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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and  
to the special session of the General Assembly entitled  
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for  
the twenty-first century”: review of gender mainstreaming  
in entities of the United Nations system**

### **Measures taken by entities of the United Nations system in promoting the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern**

**Note by the Secretariat**

*Summary*

This Conference Room Paper complements the report of the Secretary-General on “Measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, with an assessment of progress made on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system” (E/CN.6/2005/3). It assesses measures taken by United Nations entities in promoting the implementation of the commitments to action on the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, identified twelve critical areas of concern<sup>1</sup> and called upon Governments, the international community and civil society to take strategic action in these areas.
2. This paper complements the report of the Secretary-General on “Measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, with an assessment of progress made on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system” (E/CN.6/2005/3). It assesses measures taken by United Nations entities in promoting the implementation of the commitments to action on the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. The paper is based on inputs received from United Nations entities. It does not give a comprehensive overview, but provides illustrative examples from entities of the United Nations system.

## **II. Achievements in implementing the twelve critical areas of concern**

### **A. Women and Poverty**

3. Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, gender equality has received increasing attention in efforts to combat poverty in many United Nations entities. It is now widely recognized that gender equality and the advancement of women is essential to poverty reduction.
4. In order to promote enhanced understanding of the specific linkages between gender equality and poverty, several entities prepared reports and organized meetings on this topic. For example, in 2001, the World Bank published the report “Engendering Development: Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources and Voice”, which provided strong evidence that gender inequality retards poverty reduction and economic growth. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) organized a technical meeting on gender perspectives in poverty measurement, and prepared several publications/reports on poverty and inequality from a gender perspective. World Food Programme (WFP), jointly with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), undertook case studies in Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zambia to provide in-depth knowledge on beneficiaries’ perception of food distribution measures and their effect on women’s control of food.
5. To empower women in the context of poverty eradication efforts, many entities, such as ECLAC, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the WFP, promoted women’s access to, use and control of productive resources (such

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<sup>1</sup> (i) Women and poverty; (ii) Education and training of women; (iii) Women and health; (iv) Violence against women; (v) Women and armed conflict; (vi) Women and the economy; (vii) Women in power and decision-making; (viii) Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; (ix) Human rights of women; (x) Women and the media; (xi) Women and the environment; and (xii) The girl-child.

as capital and land). For example, IFAD's three-pronged approach to gender equality and women's empowerment aimed at: (i) increasing women's access to and control over fundamental assets; (ii) strengthening women's agency and decision-making in community affairs and representation in local institutions; and (iii) improving women's well-being and easing their workload. The poverty of women and girls was addressed by entities in relation to biodiversity, education, employment, food security and housing. For example, in 2003 the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), conducted workshops on the crucial role of women in managing biodiversity as means for poverty reduction in Cote d'Ivoire and Niger. In preparing country profiles on the housing sector, the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) incorporated analysis of the impact on inadequate settlement conditions on women and female-headed households, in particular single mothers. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) actively sought to increase women's participation in agriculture and rural development in its efforts to ensure food security, and agricultural and rural development, including by promoting gender-sensitive policy planning and decision-making. In recognizing the increasing burden of poverty on women, UNRWA targeted women heads of families for cash assistance and food aid. The International Labour Office (ILO) Programme on "Gender, Poverty and Employment" addressed the expansion of employment, access to assets and financial resources, social protection, skills and training and the ability to initiate change through organizational and negotiating power.

6. Specific poverty reduction programme strategies were developed, such as the World Bank strategy "Integrating Gender into the World Bank's Work—A Strategy for Action", which recommends: (i) conducting periodic assessments of gender-based barriers to poverty reduction and economic growth through Country Gender Assessments (CGA); (ii) using the findings to identify priority gender-responsive interventions; and (iii) integrating gender analysis and gender-responsive interventions into projects in priority sectors. By June 2004, a total of 38 such assessments were completed, of which more than 80 per cent proposed actions to address gender issues in at least one sector. Greater attention was also paid to gender issues in reviews of poverty reduction strategies papers (PRSPs). In 2004, over 50 per cent of the joint staff assessments (JSA) of PRSPs provided concrete advice to improve attention to gender inequality. Some of these assessments recommended further steps in sex-disaggregated data collection and monitoring. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is developing a guidebook for integrating gender and household production into poverty reduction policies in Africa with a view to improving the skills of statisticians, national accountants, and policy analysts for the collection, analysis and integration of gender disaggregated data (micro and macro) into national planning instruments.

## **B. Education and training of women**

7. The United Nations system continued to promote education and training of women and girls in order to fulfil various global commitments, including the Beijing Platform for Action, the Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals.

