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**Coordination, programme and other questions: mainstreaming
a gender perspective into all policies and programmes
in the United Nations system**

**Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies
and programmes of the United Nations system**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2006/9 and 2006/36, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on implementation of these resolutions. In response to resolution 2006/36, the report provides a summary of progress made so far in building capacities of staff of the United Nations system in gender mainstreaming and highlights the related challenges. The review of implementation of resolution 2006/36, conducted by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, revealed that, while progress has been made in capacity-building by United Nations entities, there is considerable variation among United Nations entities with regard to efforts to strengthen gender mainstreaming capacities systematically. A gap remains between understanding of basic gender mainstreaming concepts and the actual day-to-day work of staff. Enhanced concerted efforts are needed to build individual and organizational capacity for gender mainstreaming. Further to resolution 2006/9, the report also provides an assessment of the impact of the Commission on the Status of Women's input to discussions within the United Nations system.

* E/2007/100.



The report recommends strengthening linkages between building United Nations staff capacities in gender mainstreaming and the realization of organizational goals of United Nations entities on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In particular, it recommends building the institutional capacity of the United Nations system using the United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the strategy on gender mainstreaming endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

I. Introduction

1. In paragraphs 4 and 9 of its resolution 2006/36, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed gender mainstreaming as a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Recognizing that training is critical to increase awareness, knowledge, commitment and capacity of staff regarding mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations policies and programmes, the Council called on the United Nations system to undertake a series of steps to strengthen training and capacity-building to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes and requested the Secretary-General to report on implementation of those steps.

2. In paragraph 19 of its resolution 2006/9, the Council called on the Secretary-General to include, in his report on the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2, an assessment of the impact of the Commission's input to discussions within the United Nations.

3. The present report was prepared in response to these resolutions. Section I of the report contains a brief introduction. Section II is organized around thematic clusters established by the Council in its resolution 2006/36. It covers the commitments of United Nations entities to gender mainstreaming training, integration of gender perspectives into other training courses, innovative forms of capacity-building, management leadership and support, follow-up to training and impact assessments, accountability, knowledge networks, inter-agency collaboration and country team capacity-building. Section III provides an overview of the impact of Commission input to discussions within the United Nations system. Section IV of the report contains conclusions and action-oriented recommendations.

4. The report draws on information and data provided by 40 United Nations entities¹ in response to a questionnaire designed and distributed by the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. The responses formed the basis for a review of training and capacity-building activities in the United Nations system undertaken in 2005-2007. At its sixth annual session, in February 2007, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality held further inter-agency consultations on a variety of capacity-building issues, the outcome of which supplemented the above-mentioned information. The report does not provide a full account of all activities undertaken by the United Nations system in the area of capacity-building. Rather, it provides brief examples of progress made and remaining challenges.

¹ Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, Department of Public Information, Division for the Advancement of Women, ECA, ESCAP, ESCWA, ECE, FAO, IAEA, ICAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC), International Training Centre of the ILO, UNAIDS, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of Internal Oversight Services, OHCHR, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the World Bank Group, UNIFEM, UNICRI, UNICEF, UNCTAD, Department for Disarmament Affairs, UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP, UNHCR, UN-HABITAT, UN-INSTRAW, UNFPA, WFP, WHO, WIPO and UNRWA.

II. Implementing resolution 2006/36

5. The review confirms that capacity-building for gender mainstreaming is a necessary ingredient for achieving global goals in many areas, including development, international peace and security, human rights, the environment, humanitarian assistance, food security, health and human settlements. It is central to the effective integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system. It both presupposes and promotes organizational change in the direction of greater equality, better efficiency and more soundly based planning and programming, by paying attention to the interests of both women and men. A culture of system-wide commitment to gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes and the related capacity-building is beginning to take hold in the United Nations.

6. A series of initiatives was launched by the Secretary-General, including measures to foster a culture of accountability and responsibility, system-wide coherence and investment in staff development of the Secretariat and the wider United Nations system, based on the premise that organizational change and capacity-building are mutually reinforcing. In paragraph 166 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), the Secretary-General was called on to take further steps in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the policies and decisions of the Organization. In response, a system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and a strategy on gender mainstreaming were developed in the framework of the Network chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (see E/2006/83). The policy and strategy were discussed and supported by the High-level Committees on Programme and Management of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and endorsed by the Board in December 2006.² The policy and strategy include capacity-building as a core element.

