader conceptual scope. While this term encompasses policy guidelines and actions in favour of the advancement of women and girls, it reaches beyond these to include also men and boys as their involvement and attitude change is essential in the process of creating social relations in which neither of the sexes will be discriminated. This choice reflects the important conceptual shift, developed in the 1980s and consecrated at the Fourth World Conference of Women (Beijing, 1995), from the "women in development" (WID) paradigm to the "gender and development" (GAD) approach, which now prevails in the UN system and beyond.

The present review was done on the basis of the information received from a large number of colleagues and particularly the sector's gender focal points. The drafting and the final text were prepared by the BPE/WGE team, notably (by alphabetical order) Breda Pavlic, Lydia Ruprecht and Susana Sam -Vargas, with the assistance of Tosin Animashawun, Benedict Faccini, Maxime Guitton and Nadia Medjahed.

Breda Pavlic  
Director  
Women and Gender Equality, Unit

## Part I

# A GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY

### 1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

1. The Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), proposed gender mainstreaming as a key strategy to reduce inequalities between women and men. Gender mainstreaming, known also as mainstreaming a gender perspective, is *"the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action including legislation, policies, and programmes, in any area and at all levels"*.<sup>1</sup> It is a call to all Governments and other actors to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs, so that **before decisions are taken**, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.<sup>2</sup> In other words, it is a call to place human relations, as manifested in their "male" and "female" roles, at the centre of all programming, action, and evaluation, instead of treating these as marginal, or even "ghettoised" phenomena. Gender mainstreaming thus underscores the principle that there can be no sustainable development as long as discrimination of one of the two sexes/genders exists. The injustice created by inequalities based on gender/sex discrimination threatens in the long run not only the discriminated gender but the entire society.

2. In order to ensure sustainable development, it has become imperative to recognise the importance of the two sexes (male and female) as complementary biological entities and moreover, to respect full equity and equality of each of the two genders, i.e., of the social roles that men and women assume in their lives. These roles, it must be emphasised, are socio-political and cultural constructs, which have evolved through history, and vary from one society to another. The fact that the roles attributed to men and women are not static and eternally valid but, on the contrary, that these roles change, have changed and are prone to further change, is

essential in explaining why the term *gender* is now in the forefront on the debate, and why it is not interchangeable with the term *sex* but is, in fact, complementary to it. While the sex of a being is a given, the gender roles in each society are, in the ultimate analysis, a consequence of political choice. How men and women are perceived and treated in a society is one of the cornerstones of any political system, and one of its most revealing facets.

Gender *equality*, equality between men and women, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender *equity* means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

*ABC Of Women Worker's Rights And Gender Equality*, ILO, Geneva, 2000, p.48.

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<sup>1</sup> ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions (E/1997/100).

<sup>2</sup> (E/CN.6/1999/CRP.3, Executive summary of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development).

## Gender

*Gender* refers to the social differences and relations between men and women which are learned, vary widely among societies and cultures, and change over time. The term *gender* does not replace the term sex, which refers exclusively to biological differences between men and women. For example, statistical data are broken down by sex. The term *gender* is used to analyse the roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and needs of women and men in all areas and in any given social context. Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society, community or other social group. They condition activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived as male or female. Gender roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity and religion, and by the geographical, economic and political environment.

## Gender Analysis

*Gender analysis* is a tool to diagnose the differences between women and men regarding their specific activities, conditions, needs, access to and control over resources, and access to development benefits and decision-making. It studies the linkages of these and other factors in the larger social, economic, political and environmental context.

Gender analysis entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis is the first step in gender-sensitive planning for promoting gender equality.

*ABC Of Women Worker's Rights And Gender Equality*, ILO, Geneva, 2000, pp.47-48.

## 1. 1. From "Women in Development" to "Gender and Development"

3. The "gender and development" (GAD) paradigm, proposed in the process leading to the Beijing Conference, is perceived as an evolution from the hitherto dominant "women in Development" (WID) approach. As explained in the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action, *"the WID Approach focused on how women could be better integrated into the existing 'men/male made world' and corresponding development initiatives. Targeting women's productive work to the exclusion of their reproductive work, this approach was characterised by income-generating projects for women which failed to address the systemic causes of gender inequality"*.<sup>3</sup>

4. The WID approach tended to view women as passive recipients of development assistance, rather than as active agents in transforming their own economic, social, political and cultural realities. A key outcome was that women's concerns were viewed in isolation, as separate issues, leading to their marginalisation in the state system and other social structures. In practical terms, WID led to distortions such as the "tag on reflex" (i.e., it was deemed sufficient to simply allocate a part of program resources for "women projects" in order to honour one's commitment to the WID requirements) and, beyond this, to treating "women issues" as basically unrelated to major development concerns such as human rights issues, democratic governance, protection of environment, globalisation, peace and disarmament, etc.

5. The "gender and development" approach seeks to integrate gender awareness and competence into mainstream development, while recognising that development activities may affect women and men differently (due to sexual differences as well as historic circumstances), and therefore emphasising the need to apply appropriate gender planning in order to ensure that the resulting conditions and results are equitable to women and men. This approach recognises that:

- ◆ women and men have different and special needs;
- ◆ women do not constitute a homogeneous group because, while being of female sex,

<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth Plan of action on Gender and Development, 1995.

each woman is also marked by her race/ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference and other factors;

- ◆ women tend to be disadvantaged compared to men in terms of their access to and control of the means of production, and of their welfare in genera;
- ◆ gender differences can, however, also result in men being disadvantaged in certain societies, although presently, in most parts of the world, it is above all women that are victims of discrimination.

## 1. 2. Gender Mainstreaming Principles

6. As stated in key UN documents, and in those of other major international organisations, **gender mainstreaming** means:

- ◆ forging and strengthening the political will to achieve gender equality and equity, at the local, national, regional and global levels;
- ◆ incorporating a gender perspective into the planning processes of all ministries and departments of government, particularly those concerned with macroeconomic and development planning, personnel policies and management, and legal affairs;
- ◆ integrating a gender perspective into all phases of sectoral planning cycles, including the analysis development, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation policies, programmes and projects;
- ◆ using sex-disaggregated data in statistical analysis to reveal how policies impact differently on women and men;
- ◆ increasing the numbers of women in decision-making positions in government and the private and public sectors;
- ◆ providing tools and training in gender awareness, gender analysis and gender

planning to decision-makers, senior managers and other key personnel;

- ◆ forging linkages between governments, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure a better use of resources.

7. The three key principles of gender mainstreaming, as defined by the Commonwealth Secretariat, are:

**empowerment**, which means having control over the decisions and issues that affect one's life. It means having representation in decision-making bodies and control over the distribution of resources. Where women are underrepresented in decision-making fora, deliberate action to redress the imbalance is necessary. Participation in planning and decision-making processes has the additional benefit of increasing a sense of commitment to and ownership of the plan's objectives.

**accountability**, which underlines that change within an organisation and within society cannot be achieved unless the people who constitute these feel motivated to do so. Motivation for change can be encouraged through positive means such as incentive systems, which provide rewards for the achievement of specific goals, or through less positive means such as boundary systems, which define what behaviour is acceptable/unacceptable, what are the minimum standards of achievement and what sanctions are imposed if these standards are not attained.

**integration** of effort, as well as a high degree of analysis and co-ordination are necessary in order to ensure that gender mainstreaming functions as a holistic approach aimed at the transformation of the structures that create and perpetuate gender inequalities, rather than focusing on piecemeal interventions. Integration is necessary at different levels and in different sectors of government, society and individual organisations. It is necessary also in order to reflect the diversity in society, as "women" and "men" are not homogeneous categories, but include other constructs such as race/ethnicity, class/caste and age. Gender

inequalities cannot be addressed adequately unless the inequalities arising from these other variables are also addressed.

8. All major international organisations are now in the process of integrating gender mainstreaming into their policies by including it into their mission statements, operations (organisational structure, budget, practical

application, i.e., action) and in expected results. Nonetheless, it is important to underline that the gender mainstreaming strategy cannot stand alone. Women-specific programmes and projects remain as important as ever, but they should be seen as complementary to gender mainstreaming efforts rather than as the main, or even single, purpose.

UNESCO's three-pronged approach (explained further) is amply justified and remains therefore wholly valid for future work.



### **The ECOSOC definition of gender mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming is *"the process of assessing the implications for women and men for any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making Women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."*

*Agreed Conclusions on Gender Mainstreaming, ECOSOC, 1997*

Example:

### **Gender in the *UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace***

This declaration, adopted by the UN General Assembly at its 53rd session in 1999, refers to gender in the following alinea:

- Article 1 (g) *"Respect for and promotion of equal rights of and opportunities for women and men";*
- Article B 9 (d) *"Ensure equality of access for women, especially girls, to education";*
- Article B 12 *"Ensure equality between women and men:*
- (a) Integration of a gender perspective into the implementation of all relevant international instruments;*
  - (b) Further implementation of international instruments promoting equality between women and men;*
  - (c) Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, with adequate resources and political will, and through, inter alia, the elaboration, implementation and follow up of the national plans of action;*
  - (d) Promote equality between women and men in economic, social and political decision-making;*
  - (e) Further strengthening of efforts by the relevant entities of the United Nations system for the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women;*
  - (f) Provision of support and assistance to women who have become victims of any form of violence, including in the home, workplace and during armed conflicts."*
- Article B 16 (j) *"Promoting greater involvement of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts and, in particular, in activities promoting a culture of peace in post-conflict situations."*

## 2. UNESCO'S COMMITMENT

9. By promoting gender equality and equity, UNESCO advocates a new partnership between women and men, girls and boys, i.e., a partnership based on mutual respect, dialogue and the sharing of public and private responsibilities. World-wide experience has shown that by marginalising women a society locks up half of its potential, and thereby denies itself a chance for genuine development. As stated in **Our Creative Diversity**,<sup>4</sup> "*Gender rights must become an integral part of basic human and cultural rights. And this lesson must be learnt by all human beings, irrespective of their gender, right from their childhood.*" Given its mandate, UNESCO is expected by the world community, and particularly the UN system, to play a major role in advocating and affirming women's rights, and gender rights more broadly, through its work in education, science and social and human sciences, culture and communication.

### 2.1. The Pre-Beijing endeavours

10. Since its inception, UNESCO has endeavoured to promote equality between men and women through action in its fields of competence. While its primary focus has been on providing literacy and education programmes for women and girls, much attention has also been given to developing policy guidelines and advisory services to Member States on how to overcome discrimination of women and girls in areas of the Organisation's competence. UNESCO was thus among the first to cope already in the 1980s with the complex issues of prostitution and trafficking of women and girls, the portrayal of women in the mass media, seminal work on eradication of sexist stereotypes in school textbooks, violence in the mass media, and other. Work on these topics was often of ground-breaking pioneering importance, but was later, unfortunately, placed on the sidelines or even abandoned. Moreover, although rarely mentioned explicitly, UNESCO's work has been fundamentally geared to implementing *The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women*,<sup>5</sup> the objectives of which are still valid.

<sup>4</sup> Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (UNESCO, 1996, p.278).

<sup>5</sup> Strategy adopted in 1985 at the Third World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya).

11. In 1994, an evaluation was carried out of UNESCO's action concerning women and gender equality covering the period 1988 to 1993. The evaluation pointed out that the Organisation had no gender policy concept (framework) and that therefore "*Women's issues were not systematically addressed in the planning and programming process. The Organisation has not been able, either, to develop sectoral gender-based strategies in its fields of competence. Although there were important differences between the sectors in terms of mainstreaming and implementing women-specific programmes, the activities in support of women remained generally rather scattered and often based on individual initiatives...notwithstanding the fact that in all sectors a number of successful programmes and projects were identified and analysed by the evaluators*".<sup>6</sup>

The evaluation showed that:

- ◆ budget constraints had an adverse effect upon gender research;
- ◆ there was little intersectoral co-operation on activities benefiting women (e.g., no intersectoral project aimed at helping women to cope with the problems of environmental protection, although there were major activities in this area in several sectors);
- ◆ the individuals assigned as "focal points" were all women, with hardly any training in "gender approach", with little influence and normally having the "gender responsibility" in addition (on top) of other professional assignments;
- ◆ weak collaboration with National Commissions;
- ◆ Insufficient documentation, publications, etc. on women and gender issues.

12. The evaluation put forth the following recommendations (given here in abbreviated form):

- ◆ the need for a clear strategy with well-defined

<sup>6</sup> Final report "Evaluation of UNESCO's Transverse Theme Women 1988-1993 (1995)" in compliance with 26 C/Resolution 11.1 and 27 C/Resolution 11.1 of UNESCO. The evaluation was carried out by Delawit Aklilu, Margareta de Goys and Geraldine Novelo.

- ◆ priorities and policies for each sector;
- ◆ the need for the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to take fuller account of aspects relating to women;
- ◆ training activities in gender issues;
- ◆ the need for an intersectoral and co-ordinated approach in designing and execution of activities;
- ◆ action-oriented research work and studies in selected fields which reflect the international debate on gender issues and apply this to the needs of the field;
- ◆ recruitment of the "focal points" should be based on skills and ability, regardless of sex;
- ◆ the principal co-ordinator should have this as full-time assignment and the unit should be strengthened;
- ◆ the need to develop an accessible and organised set of institutional records of activities on behalf of women, along with a documentation centre, data base, bibliography, etc.

13. Drawing from the preliminary conclusions of this evaluation, UNESCO prepared a policy document, entitled *The UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality* that was submitted to the Beijing Conference<sup>7</sup> and was subsequently integrated into UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001. What follows is a concise review of UNESCO's action on gender issues which was guided by the decisions of the Beijing Conference, and by the United Nations System-Wide Medium Term Plan for the Advancement of Women 1996-2001, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1995, and subsequently, the same year, by the General Conference of UNESCO.

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<sup>7</sup> A UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality, Position paper presented by the Director-General of UNESCO. Beijing, 1995. Its core elements are given in Annex 1 of this document.

## The UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality

- Promote education for women's self-empowerment at all levels and in all fields;
- Encourage the equal access to knowledge in all fields, notably within science and technology;
- Support to women's human rights by implementing the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) and other normative instruments, and through "legal literacy" for girls and women;
- Promote the attainment of gender parity, women's full citizenship and equal participation in policy-making, and the elimination of stereotyped roles and expectations;
- Foster partnership and dialogue, and develop a new gender contract, underlining the long-term gains from the social transformation towards gender-sensitive societies (e.g., in fighting poverty and exclusion);
- Mainstream a gender perspective in the conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to development, peace and security;
- Collect and analyse gender-specific statistical data and develop appropriate indicators and guidelines to assist Member-States in monitoring progress made towards more gender-sensitive societies;
- Encourage women's creativity and freedom of expression by supporting their cultural activities, research, training, capacity-building, networking, exchange of information and women's NGOs;
- Support a pluralistic and editorially independent media by favouring the broad and active participation of women in decision-making and by encouraging more diversified and non-discriminatory images of women;
- Assist in building a culture of peace in the minds of women and men by recognising women's capacity for leadership and non-violent conflict resolution.

### 2.2 The Beijing Platform for Action impact

14. In November 1995, the General Conference of UNESCO decided that "women" were one of the priority groups in its Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001, together with "Africa" and the "Least Developed Countries" ("youth" was added as a fourth priority group two years later). In order to implement the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action, the General Conference adopted a **three-pronged**

**strategy** for enhancing action in favour of gender equality. The strategy consists of: (i) mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policy-planning, programming, implementation and evaluation activities; (ii) promoting the participation of women at all levels and fields of activity, giving particular attention to women's own priorities and perspectives in redefining both the goals and means of development; and (iii) developing specific programmes and activities for the benefit of girls and women that promote equality, endogenous capacity-building and full citizenship.

### **Twelve Critical Areas of Concern in The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

The Platform focuses on twelve areas of critical concern, all of which are relevant to UNESCO's work. These are:

- ◆ The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women;
- ◆ Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training;
- ◆ Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services;
- ◆ Violence against women;
- ◆ The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation;
- ◆ Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources;
- ◆ Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels;
- ◆ Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women ;
- ◆ Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women;
- ◆ Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media;
- ◆ Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment;
- ◆ Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl-child.

*Beijing Platform for Action, para 44*

15. As regards the Beijing Platform for Action, the General Conference of UNESCO selected five critical areas of concern, out of its twelve, as being particularly important to UNESCO (28 C/Resolution 5.16). These are:

#### **UNESCO's five critical areas of concern.**

- ◆ equal access to education for women and girls;
- ◆ women's contribution to peace;
- ◆ women's access to the media, and their image in the media;
- ◆ women's contribution to the management of natural resources and environmental protection;
- ◆ the girl-child with regard to access to education and literacy.

16. It also adopted **six resolutions**, the implementation of which is regularly reported to

the Executive Board and the General Conference as part of the Director-General's report on the execution of the programme.

#### **UNESCO Resolutions:**

- ◆ 28 C/Res. 1.13 -The elimination of discriminatory stereotypes of women;
- ◆ 28 C/Res. 4.7 -Toronto and Beijing Platforms for Action on women and the media;
- ◆ 28 C/Res. 5.15 - Women's contribution to a culture of peace;
- ◆ 28 C/Res. 5.16 - UNESCO's contribution to the improvement of the status of women;
- ◆ 28 C/Res. 20.5 - Revision of UNESCO's basic texts for the

purpose of removing all sexist language and to ensure the use of neutral terminology and wording;

- ◆ 29 C/Res. 49 - Statistical programmes and services emphasizing the need for gender sensitive data, statistics and indicators).

### 2.3. The ACC and other major commitments

17. As a further concretisation at the highest UN level of the Beijing commitments, the Executive Heads of the UN system adopted in 1998 and 1999 two ***ACC Statements on gender mainstreaming in the UN system*** (see [Annex 2](#)). The Director-General thus committed UNESCO to, inter alia, "*intensified action in support of accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and gender mainstreaming*" by:

- ◆ Providing strengthened support to Governments at the country level in their implementation of national action plans for gender equality and institutional capacity building;
- ◆ Promoting gender mainstreaming in policy dialogue with Governments, Parliaments and civil society;
- ◆ Ensuring that gender equality implications are addressed in all sectoral and thematic work (in each organisation), including through increased capacity of all staff for gender;
- ◆ Mainstreaming, through gender-sensitive planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, the development and use of good practices, and other measures;
- ◆ Developing and refining tools and resources to guide gender-responsive policy-making and planning, including use of statistics which are sex-disaggregated and highlight issues of gender equality;

- ◆ Continuing to develop and implement programmes and projects targeted to women in order to reduce existing inequalities and to promote gender equality;
- ◆ Taking the necessary steps to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in country programming such as the common country assessment (CCA), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Consolidated Appeal process;
- ◆ Ensuring an increased focus on both women and men and the relations between them, and men's full participation in promoting gender equality at all levels;
- ◆ Providing the necessary support and resources towards the realisation of these commitments, including strengthening the mandates and resources of organisational mechanisms, such as gender units and gender focal points, which are necessary to realise the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

18. The most recent ACC Statement furthermore emphasises that the Executive Heads will:

- ◆ Strengthen managerial competence and accountability for gender equality and a gender-sensitive work environment;
- ◆ Improve recruitment policies and practices to ensure that women are appointed in UN organisations, especially in senior management and operations positions;
- ◆ Improve career development opportunities for women;
- ◆ Create and enhance a supportive and gender-sensitive work environment;
- ◆ Develop effective accountability mechanisms to ensure that actions match these policy commitments.

19. It is recalled that important statements concerning gender equality have been included also in the final documents of all global conferences and summits of the past decade, notably the World Conference on Human Rights (1993, Vienna); International Conference on Population and Development (1994, Cairo); World Summit for Social Development (1995, Copenhagen); United Nations Conference on Human Settlements - Habitat II (1996, Istanbul), the World Food Summit (1996, Rome) and, most recently, the Second World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference (2000, The Hague).

20. Finally, it should be noted that the implementation of the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (CEDAW) has been another major commitment of the past twenty years which

is complementary to the above mentioned. Adopted by the UN in 1979 and signed and/or ratified to date by 165 States Parties, this Convention is regarded as "the Bill of rights for women, as it sets out in legally binding form internationally accepted principles and measures to achieve equal rights for women everywhere. UNESCO is responsible above all for the implementation of its Article 10 which deals with ensuring women equal rights with men in the field of education, including physical education and sport. However, most of the Organisation's programme in fact touches also many of the Convention's other articles. This is reported annually to the CEDAW committee. In addition to this, UNESCO has been one of the most active promoters of the Convention, first through the world-wide dissemination of the UNESCO/CEDAW Manifesto Towards a Gender-inclusive Culture through Education (adopted in February 1995) and, more recently, through UNESCO's *Passport to Equality* (see further).