8. In April 2000, at the Dakar World Education Forum, Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). Thirteen UN

entities<sup>2</sup>, led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), agreed to work together on this 10-year initiative to help Governments meet their commitments to ensure quality education for all girls everywhere. As a result, several entities have established programmes to further girls' education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), the African Development Bank and selected African education ministers and education NGOs met in Nairobi, Kenya, in June 2004, to assess best practices in girls education and strategies for scaling up.

9. In promoting girls' attendance in school, entities carried out a wide range of activities, including efforts to cover their education costs, improve sanitary facilities, provide meals at school and take-home rations of water and food, and abolish school fees. For example, the World Bank financed 142 education projects in 80 countries that provided stipends for rural girls, trained and hired female teachers, built and improved sanitary facilities, and provided a source of clean water for girls to carry home after school. Similarly, WFP provided meals to school children. Take-home rations were provided as an economic incentive for families to send their children, in particular girls, to school. UNICEF set up campaigns to abolish school fees (which led to exponential gains in enrolment in Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania) and helped children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. In implementing the Highly Indebted Poor Country initiative, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank assisted countries in developing targets, including primary school enrolment rates for girls, in order to bring about irrevocable disbursement of debt relief.

10. Efforts were also made to highlight the positive impact of girls' education. For example, United Nations Volunteers (UNV) emphasized that community based pre-school training facilities in Niger freed both girls and women of their domestic work load by relieving them of their time spent on early child care and development. Similarly, the Guidance and Counselling Programme of UNESCO, initiated by African Ministers of Education in 1994, emphasized the non-academic aspects of education, that is. the emotional and social dimension of the school life of the child.

11. With one of its mandates to promote education for all, UNESCO focused on a broad spectrum of activities: guidelines for preparing gender-responsive Education for All plans; support to the establishment of regional networks of Education for All gender focal points; in-depth qualitative research studies on ways to increase girls' access to lower secondary education; workshops on girls education; a survey on policies, structures and programmes for the promotion of girls and women's education in 26 African States; and a statistical review (1990-1998) on gender parity in basic education.. To address the quality of education, UNICEF undertook gender reviews of textbooks and curricula in many countries and engaged in advocacy to raise awareness of qualitative manifestations of gender bias.

12. A number of United Nations entities, such as IFAD, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United

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<sup>2</sup> ILO, UNAIDS, DAW/DESA, UNDGO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP, WHO and the World Bank.

Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UNRWA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), promoted training of women, including vocational training, in various areas, such as the maritime sector, health, nutrition, home economics, enterprise development, information and communication technologies (ICTs) and management. For example, IMO promoted training opportunities of women with the aim to increase women's visibility in key maritime professions. The UNDP provided women with ICT training in Turkmenistan, and supported women's tele-centres and training facilities for women entrepreneurs in Cameroon and the Philippines. UNRWA collaborated with UNIFEM in establishing a regional academy for Cisco Networking Academy Programme (CNAP), which emphasized gender equality in access to information and communication technologies. IFAD carried out functional literacy courses, technical and managerial courses and training linked to health, nutrition and home economics for women. The UNV supported income generating opportunities of disadvantaged youth, especially girls.

### **C. Women and health**

13. Many entities promoted women's health. In their responses, entities' focused primarily on sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS.

14. In February 2004, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) launched the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS<sup>3</sup>, which focuses on seven action areas: (i) preventing HIV infection among adolescent girls, focusing on improved reproductive health care; (ii) reducing violence against women; (iii) protecting the property and inheritance rights of women and girls; (iv) ensuring equal access by women and girls to care and treatment; (v) supporting improved community-based care with a special focus on women and girls; (vi) promoting access to new prevention options including the female condom and microbicides; and (vii) supporting ongoing efforts towards universal education for girls. The Global Coalition encourages work in two cross-cutting thematic areas: (i) development of bold and effective leadership for women, and (ii) the involvement of men and boys.

15. The Southern African Youth Initiative was developed and implemented by the United Nations Foundation (UNF), the United Nations Fund for International Partnership (UNFIP) and UNAIDS, in collaboration with local implementing partners, to scale up HIV interventions for young people, especially girls. Among the achievements of this initiative is the increased visibility of a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention that addresses the gender-related vulnerabilities to HIV.

16. Entities carried out studies and organized meetings in order to highlight gender dimensions of sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS, as well as to identify critical issues for further actions. For example, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) organized a side event to the fifty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Commission in 2003 on "Women, Men and HIV/AIDS:

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<sup>3</sup> Global Coalition Convening Agencies are: Centre for Women's Global Leadership; Global Campaign for Education (GCE); Global Campaign on Microbicides; HelpAge International; International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW); International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW); International Partnership on Microbicides (IPM); International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); FAO; UNIFEM; UNICEF; UNFPA; WHO; Young Positives; and Worldwide YWCA.