7. The review of implementation of Council resolution 2006/36 showed that considerable progress has been made in training and capacity-building in the United Nations system at both the individual and organizational levels, with new tools and approaches continually being developed. At the individual level, capacities of United Nations staff are built in line with specific organizational mandates by improving the abilities of individuals to conduct gender analysis, enhancing leadership and advocacy skills and gender mainstreaming technical and organizing skills and other competencies directly related to successful job performance. At the organizational level, capacity-building involves improving the ability of United Nations entities to achieve gender equality goals within their mandates by improving governance, engendering leadership, planning, programme development, delivery and evaluation, gender-sensitive fundraising, diversifying partnerships and collaboration and promoting organizational and policy change, including addressing accountability of senior management and responsibility of all staff for gender mainstreaming.

8. However, the review also demonstrates that a large gap remains between an understanding of basic concepts of gender mainstreaming and the actual day-to-day work of staff. There is also considerable variation among United Nations entities

² For the approved system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and strategy on gender mainstreaming, see CEB/2006/2, annex.

with regard to efforts to systematically strengthen gender mainstreaming capacities. Enhanced concerted efforts are needed to build individual and organizational capacity for gender mainstreaming to assist Member States and enhance their national capacity to achieve gender equality and empower women. The challenge is how to mobilize the collective capacity-building potential of the United Nations with greater coherence and focus.

A. Commitments to gender mainstreaming training

9. In paragraph 4 (a) of its resolution 2006/36, the Council requested that the United Nations system make specific commitments annually to gender mainstreaming training, including in core competence development, and ensure that all gender equality policies, strategies and action plans include such commitments. In paragraph 4 (b) and (c) of the same resolution, the Council called on the United Nations system to provide specific ongoing capacity-building, *inter alia*, through training, for gender specialists and gender focal points, including in the field and to make gender mainstreaming training mandatory for all staff and personnel and develop training for different categories and levels of staff.

10. The majority of United Nations entities have an institutional gender mainstreaming strategy or broad framework. Of a total of 40 respondents, 22 reported having a specific strategy on training or capacity development for gender mainstreaming, while the remainder use an *ad hoc* approach. In January 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) approved a strategy to integrate gender analysis and actions into its work. The International Labour Organization (ILO) revised gender equality action plan for 2008-2009 makes specific reference to training and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming and gender equality for ILO staff. Eight entities are in the process of developing training strategies.³ Among the entities with training strategies, several have no action plan for their implementation and only a few have allocated a budget for these purposes.

11. The majority of entities reported that a large proportion of their gender mainstreaming capacity development efforts target programme staff, including gender specialists, advisers and focal points. Greater collaboration within the United Nations system entities and the development of joint training curricula are taking hold to make best use of the increasing number of gender advisers, specialists and focal points, particularly in country offices. In 2006-2007, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organized workshops for seven UNEP divisions and six regional offices and trained 15 gender focal points to support implementation of its gender action plan.

12. In order to accelerate achievement of gender equality goals, many United Nations entities have instituted mandatory and regular gender mainstreaming training for staff. Such entities include the Department of Political Affairs, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNEP and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). However, in most United Nations entities, capacity-building for gender

³ IAEA secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, WHO, IOM, UNEP, UNICEF, UNAIDS and ICAO.

mainstreaming remains primarily ad hoc and voluntary. Thus, beyond their own interest, staff members have no incentive to participate in training. By the same token, there are no rewards or penalties for availing oneself of or not taking advantage of training opportunities. A 2005 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP came to the same conclusion with regard to training for gender mainstreaming within UNDP (DP/2006/5). In most entities, gender training takes the format of one-day seminars or workshops providing general orientation or sensitization on gender issues, but training opportunities of longer duration that have greater potential to impart more substantive gender mainstreaming skills should also be used throughout the United Nations more frequently than they are now.

13. However, the review demonstrated that systematic institutionalized capacity development requires the following three key elements: a strategy, an action plan and a budget as important indicators of long-term organizational commitment to gender mainstreaming. Entities with all three elements include the World Food Programme (WFP), World Bank, Department of Political Affairs, International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNESCO, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

B. Integration of gender perspectives into other training courses

14. In response to paragraph 4 (d) of Council resolution 2006/36 in which the United Nations system was urged to ensure the integration of gender perspectives in relevant training courses, including in induction courses, training on results-based management frameworks and training on the project and programme cycle, the review evaluated the integration of a gender perspective into training related to staff orientation or staff induction, programme design, financial management, programme evaluation, leadership development and results-based management.