## Part II

### UNESCO'S ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE BEIJING

21. Shortly after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the General Conference decided to reinforce UNESCO's action in favour of women and gender equality. Taking into account the recommendations of the 1995 evaluation, its political commitment, the General Conference articulated by adopting the three-pronged strategy and the UNESCO Agenda for Gender Equality. What follows is a summary review of UNESCO's accomplishments regarding the empowerment of women and gender equality, particularly in reference to specific strategic objectives and actions articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action. The presentation focuses primarily on "good/best practices", i.e., on activities and projects which had an evident impact. Prepared as an interim report, it is not an exhaustive review of all the activities undertaken in the five year period, nor an in-depth critical evaluation. Its purpose is to provide a basic information on the present state of the art in order to facilitate the outlining of future UNESCO action in favour of gender equality and equity.

#### 1. THE THREE-PRONGED STRATEGY

22. UNESCO's three-pronged approach to women's empowerment and gender equality consists of:

- **mainstreaming a gender perspective** in all policy-planning, programming, implementation and evaluation activities;
- **promoting the participation of women at all levels and fields** of activity, giving particular attention to women's own priorities and perspectives in redefining both the goals and means of development; and
- **developing specific programmes and activities** for the benefit of girls and women, particularly those that promote equality, endogenous capacity-building and full citizenship.

23. The accomplishments, outlined below, concerning the first two prongs, i.e., "gender

mainstreaming" and "promoting Women's participation and vision", have been grouped together as these often intertwine. Those concerning the third prong are given separately under the subsequent two headings, i.e., "Five Priority Areas for Women's and Girls' Empowerment" and "Other Areas of Critical Concern", as these constitute the bulk of UNESCO's work.

#### *Mainstreaming a gender perspective*

24. The first prong expressed itself through the following actions: promoting a gender perspective in UNESCO's work through daily co-operation between the Gender Unit (BPE/WGE) and the gender focal point network constituted by programme focal points, both at Headquarters and in the Field, production of gender mainstreaming tools and specific awareness-raising activities. These are briefly summarised below.

25. All UNESCO major programmes now include projects and activities geared to empowering women and girls. This, however, is largely still anchored in the "women in development" (WID) paradigm, while the more advanced "gender and development" (GAD) approach has only just begun. The first approach is reflected mostly within the framework of ten "special projects" of varying duration and with more or less important financial resources, including extra-budgetary funds. A brief presentation of the objectives and accomplishments of these "special projects" is given further on, in the chapter presenting UNESCO's priority areas. Particular attention was given to women's empowerment through two specific programmes, namely (i) *Women and a Culture of Peace*, which addressed more in-depth women's role in peace-building and the complex issue of violence, and (ii) *Promotion of the Status of Women in the Mediterranean*, focussing on fostering co-operation among women in this highly diverse geo-political region. The accomplishments of the first are presented under "Five Priority Areas of Action", while those concerning the Mediterranean, being more heterogeneous, are included in various parts of this review.



26. In order to achieve within UNESCO's programmes the afore-mentioned shift from the "women in development" (WID) to the "gender and development" (GAD) approach, it was first necessary to invest much time and effort to help the Secretariat and its partners understand the importance of such a shift, its methodological implications, and how gender mainstreaming can lead to it. Attention was therefore focused on developing gender mainstreaming tools, such as: promoting the use of gender-neutral terminology and other means of eliminating sexist stereotypes, promoting the use of sex-disaggregated data and statistics, and development of gender sensitive indicators in UNESCO's fields of competence, federating and promoting the Organisation's women and gender activities through Internet and other means, assisting Member States in capacity-building for gender mainstreaming and women-specific projects, promoting the knowledge of normative instruments relevant to gender equality issues, such as CEDAW, and other.

27. **The Gender Web site** was launched in 1997 to provide information on gender-related activities undertaken by UNESCO's programme sectors, field offices, National Commissions, NGOs and other partners. The site is linked to Women Watch, created in 1998 by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UNESCO was among the first to support its creation) which provides valuable information on UN endeavours concerning the empowerment of women and gender equality, and has been particularly useful in preparing the "Beijing + 5" session of the UN GA in the year 2000. UNESCO's Education Sector was directly involved as the principal moderator of the electronic discussion group on Women's and Girls' Education as part of the preparations for the Beijing+5" session. It is regrettable, however, that the full potential of this UNESCO site has not yet been used, due to insufficient human resources, and slow content input from the programme sectors.

28. Other actions aimed at sensitising UNESCO staff, the Organisation's partners and the public at large, to gender-related issues, include:

- ◆ publication in 1997 in English, French and Spanish of a *Women-Girls-Gender Information Kit*, which was distributed mostly through field offices and NGOs;
- ◆ publication in 1999 of the bilingual

(English and French) *Guidelines on Gender-Neutral Language*, which have been disseminated widely through UNESCO, UN and other networks;

- ◆ publication in ten languages of the *Passport to Equality*, promoting the CEDAW, which is being distributed world-wide with the help of UN sister agencies, NGOs, UNESCO clubs and associations, etc.;
- ◆ in-house dissemination of *Guidelines for the integration of gender issues in evaluation and monitoring activities*, available in English, French and Spanish;
- ◆ various activities organised each year on and around the International Women's Day (8th March), in collaboration with women's NGOs, and geared to awareness-raising on gender issues in UNESCO's fields of competence.

29. **Sex-disaggregated data (statistics) and gender sensitive indicators** are essential for measuring what progress has been achieved and for identifying problem areas that need to be addressed in terms of gender equality. The UN and other international organisations repeatedly underline the urgency of providing such data, and the slowness in developing adequate gender sensitive development indicators. UNESCO has been the main provider of basic sex-disaggregated statistics in education. As national capacity-building for such work is of crucial importance, UNESCO organised several regional and subregional workshops for training statisticians in light of gender mainstreaming requirements. These were held in Accra (Ghana) in 1996, Abidjan (Ivory Coast) in 1997 and in Amman (Jordan) in 1998. These workshops enabled the participants, mostly women, to master techniques for the analysis of gender disparities in education and literacy; to become aware of the importance of gender-sensitive indicators, and to promote regional co-operation in the collection and/or dissemination of sex-disaggregated statistics in education. A handbook on *Gender-Sensitive Education Statistics and Indicators - A Practical Guide* was produced in 1997 (English and French) and subsequently in Arabic, as a result of these workshops.

30. Similar work is now being initiated in the field of science. *A UNESCO toolkit on Gender*

*Indicators for Engineering Science and Technology* has been produced within the framework of the UNISPAR programme. This user-friendly package aims to provide better quantitative and qualitative information on women and girls in science and technology, career choices and professional development. It is meant to be used by decision-makers in governments and organisations as well as by teachers and students, for awareness raising, teaching and learning. This important achievement has made it all the more evident how urgent it is for UNESCO to develop a comprehensive programme aimed at helping Member States to develop their institutional capacities for generating sex-disaggregated statistics and gender sensitive indicators in the field of science, as well as in education. Efforts are being made to ensure that this task is well anchored in the programme of UNESCO's newly created International Institute for Statistics.

31. Combating **sexist terminology**, as a reflection and at the same time a reinforcement of sexist stereotypes and discriminating attitudes, received particular attention in the past few years, both in substantive programmes and in UNESCO's administrative procedures.<sup>8</sup> In education, training workshops were held at which training tools were developed for use at the governmental level as well as in schools and other institutions. *A Manual on Gender Sensitivity, A Training Manual* was developed for curriculum and material developers, policy-makers and teachers, especially those dealing with literacy. It provides basic information on gender issues, supported by facts and figures, and explains some of the harmful sexist attitudes, prejudices and policies which reinforce gender stereotypes and hamper women's access to education and decision making.

32. The *Guidelines on Gender-Neutral Language*, published in English and French in 1998 as a revised and updated version of the earlier brochure, have proven to be a successful tool for overcoming entrenched sexist language pitfalls. The bilingual booklet has been disseminated widely, not only through UNESCO networks but also within the UN system, other intergovernmental organisations, many non-governmental ones and various university and other institutions. Its usefulness speaks in favour

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<sup>8</sup> Underlined by the General Conference of UNESCO, 28 C/Resolution 20.5 (Revision of UNESCO's basic texts for the purpose of removing all sexist language) and 28 C/Resolution 1.13 (The elimination of discriminatory stereotypes of women).

of producing it in the next biennium also in other languages, notably in Arabic and Spanish. Whether related to this or not, gender neutral language appears to be increasingly respected in UNESCO's administration, notably in its post-vacancy announcements and other similar documents. Such improvement, however, has yet to be achieved in many of the Member States, notably by collaborating on this issue with UNESCO's National Commissions.

33. The complex issue of **sexist stereotypes**,<sup>9</sup> has emerged as a particularly important issue that requires priority attention. The work done so far by UNESCO, mostly in education and partly in communication (the portrayal of women by the media) is only the first step that touches the tip of the iceberg. Already prior to the Beijing Conference, UNESCO produced a teaching guide, *Down with Stereotypes!* which is available in French, Spanish and Russian. The guide, produced with the help of experts from all regions of the world, explains how sexist stereotypes are transmitted from one generation to another, and how these can be substituted by other representations that are more fair to women and more in line with gender equality aspirations. A similar publication spotlighting gender terminology in Arabic has been prepared by UNESCO in Jordan, along with conducting a survey into gender role stereotypes in primary schools. Similarly, the Association Européenne du Côté des Filles designed, with the support of UNESCO and the European Union, a web site for children, parents, teachers and librarians, which helps them understand and overcome sexist stereotypes. The web site uses the story of a family which is lead to question gender stereotypes due to an unexpected, traumatic event, which disrupts the usual stereotyped roles and identities of all members of the family, and offers them a possibility to change their attitudes. In the same vein, in El Salvador, UNESCO produced a range of non-formal education board games for girls and women. Assembled according to several themes, such as peace and democracy, environmental conservation, gender issues, and other, these board games stimulate reflection and a questioning of attitudes. Thus, in the game *La Juana Sin Miedo*, the questions appearing on colourful cards allow the player to progress through the game. All the questions relate to women's and girls' human rights, such as their right to education, marriage, employment, family planning, etc.

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<sup>9</sup> Underlined by the General Conference of UNESCO, 28 C/Resolution 1.13.

34. The work done so far on sexist/gender stereotypes shows that a much more systematic and concerted effort to eradicate sexist stereotypes needs to be envisaged by UNESCO. Their impact is mentioned in many key UNESCO documents.<sup>10</sup> Given the fact that stereotypes in general, and gender stereotypes in particular, are anchored in and perpetuated through education (school as well as family), culture, communication (the mass media as well as new communication technologies), religious institutions, various associations, etc. it is indeed a par excellence subject which UNESCO is best placed to treat, given its multidisciplinary mandate. The knowledge that UNESCO could develop on this important and complex issue, drawing upon information and experience that would come from universities and research centres from all regions and cultures of the world, would constitute a very valuable contribution. Experience has shown so far that practically all of the UN agencies meet with the problem of gender stereotypes in their respective fields of work, and therefore seem to expect from UNESCO a basic overall strategy. It is therefore proposed to take this into account in UNESCO's future work on gender issues (see Part III).

35. A very important aspect of gender mainstreaming is its inclusion in **budgetary** processes that accompany programming processes in any institution. All UN entities have been invited to integrate the gender dimension into their budgets as well as their programmes. A task force created by the ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, composed of representatives from UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, DAW and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, began its work on this matter in 1999. The report of this task force will be presented at the Beijing+5 session. As is the case with nearly all of the UN entities, this process is only beginning in UNESCO. The Organisation's move towards results-based budgeting system, which began developing in 2000, is an opportunity to initiate also a bolder gender equality strategy, which includes gender mainstreaming in budgeting and tools for effective monitoring and periodic evaluation of the results (see Part III). So far, inputs into the budget process have been limited

to a more explicit earmarking of the funds for "women/girls specific" projects- within major programmes. These funds, however, have so far not had any specific budget codes, which has meant in practice that it was very difficult to monitor their use. Moreover, UNESCO still largely operates within the WID framework that targets women specific projects rather than focusing on women and men in relation to all projects and programmes, which is essential in gender mainstreaming. In order to succeed in shifting UNESCO's approach from WID to GAD, and integrating a tracking through a budget coding system, the entire gender mainstreaming concept needs to be firmly anchored into current efforts to introduce a new programming and budgeting system.

### ***Enhancing women's participation and priorities***

36. The second dimension of the three-pronged strategy, focuses on encouraging a broad and active participation of women at all levels and fields of activity, paying particular attention to their priorities, perspectives and contribution to the rethinking of the goals and means of development. The Organisation's strategy in this respect has evolved in different ways, ranging from persistent efforts to include women participants and gender issues into mainstream conferences and other similar activities, to organising specific events on the issue of women's participation in policy-making, decision-making and other politically important fora, such as the 1999 African Women's Conference on a Culture of Peace, or the *Women Make the News* initiative that marked the International Women's Day in the year 2000.

37. Although it is as yet premature to speak of a consistent integration of a gender perspective in all UNESCO activities, the Organisation's gender focal points assisted the programme sectors, with varied success, in integrating a gender perspective in the major UNESCO Conferences of the past few years.<sup>11</sup> This was reflected in an increased presence of women participants and in terms of substance, i.e., the inclusion of gender related issues. The former was achieved, at least partly, by

<sup>10</sup> 1998 *World Conference on Higher Education* and the 1999 *World Conference on Science* as well as in major documents of the United Nations concerning women and gender equality.

<sup>11</sup> The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998), the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 1998), the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, 1999) and the World Conference on Science (Budapest, 1999).

suggesting to the Director-General to request explicitly in the official letters of invitation that were addressed to the Member States, to include women in their delegations. The response of the Member States to this initiative, however, has so far been rather weak. Thus, at the World Conference on Higher Education, women participants constituted only one fifth (twenty per cent) of the delegates. A successful women's debate on higher education was held, however thanks to support from SIDA/Sweden. Though held as a separate panel discussion instead of being integrated into at least some, if not all, thematic debates, the support of this donor illustrates the importance of improving gender equity in higher education. Moreover, at the opening ceremony, the high-level personalities on the podium were all men, which reflected the fact that very few women have so far been admitted to the highest offices in universities and other higher education institutions. This situation was, fortunately, avoided at the World Conference on Science, thanks to a relentless two-year effort to include high-level women scientists into the conference preparations (see further on this, para 40 and onwards).

38. Both experiences confirmed the importance of advocacy for gender issues as an essential task, which requires expertise and perseverance. In order to succeed, advocacy requires: possession of adequate information; understanding of political processes; ability to persuade and convince decision-makers and a capacity to render gender issues relevant to a wider public. These are, indeed, the objectives of what the *Special Project on Women, Higher Education and Development*, as will be seen in a Part II (Five Priority Areas), and as was confirmed in the final document adopted at the *World Conference on Higher Education*. Further reference to this is made also in the *Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development of Higher Education*<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Framework adopted at the *World Conference on Higher Education* paras I.1(i) and II.6(j).

**World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action , Article 4**

**"Enhancing participation and promoting the role of the of women":**

*" ( a ) Although significant progress has been achieved to enhance the access of women to higher education, various socio-economic, cultural and political obstacles continue in many places in the world to impede their full access and effective integration. To overcome them remains an urgent priority in the renewal process for ensuring an equitable and non-discriminatory system of higher education based on the principle of merit.*

*( b ) Further efforts are required to eliminate all gender stereotyping in higher education, to consider gender aspects in different disciplines and to consolidate women's participation at all levels and in all disciplines, in which they are under-represented and, in particular, to enhance their active involvement in decision-making.*

*( c ) Gender studies (Women's studies) should be promoted as a field of knowledge, strategic for the transformation of higher education and society.*

*( d ) Efforts should be made to eliminate political and social barriers whereby women and under-represented and in particular to enhance their active involvement at policy and decision-making levels within higher education and society."*

39. Broadly speaking, some progress was achieved by making available to the Member States working documents concerning women and gender equality, by inviting women resource persons and specialists in gender issues, and by being fully involved in the drafting of final documents. Specific events such as round tables, panel discussions, exhibits, press briefings, sensitisation and media campaigns and women's caucuses around the theme of women and gender were organised at each of these conferences in order to draw attention to the gender perspective and, to provide women with a forum in which they could express their points of view.

40. The integration of a gender perspective was particularly successful at the World Conference on Science (Budapest) due to a well orchestrated joint effort of the programme (sector) and the central gender focal point, and their co-operation with the conference organisers

(UNESCO and the International Council of Scientific Unions-ICSU), the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), a number of UNESCO National Commissions, Governments and several Women's NGOs: Once and Future Action Network (OFAN) and the Third World Association of Women Scientists (TWAWS). UNESCO was thus able to organise six regional and subregional fora on Women, Science and Technology prior to the World Conference (See later, Women Gender and Science). The reports and main concerns expressed at these fora were reflected in the Conference deliberations and conclusions. The gender inequality that still reigns in science was clearly acknowledged in the *Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge*. The follow-up to these conference recommendations has been entrusted to UNESCO's science programme in the first place, to be carried out in collaboration with UNIFEM, TWAWS, ICSU and other partners.

**Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge, Para 42.**  
World Conference on Science

*"Equal access to science is not only a social and ethical requirement for human development, but also essential for realising the full potential of scientific communities world-wide and for orienting scientific progress towards meeting the needs of humankind. The difficulties encountered by women, constituting over half of the world's population, in entering, pursuing and advancing in a career in the sciences and in participating in decision-making in science and technology should be addressed urgently."*

**Women's and Girls' Participation in Science and Technology**  
**Science Agenda-Framework for Action, World Conference on Science 1999**

*"Taking into account the outcome of the six regional forums on women and science sponsored by UNESCO, the Conference stresses that special efforts should be made by governments, educational institutions, scientific communities, non-governmental organisations and civil society, with support from bilateral and international agencies, to ensure the full participation of women and girls in all aspects of science and technology, and to this effect to:*

- ◆ *promote within the education system the access of girls and women to scientific education at all levels;*
- ◆ *improve conditions for recruitment, retention and advancement in all fields of research;*
- ◆ *launch, in collaboration with UNESCO and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), national, regional and global campaigns to raise awareness of the contribution of women to science and technology, in order to overcome existing gender stereotypes among scientists, policy-makers and the community at large;*
- ◆ *undertake research, supported by the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data, documenting constraints and progress in expanding the role of women in science and technology;*
- ◆ *monitor the implementation of and document best practices and lessons learned through impact assessment and evaluations;*
- ◆ *ensure an appropriate representation of women in national, regional and international policy- and decision-making bodies and forums;*
- ◆ *establish an international network of women scientists;*
- ◆ *continue to document the contributions of women in science and technology.*

*To sustain these initiatives governments should create appropriate mechanisms, where these do not yet exist, to propose and monitor introduction of the necessary policy changes in support of the attainment of these goals."*

World Conference on Science, Budapest, Hungary, 1999  
*Science Agenda - Framework for Action, para 90*

41. Strengthening women's participation in political life and decision-making is yet another method in which UNESCO endeavours to encourage the participation of women. The proverbial "glass ceiling", i.e., the invisible barrier arising from a complex set of structures in male-dominated organisations which prevents women from obtaining top positions in management and

administration, which is a pervasive obstacle to women's access to decision-making, was addressed in several programme activities. According to the United Nations Department of Public Information and other reliable sources, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women today make up only 7 per cent of ministerial positions world-wide, 11.7 per cent of seats in the world's parliaments and,

since the turn of the century, only 30 women, across the world, have held the position of head of state or government. Being aware of this, UNESCO has committed itself to eliminating sexist stereotypes in education and the media as these influence our understanding of women's roles and capacities, and determine both men's and women's attitudes towards them.

42. The Organisation has formulated several programmes to strengthen the position of women politically, at all levels, and particularly within the context of peace building. After the Beijing Conference, a series of meetings on gender issues and the political participation of women were held throughout Africa. A Working Group to enhance women's representation and the consideration of gender issues within parliaments in Southern Africa was held in Malawi in 1996, which adopted the *Mangochi Declaration*. Parliamentarians from Southern Africa, accordingly, recognised the need to "*address the gender imbalances in political life and to improve Women's representation in numerical and qualitative terms through united action at local, national, regional and international levels by both men and women*". A joint UNESCO/DANIDA social sciences programme led to two three-week training courses for 35 members of parliament on issues of human rights, gender relations and various social and economic concerns, which were held in Malawi. In May 1999, the United Republic of Tanzania hosted in Zanzibar the Pan-African Women's Conference on a Culture of Peace - "Women Organise for Peace and Non-Violence in Africa" - which was organised by UNESCO in collaboration with the OAU, ECA and a number of African women's NGOs. The Conference adopted the *Zanzibar Declaration: Women of Africa for a Culture of Peace* which was subsequently endorsed by the OAU Summit. (See sub-heading "Women and a culture of peace" under Five Priority Areas.)