Responding to the Challenge”. UNICEF partnered with the government of Mali in a high-level advocacy initiative “VISION 2010” to mobilize First Ladies, decision-makers, women’s groups, NGOs and media from 14 countries and get political commitments and support regional strategies to reduce maternal and neo-natal mortality. ILO developed a gender-sensitive code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and a comprehensive modular training manual to guide the use of the Code by ILO’s constituents and stakeholders.

17. A number of entities were directly involved in sexual and reproductive health services at the local level. For example, UNICEF provided large numbers of women—in 2002, an estimated 1.4 million women from 32 countries—with information on how to prevent HIV infection and the spread of the virus to newborns. IOM ensured accessibility to HIV counselling and testing for female sex workers. UNRWA provided integrated pre-natal, intra-partum and postnatal maternal health services for women of reproductive age, food aid to pregnant women and nursing mothers, and school health services to more than 490,000 children. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported programmes in schools, youth clubs, workplaces, trade associations, police forces, and other organizations that encourage boys and men to accept and promote equality in sexual and reproductive health.

18. ESCAP, UNFPA and IOM emphasized women’s specific vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in situations of migration, forced displacement and trafficking. For example, IOM established a global health database for health practitioners working with victims of trafficking. UNFPA and IOM carried out participatory research among internally displaced populations in northern Uganda.

19. Other health related issues emphasized were violence against women, female genital mutilation/cutting, cancer, including smoking and lung cancer, mental health, tuberculosis, psychological stress trauma and poverty related illnesses. For example, the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) Programme of Action on Cancer Treatment aimed at early detection of the incidence of cancer in women (cervical, breast, ovarian) and provision of therapeutic strategies and awareness creation. IAEA promoted increasing nuclear medicine and radiotherapy capabilities of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on activities to mainstream gender perspectives into ageing, child and adolescent health, essential drugs and medicines, HIV/AIDS, non-communicable diseases and mental health, tuberculosis, tobacco, reproductive health and violence and injury protection. In doing so, WHO produced a range of tools and guidelines, including practical guidance on how gender inequality issues can be addressed and monitored in HIV/AIDS policies and programmes. WHO also supported initiatives to integrate gender into medical and public health training.

20. Some entities carried out activities to contribute to strengthening health systems and infrastructure. For example, IFAD financed rural health infrastructure investments, which greatly improved rural women’s access to basic services. The World Bank carried out activities to improve health systems and health service delivery, including on child health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, nutrition and food policy, population and reproductive health. A new health management information system,

implemented by UNRWA in 2002, aimed at improving surveillance, monitoring and response, and ultimately improving women's health by linking outcomes to risk factors.

#### **D. Violence against women**

21. Efforts to fight violence against women have scaled up during the last 10 years. A large number of entities are now actively addressing violence against women, including trafficking, sexual violence (see also critical area of concern 'women in armed conflict') and female genital mutilation/cutting. Efforts focused on enhancing the understanding and prevention of and response to violence against women, including by promoting laws and policies to protect and to punish; counselling and rehabilitation of victims; and capacity building and awareness raising of police, health workers, judges and local courts, social welfare and other officials.

22. To better understand and promote enhanced awareness of violence against women, a number of entities carried out projects, research and campaigns. For example, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) carried out comparative research on causes and consequences of gender violence in more than 70 countries. During 2004, the World Bank launched an initiative on the development implications of gender-based violence. Within its Safer Cities Programmes, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) carried out qualitative surveys to identify the types of violence and abuse women suffer from, as well as the characteristics of the abusers. Four types of violence, that is economic, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, were identified and assessed.

23. Efforts were made to measure incidence and trends in violence against women. For example, ECLAC prepared a publication of a proposal of gender indicators to measure the incidence and trends of violence against women in intimate relationships, and organized an international meeting on statistics and gender indicators to measure the incidence and trends in violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean (La Paz, Bolivia, 21-23 November 2001) with the financial support of UNFPA, UNIFEM and the Government of Italy. The WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence was the first study to gather data on the prevalence of violence against women and women's health that is comparable across countries.

24. A number of entities took measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women. For example, UNFPA's efforts to promote behavioural change in Nicaragua helped improve relations between the military and local communities. UNICEF carried out a programme on early child development in Argentina that helped prevent domestic violence by reinforcing community networks and organizing communication campaigns. Other strategies included support of legislative reform, policy development, and advocacy and capacity-building at different levels. Entities responded to violence against women in different ways, including by providing counselling and rehabilitation of victims and by building the capacity of various responding groups. For example, the World Bank provided social and legal services to help women victims of domestic violence, and sexual violence against children.