15. In most entities, progress has been made with regard to staff orientation, programme design and programme evaluation trainings. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has incorporated gender sensitive causality analysis into its programme evaluation training. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has incorporated a four-point action plan for enhancement of gender mainstreaming into the strategy framework for predeployment planning, to ensure that all related capacity development has a strong gender perspective. In 2006, UNEP incorporated gender sensitivity and poverty alleviation into 18 management training sessions for approximately 300 UNEP staff members from headquarters and field offices. This was the first attempt by UNEP to demonstrate the benefits of incorporating a gender perspective throughout the project cycle.

16. However, the review revealed that despite the many advantages of the results-based management approach, integration of a gender perspective is weakest in training related to results-based management. A 2005 survey of 11 entities conducted by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality task force on monitoring, evaluation and reporting in results-based management found that entities facing the greatest challenges in mainstreaming a gender perspective in

results-based management were those where policies, strategies and workplans on gender equality goals were least developed.

C. Development of innovative forms of capacity-building

17. In the same resolution, in paragraph 4 (e), the Council requested the United Nations system to develop innovative forms of capacity-building, in addition to formal training, including by using information and communication technologies and systematically assess the effectiveness of new approaches.

18. In many United Nations entities, training methodology has evolved beyond conventional training workshops to include innovative forms of capacity development for gender mainstreaming. Flexibility in programme design with training modules or resources that can be mixed and matched to deliver a programme adapted to specific mandates, participatory working meetings, systematic follow-ups based on gender audits and use of electronic platforms and networks have emerged as new forms of capacity-building to equip staff with the competencies necessary for effective performance.

19. The Office of Human Resources Management has developed two flexible modular training courses, one on gender and diversity and the other on mainstreaming the gender perspective. The courses can be adapted to specific audiences, circumstances and mandates of offices or divisions in the Secretariat to strengthen staff's gender-related core skills and gender mainstreaming capacities in specialized areas. This methodology proves cost-effective and permits rapid planning and implementation. Using the same methodology, the Office is also piloting a new training course on how male and female communication styles differ in order to enhance communication in a diverse workforce. These initiatives are in line with paragraph 195 of the report of the Secretary-General on investing in people (A/61/255), which stated, inter alia, that gender mainstreaming programmes would be increased to promote gender sensitivity in the workplace and promote diversity awareness and cross-cultural sensitivity. Development programmes for women leaders and emerging women leaders at the middle-management level would be expanded.

20. Through a participatory approach focusing on specific aspects of the Department of Political Affairs mandate such as early warning, conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding, a series of case studies were used to illustrate gendered and non-gendered processes and the different impact that each process has on constituencies. Using field-based methodologies with participants field-testing learning materials, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues has developed a generic training manual on gender mainstreaming that any entity can adapt for use for its staff as well as for training with country-level partners. It has also produced a methodology handbook on how to collect and analyse empirical data to document case studies that depict good practices in gender mainstreaming.

21. The effective implementation of gender training requires holding staff accountable for the systematic application of new skills in their work. UNESCO has instituted biannual gender audits. In 2007, sectoral gender audits are planned in order to develop customized, sector-specific and learner-based training. Since early 2006, UNESCO, in collaboration with the United Nations System Staff College, has provided ongoing training and coaching in gender mainstreaming to staff at

headquarters and in the field. UNESCO has also developed a certificate course available on CD-ROM to increase staff knowledge of gender issues.

22. Electronic communications and networks, including the Internet, provide opportunities for innovation. More entities now use the Internet as a training platform to conduct web-based courses on gender mainstreaming. UNHCR has initiated a virtual Community Forum where staff engage in dialogue with each other and receive guidance on gender mainstreaming. The Community Forum enables UNHCR to maintain a community of learning and information-sharing. UNDP has developed an e-learning course to provide a basic understanding of gender equality issues for its entire staff dispersed in field offices and at headquarters. It can be completed by staff individually within six to eight hours and is included as a module in the UNDP Virtual Development Academy. The Academy is an online course that is fully tutored and runs for several weeks. Participants develop outputs applicable to their day-to-day work, thus linking training activities with applications. The International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization has a similar ongoing online modular learning programme on gender issues also offered in two different modalities, fully-tutored and self-learning. WHO is in the process of developing an online gender mainstreaming course.

23. UNIFEM developed additional material on women's human rights and on applying a human rights approach to conflict and post-conflict situations for the United Nations Development Group e-learning kit as well as for the United Nations Common Learning Package on the human rights-based approach, which includes an extensive resource guide, power point and a guide for facilitators. In collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, UNESCO also developed a multimedia gender training kit that enables participants who successfully complete all seven modules and related self-assessment activities to receive accreditation as master gender trainers or gender trainers from UNESCO and the University.