43. Another action aimed at helping women to break through the "glass ceiling" was the *Women Make the News* initiative that marked the International Women's Day, 8 March 2000. To test the level of commitment of the media to the gender equity goals spelt out in the Beijing Platform for Action, and in line with UNESCO's commitment expressed in the Toronto Platform for Action (adopted in 1995), the Director-General invited the media world-wide to entrust at least on 8 March their chief editorial responsibility to qualified women journalists and other women media professionals. The overall international impact of this initiative has been evaluated

positively as more than one thousand media registered from 56 countries, and some seven thousand women journalists were given increased editorial responsibility on that day. Moreover, in many countries it became "a news story" by itself, and hundreds of organisations and individuals participated in the spontaneous debate that developed around it. This being said, there was a marked abstention from the major Western media, which merits to be elucidated within the framework of the in-depth assessment of the results which is underway. This assessment will serve foremost for defining UNESCO's future action in achieving gender equality in and with the help of the media.

44. The project *Cities, Environment and Gender Relations*, carried out in partnership with the MOST (Management of Social Transformations Programme) and the Swiss National Commission encourages gender mainstreaming and participatory approach to development, involving women at every stage and level. The project is being implemented in Latin America (Argentina, Cuba and Brazil), West Africa (Burkina Faso and Senegal) and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Romania). The project endeavours to analyse the environmental situation in medium-sized towns and its effects on the nature of social relations, particularly gender relations, with a view to being able to provide useful information to decision-makers and technicians. In Campana (Argentina), the project revealed the important role played by women's movement organisations - some of them created by municipal authorities (manzanas, charity programmes) and others emerging from popular grass-roots initiatives - especially in tackling environmental problems that arise from the frequent floods in the city. In the suburb of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) where the project is being implemented, it has been found that recent improvements of social conditions in the area (cleaner surroundings and clean water) are in part due to the efforts of a local woman's association. A small charge is levied by the association for its services. In the city of Lambol (Bulgaria), the project has revealed a shift in gender relations, due to the social conditions that are emerging from the transition to a market economy from a socialist one, and its resulting denationalisation process. The study focuses on the relations between men and women and, in particular, on how these relations shift in a context of economic and political crises, which disrupt previous social relations and create new relations with the environment. It would appear that the privatisation

of the economy places a greater burden on women, and their situation has deteriorated from that in the previous socio-political context which offered higher standards of protection.

45. Other ways by which UNESCO encourages women's participation include the *Linguapax* project which aims at investigating socio-linguistic phenomena that hamper women's abilities to fully benefit from educational opportunities and, consequently, to participate more actively in their societies. This project has been particularly successful in Africa where UNESCO assists in carrying out studies concerning the language situation of African women. The studies go beyond the usual focus on literacy, drop-outs and teaching, by aiming to identify some of the root causes of women's lack of access to education and decision-making which appear to be related, in part, to the multiplicity of languages on the African continent, and to women's role within these languages and identities. The programme therefore helps identify the linguistic aspect of the marginalisation of women, and subsequently, to design better strategies that are in tune with women's realities and needs.

46. UNESCO's continued co-operation with major non-governmental organisations, especially those concerned with women, girls and gender equality issues, also contributed to implementing the Organisation's three-pronged strategy. This expressed itself both through the **UNESCO-NGO Collective Consultation on Women, Girls and Gender Equality**, which assembles periodically, and through co-operation with individual NGOs on specific projects and events. The Collective Consultation works primarily through its six work groups, namely: (i) Women, Science and Technology; (ii) Sexist Language and Stereotypes; (iii) Women and a Culture of Peace; (iv) The Girl-child; (v) Poverty eradication and Micro-finance; and (vi) Evaluation and Application of CEDAW. Besides meeting regularly, these groups have also been actively involved in the preparation of specific events such as the two World Conferences, on Higher Education and on Science respectively, the world-wide dissemination of UNESCO's *Passport to Equality*, i.e. CEDAW, the celebration of the International Women's Day every year, and on other occasions. Individually, these NGOs have also contributed to the success of such actions as the Panel discussion on women in higher education, entitled "Globalisation: The Power of Education to Effect Change" which was co-

organised by UNESCO and the International Federation of University Women (March 2000, New York) a conference on the girl-child (Paris, October 1998) by CILAF which is part of the International Women's Alliance, major conference inputs by the International Council of Women, International Federation of Women in Legal Professions, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International, World Association of Girl Guides and Girls Scouts, La Voix de l'Enfant, World Movement of Mothers, and other. The NGOs major contribution, expresses itself in specific projects, such as setting up scholarship schemes for girls from poor rural areas in Africa by FAWE (Forum of African Women Educationalists), developing women's information centres and networks by bodies such as IIAV (International Centre on Women's Movement and Archives, based in Amsterdam, Netherlands); promoting human rights for women and the role of women in science through the Forum of Mediterranean Women ; promoting basic education through micro-finance projects, as is done by the Spanish NGO *Together in the World*; promoting women's role in a culture of peace by AAWORD. Many more are mentioned in the following chapter under specific priority areas.

### ***Empowerment of women through specific projects***

47. The third dimension of the three-pronged strategy, i.e., focuses on specific programmes, projects and activities for women and girls, geared towards promoting equality, endogenous capacity-building and full citizenship. Most of these activities respond to the five priority areas which the General Conference selected from the twelve areas of critical concern defined in the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as to some other priority areas, and are therefore presented in more detail under the next two chapters.

## **2. FIVE PRIORITY AREAS FOR WOMEN'S AND GIRL'S EMPOWERMENT**

48. Out of the twelve critical areas of concern defined in the Beijing Platform for Action, the General Conference of UNESCO decided that five areas were to receive priority attention in the period 1996-2001 (See Part I., reference to



Resolution 28C/Res.5.16). The accomplishments under each priority area, are presented in summary form below.

49. The General Conference furthermore approved on the same occasion ten Special Projects that cater to the particular needs of women and young girls. Most of these were conceived as four-year or six-year projects, with an ear-marked budget that included a more or less important contribution from extra-budgetary funds. Although these projects do not represent the totality of UNESCO's work in favour of women and girls, they do reflect the Organisation's particular commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

#### UNESCO's Special Projects

- ◆ Promoting girls' and women's education in Africa
- ◆ Scientific, technical and vocational education of girls in Africa
- ◆ Women, higher education and development
- ◆ Women, science and technology
- ◆ Women and water resource supply and use
- ◆ Women speaking to women: Women's rural community radio in least-developed countries
- ◆ Women in the service of civil peace
- ◆ Empowering women: Community development programmes in rural areas

- ◆ Women on the Net
- ◆ Women and a Culture of Peace in Africa

As these correspond broadly to the five priority areas and some of the other areas of special concern, the results achieved in each of these is integrated into the presentation of the former.

### 2.1 Education and training for women and girls

50. UNESCO endeavours to implement the six strategic objectives articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action, which are relevant to education and training, namely: Strategic objective B.1 "Ensure equal access to education"; Strategic objective B.2 "Eradicate illiteracy among women"; Strategic objective B.3 "Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education"; Strategic objective B.4 "Develop non-discriminatory education and training"; Strategic objective B.5 "Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms" and Strategic objective B.6 "Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women". Furthermore, UNESCO is explicitly mentioned in the Platform as being responsible for the implementation of **paragraph 87** of the Platform, under the Strategic objective B.5 (mentioned above), which requests UNESCO to:

#### Beijing Platform for Action, Para 87

*"(a) Contribute to the evaluation of the progress achieved, using educational indicators generated by national, regional and international bodies, and urge Governments, in implementing measures, to eliminate differences between women and men and boys and girls with regard to opportunities in education and training and the levels achieved in all fields, particularly primary and literacy programmes;*

*(b) Provide technical assistance upon request to developing countries to strengthen the capacity to monitor progress in closing the gap between women and men in education, training and research, and in levels of achievement in all fields, particularly basic education and the elimination of illiteracy;*

*(c) Conduct an international campaign promoting the right of women and girls to education;*

*(d) Allocate a substantial percentage of their resources to basic education for women and girls."*

51. In 1990, at the *World Conference on*

*Education for All*, held in Jomtien, Thailand, girls'

education was identified as a critical priority.

After Jomtien, other conferences, notably the Pan African Conference on Education of Girls (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1993), the World Population Conference (Cairo, Egypt, 1994), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, China, 1995), Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States (Durban, South Africa, 1998) and finally the recent World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000) underlined the urgency of ensuring education for girls and women as one of the key elements of poverty alleviation/eradication and development. Since the Beijing Conference, UNESCO introduced an education strategy which aims at helping Member States renew their education systems in ways that can make lifelong education and equal access to education for all become a reality. The frequent shortcomings of conventional education have led, particularly in the past decade, to initiating other ways of providing education. This has been especially true for women and girls, as these often cannot benefit from conventional education services given their heavy daily workload and other impeding factors. The search for alternative (demand driven) methods has been supported by UNESCO since before the Beijing Conference, and has been intensified since. The Organisation's projects are thus designed to increase access to learning for all, wherever and wherever these may be. Education is therefore no longer thought of as an activity for the early part of life, but as a lifelong process. Given the multiple roles and responsibilities of a woman in her lifetime, viewing education as a lifelong process which should be accessible to her at any time of her life, is an important achievement.

### **Literacy and basic education for girls and women**

52. This has been, and remains, UNESCO's major concern. While significant progress has been made in providing education for all, gender disparities continue to persist in enrolment, literacy, access and quality of education. Although enrolment ratios in primary education have increased considerably over the past twenty years, gender gaps remain relatively high in some parts of the world. The World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal (April 2000), which was attended by the representatives of 181 governments and numerous non-governmental organisations, therefore reiterated the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by

2005, and to achieve gender equality by 2015, with a special focus on ensuring full and equal access for girls to basic education of good quality.

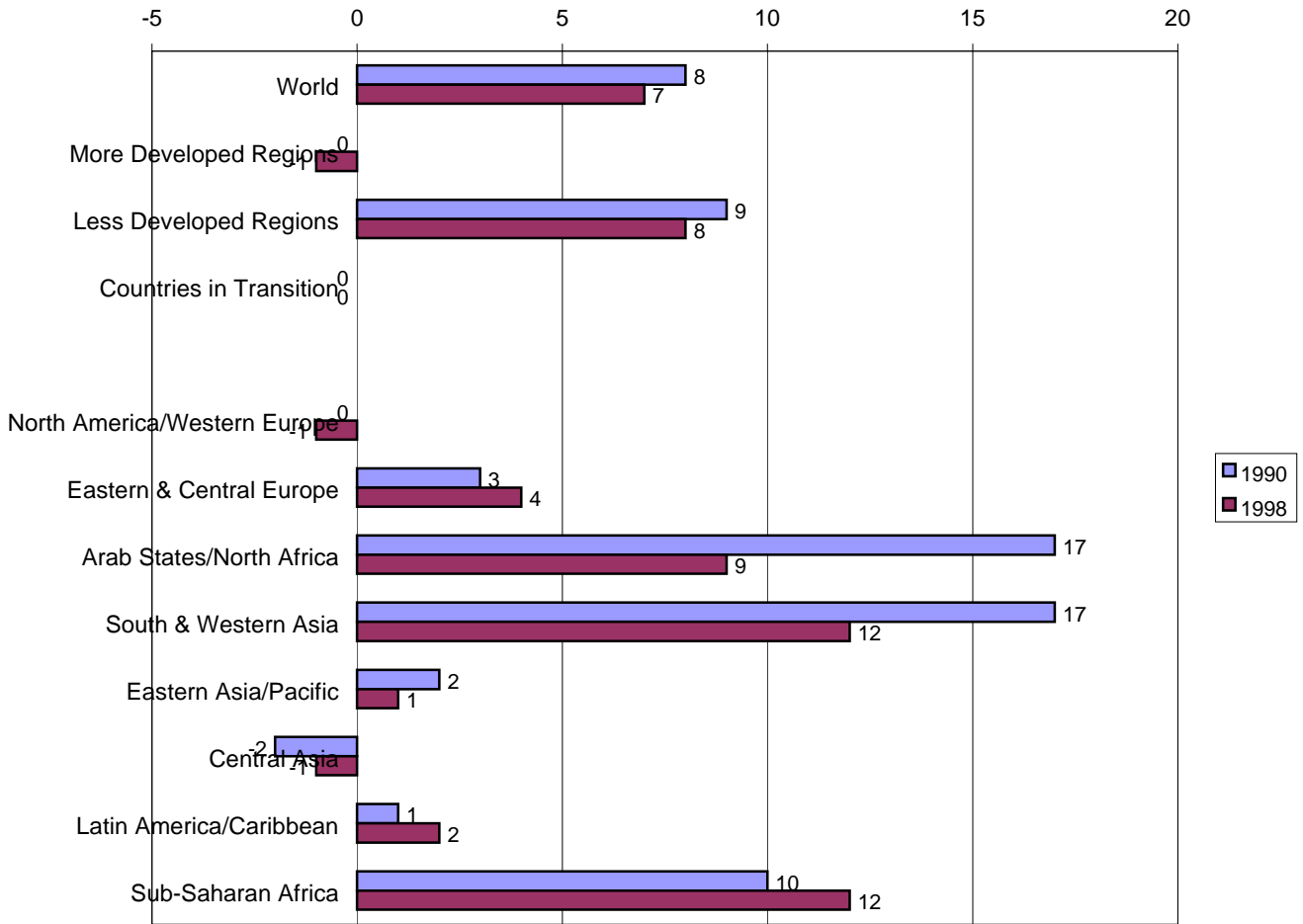
53. UNESCO has for many years supported research on obstacles to girls' education in Africa, Asia, Latin America. (In the Caribbean, as also in Lesotho, Botswana and the southern part of Nigeria, attention was given also to boys' education, as this has become a major problem.) The results of such research show, among other, that having a higher percentage of female teachers than male teachers has a favourable impact on bringing girls to school; that parents often keep girls away from school because of fear for their security; girls' work in the household and family is in most cases irreplaceable, and hence preferred to their schooling; girls' failure to achieve in the school system discourages many from continuing to attend school; and the school curricula are most often not adapted to girls' needs and possibilities. With this in mind, the need to develop complementary alternative delivery systems in education has been a primary concern of the past few years. This approach involves combining the more traditional formal education delivery systems with non-formal delivery systems, in order to ensure that all persons, including those who do not have easy access to or who remain unreached by the traditional basic education institutions, receive some level of education. Anchored in daily activities, non-formal education programmes seek innovative solutions to everyday needs in order to open up access to development processes.

54. Adaptability, free of the constraints of formal education, has particular appeal for those unreached by traditional means, especially women and girls who have to work at home, look after other family members, or who are involved in rural and informal sector activities. It is increasingly recognised that non-formal education offers the best tool for

empowering poor women, especially those in rural areas and urban slums, because it is flexible, responsive to learners' urgent needs and immediately useful. This type of education places learners at the centre of the learning process, and is demand-driven rather than supply-drive. Taking into consideration Women's (and girl's) multiple tasks and duties, its contents address their productive, reproductive and civic responsibilities. Non-formal education methods recognise women's life experience and include this as a basis on which learning activities are conceived. This gives it, moreover, a results-oriented, participatory quality.

55. The UNESCO project *A Lifeline for Afghan Women* has been allowed to continue by the Taliban authorities who have imposed a strict version of Islamic rule in the areas they control. The project uses a radio soap opera and a cartoon magazine to transmit key health and education messages to women and their families who have suffered from nearly two decades of armed conflict. Launched with the BBC World Service, the New Life cartoon magazine was introduced as a follow-up to the soap opera and to provide supplementary reading material for new literates.

**Gender gap (M-F) in estimated net enrolment ratios of primary school age, 1990-1998  
(showing percentage points differences between male and female net enrolment ratios)**



Reprinted from : Global Synthesis Education for All  
2000 Assessment World Education Forum, Dakar,  
Senegal, 26-28 April 2000, p.36

## **Guidance and Counselling for School-Aged Girls**

Following the *Pan African Conference on the Education of Girls* (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso 1993) and in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action, UNESCO in collaboration with other partners has supported the programme "Promoting Girls' and Women's Education in Africa". This programme, focusing on guidance and counselling for school-aged girls, was initiated by African Ministers of Education and is managed by them through a Board of Governors. Its objective is to develop and institutionalise guidance and counselling services, with special attention to the issues of girls. Its emphasis is on non-academic areas of development and complementarity to the academic ones. It encourages girls to pursue technical and vocational education, income-generation and self-reliance. Counselling services are provided to assist girls in their school performance and to discourage all forms of violence in schools. Its ultimate aim is to give girls the skills and information which will allow them to become self-reliant individuals with abilities to direct their own lives, and to provide the schools with trained staff which can deal effectively with the particular needs of the girls.

The programme, initiated in 1994, is being implemented to date in 25 countries, namely: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The immediate beneficiaries of this project are senior level policy-makers and administrators, teachers and trainers, literacy and non-formal education personnel, and social workers. The ultimate beneficiaries are the girls and women in participating countries.

This programme, funded by UNESCO, Denmark's DANIDA and Finland, is carried out at the regional and national levels. UNICEF, UNFPA, the United States of America and the Rockefeller Foundation are also collaborating in its implementation. In the French-speaking countries of Africa, ISESCO is an important partner. At the country-level, however, national governments and the National Commissions for UNESCO are its main actors.

### **Main activities and achievements**

Sixteen training modules have been produced, covering areas such as gender sensitivity, social work, modification of behaviour and adolescent reproductive health, and other. Each training module was prepared by a country team. In 1999, the need for additional training concerning the development of girls and boys became apparent, and therefore additional modules were produced. These include: guidance and counselling for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS; enterprise education; and promotion of racial harmony. ). The training carried out in 128 local workshops resulted in the training of some 3,089 trainers.

The main objective of this part of the programme is to encourage the spirit of entrepreneurship among young people and to give them skills for generating income at the end of schooling. The training modules are complemented by other types of material such as various booklets and, so far, sixteen videos. The Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) has contributed to this programme a training manual entitled *Gender Analysis for Education Policy-making*, which is available in English and French. FAWE also organised several sub-regional workshops on how to integrate gender concerns in education planning and implementation. Information about the project is disseminated through its Guidance and Counselling Newsletter and a web site ([www.unesco.org/education/educprog/mebam/index.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/mebam/index.html)).

56. The participatory approach encouraged through such education is illustrated by the production of a series of post-literacy booklets on gender approach, which is part of a project that is being carried out since 1997. During the two-week UNESCO-DANIDA workshops organised as part of this project, African women and men involved in literacy work were introduced to the concept of gender sensitivity and to addressing gender equity issues through basic education. Before the workshops began, the participants had selected their target communities and carried out in these needs assessments. The analyses of these assessments, done during the workshops, helped identify the priority issues that were then addressed in the booklets. Each chosen topic was written by the workshop participants, and the illustrations that accompany these texts were done by local illustrators. The titles available so far in this series deal with the following themes: women's financial self-reliance; exploitation of young girls employed as maids; superstition about goitres and their prevention; HIV/AIDS and its prevention; child marriage; domestic violence and alcoholism; sexual behaviour among young people; literacy and basic education for adults; vegetable gardening business; literacy for women; birth spacing; the importance of girls' education; filtered water for healthy living; and water carrying and sharing housework; promoting the use of latrines.

57. Since the mid-1980s UNESCO uses non-formal education as a way to empower poor women in various parts of the world. Between 1985-1987, it supported projects in Cap Verde, India, Peru and Syria to strengthen poor women's productive skills and improve their lifestyles. Based on local conditions and the women's needs, the learning contents in these projects were designed with the participants' (learners' ) involvement. These included papad making and packaging, candle making, fish cultivation, enhancing the nutrition value of local food, small commerce, family planning, sexually-transmitted-disease prevention, dowry questions, confidence building and community leadership techniques. Most of these projects continued as national activities after UNESCO concluded its work. Thus, in Uttar Pradesh (India) where the project originally covered only Chinhath and Baksi-ka-Talab, the State government expanded it to cover the entire state.

58. Between 1990 and 1996, seven countries in Asia and the Pacific co-operated with UNESCO in the skills-based literacy programmes for women, namely: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar,

Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. The project helped produce learning materials which were linked to husbandry, integrated farming, co-operative management, veterinary medicine, etc. Some five hundred learning materials were produced during this period, and are still used. The content of these learning tools was carefully designed to be gender sensitive, and the project emphasised the productive work of women. As a result, the women beneficiaries of these projects gained substantially greater income due to the gained knowledge and techniques. In Kunming (China), for example, the women raising pigs gained 30 per cent more than before the project, and some 300,000 women benefited from this experience. Consequently, the approach used in the project was applied, in an adapted form, to other needy provinces in the north-eastern and south-eastern parts of China. Moreover, a current UNESCO project undertaken in China, Indonesia and Pakistan teaches women how to be more effective in planting, harvesting, animal husbandry, etc., and provides at the same time information on childcare, HIV/AIDS prevention, civic rights, the use of solar energy and other useful topics. This project began with the awareness that women tend to be considered as '*farmers' wives*' rather than as being themselves farmers, even though their part in farming may be equal to that of the men, if not even greater. By using radio, printed material, and group activities, the project brings technology, literacy and practical knowledge to rural women, even in the remote parts of the countries concerned.