25. Measures were taken by entities to prevent and eliminate trafficking in women and children for commercial sexual exploitation. For example, IOM organized information campaigns in countries of origin to prevent potential women migrants from becoming



victims of trafficking; provided counselling in health and legal matters, shelter and accommodation to victims of trafficking; and assisted trafficked victims in their voluntary return to their country of origin and their reintegration. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) adopted a policy on human trafficking in 2004 and prepared a package of training and guidance to facilitate prevention of trafficking in women and girls. UNICRI actively prevented trafficking in minors and young women in Costa Rica, Nigeria, Thailand and Ukraine. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the linkages between development, rule of law, irregular migration, forced labour and gender discrimination.

26. The practice of female genital mutilation/cutting was addressed by some entities as a health risk and violation of women's fundamental human rights. For example, UNFPA targeted messages in Sudan and Uganda about the dangers of the procedure to parents, teachers and community leaders and supported counselling services for girls in Kenya. UNICEF played a pro-active role in the fight against female genital mutilation/cutting in Sudan, which was banned by the Government after a regional symposium on the topic in 2003.

27. UNFPA worked with governments in establishing national mechanisms for monitoring gender-based violence. In 2002, 26 countries had a monitoring mechanism in place and 25 more reported developing such mechanisms. The United Nations Office of the High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) held region-wide trainings and workshops on sexual and gender-based violence for NGO partners and government counterparts, which resulted in more countries establishing reporting systems.

28. UNIFEM continued managing a global Trust Fund to End Violence against Women<sup>4</sup>, which to date has supported 158 projects in over 80 countries. The publication "Not A Minute More" (2003) highlighted effective approaches of Trust Fund grantees, and pointed to the progress and gaps in all regions in addressing violence against women.

29. Some entities made efforts to collect good practices in eradicating violence against women. For example, WHO is documenting violence prevention programmes with a focus on low and middle-income countries with the objective of identifying proven and promising practices. UN-Habitat promoted exchange of good practices and lessons learnt by developing networks on women and cities and organizing international conferences.

30. Some entities focused on the specific role of men in ending violence against women. For example, ESCAP organized a sub-regional training workshop on elimination of violence against women in partnership with men for concerned government officials and civil society representatives from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region. UNICEF developed a framework to address and involve men and boys in ending violence against women and promoting gender equality.

#### **E. Women in armed conflict**

31. The situation of women and girls in armed conflict has received increased attention by many entities, in particular since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325

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<sup>4</sup> The Trust Fund was established by General Assembly resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995. Decisions are taken by an inter-agency project approval committee in which more than 10 United Nations entities participate annually.

(2000) on women, peace and security. For example, DPKO reported that it had increased its capacity to support gender equality—gender advisers in all peacekeeping missions placed a significant emphasis on training of uniformed and civilian peacekeeping personnel, police, legal and judicial professionals and civil servants in host countries on gender issues.

32. A number of entities assessed progress made in implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy. For example, in May 2004, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Meeting of Field Presences held a special session on gender mainstreaming, where Special Representatives of the Secretary General discussed progress and challenges of mainstreaming gender perspectives into their peace making activities. UNDP assessed lessons learned in mainstreaming gender equality and empowering women in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique and Sierra Leone. A special issue of “Essentials” was published to highlight such experiences as well as remaining challenges.

33. Specific initiatives were taken to incorporate gender perspectives into areas such as conflict prevention, peace building, peace processes, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. There was increased recognition of specific human rights and protection issues such as trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse. Efforts were also made to strengthen women’s role in electoral, constitutional, legislative and judicial reform processes in countries emerging from conflict.

34. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) produced a paper on gender in conflict and conflict prevention, which provided a framework for analysis of gender perspectives in peace and security. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) developed the Peacebuilding Portal, an interactive website containing profiles of nearly 2,000 conflict-prevention and peace-building organizations in sub-Saharan Africa with specific attention to NGOs working on gender issues. DPADM also carried out training on peace building and good governance, and conflict management, including from a gender perspective that admit participants on the basis of their awareness and interest in the needs and concerns of women in conflict situations.

35. Increasing attention was paid to women’s role in peace processes as well as in electoral, constitutional, legislative and judicial reform processes in countries emerging from conflict. In an ongoing effort to promote women’s representation and participation in peace-making processes, DPA field missions provided local women’s groups with technical advice, support and capacity building training, including in Bougainville, Guatemala and Somalia. UNHCR continued to advocate for the representation and active participation of refugee and displaced women in peace processes, including in Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. In November 2003, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) of DESA, in collaboration with DPA and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), organized an expert group meeting on peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women. Efforts were made by UNIFEM in Afghanistan, Kenya, Morocco and Rwanda to ensure that constitutions incorporate the Convention on the Elimination of

All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). UN-Habitat trained rural Afghan women in secret ballot elections with the view to establishing representative Community Development Councils with 8-15 women representatives. In January 2004, OSAGI organized jointly with DPA and DAW and in close collaboration with UNDP and UNIFEM, an Expert Group Meeting on enhancing women's participation in electoral processes in post-conflict countries.

