

Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for UNDP Bhutan Country Office 2007-2008

I. BACKGROUND

UNDP Corporate Gender policy, strategy and action plan

UNDP's gender policy is based on a two-pronged approach to achieving gender equality: (i) mainstreaming gender into all policies and programmes; (ii) investing dedicated resources in specific interventions that empower women.

In 2005, UNDP developed a corporate strategy¹ to ensure that the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment are fully integrated into its core business. The strategy rests on three major dimensions:

Develop capacities – both in-country and in-house – to integrate gender concerns in all practices areas and in global, regional and country programmes;

Provide gender-responsive policy advisory services that promote gender equality and women's empowerment; and

Support specific interventions that benefit women and scale up and expand innovative models such as those developed and tested by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Following the recommendations of the independent evaluation report on gender in UNDP, a gender action plan for 2006-2007 was designed to strengthen UNDP capacities at all levels and to enhance its delivery of gender-responsive policies and programmes, in a systematic, visible and measurable way. The gender action plan is designed around four goals:

Goal 1: Commitment and accountability at all levels

Goal 2: Capacities: gender training, knowledge sharing and networking

Goal 3: Communication and visibility for good practices

Goal 4: Core and non-core resources aligned with policy commitments

UNDP's multi-year funding framework includes a mechanism to ensure that gender equality is effectively integrated in all UNDP service lines and programmes. Moreover, a gender mainstreaming scorecard was developed to summarize organizational performance in gender mainstreaming.

As far as human resources and management is concerned, UNDP issued in 2003 its third 'Gender Balance in Management Policy 2003-2006'. For the first time, a goal was set to achieve 50/50 gender balance by 2010 in all categories of staff, at all levels. The UNDP gender and diversity scorecard was developed to track and monitor progress in reaching the 50/50 gender balance goal. Other relevant policies have been issued in order to ensure balance between personal needs of staff with the demands of work, and to ensure a work environment completely free from sexual or workplace harassment and abuse of authority. These policies include the Work Life Policy, including flexible working arrangements and

¹ UNDP Corporate Gender Strategy and Action Plan, 2005

breastfeeding policies, and the new policy on Workplace Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority (2005).

The draft UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008-2011, reaffirms UNDP's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment as one of its operational principles for enhancing development effectiveness, but also as a development goal to be pursued in its own right.

The Concept of Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is defined by ECOSOC as:

“the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of 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.”

Gender mainstreaming is thus a strategy for ensuring equitable and sustainable development of both women and men by the most effective and efficient means.

II. GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY IN UNDP BHUTAN COUNTRY OFFICE

The Vision Statement for gender mainstreaming in UNDP Bhutan Country Office (CO) for the period 2006-2008, as endorsed by the staff in February 2006, is as follows:

“UNDP Bhutan Country Office aspires to be a role model for gender mainstreaming in Bhutan and in the South Asian region, with its entire staff sensitized in gender issues, and their capacities for implementing Gender Mainstreaming in their work enhanced.”

In order to contribute to the realization of this vision, the gender mainstreaming strategy for UNDP Bhutan CO 2002-2006 has been revised for the period 2007-2008. The revision is based on UNDP corporate commitments and the discussions the gender advisor had with staff of the different Units of the CO. The revised strategy includes the following specific objectives:

Objective 1: *To ensure gender sensitivity in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the UNDP Country Office programmes, projects and activities.*

UNDP Bhutan's programmes and projects must explicitly incorporate a gender perspective in all phases of the programme/project cycle, i.e. during formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To this end, it is essential to allocate sufficient resources to carry out gender analysis throughout the programme/project. Gender analysis, which is the necessary starting point of gender mainstreaming, will provide information on the different needs and preferences of women and men and the different impacts of a development

programme or project on women and men. By ensuring gender sensitivity in all phases of the programme/project cycle, UNDP Bhutan will complement and strengthen the national efforts to mainstream gender and to meet the country's international commitments (such as MDGs, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action) towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

Result 1.1: Gender-sensitive programme/project development

UNDP Bhutan must ensure that gender related aspects/issues are sufficiently taken into consideration in the development, formulation, and approval of programmes/projects. This means ensuring that:

- (a) men and women will be able to equally contribute to and benefit from UNDP supported programmes/projects; and,
- (b) the overall programme/project will not result in reinforcing/perpetuating gender inequalities (e.g. increasing unpaid work burden of women or increasing social isolation of men, etc.).

In addition, reference shall be made to the National Plan of Action for Gender (2007-2013) for identifying existing gender gaps and possible relevant interventions that could be used during the programming/project development phase.