59. Based on this experience, other similar projects were undertaken in the past five years. The project *Women's Literacy and Basic Skills Training* implemented in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, employs community learning centres, set up in villages of the rural ethnic minorities, to attract girls and young women to basic education. The training that it provides includes sewing, weaving, market gardening and animal husbandry. By creating the immediate link between the learning process and an improvement in living conditions through the sale of products, the project encourages village women and girls to become literate and numerate. The project has provided thousands of ethnic minority young girls and women who otherwise would not have had access to any form of education, with the skills and knowledge essential for the improvement of their own and their community's living conditions. The success of the project incited the government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to place

non-formal education on its agenda. As a result, the project is now moving into a second phase, this time using radio as a means of spreading knowledge.

60. A different type of project, again based on identified needs, is being implemented in impoverished neighbourhoods of Port au Prince (Haiti), where basic education services are few and limited. The absence of necessary education infrastructures had, over a period of years, deprived inhabitants of educational opportunities and information, and therefore, of the knowledge of simple and concrete ways of improving their daily lives. It was this realisation which led UNESCO, in partnership with local Haitian NGOs and the national authorities, to establish a project for the practical training of marginalised communities, particularly for the women and girls amongst them. The challenge was how to spread and dispense information on simple appropriate technologies and practical knowledge to areas where the inhabitants were not literate and where basic services, such as electricity, were lacking. An innovative solution was found in the use of mobile projection units that could be easily transported and set up to show short training videos on a simple white sheet or wall. Film sessions became training sessions and, by watching videos, inhabitants could learn a host of new techniques to improve their daily lot: how to make furniture, recycle aluminium, dry fruit, use charcoal dust, make shoes, sew cloth, construct latrines, etc. Most of the techniques are designed to help resolve domestic problems and, therefore, appeal directly to the women and girls who are often the ones burdened with these chores. If a person needs to know more, the facilitator can rewind and explain the video or technique in greater detail. Called *Communicating Skills in Haiti*, this programme proves that modern technology can become a powerful information tool in the empowerment of the marginalised.

61. Other examples of such non-formal education approach include ongoing projects in Ecuador and Mali, where non-formal education programmes help farmers fight soil erosion of mountain slopes, teach them pest control and appropriate use of fertilizers in rice farming, and other similar techniques. The teaching/learning materials used in these projects are especially designed to be gender sensitive and to enhance farmers' reading skills at the same time. Another project of this kind is the Rag Recycling Programme which is implemented in co-operation

with the Association for the Protection of the Environment in the Mokattam "garbage village" of Cairo (Egypt). This place, which centralises much of Cairo's informal garbage collecting, sorting and disposal, suffers from disease, illiteracy, pollution, overcrowding and a general lack of basic services. Girls and women are affected most by these conditions. UNESCO therefore introduced a programme that enables young women and girls from the neighbourhood to recycle rags into woven rugs and patchwork which are sold. Once their training is over, the income they earn from the sales of these goods allows them to buy their own looms and to improve their living conditions. The flexibility and practicality of the training scheme make it possible for the beneficiaries to acquire literacy, numeracy, hygiene skills, decision-making techniques and other while working. For example, they learn basic arithmetic by calculating the length and width of the rugs, and learn the importance of hygiene because the finished product must be clean in order to sell.

62. One of the lessons learned from UNESCO's non-formal basic education activities targeted at women is that if the materials used for this type of training are to be effective, they have to be representational of women's lives and cultures. To be attractive, they have to be practical and incorporate gender sensitivity in their content. UNESCO has therefore produced a series of learning materials or booklets for women in which literacy is no longer confined to the learning of the three "Rs" (reading, writing and arithmetic), but has come to encompass a whole range of skills such as health, nutrition, child-caring, communication, decision-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution. With titles and subjects as varied as *"Enlightened Man"*, *"Mixed Farming More Money"*, *"More Knowledge, Better Pigs"* and *"Dried Fish for Sale"*, these booklets, in a variety of national and local languages, provide income-generating solutions for illiterate women struggling to make ends meet. To further the use of these documents and to sensitise managers as to the importance of non-formal education for women, workshops are held using the manuals as a basis for discussion and work.

### **Technical, vocational and science education**

63. UNESCO's education strategy focuses also on steering the renovation of education systems in the perspective of *education throughout life*

by reinforcing the Member States' capacity to rethink the aims and means of education and their strategies for the development of education systems as a whole. This is done by helping them renovate and diversify general, as well as technical and vocational education at secondary level ; by enhancing the role of higher education institutions and by contributing to their transformation into centres of learning and advanced training that are permanently accessible to all. UNESCO has developed various mechanisms to assist in the developing, improving and renewing of its Member States' education systems, providing the necessary training and tools to achieve this end. Since the Beijing Conference, the Organisation has renewed its efforts in ensuring that these training sessions and tools comprise either a gender perspective, or that they are geared to improving the situation of women and young girls within the formal education system. One of the first steps to achieving this goal is the elimination of gender stereotyping within the education system. The Organisation has incited reflection and debate of this issue and provides services to help its Member States formulate appropriate strategies for the revision of their education systems in order to combat the problem.

64. Women's and girls' access to technical and vocational education, as well as to science education, received considerable attention in the past few years. The results achieved in this regard, reflecting a considerable effort that was invested in this area, are given in *Access of Girls and Women to Scientific, Technical and Vocational Education in Africa*, published by UNESCO's Regional Office (Dakar, 1999). Nonetheless, progress in this area continues to be slow, particularly in some parts of the world. The International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, April 1999) and several regional Conferences of Ministers (MINEDAP VI - 1993, MINEDRAB V - 1994, MINEDLAC-VII - 1996 and MINEDAF-VII in 1998) highlighted the urgent need for expanding and improving the quality of secondary education and of technical and vocational programmes, mentioning sometimes also the gender bias which continues to exist, especially in this type of education. The Seoul Congress brought together stakeholders of technical and vocational education to discuss ways in which policy and practice could be renovated to provide lifelong training and learning for the world of work in the new millennium. Thanks to its UNEVOC project, UNESCO has been able to enact many of the recommendations and concerns of the Congress

which singled out within one of its major themes, the importance of "TVE for all" for "...ensuring equal access for girls and women...". Nonetheless, as stated in Recommendation 4.4 of the Congress: "*The under-representation of women in technical and vocational education is of particular concern. Traditional perceptions of appropriate roles for men and women in the work place should be challenged. Technical and vocational education must respond with gender-inclusive learning programmes, both in content and delivery...*" Future UNESCO's programme will obviously have to strengthen even more this area of activity.

65. Technical and vocational education is of great importance to women and girls given the fact that limited access to vocational and technical training is a major constraint for women's access to the labour market. This is especially true for those women who do not qualify for admission to formal post-secondary training. The participation of girls in technical and vocational education is generally low. Mostly, only vocational and/or soft options of courses such as tailoring, dressmaking, and secretarial assistance are made available to girls instead of real technical courses. The fact that there are very few female teachers in technical education, and that often technical schools are situated in regional towns where accommodation facilities are not easily available, makes parents reluctant to allow their daughters to enrol in such programmes. Furthermore, the failure of girls to meet the mathematics entry requirement for the technical subjects is also a major factor inhibiting their entry to these areas. Research on gender-related attitudes indicates, however, that the absence of women from traditional "male" fields of technical education cannot simply be overcome by making such subjects available for girls in schools. The roots of this problem are deeper; such "pre-selection" starts much earlier, i.e., in the family. A number of studies indicate that by the onset of adolescence, girls are already biased against technical careers. The pupils' own biases are compounded by the biases of their parents, and the "masculine" content of the subject matter itself and the predominance of men in the teaching, study and working environment related to the subject area are also factors alienating women.

66. Similar obstacles exist in many countries as regards girls' and women's access to science education. The 1999 World Conference on Science (Budapest) emphasised the need to eliminate the effects of gender bias in all aspects, including the bias that exist in science education. It requested, among other, that "new curricula, teaching



methodologies and resources taking into account gender and cultural diversity should be developed by national education systems in response to the changing educational needs of societies." (Science Agenda - Framework for Action, para 43).

67. Gender equality in this regard is promoted particularly through UNESCO's Special Project *Scientific, Technical and Vocational Education of Girls in Africa*, which has been implemented in collaboration with the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE), the Gender, Science and Technology Network (GASAT) and the Third World Association for Women in Science (TWAWS). This project encourages the revision of curricula, textbooks and teacher training in order to make them less gender-biased, and to introduce positive role modelling which would help girls find their place in this type of education. Begun in 1997, it first focused on a survey, which was carried out over a four-year period in thirty African countries, to determine the level of girls' participation in different science subjects, and on women's involvement in science-related careers. The countries concerned are: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Subsequently, based on the results of national surveys, which were discussed at two sub-regional meetings (in Harare in August 1997, and in Abidjan in September 1997), specific project activities were launched in most of the countries. These included: designing more gender sensitive curricula, textbooks and teacher-training programmes. The project team produced a *UNESCO Source Kit on Science Education* which underlines the gender issue in health and environment education.

68. Another illustration of UNESCO's efforts to promote science education and scientific careers for women was the meeting, organised in Paris in 1998, for some 140 teenagers from 30 countries, and their science teachers, with scientists of world repute on the theme *Future Scientists : Men and Women*. The students came from countries as diverse as Brazil, Fiji, Lithuania and South Africa. Organised within the framework of UNESCO's Science programme and the Associated Schools project, the meeting discussed gender equality in science. One of the stated main lines of action of this meeting was "to increase the number of girls in the

*world of science by campaigning to change mentalities and targeting girls through science education initiatives."* To spark off discussion, the lives of famous scientists (both male and female) such as Pierre Curie and Marie Curie Sklodowska were evoked.

69. Although the above are doubtlessly valuable steps in that direction, the whole issue of women's access to science education and to technical and vocational training could be further reaffirmed through a stronger, interdisciplinary (or multidisciplinary) arrangement, which would also establish clearer links between girls' access to science education at the lower level of schooling (primary and secondary school) and, subsequently, women's access to science as part of higher education and as a career. Some basic suggestions in this regard will be included in UNESCO's future strategy.

## Higher Education

70. As a follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, a Special Project Women, Higher Education and Development was established within the framework of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chairs Programme for Higher Education. Its objective is to launch training and action research programmes that empower women with higher education in order that they may have a more active role in development processes. This means, on the one hand, involving women in the reform and management of higher education systems and institutions, allowing them to acquire appropriate leadership and managerial capacities and, on the other hand, including the gender dimension in academic disciplines that have direct relevance for the development process. In 1996, a publication *Women and University Curriculum: Towards Equality, Democracy and Peace*, became available within this framework as a response to the Beijing Conference. It spells out clearly the undeniable importance of women's access to higher education as an element of development in general and, more specifically, its impact on science, technology, agronomy, public administration, etc. In 1998, in the conclusions of the World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century, it was reiterated that "*gender studies should be promoted as a field of knowledge, strategic for the transformation of higher education and society*".

71. Seven UNESCO University Chairs and networks devoted to gender issues were created or

consolidated during the 1996-1997 period. These were set up as "showcase" projects which inspired the creation in the following years of a number of national and NGO initiatives. The first Chairs and networks include: a *Chair on Women, Basic Education, Health and Sustainable Development* at Nairobi University (Kenya), created to reinforce action-research focused on gender issues and increase the contribution of women graduates in the development process; a Chair at the University of Warsaw (Poland) in *Women, Society and Development* promotes advanced research and high-level training for an interdisciplinary approach to women's issues; and a Chair on *Extension Strategies for Rural Development : Gender Sensitive Approaches in Vietnam* trains for the elaboration of gender-sensitive rural development projects in collaboration with local authorities and farmers. In addition to these Chairs, networks for gender issues exist such as the ACU/UNITWIN Network in Higher Education Management for Women Academics.

72. The Women in Higher Education Management network has produced: Equal Employment Opportunity case studies: good practice guidelines (a synthesis), which features case studies from South Africa, India and New Zealand. Also, a training seminar on women and management in higher education was held at the University of Malaysia for women academics and administrators from Asia and the Pacific (February 1999). This experience has been integrated into the new Master's degree in Gender and Development offered by the Institute of Education at the University of London. Similarly, a new network for Women and Development focusing on feminine leadership in various areas was launched as a collaborative effort of universities from North

America and Latin America, as part of UNESCO/OUI (Inter-American Association for Higher Education) Network for Women and Social Development.

73. Within this framework, a seminar was held on women and democracy (Montreal, Canada, August 1999), and a book, *Graduate Profiles for a Changing Society*, was published in 1998. Other publications produced include: two publications by the Chair on Women, Community Health and Sustainable Development (University of Nairobi, Kenya) notably on *Poverty Revisited and Transition from Pre-School to Secular Basic Education: The Role of Higher Education*, a book on women and science, presently being prepared by the Association of African Universities/UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Technology, in collaboration with the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi (Ghana) and universities in Gambia, Senegal and Togo; and a publication based on the World Conference on Higher Education debate *Women, Power and Academy* - UNESCO/Berghen books. Furthermore, a seminar was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (April 1998) to evaluate the first phase of the project on social mobilisation and community participation, which focuses on training women for community action in seven municipalities. Three conferences were also held in 1999, notably in Oxford, United Kingdom, on *Gender, Higher Education and Development*; in Dublin (Ireland) on *Women and Conflict Resolution*, and in Leiden (Netherlands) on *Migration and Gender*, held with the support of the European Union. The burgeoning of new projects indicates a clear and growing commitment to promoting the principle of gender equity in higher education and in social development.

### **Actions undertaken under UNESCO's Women in Higher Education programme:**

- ◆ Development and monitoring of women's studies at various universities in India;
- ◆ setting up of a UNESCO Chair on Gender Policy and Human Rights at the Kyrgyz-Slavic Russian National University in Kyrgyzstan;
- ◆ a UNESCO Chair on Women, Society and Development, at the University of Warsaw, Poland;
- ◆ a UNESCO Chair on Communication and Women in Asia and the Pacific, to be established in the Republic of Korea;
- ◆ creation of a UNESCO Chair on Women Studies at the Centre de recherches, d'études, de documentation et d'information sur la femme, (CREDIF) in Tunisia;
- ◆ collaboration with the International Women in Science and Engineering Programme at the Iowa State University, in USA, which provides training for women from some fifty countries from all regions of the world;
- ◆ creation of a Chair on Women and Social Development in Morocco.

### **2.2. Women's contribution to a culture of peace**

74. The activities under this heading correspond primarily to Strategic Objective E.1. of the Beijing Platform for Action, namely "Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed conflict" and Strategic Objective E.4.: "Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace". Women, historically the givers and sustainers of life, necessarily have a pivotal role to play in peace building processes, particularly given the myriad care-taking, social and cultural functions that have traditionally been theirs. This was endorsed at the Beijing Conference and enshrined in its Platform for Action. UNESCO believes that women can give an alternative approach to conflict prevention and resolution, and can play an important role in transmitting the messages of a culture of peace because they are usually the principal transmitter of cultural values to children and youth. By virtue of their specific role in society, they often have a vision that can be most valuable for ensuring peace and tolerance in a society, but is often overlooked or underestimated. UNESCO's attention has therefore focused in these past few years on a wide range of activities geared towards: capacity-building in Member States for the sharing of peace-related information and knowledge among women, within local and national boundaries as well as regionally and globally; a greater mobilisation of women's intellectual resources, and

elaboration of new approaches to political participation based on genuine solidarity, power-sharing and by fostering co-operation and team spirit rather than aggressive competition.

75. The **Women and a Culture of Peace programme** was initiated in 1996 as a forum for women to voice their opinions on how peace can be achieved and sustained in their societies. Besides mainstreaming a gender perspective in the Culture of Peace Project, this programme, which is now in the Social and Human Sciences Sector, has three main priorities : (i) supporting women's initiatives for peace ; (ii) empowering women for democratic participation in political processes to increase their capacity and impact especially in economic and security issues ; and (iii) gender sensitive socialisation and training for non-violence and egalitarian partnership, with a special focus on boys and young men. Women decision-makers, parliamentarians, researchers and representatives of women's grass-root organisations express themselves through this programme in a variety of forms: through training workshops, publications, videos and film, as well as through major conferences such as the *Pan-African Conference of Women on a Culture of Peace and Non-violence*, held in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania in May 1999. Particular attention is given to examining the gender-related factors which hinder, or inspire, democracy and a culture of peace. Thus, this programme has initiated groundbreaking work on male identity and the notion of masculinity, its multiple expression and the impact

of such gender/sexist stereotypes on society. Following the first expert group meeting on *Male Roles and Masculinities in the Perspective of a Culture of Peace*, held in Oslo, Norway, in 1997, other workshops have been organised on this subject. These workshops focused on how social institutions such as the family, school, media and the military relate to male identity, and what sort of strategies can be developed in order to replace violence, aggressiveness and the use of physical force by dialogue, creative thinking and partnership. The report of the Oslo meeting is available in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Swahili.

76. Major attention is given under this programme to assisting women in Africa in their efforts to stop violence and armed conflict on their continent and to help them become recognised as vital partners in peace-building processes. Thus, in the context of the Special project on women and a culture of peace in Africa a series of workshops have been organised and seven case studies on women's approach to traditional non-violent conflict resolution, prevention and peace-building techniques and experience, were produced, namely in: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania. These case-studies were carried out in collaboration with competent non-governmental organisations such as the African Association of Women for Research and Development (AAWORD). Subsequently, a training module for a gender-sensitive education for a culture of peace namely geared towards post-conflict situations, based on these case studies, was developed in collaboration with the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE). The module which will be edited for wide distribution and use by early autumn 2000, has been tested in Sierra Leone and at the Zanzibar Pan African Women's Conference on a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.

77. The Zanzibar conference, co-organised by the Organisation of African Unity, the African Women's Committee for Peace and Development and many international NGOs, was attended by some 300 participants from 49 African countries. The main themes addressed during this four-day conference were : the impact of violent conflicts in Africa ; the role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building in Africa ; and innovative and practical measures for capacity-building and networking for a culture of peace in Africa. The conference launched an African

Women's Peace Movement and adopted the "Zanzibar Declaration: Women of Africa for a Culture of Peace", as well as a Women's Agenda for a Culture of Peace in Africa with many activities foreseen for the celebration of the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace in the year 2000.

78. The Agenda contains many practical suggestions for action which can be instigated at local, national and regional levels. Its implementation began with the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and should continue throughout the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). The Declaration advocates, among other, increased women's participation in decision-making, peace promotion, networking and women's full access to and use of communication technologies for peace promotion. Both the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Summit of African Heads of State, as well as UNESCO's General Conference, gave strong support to the implementation of both these documents at their meetings which took place in Algiers (Algeria) in July 1999 and in Paris (France) in November 1999 respectively.

79. Other important achievements under this programme include:

- ◆ seminars on women and a culture of peace were organised in Congo/Brazzaville and in Guinea Bissau in 1997, and in Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania in 1998;
- ◆ the publication *Towards a Women's Agenda for a Culture of Peace*, produced in co-operation with the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women) ;
- ◆ a documentary film "Doves of Rwanda", on Women's peace initiatives in Rwanda ;
- ◆ the publication *Best Practices of Women in Conflict Resolution Using Non-Violent Tradition Methods*, done in co-operation with UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNIFEM, which is being distributed through various UN networks.
- ◆ the publication of a photographic album, *Women Say No to War*, which celebrates

women's brave resistance to war and their efforts at peace-building;

- ◆ a directory of grass-roots women working on emergencies and solidarity, prepared with the Women's International Network (WIN);
- ◆ a poster entitled *Join Women for a Culture of Peace* launched within the framework of the activities to celebrate the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000).
- ◆ a pro-active advocacy strategy to promote the concepts and visions that are at the core of a gender perspective to a culture of peace.

80. Activities geared to helping women in conflict-ridden societies were undertaken also in some other programmes, notably as part of the **Women in the Mediterranean programme** which focuses on enhancing the potential of the Mediterranean women in support for democracy, social cohesion, cultural creativity and economic growth. Thus, it helped establish the Women's Centre in Gorazde (Bosnia Herzegovina), a town which suffered during the recent war (1992-95). The local economy and infrastructures have still to recover and jobs are scarce. This situation affects women in particular, many of them being widowed, and now sole bread-winners. To help them face this situation, UNESCO, in partnership with two NGOs, Bosfam and Anima, has set up this centre in Gorazde where women, from "all walks of life", can meet and take part in educational activities that increase their employment prospects. Since July 1998, the Centre has been functioning as a training area for women in activities as varied as small business development, foreign languages, computing, health and legal advice. The Centre also has an SOS telephone line and an information and media group. New courses are planned to focus on micro-business development and activities related to refugee rehabilitation.