36. Efforts were made by several entities to protect civilians, including displaced, trafficked and refugee women and children. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) developed an Aide Memoire on protection of civilians, including women, which was adopted by the Security Council as a diagnostic tool/framework for defining threats to the civilians, drafting resolutions that better safeguard civilians and for reviewing peacekeeping operations and threats to international peace and security. In 2004, DPKO issued a policy on human trafficking and has since then been developing a package of guidance for multidimensional peacekeeping operations. The United Nations University (UNU) carried out research projects that incorporated gender perspectives into issues of refugees and forced displacement.

37. Efforts are increasingly carried out on gender equality in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. For example, UNIFEM reported that greater opportunity, demand and support from donors, had enabled the organization to strengthen the depth and breadth in mainstreaming gender perspectives into United Nations activities in more than 20 post-conflict areas. UN-Habitat carried out a series of user-friendly tools on gender in post-conflict situations and is in the process of completing a series of practitioner's handbooks for post-conflict reconstruction. In 2003, the ILO In Focus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction, published a guide entitled "Gender in Crisis Response, A Guide to the Gender-Poverty-Employment Link", which presented a range of strategies for improving crisis responses and post-crisis reconstruction, along with lessons learned from experience and guidelines for action. FAO played a leading role in supporting the recovery and rehabilitation of agriculture and enhancing rural women's resilience and ability to recover from human and natural disasters in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was active with industrial rehabilitation and reconstruction in Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq and Sudan.

38. Gender sensitive activities were also carried out in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). For example, the UN Political Office in Bougainville facilitated efforts of women in the weapons disposal programme, including by convening a Women's Forum to facilitate women's discussions and activities. The Forum resulted in a joint meeting with ex-combatants on disposal of weapons. The Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA), jointly with the UN Mine Action Service and other members of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Group on Mine Action<sup>5</sup>, contributed to the development of guidelines for integrating gender perspectives in Mine Action Programmes. DPKO, in collaboration with UNIFEM, produced draft standard operating procedures for delivering gender-sensitive DDR programmes. UNDP took

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<sup>5</sup> Group members are: DDA, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), OCHA, World Bank, WFP, WHO

systematic steps to mainstream gender perspectives in its field manuals and its operations on land mines, disarmament, demobilization and recovery.

39. Considerable progress has been made in developing mechanisms and establishing taskforces to address the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions and humanitarian assistance. These include the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises and the Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of the Executive Committees on Peace and Security (ECPS) and on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA). The Secretary-General also issued a Bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, which entered into force on 15 October 2003.<sup>6</sup> The Bulletin made Heads of Department, Office or Mission responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse, and taking appropriate measures and action in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. DPKO produced a compilation of its disciplinary directives for military, UN civilian police and civilian personnel and established a network of Focal Points on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in all peacekeeping operations to facilitate the receipt of complaints regarding misconduct by UN peacekeeping personnel. UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) collaborated in developing guidelines for the care of rape survivors in refugee and internally displaced person settings. WHO and the Global Forum for Health Research (GFHR) set up a Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) with the aim to build an experienced and committed network of researchers, policy-makers and activists. Efforts were also undertaken at the field level, such as in Sierra Leone, where OCHA chaired a Coordination Committee on sexual exploitation that developed a training course for humanitarian workers. WFP pursued special measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in all its operations.

#### **F. Women and the economy**

40. Activities carried out in the critical area of concern 'women and the economy' aimed at (i) empowering women through their improved access to productive resources and markets; (ii) clarifying the linkages between gender equality and the economy; and (iii) advocating for gender-responsive economic policies and programmes.

41. With the objective to empower women in the economic sphere, several entities, such as ESCAP, IFAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UNRWA, the World Bank and IOM, focused on building capacity of women entrepreneurs and on enhancing women's access to credit, land, inheritance, markets, employment, public transport and other public services. For example, the World Bank made efforts in Bangladesh to improve women's use of public transport through 'gender-friendly' bus services. UNCTAD's Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EMPRETEC) developed a tailor-made approach for targeting women entrepreneurs and designed training modules aimed at addressing their specific needs. UNIDO strengthened the capacity of public and private support institutions to identify and alleviate the constraints faced by women entrepreneurs by equipping these institutions with tools to formulate and implement targeted skills enhancement programmes and by organizing training of trainers.