D. Management leadership and support

24. In paragraph 4 (f) of its resolution 2006/36, the Council requested the United Nations system to ensure that managers provide the leadership and support required, including by enhancing awareness, commitment and capacity through innovative approaches specifically developed for management levels.

25. The review confirmed the importance of organizational and senior management commitment to gender mainstreaming for capacity-building. It revealed senior management's enhanced commitment to gender mainstreaming and readiness to participate in various aspects of training and capacity development for gender mainstreaming. Senior managers increasingly participate in training as resource persons, take part in management systems that reinforce networks for the flow of information and learning, allocate resources for gender mainstreaming and make gender mainstreaming training mandatory.

26. Many entities, including International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Department of Political Affairs, International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and UNFPA, provide leadership training for gender mainstreaming. UNICEF conducts an annual senior women's leadership workshop. At ECA, the support of senior management made mandatory training possible, and

facilitated capacity needs assessments for all divisions and the use of participatory approaches to develop tailor-made tools for training on gender mainstreaming for various sectors. This ensured relevance and strengthened ownership by focusing on the practical aspects of gender mainstreaming using each division's policy and strategy documents.

27. At the Department of Political Affairs, senior managers were involved at all levels of the planning and implementation of mandatory gender mainstreaming training for all staff. Members of senior management acted as resource persons while desk officers generated case studies for use in the training. Each session of the workshop, designed to be highly interactive, included staff from the most junior to the Assistant Secretary-General level. The purpose of this format was to bring working-level staff into closer contact with management and overcome the compartmentalization of issues dealt with by the Department. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations organized targeted senior manager training to enlist commitment, support and leadership in developing an action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). A time frame and an implementation strategy were agreed upon.

E. Follow-up to training and impact assessments

28. In paragraph 4 (g) of its resolution 2006/36, the Council urged the United Nations system to ensure that, as relevant, offices of human resources management advocate for gender training and the enhancement of pertinent skills for all trainers within the United Nations, while in paragraph 4 (h) of the same resolution the United Nations system is requested to develop more effective forms of follow-up to training to ensure full utilization of best practices and maximum impact on work programmes.

29. Responses from United Nations entities indicate that procedures and mechanisms have been set up to increase the impact of training on gender mainstreaming, for example, the Department of Political Affairs periodic staff surveys, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, ESCAP, ILO and UNICEF gender audits. Other follow-up activities involve help desks, joint evaluations by gender, training and human resources units and web-based resource collections with practical solutions.

30. Despite these efforts, many entities reported that gender analysis is not systematically implemented. While almost all entities undertake training course evaluation through standard pre- and post-tests, most entities have not yet developed robust training follow-up systems to assess how much has been learned and to evaluate the immediate and the medium-term impact and relevance of training to job performance. No entity has developed specific indicators to assess the impact of its training on staff performance.

F. Strengthening accountability

31. In paragraph 4 (i) of its resolution 2006/36, the Council requested the United Nations system to strengthen accountability systems for both management and staff, through, inter alia, the inclusion of objectives and results related to gender mainstreaming in personnel workplans and appraisals.

32. Entities have taken measures to strengthen accountability systems for gender mainstreaming for both management and staff. Some entities assess staff capacity and development needs for gender mainstreaming through performance appraisals. In addition, many entities, including ESCAP, IAEA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM and the World Bank, assess gender mainstreaming capacities through mission reports. The analysis of mission reports, for both management and staff, permits the evaluation of staff understanding of gender equality and application by staff members of the knowledge acquired to the delivery of technical assistance.

33. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Gender Plan of Action (2003-2006) includes a number of accountability measures for its implementation. UNHCR has initiated an accountability framework for age, gender and diversity mainstreaming that has been piloted in 21 countries and at headquarters. The Framework renders all senior staff responsible for fostering an organizational and operational environment conducive to achieving gender equality.

34. At the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of Internal Oversight Services supports accountability for gender mainstreaming through its evaluations and audits of departments and offices as well as through the biennial report on programme performance of the United Nations. The Office has twice included gender mainstreaming in the list of topics submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination and ensured the integration of a gender perspective into the strategic framework of the forthcoming 2008-2009 biennium.