81. The UNESCO Centre for Women and Peace in the Balkans was established in Thessaloniki (Greece) with the objective to support and strengthen the role and status of women in peace-building in the region. The Centre serves as a base for formulating projects in the fields of health, culture, education and the

environment, as well as encouraging various income-generating projects for countries in the region. In 1997 and 2000, the Centre organised a successful international festival entitled *Women Creators of the Two Seas - The Mediterranean and the Black Sea*, which brought together 400 Mediterranean artists from 29 countries of the region. Furthermore, in December 1998, this programme supported the creation of a centre for immigrant North African women in Madrid. The centre provides information, training and educational opportunities to immigrant women which is given with the help of legal specialists and social workers. The centre has links to associations in North Africa so that ties with home countries are not totally lost. The wider community also benefits from the centre since it generates increased understanding of the North African culture and helps promote new attitudes towards the peoples of this region. Other activities within the framework of this programme are geared to promoting the cultural diversity of the region, creating networks and exchanges among women's organisations, reinforcing dialogue and tolerance among the diverse cultures and showing the importance of women as agents of change and promoters of a culture of peace.

82. The Mediterranean women's commitment to peace and tolerance expresses itself also through the UNESCO sponsored competition for women architects engaged in the rehabilitation of town squares, known as *Mediterranean plazas (squares) for Women and Peace*, initiated in 1998. The first competition concerned a square in the centre of Algiers (Algeria). This competition has now spread to other Mediterranean cities, namely to Mojacar (Spain), Cosenza (Italy), Marseilles (France) and Barcelona (Spain).

### 2.3. Women and the media

83. Promoting a free exchange of ideas and knowledge, and universal access to information, are among UNESCO's priorities since its foundation. Communication being of vital importance for any society and all development processes, the Organisation helps its Member States develop their communication, information and informatics capacities in practical terms and policy-wise. Its work encompasses all forms of communication and information-sharing, from the most basic forms (such as community radio programmes) to the most sophisticated new electronic media. Given that new communication

technologies are increasingly pervasive in all areas of human endeavour, one of the challenges for UNESCO has been to employ all possible means to increase access to information so that women do not miss out. UNESCO works to ensure that the content of information is truly directed at supporting women and their full participation in their societies, as well as in the development process. This is undertaken by strengthening local communication capacities - ensuring that the means are present for women to make their own contribution. UNESCO's efforts thus respond to Strategic Objective J. 1 ("Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication") and Strategic Objective J. 2 ("Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media") of the Beijing Platform for Action.

84. The Special Project *Women Speaking to Women: community radio project*, begun in 1996, addresses itself to the specific communication needs of women, especially in their struggle against poverty and marginalisation. The project provides fully operational local radio stations, designed for and run by women. Such community radio stations have been established so far in Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Malawi, Nepal, Surinam and Trinidad and Tobago. The radio programmes aired by these stations are based on the everyday life of the community and deal with women's concerns, providing advice on health, childcare, nutrition, improved agricultural methods, vocational training, literacy, job opportunities, etc. At the same time, these programmes help train women journalists and enhance women's creativity in general. In addition to the above-mentioned topics, these programmes also provide feature stories on the discrimination against women and gender equity, the portrayal of women and sexist stereotyping, women's rights as human rights, etc. UNESCO has provided the necessary equipment and training of the core staff in broadcasting, programming and management, and is now preparing a practical handbook based on this experience, which will help promote the creation of similar stations in other parts of the world.

85. *The Radio for Women in Mongolia's Gobi Desert* project has been conceived by UNESCO to help Mongolia resolve its problems regarding food production, employment, energy consumption and so on, endured particularly by its rural nomad women. The Organisation launched, in co-

operation with the Government of Mongolia, a far-reaching non-formal radio education programme targeting the Gobi Desert region. By providing radios for individual households, the project made it possible for nomadic women to learn, or revive, precious skills such as making fuel from dung, producing camel saddles, cheese-making, etc. These products are exchanged through barter in the community and beyond its limits. Back-up for the educational content of the project is provided by visiting teachers. The radio listeners often give themselves suggestions for new/additional lessons by writing to their local radio station and asking for further details or specific skills. The success of this project has incited UNESCO to design a second phase, to be carried out in different geographic regions, which is addressed primarily to all those who are excluded from the formal education.<sup>13</sup>

86. The Beijing Platform for Action proposes as one of its strategic objectives, increasing women's access to and participation in decision-making in and through the media and new communications technologies. The action *Women Make the News* (mentioned in para. 43) addresses precisely this need. In order to enable women to do so, UNESCO endeavours to strengthen their capacities so that they have the necessary knowledge to perform this task. For example, radio production and management training has been provided by UNESCO, in collaboration with Deutsche Welle and the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, for participants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The main objective of this training is to improve the journalistic and broadcasting skills of women in order to upgrade their programmes and make them more relevant to listeners' needs. The Eastern Africa Women in Media Associations Network (EAWMAN) is preparing a manual on the basis of this. In another project, training is given to women journalists in the Mediterranean. The latter project was established following a UNESCO study which was carried out in 1994 and which showed that women are still largely absent from the journalism profession in Mediterranean Arab countries (in Egypt, women journalists represent 28%, in Jordan less than 10%, in Morocco less than 15%, and in Tunisia 21%).

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<sup>13</sup> A video - *Life in the Green Desert* - is available in English and French from UNESCO's Education Sector, as well as Booklet No. 12 (with the same title) in the *Innovations* series.

UNESCO therefore launched a series of activities to help change the situation. Workshops on management of small and medium-sized newspaper enterprises, and on desktop and electronic publishing were organised for women journalists from Algeria, Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. By providing training in advanced journalism techniques, these programmes also help develop a gender-based approach to the media and a critical interpretation of media output in these countries.

87. Other capacity-building activities include seven regional workshops and three national Conferences which were organised by UNESCO between 1998 and 1999, in co-operation with the Federation of African Media Women-SADC, for media professionals from Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. While their primary purpose was to impart skills on how to produce gender-sensitive television programme, and how to enhance exchange of knowledge and programmes among these countries, these workshops also discussed matters concerning the collection and analysis of data on women in the media sector.

88. The experience gained by women's organisations and individual women as they prepared for the Beijing Conference, helped to reveal to them the power of the new digital age. As pointed out by the Society for International Development (SID), "...by participating in electronic conferences or bulletin boards, many women and organisations are developing their experience and confidence to participate in other on-line

circles and to better express publicly their viewpoints. Having access to an interactive space of communication provides women with opportunities for dialogue, to learn and to share with each other.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in addition to UNESCO's long-time efforts to train women in the media (radio, the press, television, film), special attention is now given to helping them benefit from the new communication technologies and the opportunities these offer for their empowerment through information sharing, networking, public visibility, job creation, etc. Women can thus influence that the communication content truly reflects their realities, and that they participate in determining the development of new information technologies.

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<sup>14</sup> *Women in the Digital Age: Using Communication Technology for Empowerment - A Practical Handbook*, SID/UNESCO, 1998.

## Women on the Net

UNESCO encourages the participation of women through the initiation and reinforcement of women's networks, particularly media networks. An example of UNESCO's work with media networks is its co-operation with the Society for International Development (SID). Through this programme, UNESCO has been working to strengthen women's use of new communication technologies so as to enable them to challenge and correct the inherent gender biases of cyber-culture.

The key strategy is to adapt the new information technology in an appropriate manner so that it supports the everyday work and lifestyles of women. On the basis of this project, the *Special Project: Women Working on the Net* was created in 1996, to deal with international communication systems through a multicultural perspective. Elaborated, again in co-operation with SID, this project aims to create dynamic cyberspaces for women on the net, especially those living in developing countries, and women of marginalised groups in the developed ones. By strengthening women's skills in networking and policy-making, and by encouraging them to use the Internet as an empowering space, the project focuses on how men and women approach and perceive the net as a communication tool with immense social and political potential.

Its main aim is to facilitate the creation of women's alternative communication to counteract discrimination and stereotyping, promote gender equality, and help NGOs and advocacy groups defend women's rights. Within the context of the project, UNESCO and SID produced the booklet *An International Annotated Guide of Women Working on the Net* (1997) to sensitise women on the role and impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) from a cultural (local) and gender sensitive perspective. Furthermore, a practical handbook *Women in the Digital Age: Using Communication Technology for Empowerment*, was published by UNESCO and SID in 1998, and suggests innovative ways of surfing and how best to use the Internet. It includes a list of worldwide web sites that are particularly relevant to women.

The project aims to assess women's participation in ICTs from a specifically cultural/local environment perspective. As such, it was designed not just to focus on the so-called electronic "support" tools (i.e. e-mail, Internet, fax and phone facilities, and connectivity issues), but also on how women shape the contents of their electronic interactions from a cultural perspective vis-à-vis men interacting on the Net. This latter view reflects an important aspect in terms of research in the area of gender studies and policy.

The Centre for Mass Communication Research (University of Leicester, UK) has been fundamental in providing the socio-political gender-sensitive dimension to the project. This has been notably visible in the practical experimentation "last phase" of the project, in the course of three workshops organised in Africa. These workshops have led to the establishment of the autonomous and self-financed African Women on the Net chapter - a partnership between IDRC (Canada) and Africa-On-Line (Nairobi, Dar-es-Salam, Zanzibar - September 1999). The publication *Women@Internet: Creating New Cultures in Cyberspace*, published by ZED Books (1999), constitutes an excellent survey of the processes by which the project developed. This pilot-project could successfully be duplicated in other continents of the world.

At the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998), an Agora on the *Women on the Net* project was organised with government representatives of women's policies, activists and civil society, in order to mobilise awareness at the policy level. The Agora results were duly reflected in the Stockholm Action Plan of Cultural Policies for Development, as adopted by Member States in the plenary session.

89. In order to help the media promote a more balanced, non-stereotyped portrayal of

women in the media, a training manual *Whose Perspective? - A Guide to Gender-Sensitive Analysis of the*



*Media*, has been produced by Women's Media Watch (Jamaica) with the support of UNESCO. It retraces the Jamaicans' ten years of experience in lobbying campaigns, training workshops, media monitoring and the production of audio-visual teaching aids. Jamaican women from different backgrounds speak on various issues concerning gender and media, with particular emphasis being put on whether there is a link between the violence shown in the media and the violence against women in real life.

90. As requested in the Toronto and in the Beijing Platforms for Action, and in conformity with UNESCO 28 C/Res. 4.7 (concerning the implementation of these two Platforms of Action on women in the media), UNESCO has been playing a catalytic and facilitating role in the development of a global network of women and men journalists and media practitioners that are committed to gender equality in the media, in all its aspects and at all levels, including the decision-making and management ones. This network, known as WOMMED/FEMMED, encourages greater freedom of expression for women and a more balanced access for them to decision-making in the media. The network has been developing particularly fast in Africa (with core action in Senegal) and, more recently, as part of the Asia-Pacific Women's Information Network (APWIN) initiated by the Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul (Korea). The APWIN Centre, established in 1996, and being in charge of the UNESCO Chair on Communication Technology for Women, and is in the process of developing comprehensive cyber-information service systems for the Asia-Pacific region, in addition to providing educational programmes for women-related information technologies and communication technology services such as electronic mail, cyber classroom and teleconferencing.

91. Similarly, in the Central Asia region, women media professionals of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are connected through the Women in Media Network of Central Asia (WIMNCA) which helps them organise training activities, acquire equipment and other. The network focuses on issues such as women's health and reproductive rights, education, environmental issues and economic activities. Training workshops have been held on topics such as *Women, Media and Conflict Resolution*, *From Family Planning to Reproductive Health*, and *Refugees and the Media*. Women journalists are also being trained to

produce awareness-raising television programmes on violence against women, which are also made available as audio-visual learning packages used for training other journalists in gender-sensitive reporting. In the Pacific, UNESCO assists the Pacific Islands News Association's efforts to establish electronic networks of women journalists within the region. Besides enhancing information exchanges among journalists, the network is also used for circulating television programmes produced by women among the region's broadcasting television stations, namely in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea and Tonga.

92. Beyond the Women Working on the Net project, UNESCO is also supporting the development, by the International Information Centre and Archives of the Women's Movement (IIAV), of a database which will be accessible on the Internet and which will provide links to women's information centres all over the world. Thus, women's organisations, researchers, policy-makers and the media can find information regarding the status of women in most countries of the world. It further provides tools for linking government policy agendas and civil society concerns and action. A *European Women Thesaurus*, containing a list of controlled terms for indexing of information on the status of women and women's studies, has recently been produced within this framework.

93. UNESCO's collaboration with the IIAV expressed itself also in the global electronic debate on gender mainstreaming of the World Water Vision project, as it prepared for the 2nd World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference (The Hague, Netherlands, March 2000); this debate involved several hundreds of women's and other grassroot organisations concerned with water issues. UNESCO is also one of the partners of *WomenWatch*, which is the Internet site created in 1998 by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women as an umbrella site for all United Nations information regarding gender mainstreaming. The site facilitates global exchange of information on the implementation the Beijing Platform for Action, by linking various United Nations entities with a wide range of non-governmental and other organisations, institutions and individuals interested in the advancement and empowerment of women.

## **2.4. Women and the environment**

94. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Brazil, 1992) an international consensus has emerged as to the critical role of education in achieving sustainable development. This consensus, reinforced at subsequent world conferences including that of Beijing, has led to a new vision of education, one which is strongly upheld by UNESCO's **Environment and Population Education and Information for Development programme** (EPD). This interdisciplinary programme (also known as Education for a Sustainable Development) has emerged as an important part of UNESCO's education strategy, particularly since Beijing. It addresses the relationship between population, environment and development with its objectives being: enhancement of knowledge and development of action frameworks to strengthen education, training and information in matters of environment, population and development; the creation of alternative and new training/information programmes for Member States ; awareness raising and mobilisation of decision-makers and political leaders on the importance of dealing with the issues of environment, population and development in an integrated manner. The work undertaken within the framework of this programme responds to Strategic Objective K.1 ("Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels"); Strategic Objective K. 2 ("Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development") and Strategic Objective K. 3 ("Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women").

95. The project which is currently being implemented in Machakos, a suburb of Nairobi (Kenya), which has 5 different ecological zones that are more or less fertile, is a good illustration of such work. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and UNESCO/EPD recently launched a project in Machakos, that tries to organise a working relationship between women farmers and women's groups on the one hand, and local educational institutions such as polytechnics or agricultural institutes on the other hand. Within the context of workshops, issues such as water, harvesting technologies, environmentally friendly farming technologies, energy saving methods, food processing, conservation and marketing methods are discussed and demonstrated. The project

encourages dialogue between training and research institutions and community based groups on developmental and environmental issues, as well as developing a mechanism for the exchange of traditional and professional knowledge and skills. This project show clearly that women are often the first to suffer from environmental change or damage caused to the balance of the land, forest, fisheries and general natural resources. Over-use of pesticides, water pollution, poor nutrition, etc. all affect negatively the health of women and can lead to risks in birth, pregnancy and breast feeding.

96. UNESCO has supported many innovative appropriate technologies, such as wind-power or solar energy. A project in Haiti, combats the dire problem of deforestation, by training women in the use of solar dryers. These are made of simple wooden cases, painted in black, with a glass or transparent plastic top and allow for fruit and other foodstuffs to be dried. Furthermore, a World Solar Cooker Programme, with support from UNESCO, is being developed to raise awareness of environmental issues, train rural women (who are some of the main users of fuel wood and biomass resources) and promote the active use of solar energy. A workshop entitled World Solar Cooking Programme Strategies and Financing was held in Milan (Italy) in 1999. These actions reconfirm the commitment of the international community to the strategies recommended in the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as those in the Harare Declaration. It is stated in this Declaration that: "*We, the Heads of State and Governments recognise that women have an important role to play in the promotion of solar energy, and they would benefit significantly from its use*".<sup>15</sup> Another action-research scheme, monitored by the UNESCO Office in Namibia, within the context of a UN-wide poverty alleviation pilot project, is examining the multiple tasks of rural women in two regions of Namibia and seeing how the introduction of solar energy in their communities, especially solar cookers, could improve conditions. The solar demonstration village, set up by UNESCO in Onamunhama, supports the process.

97. Access to good quality, affordable water is a fundamental need for everyone and

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<sup>15</sup> Harare Declaration, World Solar Summit (Zimbabwe, 1996).

an essential factor for the improvement of health and well-being in any population. Women have a major role in water management. On the whole, it is they who are the collectors, users and managers of water and they who make decisions regarding its use within the household. Women have essential experience in matters such as the location of wells or the design of pumps, yet their contributions and special needs are rarely taken into account even if the success of many water development projects

depends on them. Moreover, they are almost entirely absent from the professional sector where they could be providing key advice as planners, scientists and engineers. With these considerations in mind, UNESCO addressed these issues in recent years through at least two major efforts: a *Special Project on Women and Water Resource Supply and Use*, and by co-ordinating gender mainstreaming in the global World Water Vision Project.

### **Women and Water Resource Supply and Use**

Implemented by UNESCO in the sub-Saharan region of Africa in the period between 1996 and 1999 as part of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), this project helped to improve the quality of life of women in the rural and urban areas of sub-Saharan African countries by facilitating their access to water resources. This was achieved through the amelioration of water resource management and by reducing the gap between theory and action in the area of water management through dialogue between the specialists and other actors in the field of poverty reduction (water, social sciences, health, education, etc) so as to develop a new approach to the management of water resources, based on gender equality. During its four-year implementation the project's main objectives were to help develop national and regional policies geared to facilitating women's involvement in water resource development programmes. This included organizing training courses at national and at regional level, publication of learning materials, research, etc. The project consisted of the following four components: (1) development of studies, research, and learning material (grants were given for women training in hydrology), (2) meetings that brought together women's groups and other actors concerned with water management, (3) the formulation and implementation of national and regional policies meant to facilitate women's involvement in water management and development programmes; and (4) direct support to women's water management programmes (e.g., a specific scheme was developed in the Siaya district of Kenya). The absence of women at the advisory and policy making levels has largely been due to the disparity between women's and men's education. In addition to basic literacy, it was therefore also necessary to consider education in forestry, hydrology and other fields related to water sciences. Thus, IHP has endeavoured to offer study grants to young African scientists so that they may pursue university studies in these areas, and has encouraged training of women specialists to ensure better management of water resources.

A regional training course on gender and development with particular focus on water resources management was organised in Nouakchott (Mauritania) in October 1997 in co-operation with the International Water and Sanitation Centre. A regional workshop on women's participation and Gender Consideration in Water Supply and Sanitation Services was organised in South Africa by UNESCO - in co-operation with UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank in November 1997. Representatives from 16 African countries (Angola, Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) were invited to evaluate policies, strategies and tools related to the improvement of the quality of women's lives. The seminar was the first stage in a series of regional consultations, which lead to the development of guidelines and the implementation of national programmes. As a follow up to the workshop UNESCO, UNDP, the World Bank Water Sanitation Program and UNICEF agreed to carry out jointly pilot activities at national and regional level, design and develop/refine manuals and tool kits, organise training of trainers, and support the countries to prepare and implement their national action plans.

Statistics show that in sub-Saharan Africa very few women have access to university training in agronomy. UNESCO therefore encourages women's participation in scientific research and incites their interest in the new means of communication, by teaching them how to use

computers and the Internet. Helping women use the net gives them the possibility to exchange their knowledge, ideas and experiences, and strengthen co-operation between the countries of the South. Furthermore, women are precious educators and communicators with regard to the environment and the adoption of new behaviour patterns regarding health and hygiene, in the family and in the community. This is why UNESCO supports also studies on the traditional knowledge of the feminine populations, traditional customs related to water supply and use and greater participation of women in technical training programmes.

98. The Women and Water Resource Supply and Use project concluded that only 45 per cent of the population on the African continent had access to clean drinking water and less than one third to adequate sanitation. Furthermore, in rural and urban areas it was always left to women to fetch the water required for domestic needs. IHP therefore organised a series of seminars which brought together representatives from the Ministries of Hydraulics and of the Status of Women from nine African countries to discuss these matters. At this time a number of regional and national policies were formulated. As a follow up, the Ministry for Welfare and the Promotion of Women in Côte d'Ivoire launched a training programme for village leaders, aimed at the protection of the environment, hygiene, and the use of drinking water. Rural trainers organised information sessions using posters and picture boxes and encouraged the women to organise themselves.

99. Reducing the time and effort that women have to spend on water chores in many countries has encouraged the creation of new economic activities within the framework of the above-mentioned and other similar projects. Thus, women can now cultivate vegetables that they sell at local markets, they produce handicrafts and can finally participate in training programmes. In Mauritania, the lack of water has an adverse effect upon income; it moreover favours the encroachment of the dunes, and thereby depopulation and immigration towards the big cities. With funding from the Government of Germany, UNESCO helped the Government of Mauritania launch a pilot project aimed at re-energising the socio-economic fabric and ensuring adequate food supplies. This experience was carried out successfully in Ouadane where the canalisation of water and the work of the women's co-operatives have given a new impetus to the economy, and it is hoped that the exodus tendency will be reversed and that men will return from the capital. Women henceforth participate in the execution of the projects and programmes, for the most part on a voluntary basis and as workers. There are hardly any women holding posts of responsibility. It is therefore essential that more women are involved as advisors, planners,

scientists and engineers in all the fields, from teaching to public administration.

100. In another activity, the Kobongo Women Co-(Kenya) requested and got support for the building of the necessary infrastructures to supply fresh water to their village (1996 - 1999). The participatory approach that was used by this Co-operative in the implementation of their project has been used as an example by other local associations. Also, UNESCO Cairo Office organised two workshops: *Rural Development in Egypt: Past, Present and Future* held in October 1998, and a workshop on *Biotechnology in Agriculture and Food Production: The Role of Women*, held in April 1999.