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<sup>6</sup> ST/SGB/2003/13

42. At the international level, the linkages between gender equality and the economy were clarified in a number of global events and conferences, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development (2002) and the eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2004). Important contributions to this achievement were made by two task forces of the Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE). The Task Force on Gender and Trade was established in February 2003 with the objective to sensitize policymakers at the national and international levels on the linkages between gender equality and trade. The Task Force on Gender and Financing for Development worked actively to ensure that gender perspectives were reflected in the preparatory process and outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2001-2002.

43. The Development Policy and Analysis Division (DPAD) of DESA clarified in a report to the Committee for Development Policy the linkages between women's economic participation—fostered by increased access to education and training, financial resources and land—and successful poverty reduction strategies. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) prepared a research-based report "Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World", to provide a complement to the formal review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, carried out by DAW. The report, to be launched on 7 and 8 March 2005 in New York, addresses macroeconomics, well-being, and gender equality; women, work and social policy; women in politics and public life; and gender, armed conflict and the search for peace. ECA is in the process of developing a "Gender Aware Macroeconomic Model" to be tested in South Africa in the analysis of different impacts of fiscal policies and exogenous shocks of poverty reduction on women and men. UNCTAD prepared two major publications on "Trade, Sustainable Development and Gender" and "LDCs: Building Capacities to Mainstream Gender in Development Strategies", and, in collaboration with the IANWGE Task Force on Gender and Trade, a book on "Trade and Gender, Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Countries".

44. To promote gender responsive policies and programmes, UNIFEM supported regional and cross-regional networks of gender-aware economists in Latin America and Africa to advocate for gender-responsive macro-economic policies and trade agreements. ECE, in collaboration with OSAGI and DAW, brought together national machineries and line economic ministries from 35 countries in Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and North America in a Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies in January 2004. The Symposium identified key issues and good practices related to mainstreaming gender perspectives into employment policies, budgets, access to assets and financing, pensions and social reforms. UNCTAD organized several events, such as the pre-UNCTAD X expert workshop on "Trade, Sustainable Development and Gender", held in Geneva in 1999; a ministerial meeting on "Least Developed Countries: Building Capacities for Mainstreaming Gender in Development Strategies" as part of the preparatory process for the Third United Nations Conference for Least Developed Countries, held in Cape Town in 2001; and the UNCTAD XI Round Table on trade and gender, held in Sao Paolo in 2004. ILO assisted countries in developing and implementing National Action Plans for More and Better Jobs for Women.

## **G. Women in power and decision-making**

45. In recognizing women's participation in power and decision making as critical aspect of good governance, some entities carried out technical cooperation, prepared studies and organized workshops and other capacity building activities to enhance women's role in national and local governments and parliaments. Attention was also paid to women's participation in other decision-making processes, such as at the household and community levels. Some activities aimed at ensuring gender responsive governance. To advancing women's role in local Governments, ESCAP organized in June 2001 the first ever Asia-Pacific Summit of Women Mayors and Councillors in Thailand, followed by a number of national summits in Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. In 1999, UN-HABITAT and the People's Urban Economy Team of the Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA ECOPOP) in Senegal organized training workshops on local governance and decentralization for some Dakar Women Councillors that made recommendations for strengthening the capacities of women councillors from other provinces. ECLAC published a study on electoral systems and women's representation in Latin America. To enhance women's participation in national Parliaments, UNDP sponsored two workshops in Marrakech and Bangkok that brought together women parliamentarians from Asia and Africa to build their capacities and networks on common issues of human security. DPA promoted women's representation and participation in peace-making processes, by providing local women's groups with technical advice, support and capacity building training. In the Russian Federation and Ukraine, UNDP acted as a catalyst in introducing mandatory courses on gender concepts for government officials through the Academies of Public Administration under the patronages of Presidents.

46. Some entities examined opportunities and obstacles to women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels. For example, experience in IFAD indicated that increasing women's confidence and self-esteem by building their knowledge, economic assets and income earning capacity as well as by using quotas, enables women to participate more actively in decision-making, both in the public and private sector. ECLAC analysed obstacles to women's active participation in decision-making processes at the household, community and societal levels.

## **H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**

47. Entities supported institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women in various ways, including by building capacity of national machineries, promoting data and information disaggregated by sex and by developing tools and methodologies for gender mainstreaming and analysis.