35. Accountability is being strengthened by broadening the scope of responsibility for gender mainstreaming beyond gender units. In most entities, it is primarily gender units that are held accountable for the development and implementation of training programmes on gender mainstreaming. With the exception of the gender unit of the International Training Centre of the ILO, which was established as a training unit, gender specialists, advisers and focal points in most United Nations entities are rarely trained as trainers and few entities invest in building their training skills, because training is not considered their main responsibility. Given the role of gender specialists, advisers and focal points in organizational learning on gender mainstreaming, it is critical that they receive adequate training skills.

G. Creating and expanding knowledge networks

36. In subparagraph 4 (k), of its resolution 2006/36, the Council asked the United Nations system to create or expand electronic knowledge networks on gender mainstreaming to increase effective support for and follow-up to capacity-building activities. In paragraph 8 of the same resolution, the Council urged the Network to, inter alia, explore possibilities for developing an accessible and consolidated database of trained facilitators at the country and regional levels, in consultation with Member States.

37. Regarding expansion of knowledge networks and development of databases of gender trainers and facilitators, the implementation review for this resolution shows that some entities have made progress. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs posted information on Relief Web, the leading humanitarian issues website, on institutions that provide humanitarian affairs training, many of

which address gender issues in humanitarian situations. The Division for the Advancement of Women is developing a webpage on the WomenWatch website that will facilitate, inter alia, sharing information on capacity development initiatives for gender mainstreaming. INSTRAW has created a comprehensive online database that facilitates collaborative knowledge generation on training institutions, training offered, training materials, grants, scholarships and other funding available for training on gender issues.

38. A UNDP gender roster facilitates UNDP staff access to experts or consultants available for short to medium-term assignments. The roster is based on the UNDP Web for information for development roster platform. The platform allows UNDP teams to develop their own roster of experts and offers the possibility of linking this into a global UNDP expert database. ILO similarly maintains and regularly updates a database of gender consultants and experts which is available through the web-based gender equality tool. Training materials and tools are also shared through knowledge networks featured on the same web-based facility.

39. The development and maintenance of databases is resource and labour-intensive, requiring systematic updating and network improvement. As a result, most entities have no fully functional databases of trainers or facilitators. This places a serious constraint on training in gender mainstreaming, as two thirds of the United Nations entities indicated that finding appropriate trainers is a continuing challenge.

H. Inter-agency collaboration

40. Under paragraph 4 (l) of its resolution 2006/36, the Council requested the United Nations system to strengthen inter-agency collaboration, including through the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, to ensure systematic exchange of resources and tools across the system to promote cross-fertilization of ideas. Furthermore, in paragraph 8, the Council requested that the Network continue to provide practical support to its members in gender mainstreaming and report regularly to CEB.

41. Over the past two years, entities have increasingly demonstrated a readiness to share methodologies and tools for gender mainstreaming and to participate in joint efforts. The Network remains the main forum for exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas on gender mainstreaming. At its sixth session, in February 2007, the Network commenced discussions on the implementation of the policy and strategy, including strengthening capacities for gender mainstreaming, with a view to developing a system-wide action plan with clear indicators and a time frame.

42. More recently, cooperation with CEB and its subsidiary bodies, the High-level Committee on Management and High-level Committee on Programmes, has significantly improved, in line with Council resolution 2005/31. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women regularly briefs the Board and its two High-level Committees on progress in gender mainstreaming, including the development of the system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and strategy on gender mainstreaming. In 2006, CEB identified gender equality as one of its priority themes and endorsed the system-wide policy and strategy. In March 2007, at their joint meeting, the High-level Committees recommended that the United Nations system explore the feasibility

and cost implications of developing a senior management training programme on gender mainstreaming through the United Nations System Staff College. In addition, the two committees considered the development of mandatory web-based training on gender mainstreaming for all United Nations staff.

43. An implementation review conducted by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (S/2006/770) of the system-wide action plan on implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2005/636, annex) revealed progress and challenges in capacity-building for gender mainstreaming in the area of women, peace and security. Capacity-building is prominent in each area of action of the system-wide action plan, including conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding, peacekeeping operations, post-conflict reconstruction, prevention of gender-based violence and others. The review also identified significant challenges, including the lack of a common understanding of the practical applications of gender mainstreaming, inadequate use of existing advisory and technical expertise and the absence of a system-wide knowledge and information management system. A revised system-wide action plan for 2007-2008 being prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues in cooperation with the Inter-agency task force on women, peace and security will address these challenges.

44. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in coordination with the Sub-Working group on gender and humanitarian action⁴ of the Inter-Agency standing committee on humanitarian affairs, will commence training in 2007 for the Gender advisory roster pool. The training will be based on the handbook entitled “Women, girls, boys and men: different needs: equal opportunities”, which is a sector-by-sector guide on how to ensure gender equality programming in humanitarian situations.

45. The preparation report of the Secretary-General on violence against women (A/60/137) offered United Nations entities an opportunity to jointly organize, in December 2005, a workshop on violence against women. In addition to compiling an inventory of activities of United Nations entities on violence against women, entities reached a series of agreements to address the issue of violence against women more systematically and comprehensively and improve coordination and joint programming at the national level. As a follow-up, the Network created a task force on preventing violence against women which will spearhead and coordinate system-wide implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/143 on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including identification of capacity development needs.

46. To strengthen inter-agency sharing of tools and methodologies for gender mainstreaming the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues launched an online collaboration platform in May 2007 for use by the Network. The platform allows United Nations entities to share and exchange a wide range of documents, including training manuals, strategy documents, reports, policy briefs and guidelines and handbooks in electronic form.

47. These inter-agency collaborative initiatives in capacity development for gender mainstreaming aim at increasing the capacity of the United Nations system to integrate a gender perspective into the key areas of development, peace and security

⁴ Comprises 25 entities, including international non-governmental organizations active in the humanitarian sector.

and humanitarian affairs. The full implementation of these initiatives should contribute to stronger and more systematic support for Member States to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

I. Country team capacity-building

48. In paragraph 4 (m), of its resolution 2006/36, the Council requested the United Nations system to ensure that resident coordinators systematically promote, monitor and report on capacity-building activities related to gender mainstreaming within their country teams while in paragraph 4 (n), of the same resolution, it urged the United Nations system to strengthen country team collaboration on gender training at the country level, including through sharing methodologies and tools, undertaking joint activities and strengthening the capacity of gender theme groups to support such activities.

49. Significant progress has been made to strengthen United Nations country team collaboration and joint gender mainstreaming activities. The United Nations Development Group has a modular web-based training package for United Nations country teams. For this resource package, UNIFEM developed a module on strengthening the capacity of gender theme groups to address gender equality issues in the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework. In an effort spearheaded by UNFPA, United Nations country teams began submitting joint reports to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on reporting countries. During the past two years, ILO has collaborated with 10 United Nations agencies in Zimbabwe, including UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, FAO, the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF, in training facilitators in participatory gender audits, resulting in a pool of 30 trainers.

50. To strengthen gender mainstreaming at the country level and promote coherence with partners, WFP developed, on the basis of lessons learned, an enhanced commitments to women training and learning initiative in collaboration with Capacity Building International (InWent). In 2005 and 2006, WFP conducted two hands-on training trainers' workshops at the regional level for gender focal points and 63 country office trainings covering 1,400 WFP staff and partners. The trainings enabled WFP to phase out the gender action plan approach and to move towards the systematic mainstreaming of WFP's Enhanced Commitments to Women Initiative into country office and unit workplans. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has mainstreamed a gender perspective in emergency field coordination training while UNHCR has organized gender mainstreaming training for its multifunctional teams. UNICEF and UNIFEM have launched action learning to assist in making organizational or programme changes that have an impact on gender equality. UNEP collaborated with the World Conservation Union and the Women's Environment and Development Organization to strengthen gender perspective mainstreaming into the environment at the country level through training.

III. Implementation of Council resolution 2006/9

51. In its resolution 2006/9, the Council called on the Secretary-General to report on the impact of the Commission input to the discussions within the United Nations system. At its fiftieth session, in 2006, in accordance with its multi-year programme of work for the period 2002-2006, the Commission considered the following two thematic issues: “Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work” and “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels” and adopted the relevant agreed conclusions (see E/2006/27).

52. The analysis of the replies of the United Nations entities to the questionnaire showed that the recommendations contained in the agreed conclusions for both themes provided a new impetus to the work of United Nations entities in the following three areas:

- (a) Enhancement of their substantive activities at both policy and operational levels;
- (b) Promotion of advocacy and awareness-raising for gender equality and empowerment of women, especially at the regional and national levels;
- (c) Improvement of the status of women, including their representation within organizations.

53. With regard to the enhancement of substantive activities at the policy and operational levels, United Nations entities continue to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies and strategies in their substantive areas with the aim of creating enabling environments for the empowerment of women. The present report provides examples of enhanced United Nations activities in such areas as development, peace and security, women’s rights, access to decision-making and information and communication technologies.