101. The Manara-Nord Biosphere Reserve in Madagascar, was declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1990. It is a conservation area where 14 specific projects for buffer zone development and local community participation have so far been formulated. Since Beijing, women have increasingly been targeted as partners of many projects and encouraged, through training, to adopt environmentally-friendly technical innovations in their rice cultivation and fishing. A centre for the women on the reserve has recently opened to serve as a meeting place for women's associations, as a training base and as an exhibition hall for handicrafts. A new form of management of these protected zones is emerging and proves that conservation and community development can be reconciled. Other similar projects are being conceived in the Coastal and Small Islands Programme (CSI).

## **2.5. The girl-child with regard to access to education and literacy**

102. To a large extent, many of UNESCO's activities addressed to women, also young girls, i.e. the girl-child. However, certain activities are specifically directed at the girl-child. Member States indicated at the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference that they wished the activities in favour of young girls to concentrate in particular on their access to education and literacy. With this in mind, a large part of UNESCO's education

programme is geared to helping the very young girls, especially in poverty stricken areas. More specifically, the *Special Project Educating women and girls in rural African Communities* helps Member States develop non-formal education programmes which can be particularly useful to young girls. Designed on the basis of the *Ouagadougou Pan-African Conference on Education for Girls (1993)*, it aims at providing training and technical assistance for planning and implementing more effective schooling for girls, and at developing alternative delivery systems for literacy and non-formal continuing education for women, thus promoting girls' and women's empowerment and their status in society. The activities carried out within this project include regional, national and local training workshops to analyse and address socio-cultural obstacles to girls' and women's education; preparation of curricula and educational material designed to promote self-reliance and empowerment of girls and women; strengthening guidance and counselling services for girls in schools; and preparation and production of prototype 'skills-kits' for out-of-school girls in rural areas using audio-visual support. The project enables women living in African rural communities, particularly the poor ones, to participate in public life and in the decision-making processes, by enhancing their opportunities for formal and non-formal education. Its long-term objectives are for a greater equity for all inhabitants in the community, to eradicate poverty, and a general upgrading of the quality of life in African rural areas.

103. Another example is the *Guidance and Counseling for School-Age Girls project* which is part of the *Promoting Girls' and Women's Education in Africa programme*. Concerned by the increasingly urgent social issues such as adolescent pregnancy, unemployment, school drop-outs, large numbers of street children, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, prostitution and conflict on their continent, many educationalists in Africa realised that the time had come to redirect education, during the teenage years, towards life-oriented skills. With UNESCO assistance, this became a comprehensive and Africa-wide programme with Regional Technical Committees established to train trainers and youth workers in guidance and counselling techniques. The programme is managed by a Board of Governors comprising Ministers of Education from the participating countries. Trainers and counsellors are specifically trained to ensure that education meets the needs of young people, particularly girls, as they enter the at-risk age

bracket of adolescence. To facilitate training, the project has developed a *Training Package on Guidance and Counselling* containing eight modules that address attitude change, gender sensitivity, social work and adolescent reproductive health.

104. The work group on the girl-child constituted within the UNESCO-NGO Collective Consultation has been particularly active and has endeavoured to fill some of the gaps which are present in UNESCO's current work, which focuses primarily on the girl-child's access to literacy and education, and not so much on the girl-child's overall situation in today's societies. One of these is the complex issue of female genital mutilation (FGM), which is still practised for traditional reasons in many countries, particularly in Africa, and the whole issue of violence against the girl-child, which is found in all regions of the world. As regards FGM, it is estimated that more than one hundred million girls and women are annually victims of this extremely cruel practice. As regards violence in general, hundreds of millions of little girls suffer from it. Another issue, deeply related to poverty and nurtured by sexist (gender) stereotypes, is the infanticide of baby girls, either prior or after their birth, which is still practised in several countries. These can be combated successfully only through widespread awareness-raising and education, in which UNESCO has an important role to play. Although regarding the first, some progress has been achieved in recent months (e.g., Senegal adopted a law prohibiting FGM in late 1999), in many of UNESCO's Member States an important job remains to be done regarding this and violence against the girl-child in general.

### 3. OTHER CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

105. Although UNESCO's major attention focused on the five priority areas presented above, its programme contributes also to some of the other areas of critical concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. Again, without being exhaustive, the following is a brief summary of what has been accomplished in the past five years.

#### Women's Human Rights

106. Gender concerns have always been an integral part of UNESCO's human rights programme activities. However, since the Beijing Conference and in view of the strategic objectives relating to women and armed conflict and women and violence as laid out in the Beijing Platform for Action, this aspect of gender mainstreaming has been reinforced. To mark the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (in 1998) a special publication was brought out in English and French under the title *Human Rights of Women: A Collection of International and Regional Normative Instruments*. It contains the universal and regional standards and instruments protecting women's rights and the relevant final documents of the various World Conferences, as well as information on the status of ratification of universal and regional instruments. The 1999 edition of this publication is dedicated to the 20th

anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW and was prepared as a contribution to the implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action concerning the universal ratification of human rights instruments. The publication has been disseminated world-wide through important networks, notably the UN and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in order to encourage the ratification of international instruments which are of paramount importance for gender equality. It was also sent to the Chairperson of the CEDAW Committee for distribution among its members.

107. Furthermore, in order to clarify the many international standards concerning women and the obstacles blocking their implementation, a series of conferences on women's rights, notably in Finland, India, Morocco and Senegal, were organised within the framework of UNESCO's Human Rights Education programme.

108. UNESCO recently produced a *Civics Education Kit*, containing basic learning materials that tackle the concept of civics education. It has also parts dealing with women's and girls' rights and gender equality. The kit is designed to be used by teachers directly, or to be adapted to culturally specific contexts, through the interpretation of ideas. It includes a *Manual for Human Rights Education*, which pupils, their teachers and human rights experts elaborated for UNESCO, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### Promoting The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through UNESCO's *Passport to Equality*

Next to the 1948 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* is the most important international normative instrument which guarantees women's equality. Initiated in 1967 in the form of a General Assembly Declaration, it was adopted in 1979 as a convention that eventually came into force in 1981. CEDAW establishes a basic set of principles that are meant to serve as a model for the elimination of gender discrimination at national level. Countries that sign this Convention are accordingly obliged to create or modify policies to eradicate discrimination. In March 1998, an Optional Protocol to CEDAW was adopted. This Protocol allows women to submit claims about violations of the Convention by their Governments, which are then investigated by the CEDAW Committee.

Article 10 of the Convention calls on all States Parties to "take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education..." UNESCO is the lead agency for the implementation of the provisions of this Article. At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995), taking into account the agreement between UNESCO and the Committee responsible for CEDAW, the Director-General of UNESCO presented several principles of action to the Beijing Conference. These principles

are:

- ◆ *The right to education is a fundamental human right that must be guaranteed to all women and men by the State as a public service.*
- ◆ *Separate is rarely equal. Girls and women should have access on an equal footing with boys and men to all levels and forms of education.*
- ◆ *The acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy is essential to achieve the empowerment of all citizens and especially to strengthen the capacities of girls and women.*
- ◆ *An education policy which provides lifelong education for women from early childhood through adulthood, and which takes into account the varying stages in women's life cycles, should be developed.*
- ◆ *Means of ensuring that large numbers of girls and women enter the fields of non-traditional scientific and technological education should be explored and implemented*
- ◆ *Non-discriminatory gender inclusion is fundamental to the organisation, structure and content both of the development and of transmission of all knowledge through education.*
- ◆ *Legal literacy, health and reproductive rights are the foundation of women's autonomy and enable them to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*
- ◆ *Education for gender equality is a vital means for combating violence throughout the world.*

As lead agency for Article 10, UNESCO regularly reports to the CEDAW Committee on the progress of the implementation of this Article. One of the important activities of the Organisation's implementation activities is the popularisation of the text of the Convention. Although CEDAW came into force in 1981, twenty years later, its provisions remain poorly known, especially among women. Clearly, if women are not aware of the provisions of this important convention, they can neither fight for nor monitor its implementation. In order to overcome this, UNESCO decided to initiate a world-wide literacy campaign on the provisions of the Convention by disseminating its ***Passport to Equality***.

Presented in the format of a personal passport, the full text of the Convention is available in: Arabic, Hindi, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili and Urdu, as well as English, French and Spanish. The Passport is being widely distributed with the help of the FAO, HABITAT, ILO, UNDAW, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNIFEM, UNICEF and major NGOs. UNIFEM used it in its campaign to combat violence against women, and the International Federation of Women in Legal Professions has distributed it to its many members. Furthermore, an easy-to-read Spanish version for neo-literates was published by the UNESCO Office in El Salvador, while the UNESCO Office in Guinea produced it in nine of the local languages. Copies of the Passport can be obtained from the Unit for the Promotion of the Status of Women and Gender Equality.

109. Women's rights as human rights are at the heart of the entire programme focussing on Women in the Mediterranean. Thus, under the auspices of the Euromed Civil Forum of Barcelona, with support from UNESCO, a trans-Mediterranean human rights network is developing. The project comes at a time when increased co-operation between the countries of the North and the Southern Mediterranean is needed and when public opinion should be made more aware of human rights violations, especially those concerning women. The network pays particular attention to women's rights to freedom of movement, freedom from violence and freedom of nationality. An important role in this context is

played by the tri-lingual (Arab, French and Spanish) monthly *El Boletín* dealing with the rights of women, which is produced with the support of the Madrid Community.

110. Another important area in which UNESCO deals with women's human rights is in that of bio-ethics. This is an area where women are very often affected but hardly ever consulted, particularly in relation to reproduction. At the fifth session of UNESCO's Bio-ethics Committee, held in the Netherlands in December 1998, a report on *Women's Health, Bio-ethics and Human Rights* was presented. The report denounced the continued discrimination against women in matters of health,

notably due to unequal access to care, and called for increased vigilance in the use of modern technology in the domain of human reproduction.

111. UNESCO endeavours to disseminate also other international legislation concerning gender equality and the rights of girls and women. A handbook entitled *Rights of Girls and Women* was developed and disseminated in Africa, the Arab States and Asia. The handbook focuses, in particular, on the provisions of CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and consists of three parts: the rights of girls (children) and women as they appear in the legal international documents and charters; the legal rights of girls (children) and women as they appear in the official laws of the country, such as the right to education, and other; and illustrations with simple explanations of the rights, addressed to young children (primary school children). Member States have expressed their appreciation of its usefulness for sensitising authorities and the public at large on

the rights of girls and women.

### **Women, Gender and Science**

112. Science and technology determine many of the orientations and mutations of our era and yet women's roles as stakeholders and their contribution to the fields of science and research are still largely ignored or not sufficiently recognised. It is estimated that only 5 to 10 per cent of decisions-makers in science policy are women and only 11 out of the 444 Nobel Prize winners have been women. UNESCO endeavours to improve women's access to scientific and technological education and careers and works with them to develop and improve community conditions, through projects dealing with the use and management of water, non-renewable resources, etc. This has also led to the fostering of research into women's use of renewable energy sources and appropriate technologies.



### Regional preparatory meetings for the World Science Conference

UNESCO held in co-operation with UNIFEM and other partners a series of regional consultations around the globe, on the subject of women and science, in the run up to the World Conference on Science for the Twenty-first Century: A New Commitment, held in Budapest (Hungary) in June 1999. These were:

- ◆ Women Science and Technology in Latin America: Diagnosis and Strategies (Bariloche, Argentina. October 1999);
- ◆ Women in science and Technology. Quality and Equality - Conditions for Sustainable Human Development (Bled, Slovenia. November 1998);
- ◆ Women and Gender in Science, engineering and technology (Sydney, Australia, December 1998);
- ◆ Women, Science and Technology (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. January 1999);
- ◆ Women, Science, Biotechnology: What does the Future hold for the Mediterranean? (Turin, Italy. January 1999);
- ◆ Women, Science and Technology (Abud Dhabi, UAE. April 1999).

The reports of these meetings were published in English and French by UNESCO in *Women, Science and Technology: Towards a New Development?*, UNESCO, Paris, 1999.

113. UNESCO promotes the accomplishments of women, by drawing international attention to their work and demonstrating that of which women in science are capable. It is recalled that *UNESCO World Science Report 1996* includes a ground-breaking chapter on "The Gender Dimension of Science and Technology" edited by Sandra Harding and Elizabeth McGregor, with contributions from several outstanding women scientists namely Pnina Abir-Am, Ann Hibner Koblitz, Lydia Makhubu, Radhika Ramasubban, Josephine Beoku-Betts, Marilyn Carr, Bev Chataway, Bonnie Kettel and Shirley Malcolm. Addressing two key questions: Science by whom? and Science for whom? This chapter provides data and information on women's participation in scientific and technological education, analyses the range of obstacles to women's equal opportunities in science and technology, examines the differential impact of technological change on the lives of men and women, explores the role of women in traditional knowledge systems and reviews the history of women in science. Examples of strategies addressing issues of women in science policy are also given throughout.

114. As of 1997, UNESCO co-operates with the private sector to bestow the Helena Rubinstein Award, which became in 1999 the *L'Oréal - Helena Rubinstein Award*. Four awards, of US\$20,000

each, are given every two years to a woman scientist from each of the four regions, who has made a major mark in the field of science. The jury is made up of 14 distinguished world scientists, with Christian de Duve, Nobel Prize winner for medicine in 1974, acting as President of the panel. The first awards, in 1998, were presented to four distinguished scientists from four different continents: Grace Oladunni L. Taylor from Nigeria (Professor of biochemistry pathology at the University of Ibadan), Gloria Montenegro from Chile (Researcher of cellular microbiology at the Taejon Institute), Myeong-Hee Yu from South Korea (Botany specialist at Santiago University) and Pascale Cossart from France (Researcher of listeriosis at the Pasteur Institute). In 1999, the award was given to Joanne Chory from the United States, Eugenia Maria Del Pino Veintimilla, Valerie Mizrahi, Tuneko Okazaki from Japan and Margarita Salas from Spain. These awards help make the work of these women scientists known to all world-wide, and give a renewed vision of science in which women are playing a crucial role.

115. As a complement to the L'Oréal Helena Rubinstein Award, the *UNESCO-L'Oréal Fellowship* programme was launched in 1999. Ten fellowships amounting to US\$ 10,000 respectively were granted to meritorious scientists at post-graduate level. Young women from Spain,

Azerbaijan, China, South Korea, Lebanon, Tunisia, Togo, Kenya, Jamaica and Columbia were given the opportunity to continue or accomplish their research in the exact and natural sciences.

## Health education

116. The United Nations data show clearly that women are increasingly affected by HIV/AIDS. About 42 per cent of estimated cases are women and the total of infected women is expected to reach around 15 million by the year 2000. As an active participant in the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNESCO endeavours to integrate education for the prevention of HIV/AIDS into school curricula. It developed a programme for preventive education and communication which has been especially designed for societies in which men traditionally have the dominant role and women have little control over their own sexual behaviour and reproductive capacities. Workshops for grassroots women's organisations have been held in India and Nepal and parts of Africa. These activities are designed to equip illiterate and neo-literate women with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their families from the epidemic. The situation in sub-Saharan Africa is especially critical. For this reason, a regional workshop on Preventive Education against HIV/AIDS for Women's Grassroots Organisations in Africa was held in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) in September 1998. The workshop was organised by UNESCO, in co-operation with UNAIDS and the UNDP Regional HIV and Development Project. Participants from 17 countries of the region, the majority of whom were co-ordinators of women's organisations working actively in the fields of community health, home economics, STD and HIV/AIDS, took part in the workshop.

117. The overall objective of the workshop was to provide women and girls with the required awareness and skills to tackle HIV and reduce the current rate of HIV transmission. Specifically, the objectives were:

- ◆ to reinforce the capacity of local facilitators in raising awareness on the importance of HIV/AIDS preventive education in grassroots women's organisations;

- ◆ to identify examples of best practice with regard to HIV/AIDS preventive education, targeting women and men, and using appropriate and accessible methods; and
- ◆ to propose the compilation of the strategies recorded, and focal points of research, on the transfer of gender-sensitive educational messages aimed at African women, notably those who are illiterate or semi-literate.

In order to produce adapted messages, participants were divided into two groups to discuss radio programme production and graphic production. Furthermore, two documents were distributed by UNESCO to the participants. They were: *African Woman and AIDS: Scope, Impact and Resources*, and *HIV/AIDS Preventive Education: A Practical Guide for Co-ordinators of Women's Grassroots Organisations in Africa*. The latter publication is a booklet which was published by the UNESCO Office in Dakar.

## Violence against women

118. Genital mutilation, rape and the trafficking of women are now recognised as being forms of physical violence against women which cannot be tolerated. In the past decade, especially with the emergence of numerous armed conflicts, rape is being used increasingly used as a weapon of war. Recent conflicts, such as those in Rwandan, Bosnia, Sierra Leone and Kosovo, have revealed the extent to which this tendency is increasing. In Rwanda between 1994 and 1995 for example, estimates of the number of women and girls raped range from 15,700 to over 250,000. Parallel to this, violence against women and girls expresses itself also through the rapidly growing amalgam of prostitution, pornography and trafficking, which are linked also to drug trafficking and other activities of organised crime. There are indications that the evident blossoming of such organised crime is linked to the ongoing globalisation processes, and that this threatens to weaken some of the normative instruments which were painstakingly created within the UN system in order to protect the most vulnerable parts of today's societies. Clearly, violence against women and sexual exploitation are violations of many international conventions some of which cover UNESCO's mandate. Although UNESCO's mandate does not strictly cover these issues, they are imposing themselves, by the sheer force of

reality, as priorities for the whole of the United Nations system, and thus also for UNESCO.

119. UNESCO's approach to the issue of physical violence has been that of education and prevention, i.e., prevention through education. Bearing in mind that violence is often rooted in poverty, unemployment and poor education, the Organisation has striven to complement the on-going work of other UN agencies that deal with issues of violence against women, by acting as a facilitator in its areas of competence. It has provided educational materials as a means to increase awareness, and has helped in the setting up of networks, providing expert advice to governments when called upon to do so, etc. Particularly visible, in this sense, was UNESCO's initiative to tackle the problem of sexual abuse of children and young people through electronic media. The Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by the international *Experts' Meeting on Sexual Abuse of Children, Child Pornography and Paedophilia on the Internet* (Paris, January 1999) served as a basis for the setting up of a world-wide network of child care and child Internet safety organisations. As a follow-up, a World Citizens' Movement to Protect Innocence in Danger was launched at UNESCO Headquarters on 15 April 1999. With National Committees being set up in Argentina, Belgium, France, Monaco, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, the Movement seeks to raise world public opinion and extend support to the Internet and legal specialists and NGOs in order to make the Internet safe for children. The most important result of this initiative is the mobilisation of a large number of IGOs and NGOs, experts, law-enforcement agencies, world personalities and public pressure groups for joint action in this field.

120. In Eastern and Central Europe, as well as in Central Asia, UNESCO is collaborating with the Open Society Institute (OSI/SOROS) in the creation of a network called Stop Trafficking. In the same vein, the UNESCO Office in Islamabad has been involved in activities on the trafficking of women, particularly in relation to the issue of prostitution. One of the achievements of the Office has been to focus the attention of the Pakistani Government on the problem of prostitution. The matter is now dealt with in the country's Constitution with the State being under a legal obligation to provide measures to prevent it. In order to provide this new awareness with further momentum and spread the message beyond the borders of Pakistan, the UNESCO

Office held a regional conference - *Trafficking in Women and Children* - in collaboration with the Pakistani Government, local NGOs and UN Agencies. The Organisation is also working with OSI/SOROS international partners and local NGOs in Budapest, to set up a sub-regional women's centre where the objective is to provide educational training for women on the real day-to-day problems which they face such as domestic and other physical types of violence, prostitution and other matters.

121. The awareness-building activities of UNESCO relating to violence against women are not limited to women. As mentioned already under the heading dealing with a culture of peace, the issue of male identity and gender stereotypes is also being considered within UNESCO as part of the "women and violence" issues. As stated, an Expert Group meeting was held in Oslo (Norway) in 1997 on the subject Male Roles and Masculinities in the Perspective of a Culture of Peace. The objective of the meeting was two-fold: to uncover the way major social institutions such as the family, schools, the media, the military and other bodies work; and to develop strategies and practices within those institutions that prevent violence, aggression and physical force in all situations, and encourage dialogue, creative thinking and partnerships between men and women. This first meeting having provided encouraging results, other seminars and meetings along the same lines have been envisaged.

122. A regional workshop on media violence jointly organised by UNESCO, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNDP and the Jordanian National Committee for Women, was held in Amman (Jordan) in November 1998, on the theme of *The Impact of Media and Domestic Violence*. A further meeting to follow-up on the issues raised is being organised and will include women journalists from the other Gulf States as well. Likewise, UNESCO has been progressing in its work concerning violence on the screen, mainly by giving support to the International Clearing House on Children and Violence on the Screen, which is based at the University of Göteborg (Sweden) and which produced two yearbooks as a contribution to world-wide research and awareness raising on the subject.