Activities will include:

- Use the revised project document standard format (UNDP, SGP) which includes gender related aspects/questions (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Use the "Checklist for Mainstreaming Gender into Projects" (long or mini one) during project document development/appraisal process (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Incorporate gender analysis when collecting relevant baseline information during project development (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Refer to and make use of the information included in the National Plan of Action for Gender (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Use gender expertise and/or members of the UNDP Gender Team in project identification and development (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Gender Team members, Gender expert, Senior Managers*);
- Participation of gender expert(s) and/or Gender Team member of concerned unit in internal PAC meetings (**Responsible:** *Gender Team members, Gender expert, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: Project documents

Result 1.2: Gender-sensitive programme/project monitoring and evaluation

Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation reveals the extent to which men and women are contributing/have contributed to and benefiting/benefited from the programmes/projects, and the extent to which the programmes/projects are contributing/have contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment. It also enables crucial adjustment of the programme/project to fit and respond to gender issues and needs in a comprehensive and timely way, and it provides useful information for more effective future planning and

programme/project delivery. For example, in case during project implementation more than 70% of decision-makers, implementing partners or beneficiaries of the project are found to be of one gender, programme staff will be responsible for taking a qualified decision on whether any revision needs to be made to the project strategy/activities in order to redress imbalances. Programme staff will also need to provide justification why balance was not achieved and this should be noted in project related documents/reports.

Activities will include:

- Identify gender-sensitive objectives and develop gender-sensitive indicators in the programme/project formulation stage (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Gender expert, Senior Managers*);
- Use the revised quarterly and annual progress reports, field visit report, terminal report, evaluation report standard formats (UNDP, SGP) which include gender related aspects/questions (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Use the revised standard evaluation terms of reference (ToRs) which include gender related issues (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Use the “Checklist for Mainstreaming Gender into Projects” (long or mini one) during monitoring and evaluation processes (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Senior Managers*);
- Collect, analyze and use sex disaggregated data (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Gender expert, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: Project documents (M & E indicators); Monitoring reports (quarterly and annual progress reports, field visit reports); Evaluation Reports (including terminal reports)

Result 1.3: Tools developed and resources made available, and updated as and when required

For staff members to be able to effectively take up their responsibility in gender mainstreaming, it is essential that they have access to basic tools to facilitate gender mainstreaming and analysis and to gender related resources.

Activities will include:

- Integrate relevant gender aspects/questions in the project document, quarterly and annual progress reports, field visit report, terminal report, evaluation report standard formats (UNDP, SGP) (**Responsible:** *Gender expert*);
- Integrate gender issues in standard evaluation ToRs (**Responsible:** *Gender expert*);
- Provide feed-back on the “Checklist for Mainstreaming Gender into projects” (long and mini ones) (**Responsible:** *Programme staff*);
- Create a folder for the different programme Units with relevant tools and documentation on the linkages between gender and the key areas dealt with by each Unit (based on UNDAF) together with an annotated list of references included in the folders, all to be uploaded on the intranet (**Responsible:** *Gender expert*);
- Update the “Gender Notice Board” as and when necessary (**Responsible:** *Chairperson of the Gender Team*);

- Update the gender part of CO website and intranet as and when necessary (**Responsible:** *Chairperson of the Gender Team*);
- Procurement of additional gender related materials for the resource centre (**Responsible:** *Chairperson of the Gender Team*);
- Participate in gender network, community of practice, etc. (**Responsible:** *Gender Team members*);
- Document the CO experience in gender mainstreaming and share best practices (**Responsible:** *Gender Team members*).

Means of verification: Tools and resources available

Objective 2: *To promote gender mainstreaming in Human Resources and Management in the UNDP CO.*

Result 2.1: Mechanisms/systems developed/strengthened to promote collective responsibility in gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is not one person's (e.g. gender expert or gender focal point) duty, but a collective responsibility that must be shared by all staff working in UNDP CO. Making tools and gender related resources more accessible to staff will assist them in taking up their responsibility in gender mainstreaming. However, this must be complemented by putting in place or strengthening mechanisms/systems to promote collective responsibility of staff, including a system that allows their performance in gender mainstreaming to be monitored and an incentive system.