54. In compliance with the Commission’s recommendations, the efforts of United Nations entities were focused on mainstreaming gender perspectives into national planning and implementation processes and mechanisms related to national development strategies, and, in particular, on the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. UNFPA reflected the recommendations of the outcomes of the Commission in its gender mainstreaming strategy and in global, regional and country programmes. ECA continued to develop tools for mainstreaming a gender perspective in national planning and programming and expanded the use of the Africa Gender and Development Index for tracking progress towards gender equality. UNEP completed the formulation of a gender plan of action that included guidelines for mainstreaming a gender perspective in environmental policies and programmes, resource mobilization and human resources management and established accountability mechanisms. The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) developed new methodologies and tools to include the gender dimension in trade development work and established a web-based network for women entrepreneurs in 11 African countries.

55. Responding to calls by the Commission to intensify the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), both within the Organization and at the

national level, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UNFPA and UNHCR enhanced their support for the empowerment of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict countries, strengthened efforts to combat gender-based violence and focused on ensuring the reintegration of female ex-combatants. The Department of Political Affairs focused on promoting women's participation in conflict prevention efforts and launched the peacemaker databank which includes operational guidance notes on women in the peace processes and agreements.

56. Women's rights and their access to decision-making, which were emphasized by the Commission, received particular attention from United Nations entities. UNHCR reaffirmed its commitment to protect women and children by allocating adequate resources in collaboration with UNDP and the Regional Gender Programme of the Regional Bureau for Africa. ECA set up a human rights observatory on the issues of gender equality and empowerment of women. Many United Nations entities specifically focused on the elaboration of special programmes and projects to enhance women's representation in decision-making. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided support for women's participation in elections in a number of peacekeeping missions and organized leadership training for women candidates. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme and INSTRAW paid special attention in their programming to women's participation in local governance. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute focused on activities aimed at increasing the quantitative and qualitative participation of women in decision-making by targeting women candidates.

57. Special attention was paid by United Nations entities to addressing the concerns of the Commission with regard to limited access of women to information and communication technologies. The International Telecommunication Union supported the establishment of multi-purpose community tele-centres in rural and remote locations in Africa and Asia. It also conducted computer training for young women in some African countries to increase their employment opportunities.

58. With regard to advocacy and awareness-raising to promote gender equality and empowerment of women, the outcomes of the Commission were used extensively by United Nations entities as resource materials in their advocacy campaigns and capacity-building. ESCAP used the Commission's outcomes to build staff capacities in programmes and activities covered by the agreed conclusions. The Division for the Advancement of Women used them in the preparation of intergovernmental documentation. The Department of Public Information produced information kits on the outcomes of the work of the Commission and ensured extensive outreach to regional and national media. The Department of Political Affairs, together with UNDP, developed a plan, funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund, to build media capacity to focus on the needs and concerns of women in several African countries.

59. With regard to the status of women, the following recommendations of the Commission and United Nations entities endeavoured to improve the situation of women within their organizations, in particular through development and implementation of policies, programmes and training courses. In 2006, IAEA conducted a survey on the status of gender equality within the Agency and took steps to improve gender balance among all categories and levels of staff, train young professional women and organize gender training for all staff. It has also revised its

policies on work-life balance, discrimination and harassment. UNESCO established a target of 40 per cent of women at the D-1 and D-2 levels to be reached by 2010. WFP and ILO took concrete steps to promote equal participation by women and men in internal decision-making processes and gender equality in filling management positions. The Office of Internal Oversight Services, UNEP, the International Telecommunication Union, the International Training Centre of ILO, WFP and many others provided gender training for staff and special career training for women. ECA prepared a note on mainstreaming gender in conferences and meetings to ensure balanced gender representation and coverage of gender issues at ECA meetings. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continued to strengthen the institutional capacities of gender units. UNEP established a network of gender focal points.

60. In spite of these efforts however, entities need to do much more to implement the recommendations of the Commission on 50/50 gender balance, inter alia, taking into account the findings of the report of the Secretary-General on improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system (A/61/318).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

61. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are recognized as an essential contribution to the effective implementation of United Nations mandates, and there is a general consensus among Member States that gender mainstreaming is a tool for achieving gender equality. Successful gender mainstreaming cannot be achieved by adding marginal programmes for women to United Nations activities. Rather, it requires change in all mainstream policies, programmes and resource allocations to reflect the interests of women as well as men. To achieve this goal, an enabling environment is essential. Such an environment should generate changes that are influenced to a far greater extent than they are now by information coming from below, rather than from above. It presupposes adequate gender mainstreaming capacities and knowledge on the part of United Nations staff at the individual and entity levels.