### **Sexual harassment**

123. Firm action against sexual harassment within

UNESCO as an organisation was initiated in 1999 by the Director-General following the proposals made by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Equal Opportunities for Women in UNESCO's Secretariat. A preliminary proposal of the procedure to be followed in cases of sexual harassment - the victims of which may be women as well as men - was announced in the Administrative Circular No. 2089 of 29 October 1999. The *Sexual Harassment Panel* that was established with this circular received a three-day

training organised by the Human Resources Management (Training) division. Further to this, the Panel is now preparing, in collaboration with HRM and other Secretariat units, a comprehensive information and sensitisation Campaign addressed to the Secretariat staff and our partners, notably Permanent Delegations, external consultants, etc. Parallel to this, the Panel has also been dealing with specific harassment cases that were brought to its attention in the course of this year.

### Part III

## ELEMENTS FOR UNESCO'S FUTURE GENDER STRATEGY

124. The preceding pages of this document summarised what UNESCO has achieved roughly since the Beijing Conference regarding gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and girls. This third part gives a few brief indications as to what UNESCO could do in the future, and how this could be achieved. The table at the end presents a draft framework for pursuing a gender mainstreaming approach within UNESCO as a whole, i.e., in its Member States and in the Secretariat. The elements presented herein are far from exhaustive; they are meant foremost to stimulate a debate, as wide as possible, within UNESCO's Secretariat as well as through UNESCO Member States, UNESCO National Commissions and concerned NGOs, on the basis of which a clear set of proposals could be elaborated within the next Medium-Term Strategy 92001-2006).

#### 1. MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO GENDER EQUALITY: UNESCO'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

125. By virtue of its multidisciplinary character UNESCO is well placed to deal with some of the complex issues that are central to women's empowerment and gender equality. Most of the gender equality issues require a holistic approach; coping with these in a piecemeal way, is not only a waste of effort and resources, but can even lead to distorted results and, consequently, to ill advised policies and practical solutions. The issues which belong to this category were identified by the UN ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality in February 2000, on the basis of information received from Governments, as "emerging challenges and trends" which require structural and/or policy intervention from the entities of the UN system, individually or collectively with regard to norm and policy development. They were elaborated in the Secretary-General's report concerning the special session of the UN General Assembly on "Beijing + 5"<sup>16</sup> Briefly, these issues/trends are:

- ◆ The impact of globalisation and new technologies on women and gender equality. It is noted that gender equality issues remain either absent or marginalised in discussions on globalisation, technology and economy. And yet, it is crucial for understanding the changing nature of work and employment, the creation of new job opportunities in some sectors and loss of livelihood in other, etc.
- ◆ A renewed emphasis on poverty eradication, which is no longer seen mainly as questions of income but rather of opportunity, security and empowerment. Gender is most relevant to these questions.
- ◆ Increased blurring of the rural - urban divide, with industrial production moving into rural areas, and agriculture and smallholding becoming more and more present in urban areas. An emerging distinction between *rural* women and *farm* women, with specific and different sets of needs, constraints and capacities needs therefore to be reflected in policy and programme approaches.
- ◆ The HIV/AIDS pandemic and its growing impact on families, communities and the entire society needs to be scrutinized even more in terms of the role of women and girls in this situation, and how best to help them.
- ◆ New information and communication technologies bring benefits to both women and men, but they also have differential impacts on women and men, and are creating new ways of excluding women, especially rural and poor women.
- ◆ The low number of women in decision-making in general, in all vital areas, including information technology, telecommunications, and science.
- ◆ The changing nature of conflict and its impact on women, and the increase of violence against women and civilians in general deserve special attention This

<sup>16</sup> UN Secretary General Report E/CN.6/2000/PC/2.

includes: the perceived or real threats to men's traditional identity, and desire to return to former social patterns which often include sexual violence; violence against women and girls in non-conflict situations, such as domestic violence; violence linked to prostitution, trafficking and other.

- ◆ The urgent need to have reliable sex-disaggregated data statistics and development of quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure gender mainstreaming progress in all areas that concern women.
- ◆ The role of gender (sexist) stereotypes on the change of attitudes concerning the role of women and men in all societies and in all areas of work of UN entities. Traditional stereotypes in the minds of both men and women continue to reinforce gender inequality, while new stereotypes are emerging with similar damaging impact.

126. A definite selection of priorities is the prerogative of the Member States of UNESCO, which they will consider when discussing the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategy 2001-2006. As a first step, however, in order to facilitate discussion, both within the Member States and in the Secretariat, some preliminary suggestions are hereby outlined. These deal with issues which have emerged in the past few years as central to gender equality concerns, and which are important globally, i.e., for a vast majority of countries.

127. The proposals that follow have been selected also on the basis of their multi-disciplinary (or trans-disciplinary) character, and which require foremost the expertise that UNESCO has. The empowerment of women and the processes leading to gender equality are by definition complex and crosscutting. Given its *multi-disciplinary* mandate, UNESCO can play a leadership role for some of these, provided that its relatively modest resources (human and financial) are more rationally used. In spite of an overall positive "women empowerment score" which emerges from the preceding review of the achievements of the past few years, it nonetheless transpires that the present dispersion of funds and efforts has resulted in a relative loss of excellence - and of leadership - in areas that are important for gender equality (e.g., young girls

education, sexist stereotypes, prostitution as a social phenomenon, etc.), and in which UNESCO had in the past a strong position vis-à-vis other UN entities, and other institutions in the world. The remedy for this lies in (a) refocusing UNESCO's action on a select number of clearly defined subjects to which at least two, or more, of UNESCO's major programmes (fields of competence) could contribute, and which are complementary to what other UN entities are doing; and (b) encouraging cross-disciplinary team work, within the Secretariat, in Member States and within the UN system, through appropriate programming and administrative measures.

128. The evident need to change both women's and men's *attitudes* towards gender equality, and the role of *gender (sexist) stereotypes* in shaping these attitudes, is a key topic which is at the heart of women's empowerment and gender equality endeavours. The impact of gender/sexist stereotypes is repeatedly mentioned in many UN documents, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as in documents of other major international and regional organisations (e.g., the EU, various parliamentary bodies, etc.). It also appears in the final declarations and action plans adopted at the World Conference on Higher Education, the World Conference on Science and other. Moreover, as was noted by the ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality in February 2000, "*the lack of effective means to address gender stereotyping contributed to the delay in implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy within UN entities as well as in Member States. The question of identity - of masculinity and femininity, and the so-called marginalisation of men - thus needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency*".<sup>17</sup>

129. Given its mandate in education, science, social and human sciences, culture and communication - all of which are crucial for attitude change and stereotypical behaviour - UNESCO has an uncontested leadership role in moving this issue from rhetoric to practical solutions. While the impact of stereotypes in general, and sexist stereotypes specifically, is studied at various universities and other similar institutions in the world, our knowledge about this remains fragmented and, therefore, practically impossible to use presently at the policy level. Pooling this knowledge together, consolidating it and placing it

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<sup>17</sup> Report of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality on its fifth session, UN Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, 6 March 2000; ACC/2000/3

at the disposal of Member States as well as other UN entities, would be a major contribution that UNESCO could make to the world-wide efforts to enhance gender equality, which has by now become a historic necessity. The more so since UNESCO had already begun such work in the past, notably in education (see paras 33 and 34 of Part I) and, more recently, within the framework of Women and a culture of peace programme, which addressed, among other, the issue of male identity (masculinity).

130. To change attitudes implies changing perceptions, understanding, expectations, beliefs and language, all of which are deeply rooted in one's experience, inherited socio-cultural value system(s), prevalent modes of thinking, peer pressure, personal hopes and fears, and so much more, which is often difficult if not impossible to express. Education, culture, communication and information obviously play an important part in all these. School textbooks, teachers' and parents' attitudes, the toy industry, music and video industry, the mass media and now Internet, all of these have an impact on the individual's attitudes, and are by and large prominent in perpetuating sexist stereotypes, in practically all societies today. A concerted, consolidated approach is necessary to deal with their root causes, and only a multidisciplinary organisation like UNESCO can federate and mobilise the necessary effort for this.

131. Another important and long neglected issue for women's empowerment and gender equality is **unpaid (non remunerated) work** which, indeed, is foremost the lot of women in all parts of the world, but increasingly concerns also men. This too is a very complex issue, which is of crucial importance for development policies, and which is only now starting to be recognised as a legitimate issue that needs to be raised within the framework of national economies and at the global level. It is recalled that the General Conference of UNESCO requested in its 28 C/Resolution 5.16, among other, the examination of "the issue of the economic contribution of women and the means of enhancing the status of their unpaid work". Admittedly, this expectation has not yet been fulfilled. While work (labour) as such is foremost the responsibility of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the elucidation of its cultural components and of its role in development processes certainly falls under UNESCO's mandate, and could hence be envisaged as a useful inter-agency undertaking. The *Our Cultural Diversity*

report<sup>18</sup> (dealing with gender) offers a possible framework of reflection within which a concerted examination of the complex phenomena of women's unpaid work could be initiated. Furthermore, the existence of unpaid work is deeply linked to questions regarding education, training and employment opportunities. All of these are inherent in UNESCO's programme.

132. Women's **use and management of natural non-renewable resources**, notably water, is another key topic. As stated in Part II UNESCO carried out in the past four years a number of successful activities within the framework of the special project it had on this subject. Furthermore, the importance of water for women, and the need to examine water-related processes and policies from a gender perspective, was clearly manifested within the World Water Vision project, especially its gender mainstreaming component, which was co-ordinated by UNESCO. To ensure a rational and equitable use of water, it is imperative to integrate women fully into the decision-making processes that take place in this regard at all levels: from community (which is in fact that most important, and should therefore be the most accessible to women) to that of international agreements. To help empower

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<sup>18</sup> *Our Creative Diversity, Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development*, Chapter.

women to participate fully in this, at various levels of action, UNESCO is expected to provide appropriate training in a variety of fields, ranging from the elementary literacy and basic education services to the more sophisticated scientific

knowledge and skills in management, governance and political action. Thus, all fields of the Organisation's competence are called upon to contribute to such an endeavour.

### **A fundamental prerequisite: Gender-sensitive statistics and indicators**

#### ***Women's participation in seminars on education statistics and indicators***

Within the framework of UNESCO's 'Seminars on gender-sensitive education statistics and indicators' national authorities were invited by UNESCO's statistics division to make an effort to send women to participate in the workshops.

Many of UNESCO's National Commissions complied with this request, and it was therefore possible to have an exceptionally high proportion of women attending the workshops. Thus in the three subregional workshops organised in the context of this project between 1996 and 1997 the participation by gender was as follows:

#### **Number of participants in 1996-97 workshops, by gender**

	Total	of which female	% female
Abidjan, for French-speaking African countries	15	11	<b>73</b>
Accra, for English-speaking African countries	18	12	<b>67</b>
Amman, for Arab speaking countries	17	7	<b>41</b>
<i>Total 3 workshops</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>30</i>	<i><b>60</b></i>

It needs to be noted that at time of the 1996-97 workshops many people considered that it was necessary to insist on the participation of women, as it is commonly stated that "statistics are the frame for all."

IN the new round of workshops carried out by the new UNESCO Institute for Statistics in connection with Survey 2000, there was no mention in the invitation letter to the National Commissions to make a special effort to propose women candidates. As a result, women's participation was as follows:

#### **Number of participants in Year 2000 workshops, by gender**

	Total	of which female	% female
Abidjan, for French-speaking African countries	26	1	<b>4</b>
Dakar, for French-speaking African countries	25	2	<b>8</b>
Nairobi, for English-speaking African countries	33	9	<b>27</b>
Beirut, for Arab-speaking countries	26	9	<b>35</b>
Bangkok, for South-Eastern Asian countries	22	2	<b>9</b>
Kingston, for the Caribbean	27	8	<b>30</b>
Samoa, for Oceania	26	9	<b>35</b>
Almaty, for Central Asian countries	26	16	<b>62</b>
Havana, for Latin America	19	5	<b>26</b>
<i>Total 9 workshops</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>61</i>	<i><b>27</b></i>

Conclusion: the practice of considering that statistics are "the same for all" means ultimately that women remain *invisible*.



## 2. INTEGRATED GENDER MAINSTREAMING

133. UNESCO's overall gender mainstreaming effort includes also the progress made in the past five years in (a) electing prominent women as Presidents/Chairs of the Organisation's governing bodies, and (b) appointing qualified women to high-level positions in the in the Secretariat. As regards the first, currently both the General Conference and the Executive Board are chaired by a woman (respectively Ms Jaroslava Moserova from the Czech Republic, and Ms Sonia Mendieta de Badaroux from Honduras), which is a novelty in the history of the Organisation. This being said, the men/women ratio in the Executive Board is nothing to boast about: out of 58 Member States represented on the Board, only 12 are represented by a woman. Among other important bodies, the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) is chaired by Ms Vigdis Finnbogadottir (Iceland), and Audience Africa is chaired by Ms Graca Machel (Mozambique).

134. As regards the UNESCO Secretariat staff, the 1999 data of the Human Resource Management unit show the following:

- ◆ Women constitute 54.8 % of the total staff (all locations, regular programme and extrabudgetary); women make up 40.9 % of the professional category; and 66.7 % of the general service staff;
- ◆ Women in the professional category (altogether 449 out of a total of 1098 professionals) are further broken-down as follows:
 

P1	40 women	(34 men)
P2	104	(64)
P3	122	(100)
P4	83	(138)
P5	69	(183)
D1	20	(83)
D2	9	(33)

135. In spite of a relative progress in increasing the numbers of women in higher professional categories and above (a good record compared to other UN agencies), the data above confirm the persistence of the trend in recruiting/appointing women foremost lower professional categories. From P4 upwards the recruitment/appointment trend is still clearly in favour of *men*. Further efforts are necessary in order to bring the

percentage of women in professional and above categories closer to 50% (the UN target), and in order to redress the imbalance in terms of lower and higher categories. Furthermore, the average age of female staff members, which is 46.54 for the professional category and 48.92 for general services and other category staff, is rather high and would seem to indicate that there is little recruitment of young professional women. Efforts are therefore being made to combat this discrepancy and remove obstacles to their recruitment, promotion and mobility, through an increase in the flexibility with which the system deals with women candidates.

136. In order to ensure this, Member States have been asked, since July 1996, to submit lists of associations grouping professional women, with a view to addressing them to UNESCO's vacancy notices directly. Furthermore, the Organisation's vacancy notice specifies, in the first paragraph and in bold script, that qualified women's applications are encouraged. In order to consolidate and ensure the success of this strategy, all staff in charge of evaluating candidatures for professional posts are provided with new recruitment guidelines which encourage them to consider UNESCO's recruitment policies regarding women in professional posts. (For more detail, see Annex 3)

137. Overall, gender mainstreaming, in the full sense of the term, has not yet been integrated into UNESCO's work. Broadly speaking, a part of programme specialists - mostly those who function as gender focal points - have begun to understand and apply this approach, while the vast majority of programme specialists and most of the high-level administration have not yet grasped its importance. As a first step, a network of gender focal points has evolved, although in most cases they assume these responsibilities *in addition* to normal work load and with no incentives. A much stronger policy is therefore needed, which would include gender focal points of National Commissions. The latter still remains to be created. Likewise, although a first step has been made towards adapting the Organisation's budget system/coding to take into account "women projects" (by earmarking explicitly the funds for these activities), a more solid integration of a gender perspective into budgeting is yet to be devised (e.g., by using specific codes for "women and gender related" projects).

138. Such innovations imply:

- ◆ applying a gender approach in the programming of UNESCO's activities (i.e., the gender focal points must become a "permanent fixture" in all work groups that decide on programming matters, whatever the level, and they should participate with full authority);
- ◆ having the capacities (human and technical) to monitor continuously (regularly) and thoroughly the implementation of the programmed activities;
- ◆ having the authority to act when gender mainstreaming principles are not respected (i.e., when funds for "women/gender related" activities are cut or withheld in spite of good performance record, simply because these activities are deemed as "less important" compared to other projects).

139. Presently, the UNESCO *gender focal point set-up* consists of:

- ◆ a principal (overall) GFP co-ordinating unit, integrated into BPE since December 1999, consisting of a D1, a P4, a P1 and a G5; as of September 2000, WGE consists only of a D1, (P1) and a G5;
- ◆ a unit for "Women and a Culture of Peace" whose mandate includes human rights and discrimination issues since its integration into SHS in December 1999, consisting of a D1, a P1 and a G7;
- ◆ a unit for "Women in the Mediterranean" programme, in SHS, consisting of a D1 and a G4 (likely to disappear in 2001);
- ◆ at least one gender focal point in each of the substantive sectors, ranging from P3 to D1 level;
- ◆ a GFP in each of the field offices, ranging from P1 to P5.

140. For future evaluation, it needs to be noted, that the creation of the principal GFP unit in Spring 1996, as well as the unit responsible for "Women and a Culture of Peace" and the unit for

"Women in the Mediterranean" (both created in Summer 1996), took considerable time and effort as the most elementary conditions (minimum office space and a minimum number of post) had to be negotiated through long administrative procedures. This resulted in an evident delay in the implementation of important tasks such as the preparation of appropriate gender mainstreaming training programmes and training material, which is of utmost importance.

141. In the given circumstances, the task of WGE as the main GFP co-ordinator was:

- ◆ to ensure coherence for the overall UNESCO work on women and gender equality issues; inform the UN system and other relevant partners of this work; and give it visibility through publications, Internet, various public events, etc.;
- ◆ act as "cross fertilizer" regarding content and a basic support mechanism for individual GFPs, by providing assistance (human resources and funds) when requested, and to the extent possible given its relatively modest means;
- ◆ to develop operational relations with the entire GFP network through regular contact, personally including relevant NGOs, and by e-mail and other forms of communication.

142. As regards a further development of the GFP network, the following needs to be envisaged:

- ◆ create appropriate training in gender mainstreaming (to be organised by BPE/WGE and HRM)
- ◆ provide training material, and other awareness-building material, especially for the Field;
- ◆ assist National Commissions for UNESCO in setting up their own GFP networks, and facilitate a flow of information and communication among these, as well as among these and the Secretariat GFPs;
- ◆ introduce incentives for GFPs and for all who adhere to gender mainstreaming

principles and practice.

143. In the past four years, when preparing biennium workplans, all substantive sectors were requested to indicate clearly the **financial resources** to be used for "women" projects (women being a priority group). While this was observed by all, the following problems were noted:

- ◆ the funds thus allotted were earmarked for "women specific" projects, and only rarely for gender mainstreaming work;
- ◆ in the absence of specific "gender/women" budget codes, it has so far been impossible to monitor what part of these funds was indeed spent on "women" projects, and even less so to what effect;
- ◆ several of the funds earmarked for "women" projects were among the first to be cut by administrative units, partly or entirely, when funds were needed urgently for other programmes;
- ◆ most GFPs work with relatively small budget allocations; many of the field GFPs are given even less, and have practically no budget that allows them to attend sometimes very useful meetings of UN GFPs in the (sub)region.

144. In the meantime, the UN system has begun to introduce gender mainstreaming in the programme budget processes, and a first, interim report became available in February 2000. Using the experience of other UN entities, UNESCO is now ready to begin this process in a more concerted way, especially within the present restructuring and reform effort.

145. The use of *gender sensitive (neutral) language* in Secretariat documents has certain success. The 1999 updated, bilingual (English and French) publication of UNESCO's Guidelines on Gender-Neutral Language has proven to be a very useful tool for eradicating some of the most blatant sexist formulations in the work of UNESCO's administration (e.g., various administrative forms, reports, etc.) and in most of its programmes. Thousands of copies of this booklet have been, and are being distributed to

Member States, NGOs, UNESCO Clubs and associations, etc. Nonetheless, important language blockages still appear, especially in the French language, where "droit de l'homme" is persistently preferred to the term "droit humain", to give but this example.

146. The continuing challenge is to overcome these constraints by incorporating gender issues in dialogue with Member States and by securing intensified managerial commitment at all levels, as well as appropriate resources and incentives and regular progress monitoring. Additionally, a clear strategy for the gender dimension with well designed priorities and policies still needs to be established for each Sector.