Activities will include:

- Review composition of Gender Team and its operation modalities (**Responsible:** *Gender Team members, Gender Expert*);
- Integrate gender related targets (performance indicators) in the RCA of Senior Managers, Unit Heads, Gender Team members (**Responsible:** *Senior Managers, Unit Heads, Gender Team members, Gender expert, HMSU*);
- Revise Rewarding Recognition system to include reward for best performer in gender mainstreaming (**Responsible:** *R&R Committee, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: Systems and mechanisms in place

Result 2.2: CO internal capacity in gender mainstreaming and analysis enhanced

Apart from tools, resources and appropriate mechanisms/systems, it is necessary to continue the efforts for strengthening the capacities of the staff for them to be able to carry out their gender mainstreaming responsibility. While various gender sensitization sessions and training workshops have already been organized for the staff, especially in 2005 and 2006, a need is felt for more practical training in gender mainstreaming and analysis.

Activities will include:

- Organise in-house practical hands-on training in gender mainstreaming and analysis (**Responsible:** *Gender expert, Senior Managers*);

- Have face-to-face capacity development sessions regarding particular UNDP projects or activities (**Responsible:** *staff, Gender expert*);
- Identify in-depth training (could be online) for interested staff (**Responsible:** *Gender expert, interested staff, Learning Manager*);
- Organize in-house gender sensitization sessions as and when necessary (**Responsible:** *Gender Team members, HMSU, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: sensitization session and training reports

Result 2.3: Gender sensitive Human Resources and Management Policy at CO level

Guided by UNDP corporate ‘Gender Balance in Management Policy 2003-2006’, Work Life policy, Workplace Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority Policy, the UNDP CO in Bhutan is implementing a gender sensitive Human Resources and Management Policy. This is considered crucial for building a more equal organization and at the same time as a good way to show clearly the organization’s commitment to the goal of gender equality. Actions prioritized in this area include adopting a gender approach in selection and recruitment of new staff, promoting gender balance among the staff, making continuous efforts to improve balance between staff’s personal and professional lives, and to create a harmonious working environment free of harassment and abuse of authority.

Activities will include:

- Include introduction to gender and gender mainstreaming in briefing package for new staff (e.g. e-learning module Gender Journey) (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Include “promotion of gender equity and human rights” in the ToRs of all staff and consultants (national and international) (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Monitor gender balance in staffing at all levels and decide on ways of redress in case of imbalances (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Monitor gender balance on all Committees and Appointment and Promotion panels in line with the global policy, and in case of imbalances, review membership criteria of concerned Committees and panels (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Provide family-friendly work environment for all staff such as: breastfeeding mothers not separated from their babies- if they have to travel for meetings, workshops or other work related activities; allow staff to take advantage of flexi-time policies (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Create spaces for dialogue on work-life matters and ways to improve work-life balance (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*);
- Continue zero tolerance to sexual harassment in the context of work relationships (raise awareness on the UNDP Corporate Policy on sexual harassment through briefing sessions to new staff including gardeners, security guards, cleaners, etc, e-learning module on sexual harassment for new staff, annual briefing session for drivers; attach/include relevant declaration/ clause on sexual harassment to/in standardized and non-standardized contracts including link to the policy and information on reporting system in place at CO level; take appropriate measures if such incidences occur) (**Responsible:** *CO Counsellors, OSU, HMSU, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: briefing package, ToRs, gender and diversity scorecard, staff survey, contracts, annual report of the CO Counselors

Objective 3: *To create greater awareness among national partners on gender and gender mainstreaming.*

The Royal Government of Bhutan is committed to mainstream gender into its national policies, plans and programmes. The ‘Guidelines for Preparation of the Tenth Plan’ mention the need to consider gender in the identification of strategies and programmes and for gender disaggregated data to the extent possible. The government is also committed to fulfill its international and regional commitments. UNDP has an important role to play in supporting national efforts to advance in these commitments. In order to ensure the sustainability of the gender mainstreaming process, it is felt that sensitizing and creating awareness among national counterparts, and getting them involved, is critical to the process. Various such sensitization and awareness raising sessions have been conducted in the past with UNDP support, but it is essential to continue these efforts.

Activities will include:

- Develop a pamphlet on gender and another one on human rights for wide distribution to national partners (**Responsible:** *UN Theme Groups on Education and Gender and on Governance with support from the UN Communication Group, Senior Managers*);
- Liaise with the national gender focal points in the relevant ministries/agencies in all phases of the project cycle (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Gender Team member of the concerned unit*);
- Incorporate gender sensitization/capacity-building session for programme/project national counterparts during inception workshop (**Responsible:** *Programme Staff, Gender Team member of the concerned unit, Senior Managers*);
- Organise a session to sensitize media, publishing houses, and film producers on gender (**Responsible:** *UN Communication Group, NCWC for implementing, Senior Managers*);
- Integrate the “Checklist for Mainstreaming Gender into projects” into the NEX manual (**Responsible:** *HMSU, Senior Managers*).

Means of verification: pamphlets; project related documents; NEX manual