62. The review conducted by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues on implementation of Council resolution 2006/36 indicated that some progress has been made in equipping United Nations staff with the necessary skills and competencies to mainstream gender and assist Member States in setting policies and norms on gender equality. A great deal of capacity-building has been carried out in the United Nations system, through more expanded conventional training, leadership and senior management training, use of electronic networks and follow-ups. Inter-agency collaboration on gender mainstreaming, including at the CEB level, has significantly improved. The needs for gender capacity-building at the country level are better understood and are being more effectively addressed than before.

63. Yet much more remains to be done to overcome challenges and bridge capacity and knowledge gaps. Training for all staff is critical to understanding gender mainstreaming concepts and their applications. Gender mainstreaming capacity-building is not yet mandatory in all entities, particularly in the field. In many entities, limited support by senior management constrain its effectiveness. Few mechanisms exist to ensure accountability of all staff for a more systematic

application of gender analysis. There is a need for more methodical evaluation of the impact of training courses on job performance.

64. There is insufficient knowledge among senior managers, including resident representatives, on how to operationalize gender mainstreaming policies. No indicators for measuring changes in knowledge and attitudes have been established. Specialized expertise in gender units needs to be further strengthened to undertake training needs assessments, develop learning materials and conduct training. A widely accessible multifunctional database of gender experts, facilitators and trainers should be put in place. Most important, woefully insufficient funding for capacity development in gender mainstreaming remains a major challenge across the United Nations system.

65. In the light of the foregoing, most of the recommendations contained in paragraph 76 of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/2006/65) are still valid.

66. However, one of the major lessons of the review is that building United Nations staff capacities alone is not sufficient for the United Nations system to live up to its commitments and obligations with respect to gender mainstreaming. Linkages between building staff capacities in gender mainstreaming and the realization of organizational goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women should be significantly strengthened. The review revealed that capacity-building programmes experience more resistance in those elements that presuppose the greatest amount of organizational change, including in such areas as accountability, strategic planning, leadership, funding, programme design and evaluation.

67. The challenges described above can be addressed by building institutional capacity that aims at creating competencies in gender mainstreaming in all organizational processes and procedures and in all areas where the United Nations is active. The United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and the strategy on gender mainstreaming hold promise for strengthening gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system while building on good practices. The policy and strategy endorsed by CEB and its subsidiary bodies were developed in cooperation with the Network and enjoy the support of the United Nations system at the highest level. For the first time in its history, the United Nations system has a common strategy and policy for integrating a gender perspective into its activities. The commitments contained in the strategy and policy should be operationalized in a system-wide action plan which is being developed by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues in close cooperation with the Network.

68. To further the implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 and its resolutions 2006/9 and 2006/36, the Council may wish to encourage United Nations entities to:

(a) Develop and/or strengthen gender mainstreaming accountability frameworks in a coherent, coordinated and consistent manner;

(b) Utilize and strengthen results-based management arrangements, including establishing clear and measurable common system indicators and measurement protocols; expedite the collection of sex-disaggregated data, including

baseline data; incorporate a gender perspective into programme budgets and multi-year funding frameworks and into all results-based budgeting processes;

(c) Enhance oversight through monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting procedures; establish common indicators and benchmarks; regularly evaluate progress achieved towards gender equality;

(d) Allocate adequate financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming commensurate with organizational gender equality goals, including for mandatory training on gender mainstreaming, especially gender analysis, for all staff and for implementation of strategies, policies and action plans; use opportunities for joint programming, including with Member States;

(e) Develop and/or strengthen staff capacity and competence in gender analysis through mandatory capacity development for all staff and targeted training for specialized programme staff, including senior management and gender focal points; integrate a gender perspective into all other training activities; develop robust evaluations to gauge the relevance of training and to measure how much is being learned and how what has been learned is contributing directly to improved programme results;

(f) Strengthen coherence and coordination among all United Nations entities, especially regarding stronger linkages between operational and normative work, including through the harmonization and application of common systems frameworks, indicators and joint programming at the global, regional and country levels, in order to realize the 2005 World Summit vision of stronger system-wide coherence;

(g) Promote inter-agency cooperation through the Network and CEB and its subsidiary bodies to ensure the implementation of the United Nations system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming, including the development of an action plan with a clear timetable and indicators.