**PURSuing A GENDER MAINSTREAMING APPROACH  
WITHIN UNESCO'S MEMBER STATES AND ITS SECRETARIAT**

ACTION	OBJECTIVES	MODALITIES
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a gender perspective throughout UNESCO's programmes and operational activities.</li> <li>• Keep the education of girls and women high on national agendas.</li> <li>• Promote an active and broad participation of women at all levels and fields of activity;</li> <li>• Promote women's priorities and perspectives in the rethinking of the goals and means of development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist Member States in the implementation of UNESCO's Agenda for Gender Equality and its commitments: the UN System-Wide Medium Term Plan for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing Platform for Action and regional platforms;</li> <li>• Promote &amp; implement, particularly Article 10 (Education) of the CEDAW Convention;</li> <li>• Operationalise the agreed ECOSOC conclusions on gender mainstreaming;</li> <li>• Operationalise and integrate the ACC Statement on gender mainstreaming;</li> <li>• Integrate impact studies on gender equality as part of the UNESCO Field Offices Annual Report.</li> <li>• Co-operate regularly with gender focal points of the UN system, by participating in: the ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women &amp; Gender Equality, UN Commission on the Status of Women, the CEDAW, through projects with UN agencies, and other inter-agency mechanisms.</li> </ul>
Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure that UNESCO's overall policy, gender strategy, specific projects and activities concerning women and gender are coherent (focusing on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action).</li> <li>• Provide policy guidance to Member States on gender issues.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of a holistic approach to gender issues through inter-disciplinary collaboration and teamwork.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist National Commissions and programme sectors in developing a gender strategy, in the areas of policy, programming, implementation, and evaluation.</li> <li>• Establish a modality for inter-sectoral co-operation, which would serve as a catalyst for initiatives in gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>• Foster communication and dialogue between and among different disciplines on gender matters;</li> <li>• Identify interrelated areas of particular importance for gender equality;</li> <li>• Plan joint working/training sessions on gender issues</li> <li>• Assist in establishing partnerships at the country level with NGOS, the private sector, and civil society, (universities, other institutions)</li> <li>• Develop tools, guidelines and training materials on gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>• Develop interactive learning material on gender mainstreaming and UNESCO's policy (on-line CD-ROM).</li> <li>• Organize with HRM, training of HQ and FO staff on gender mainstreaming, including gender-sensitive project preparation and evaluation.</li> <li>• Organize with HRM, training for AOs, BOC, BB officers on gender mainstreaming</li> </ul>

## Gender Equality and Equity

Monitoring and Information Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure regular information/ communication flow among the different Programme Sectors at Headquarter. and in the Field (Gender focal points, National Commissions, Permanent Delegations, NGOs, IGOs and other partners).</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the implementation of gender projects/activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor projects through the results- base programming software SISTER.</li> <li>• Continued update of UNESCO's Gender Internet site.</li> <li>• Develop Gender Intranet site to facilitate Secretariat and partner institutions' access to work/ projects on women and gender.</li> <li>• Reinforce UNESCO's participation in the UN Women Watch web site.</li> <li>• Develop and make accessible through Internet a world wide data base/per region, on NGOs working on women and gender projects.</li> </ul>
Managerial Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the managerial framework for effective implementation of multi-disciplinary gender programmes.</li> <li>• Use specific budget coding for gender and women projects in national budgets and in UNESCO;</li> <li>• Enforce accountability at all levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the use of existing training programmes / workshops at the regional and sub-regional levels to include training devoted to the use of gender guidelines.</li> <li>• Build on the work underway in the UN system to strengthen capacity for data collection and analysis.</li> <li>• Assist in the selection of appropriate management tools, criteria for evaluation, indicators for monitoring.</li> <li>• Provide relevant training/ briefing for capacity building in this area.</li> <li>• Contact lead agencies (UN DAW, UNIFEM, etc). on guidelines and discuss the issue with the Inter- Agency Group on Gender.</li> <li>• Facilitate interchange of staff expertise between and among programmes and activities.</li> <li>• Gender mainstreaming to become an element in personal professional assessments.</li> </ul>
Mobilization of resources and forging of partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize extra-budgetary financial and other financial resources</li> <li>• Promote policies that favor allocation of greater resources for gender mainstreaming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in identifying sources of financing for gender projects and gender mainstreaming;</li> <li>• Provide technical and other support to country level initiatives aimed at generating more resources for gender projects and gender mainstreaming.</li> </ul>

## A UNESCO AGENDA FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Position Paper  
presented by  
the Director-General of UNESCO  
at the Fourth World Conference on  
Women, Beijing 1995

The UNESCO **Agenda for Gender Equality** introduces ways of combining the universal and the particular. It articulates women's common aspirations for equality and the respect for cultural plurality. UNESCO, within its fields of competence and in co-operation with Member States and other partners, thereby commits itself to:

- i. Promote **education for women's self-empowerment** at all levels and in all fields by assisting Member States to ensure equal access to relevant quality education and training for girls and women, including the development of distance education as an effective means of reaching the unreached. The right to education is a fundamental human right. Universal primary education and adult literacy for girls and women pave the way to personal fulfilment, economic self-reliance and full citizenship.
- ii. Encourage the **equal access to knowledge** in all fields, notably within science and technology, and increase women's participation in higher education and training programmes. More women's participation is needed in decisions relating to research, development, use and control of science and technology. Access to water, particularly in the rural areas, as well as the development of alternative renewable energy resources, especially solar energy, is crucial for the rational management of dwindling natural resources and for the alleviation of the drudgeries of the lives of poor women and men.
- iii. Support **women's human rights** by strengthening initiatives for a broader ratification and a more effective implementation of normative instruments pertaining to women, notably, the CEDAW. Encourage Member States to acknowledge the principle of gender equality and *inter-alia*, to integrate 'legal literacy' for girls and women at all levels of the educational system.
- iv. Promote the attainment of **gender parity, women's full citizenship and equal participation in policy-making** as a prerequisite for true democracy at the local, national and international levels. Assist in the elimination of stereotyped roles and expectations, with a view to promote more equitable sharing of responsibilities and rights in the family and in society at large.
- v. Foster **partnership and dialogue, and develop a new gender contract**, underlining the long-term gains from the social transformation towards gender-sensitive societies. Women and men in partnership hold the reins of development in their joint capacity to fight poverty and exclusion, rethink

- and humanise the goals and means of development. Equal and equitable participation of women and men in all decision-making, whether in the home, in the community or in society at large, is essential to the world's survival and well-being.
- vi.** Mainstream a **gender perspective** in the conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to development and peace and security. Collect and analyse gender-specific statistical data while developing appropriate indicators and guidelines. This will assist Member States in monitoring progress made towards the promotion and development of more gender-sensitive societies.
- vii.** Encourage **women's creativity and freedom of expression** by, *inter-alia*, supporting women's activities and research within UNESCO's fields of competence. Further promote relevant training opportunities, capacity-building, women's NGOs and networking initiatives for the exchange of information and experience, focusing in particular on women artists, artisans and journalists.
- viii.** Support a **pluralistic and editorially independent media** by favouring the broad and active participation of women in decision-making and by encouraging more diversified, realistic and non-discriminatory images of women. Promote gender equality in order to 'advance the mutual knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through all means of mass communication', as stated in UNESCO's Constitution.
- ix.** Assist in building a **culture of peace in the minds of women and men** by recognising women's capacity for leadership and their contributions to non-violent conflict resolution. UNESCO places education at the heart
- of its efforts towards the building of a culture of peace and assists in the reorganization of educational systems, so that they become gender-sensitive and provide knowledge of human rights and democracy, skills in non-violent conflict resolution, care and respect for the natural environment and cross-cultural understanding, in order to forge a genuine global neighborhood.

**ACC STATEMENT FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE YEAR 2000**

**"Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century"**

1. We, the Executive Heads of the organizations of the United Nations system, are committed to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the achievement of gender equality as essential for the reduction and eradication of poverty, and the achievement of peace, human rights, and sustainable development.
2. We acknowledge that progress has been made in creating an enabling environment for women's empowerment and gender equality through implementation of commitments made at the United Nations Conferences and Summits of the 1990s, in particular the Fourth World Conference on Women.
3. However, significant challenges remain. Renewed efforts are needed to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Global and local developments and trends offer both opportunities for, and challenges to, gender equality. New approaches are needed to address these opportunities and challenges within the Platform's vision of gender equality and women's empowerment. Policy interventions to minimize the risks of globalization and to ensure the most positive outcomes for women throughout the life cycle need to be identified and implemented. Specific policy issues concerning women and girls, such as work-related rights, gender-based violence, reproductive and sexual health and rights, education and social security, access to productive resources including credit, and nutrition require sustained attention. Institutions and individuals need to be equipped to deal with the opportunities and challenges in processes of rapid change in a manner which supports the promotion of gender equality.
4. Women and men must be equal partners in shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We strongly believe that political will and accountability for the realization of gender equality are fundamental prerequisites. We are increasingly assuming responsibility and accountability for active promotion of gender equality in our policy, normative and operational work, through our programmes carried out in partner countries, and through strengthened inter-agency partnerships in its achievement. We account for progress through better monitoring and reporting.
5. We commit ourselves to intensified action in support of accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action and gender mainstreaming. Accordingly,
  - We will strengthen our support to Governments at the country level in their implementation of national action plans for gender equality and in institutional capacity building.
  - We will continue to promote gender mainstreaming in the policy dialogue with Governments/Parliaments and civil society, and between Governments.
  - We will encourage and support the sharing of experiences and of good practices in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action, and in using the gender mainstreaming approach in a cross-cutting manner.
  - We will continue to develop and implement programmes and projects targeted to women to reduce existing

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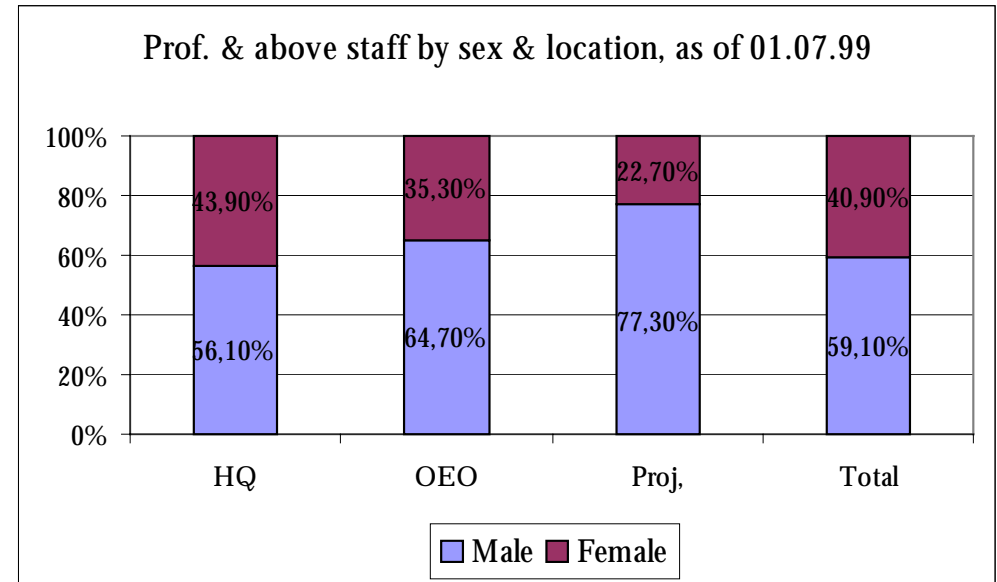
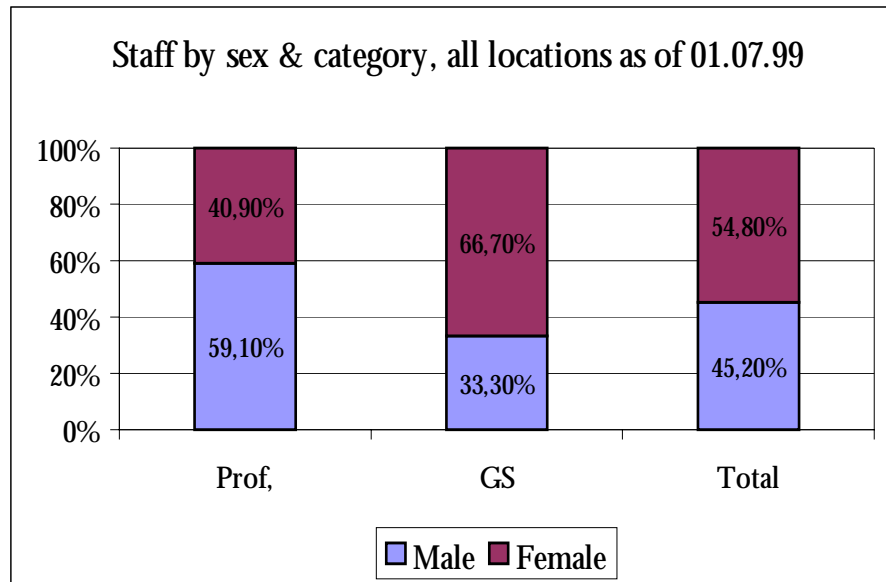
- inequalities and to promote gender equality.
  - We will ensure that gender equality implications are addressed in all our sectoral and thematic work, including through increased capacity of all staff for gender mainstreaming, through gender-sensitive planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, the development and use of good practices, and other measures.
  - We will continue to develop and refine tools and resources to guide gender-responsive policy-making and planning, including using statistics which are sex-disaggregated and highlight issues of gender equality.
  - We will take the necessary steps to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in country programming such as the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and Consolidated Appeal processes.
  - We will work to ensure an increased focus on both women and men and the relations between them, and men's full participation in promoting gender equality at all levels.
  - We will provide the necessary support and resources towards the realization of these commitments, including strengthening the mandates and resources of organizational mechanisms, such as gender focal points, which are necessary to realize the implementation of gender mainstreaming.
6. Within our organizations, we are taking positive measures to significantly increase the representation of women, including at the most senior level, towards the goal of 50/50 gender parity set by the General Assembly. This has required special administrative measures and focussed programmes of affirmative action, which we expect to be temporary in nature. However, we have also taken steps to address the more difficult and long-term challenges of changing the culture of our organizations to become more gender-sensitive. We have increased our awareness of what gender equality means to each organization and have implemented positive measures to make our work environments more responsive to the requirements of both women and men.
7. Further action is needed to achieve the goals set in the Platform for Action, and in other intergovernmental mandates. Accordingly:
- We will strengthen managerial competence and accountability for gender equality and a gender-sensitive work environment.
  - We will improve recruitment policies and practices to ensure that women are appointed in our organizations, especially in senior management and operations positions.
  - We will take steps and develop common policies on retaining women, especially through effective spousal employment assistance and inter-agency mobility, and improving career development opportunities for women.
  - We will create and enhance a supportive and gender-sensitive work environment.
  - We will develop effective accountability mechanisms to ensure that our actions match our policy commitments.
- Finally, we will work to build partnerships with Governments, civil society, and the private sector, and within the United Nations system to achieve gender equality, development and peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

9 February 2000

**Annexe 3**

**Staff by sex, category and location  
Regular Programme & Extrabudgetary  
at 01.07.99**

	Headquarters			Established Offices			Field Projects			All locations		
	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>GS</i>	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>GS</i>	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>GS</i>	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>GS</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Male</b>	419	310	729	213	104	317	17	13	30	649	427	1076
<b>Female</b>	328	660	988	116	181	297	5	16	21	449	857	1306
<b>TOTAL</b>	747	970	1717	329	285	614	22	29	51	1098	1284	2382



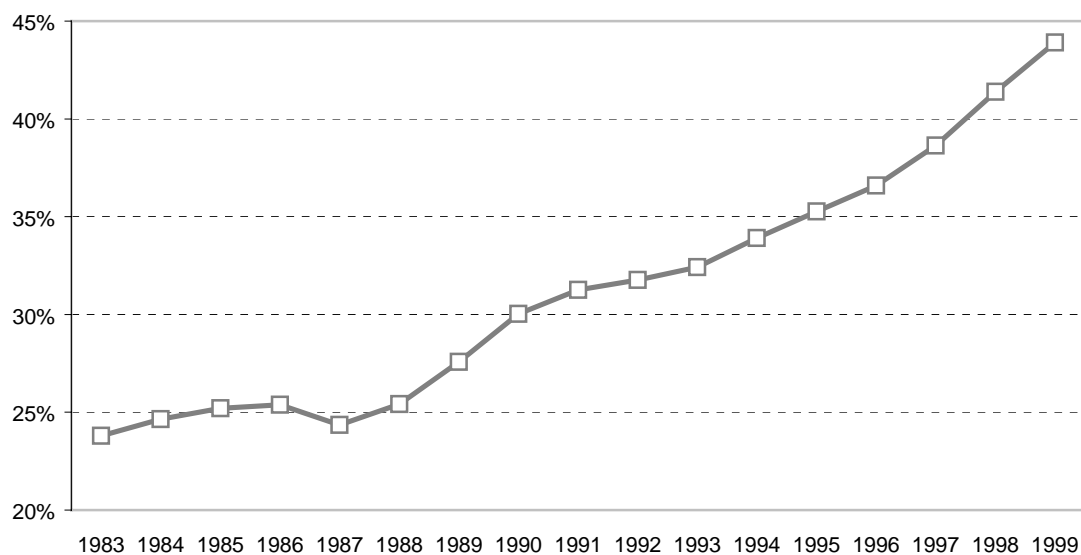
**Professional staff**  
**Regular Programme & Extrabudgetary**  
*(by sex, grade & location)*  
*as of 01.07.99*

	<i>P1</i>	<i>P2</i>	<i>P3</i>	<i>P4</i>	<i>P5</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>D2</i>	<i>ADG &amp; above</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>HQ</b>									
<b>Male</b>	12	39	64	99	113	56	22	14	419
<b>Female</b>	13	76	100	61	54	15	7	2	328
<b>Total HQ</b>	25	115	164	160	167	71	29	16	747
<b>OEO</b>									
<b>Male</b>	21	24	29	36	65	27	11		213
<b>Female</b>	27	27	22	20	13	5	2		116
<b>Total OEO</b>	48	51	51	56	78	32	13		329
<b>Projects</b>									
<b>Male</b>	1	1	7	3	5				17
<b>Female</b>		1		2	2				5
<b>Total Proj.</b>	1	2	7	5	7				22
<b>All UNESCO</b>									
<b>Male</b>	34	64	100	138	183	83	33	14	649
<b>Female</b>	40	104	122	83	69	20	9	2	449
<b>TOTAL</b>	74	168	222	221	252	103	42	16	1098

**HQ Female staff ratio dynamics**  
*(RP & Exb., professional and above category)*

<i>1 July</i>	<i>Total staff</i>	<i>Female only</i>	<i>Female staff ratio</i> %
<i>1983</i>	874	208	23,80
<i>1984</i>	864	213	24,65
<i>1985</i>	849	214	25,21
<i>1986</i>	772	196	25,39
<i>1987</i>	727	177	24,35
<i>1988</i>	740	188	25,41
<i>1989</i>	707	195	27,58
<i>1990</i>	716	215	30,03
<i>1991</i>	720	225	31,25
<i>1992</i>	699	222	31,76
<i>1993</i>	694	225	32,42
<i>1994</i>	711	241	33,90
<i>1995</i>	723	255	35,27
<i>1996</i>	716	262	36,59
<i>1997</i>	722	279	38,64
<i>1998</i>	737	305	41,38
<i>1999</i>	747	328	43,91

**HQ female staff ratio**  
*(Prof. & above category)*



## Annexe 3

**HQ staff by sex, category, age**  
*(as of 01.07.99)*

AGE	Prof. & above			GS			ALL HQ STAFF
	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	
<30	8	22	<i>30</i>	10	21	<i>31</i>	61
30<45	26	42	<i>68</i>	17	27	<i>44</i>	112
35<40	24	26	<i>50</i>	23	41	<i>64</i>	114
40<45	32	34	<i>66</i>	36	83	<i>119</i>	185
45<50	61	51	<i>112</i>	66	137	<i>203</i>	315
50<55	104	73	<i>177</i>	102	186	<i>288</i>	465
55<60	135	76	<i>211</i>	52	163	<i>215</i>	426
60<65	29	4	<i>33</i>	4	2	<i>6</i>	39
<i>Total staff</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>328</i>	<i>747</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>660</i>	<i>970</i>	<i>1717</i>
<b>AVERAGE AGE</b>	<b>50,73</b>	<b>46,54</b>	<b>48,89</b>	<b>48,23</b>	<b>48,92</b>	<b>48,70</b>	<b>48,78</b>

**OEO staff by sex, category, age**  
*(as of 01.07.99)*

AGE	Prof. & above			Local			ALL OEO STAFF
	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	
<30	6	6	<i>12</i>	5	12	<i>17</i>	29
30<35	17	22	<i>39</i>	12	15	<i>27</i>	66
35<40	14	14	<i>28</i>	14	28	<i>42</i>	70
40<45	16	11	<i>27</i>	19	34	<i>53</i>	80
45<50	28	15	<i>43</i>	28	33	<i>61</i>	104
50<55	60	24	<i>84</i>	18	38	<i>56</i>	140
55<60	59	21	<i>80</i>	7	21	<i>28</i>	108
60<65	13	3	<i>16</i>	1		<i>1</i>	17
<i>Total Staff</i>	<i>213</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>329</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>285</i>	<i>614</i>
<b>AVERAGE AGE</b>	<b>49,80</b>	<b>45,17</b>	<b>48,17</b>	<b>44,23</b>	<b>44,65</b>	<b>44,50</b>	<b>46,47</b>