48. As a result of efforts made by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) since the early 1990s, almost all member countries in the region have established permanent machineries for women at the national level, including ministries for women, national commissions, councils and/or committees for women, as well as departments within other ministries for coordination, monitoring and follow-up. ECLAC carried out a project that aimed at strengthening the capacity of national machineries in promoting gender equality and organized sub-regional electronic conferences at the ministerial level which contributed to enhanced networking among these national

mechanisms. ECA developed the Monitoring and Evaluation Tool for Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Mainstreaming, which at the national level promoted the creation or strengthening of national coordination mechanisms, the formulation and implementation of national gender policy frameworks, the establishment and effective use of accountability mechanisms, and capacity building for gender analysis, planning and programming.

49. ILO piloted gender audits— which are powerful mechanisms to influence the creation and strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the world of work—for governments, employers' organizations and trade unions in Sri Lanka (2004), and Indonesia and Russian Federation (2005).

50. In acknowledging lack of data disaggregated by sex as a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality, several entities promoted the collection, analysis and use of data and indicators disaggregated by sex, including in such areas as population, fertility, agricultural and rural development, education, employment and income, decision-making, poverty, access to credit, health and HIV/AIDS, human rights of women and the girl child. For example, FAO carried out training of national agricultural statisticians on collection and re-tabulation of data disaggregated by sex in order to support the planning and formulation of policies, programmes and projects. Training workshops carried out by UNIFEM and ESCAP focused on methodological issues of gender statistics, including how gender statistics can facilitate effective policy making.

51. To provide an effective monitoring mechanism for gender equality and the advancement of women, ECA formulated the African Gender and Development Index which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data. ECE organized in October 2004 a meeting of experts to evaluate good practices in engendering national statistical offices and issues related to measuring violence against women. ECE also evaluated the availability of gender statistics, capacity of national statistical offices to produce and disseminate gender statistics, and assistance received by national statistical offices from national and international donors for Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and South European countries (SEE). UNHCR pilot tested a gender and age mainstreaming methodology in 14 countries, which actively engaged refugees in planning, implementation, monitoring and data collection on gender dimensions of displacement and the related protection risk.

### **I. Human rights of women**

52. Entities promoted the human rights of women in various ways, including in all other critical areas of concern. Specific activities were carried out to assist Member States in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international human rights instruments.

53. In promoting effective implementation of CEDAW, ECA provided Member States with advisory services, advocacy, capacity building, networking and production of papers on the human rights of women. IFAD, FAO and the International Land Coalition initiated efforts to use CEDAW Article 14 as an advocacy tool to advance women's rights regarding equal access to land and property, inheritance rights and legal capacity. WHO is developing a reference guide on CEDAW to assist WHO staff and national level partners in addressing women's health issues in the various CEDAW processes. ESCAP,

jointly with DAW/DESA, organized a Judicial Colloquium on the application of international human rights law at the domestic level in 2002 and training workshops for government officials on reporting under CEDAW in 2002 and 2004. UNIFEM regional programmes in Southeast and South Asia, the Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, the Mashreq and Mahgreb regions, and Africa undertook efforts to build capacity in implementing CEDAW. ECA provided advisory services and technical assistance to governments and relevant NGOs in the promotion of human and legal rights of women in compliance with international human rights instruments.

54. Entities also promoted women's rights in other areas, such as the right to adequate housing, credit, inheritance, pensions and the right to vote as well as of specific groups of women, such as indigenous women. For example, UN-HABITAT in collaboration with the OHCHR and the UN-Rapporteur on Housing rights undertook joint programmes in the area of women's rights to adequate housing and the rights of indigenous women. The World Bank supported a project in Egypt designed to teach poor women their rights as citizens and provide them with the official citizenship documents necessary to access such vital services and rights as credit, the vote, inheritance and pensions. OHCHR, in collaboration with other UN partners, organized meetings addressing the intersection between gender and racial discrimination, both at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001) and in follow up activities. The Office also produced a publication on gender and racial discrimination.

#### **J. Women and the media**

55. Some entities carried out specific activities to highlight gender and women's issues in media campaigns, radio and television programmes, documentaries and by using new information and communication technologies.

56. Common areas for media campaigns on women's rights and other gender issues, used by for example the Department of Public Information (DPI), UNICEF, UNIFEM and IOM, included violence against women, including female genital mutilation/cutting and trafficking in women. Awareness about gender equality and women's rights was raised to improve the images of women in the media. For example, ESCWA launched media campaigns to raise gender awareness and improvement of the image of women in society. The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)—an independent humanitarian news service operating under the aegis of OCHA—regularly carried stories on gender issues in countries in sub-Saharan Africa and central Asia. DPI drew attention to a large number of issues, including the plight of young indigenous women, female victims of landmines, women in international peace and security, poverty, sustainable development, HIV/AIDS pandemic, and women's human rights, and promoted the use of non-stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women in the media implemented by United Nations Information Centres around the world. In addition to using more traditional outreach methods, DPI diversified its outreach and improved the inflow of perspectives to more extensively reflect women's priorities by using new technologies, including interactive websites.

57. Two important global events to promote gender equality and the advancement of women that attract media attention are the annual observance of the International Women's Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.



United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) ensured translation of press and other materials into local languages, organized local events and press conferences, promoted major UN publications on women, and produced publications on women's issues for distribution to their regions;

58. Limited attention was given to the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication. DAW/DESA, in collaboration with DPI, ESCWA and UNESCO, organized an expert group meeting on participation and access of women to the media and the impact of media on and its use as an instrument for the advancement of women in Beirut, Lebanon, in November 2002. DPI supported the education, training and employment of women in order to promote and ensure their equal participation in all areas and levels of the media, especially through the annual training programme for journalists from developing countries in which 50 percent of participants are women.

#### **K. Women and the Environment**

59. Some entities, such as Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of DESA, ESCAP, ECLAC, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNU and UNV, reported on activities in the area of women and the environment.

60. The Task Force on Gender and Water of the Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)<sup>7</sup>, established in September 2003, facilitated dialogues between gender and water focal points; promoted gender perspectives into the main themes of the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of the Commission for Sustainable Development; and provided inputs to the World Water Assessment Programme in order to ensure gender sensitive indicators and policy recommendations in the forthcoming World Water Development Report (2006). As part of the activities of the International Year of Freshwater 2003, the Task Force facilitated gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes and assisted in the implementation of gender-sensitive water and sanitation activities within and outside the United Nations system. For the United Nations International Decade for Action—Water for Life (2005-2015), DPI and the Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of DESA are in the process of preparing a booklet with good practices in implementing gender mainstreaming in water resources use and management.

61. Several entities promoted gender mainstreaming into environmental policies and programmes, including into those related to energy, water and sanitation, natural disasters, sustainable consumption and production. For example, ESCAP organized an Expert Group Meeting on the integration of energy and rural development policies and programmes in 2003, where approaches for mainstreaming gender perspectives into rural energy development policy-making. UN-Habitat and the Gender Water Alliance drafted a gender mainstreaming strategy within the context of the Water for African Cities Programme. DSD/DESA carried out a project in Niger that specifically addressed gender perspectives in decentralized and participatory management of water resources. In

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<sup>7</sup> Members of the Task Force are: DESA: DAW and DSD, ECA, ESCWA, ESCAP, FAO, IFAD, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, UN-Habitat; UNIFEM, UNHCR, the Gender and Water Alliance, Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC); and the United Nations Foundation.

updating its handbook for estimating the socio-economic and environmental effects of disasters, ECLAC reviewed the impact of natural disasters from a gender perspective. UNEP mainstreamed gender perspectives into its sustainable consumption and cleaner production programmes, including through seminars and capacity building workshops. UNDP supported local capacity for environmental planning and monitoring through a comprehensive approach linking environment, poverty and gender equality.

62. Efforts were also made by several entities to highlight the crucial role of women for sustainable development, as well as the need to involve women in environmental decision-making processes. Specific areas of focus include biodiversity, water management and sanitation, desertification, threats of mercury and persistent organic pollutants, forestry, and energy. For example, in October 2004, UNEP held, in collaboration with the Network of Women Ministers for Environment, a major Global Women's Assembly on the theme "Women as the voice for the environment". UNEP also strengthened the capacity of African women to contribute to the development of environmental law and institutions. UNU prepared a study on women in natural resource management. UNDP published a case study and a handbook which aimed to improve women's access to water and modern energy services. UN-Habitat is collaborating with Tanzania Women's Land Access Trust to bring women's voices to bear in water and sanitation activities through community mobilization and women's membership on the water management committees. UNV conducted workshops for women on their roles as volunteers for the protection and utilization of their environment in Mali, Ecuador, Jamaica and Yemen.

#### **L. The Girl Child**

63. Entities that paid specific attention to the girl child focused almost entirely on promoting girls' education (see critical area of concern 'education and training of women') and protecting adolescent girls from HIV infection (see critical area of concern 'women and health').

64. Some attention was also paid to girls in poverty, gender socialization and to income generating opportunities. For example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) carried out, in 2002, a project on schools and learning centres as community catalysts for poverty reduction and empowerment of girls in Nepal, Cambodia and Indonesia. The UNV supported income generating opportunities of disadvantaged girls in Vietnam. ILO developed a practical guide on "Promotion of gender equality in action against child labour and trafficking". UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF and UNAIDS developed an advocacy document, which will be followed by programmatic actions in selected African and Asian countries, that specifically addresses the issue of gender socialization in relation to girls' vulnerability to HIV.