

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

*Mieke Verloo and
Anna Van Der Vleuten*

3

INTRODUCTION

There is still no consensus on the failure or success of gender mainstreaming at the international level, and evaluation studies are still rare, fragmented and mostly not independent. In 2006, most international institutions put in place gender mainstreaming policies, but successes in implementation are hard to find. Almost a decade of gender mainstreaming practice has revealed its limited impact, according to Charlesworth (2005), and Moser and Moser (2003). Although the vocabulary of mainstreaming has been adopted, there is little evidence of monitoring or follow-up. A consistent problem for all the organisations that have adopted gender mainstreaming is the translation of commitment into action. Most evaluations of institutional inputs identify some successes but also reveal limitations. By contrast, very few assessments have addressed the

operational and programming implementation of gender mainstreaming. As a result, the outcomes and impact of implementation in terms of gender equality are still largely unknown.

Some authors find that gender mainstreaming in practice has encountered sustained resistance (Charlesworth, 2005). For example, a review of gender mainstreaming policy as implemented by the UNDP, the World Bank, and the ILO (Razavi and Miller, 1995) found inadequate budgeting for the gender components of projects, insufficient development of analytical skills, poor supervision of the implementation of gender components, and a general lack of political commitment both within the organisation and at country level.

Thus, according to Moser and Moser (2003), the next decade calls for a twofold strategy: implementation of gender mainstreaming

(with far greater transparency in terms of documentation), and the development of more robust evaluations of output and outcome processes. While progress has been made, the next decade will provide the real test of gender mainstreaming in practice.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Charlesworth, H., Not waving but drowning: Gender mainstreaming and human rights in the United Nations. *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 18, 2005, p. 1–19.

Hafner-Burton, E. and Pollack, M., Mainstreaming gender in global governance, *European Journal of International Relations* 8, 2002, p. 339–373.

Moser, C. and Moser, A., *Gender mainstreaming since Beijing: a review of success and limitations in international institutions*, Oxfam, 2003. http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/resources/downloads/FOG_MGD_3.pdf

Razavi, S. and Miller, C., *Gender mainstreaming: A study of efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to institutionalize gender issues*. Occasional Paper 4, UNRISD, 1995. <http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/0/FC107B64C7577F9280256B67005B6B16?OpenDocument>

True, J. and Mintrom, M., Transnational networks and policy diffusion: The case of gender mainstreaming. *International Studies Quarterly* 45, 2001, p. 27–57.

Villagomez, E., *Gender responsive budgets: Issues, good practices and policy options*. Background paper V, Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies, Geneva, 28–30 January 2004. <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/documents/gender.2004.grb.pdf>

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

The primary goal of the International Labour Organization (ILO) is ‘the promotion of opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity’⁹. Decent work is the converging focus of the four strategic ILO objectives, namely rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue. The ILO’s gender equality policies are linked to the concept of decent work, and its mandate on gender equality is grounded in the Conventions on Employment and Occupation (1958, No. 111), Equal Remuneration (1951, No. 100), Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981, No. 156) and Maternity Protection (2000, No. 183)¹⁰.

The International Labour Conference has adopted Resolutions in 1985, 1991 and 2004 that outline the need to adopt and promote comprehensive strategies to eliminate the continuing barriers to equal participation of women in employment, the proper recognition and fair valuation of all work, including work which has traditionally been done predominantly by women, and the adoption of measures to help women and men to reconcile work with family responsibilities. These resolutions primarily concerned the efforts required of ILO constituents (governments, employers and trade unions); they insisted, for instance, on including more women in delegations to the ILC and other major ILO meetings.

The concept of gender mainstreaming was used at the ILO for the first time in 1999, when the new Director-General, Juan Somavia, announced that ‘mutually-reinforcing action to promote gender equality should take place in staffing, substance and structure’ of the ILO itself¹¹. The policy was made operational through the *ILO Action Plan on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in the ILO* (2001).

In the Plan the ILO chose three fronts for gender equality mainstreaming: staffing, substance and structure. Concerning substance, one of the aims was to apply a new methodology for analysis, which would involve (a) looking at the complexity of gender differentials in labour market

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

participation; (b) understanding the different constraints and opportunities affecting women and men, and (c) reviewing the different implications for men and women of the proposed solutions to ensure that gender concerns would be incorporated in planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (d) collecting gender-specific data and indicators¹².

Gender was also included as a cross-cutting concern in the Strategic Policy Framework 2002–05 and in the ILO Programme and Budget for 2004–05. The five regional ILO offices (Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia) have also adopted gender mainstreaming policy statements for their respective regions. Concerning the UN Millennium Development Goals, the ILO is responsible for providing data and analysis relating to the indicator on women in non-agricultural paid employment.

ILO documents mainly refer to the definition of gender mainstreaming formulated by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1997:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part 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. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality¹³.

Institutionally, the Bureau for Gender Equality (GENDER, created in 1999), based in Geneva as part of the Secretariat of the ILO, is the advocate for gender

equality throughout the organisation. The Bureau reports directly to the Director-General. It advises ILO member states and staff. It coordinates and manages the gender Action Plan and the organizational Gender Audits. It also coordinates the ILO Gender Network, a team of Senior Gender Specialists (one or two per region), the Sector Coordinators at the Headquarters (four) and the Gender Focal Points all over the world (100) to assist in the process of gender mainstreaming in their respective unit or office.

REVIEWS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

There has been no specific review as yet of fundamental policy documents on gender mainstreaming in education and employment by the ILO. Some of the following material provided building blocks for such a review. In the following list, numbers in square brackets indicate documents which will be discussed in the 'Findings' section.

General reviews

[1] Bureau for Gender Equality, *Final Report, ILO Gender Audit 2001–02* (internal report), ILO, Geneva, 2002. This is the report of the first organisation-wide gender audit. Gender audits are used as a key tool to implement gender mainstreaming within the ILO. An audit has two main components: (1) participatory gender audits in work units; (2) a review of key documents and publications. Gender audits improve the competence of staff on gender. They facilitate self-assessment and learning and establish a baseline on areas to improve. General information about the audit can be found at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/gender/newsite2002/about/audit.htm>

¹² *ILO Action Plan on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in the ILO*, submitted to the ILO Governing Body in March 2001.

¹³ www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/gender/newsite2002/about/defin.htm

Mata-Greenwood, A., *Incorporating gender issues in labour statistics*. Bureau of Statistics, ILO, 1999.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/papers/index.htm>

The main objectives of this working paper are to make differences and similarities between men and women visible in labour statistics; to understand and analyse the particular position and constraints of women workers compared to men workers; and to provide a basis for promoting gender equality in the labour market. Contains measurement methodologies used to assess gender distinctions in labour statistics.

Education

[2] ILO/IPEC, *Good practices: Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour*, ILO, Geneva, 2003.

Includes some good practices on education as part of the fight against child labour.

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec>.

IPEC has recently produced a series of publications on gender, education and child labour, which tackles the interrelation between educational systems, child labour and gender. Each volume deals with one country. The series can be accessed through <http://www.ilo.org/childlabour>: click on 'publications' and then 'gender mainstreaming'. No review available.

Employment

[3] Bureau for Gender Equality, *Gender equality and decent work. Good practices at the workplace*, ILO, Geneva, 2005.

<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/docs/RES/398/F1448380228>

Review of good practices at the workplace, presenting 25 good practices drawn from all ILO regions. These illustrate the experiences of governments, trade unions and employers' organisations.

Gender Promotion Programme (GENPROM).

This unit, part of the Employment Sector, is responsible for the global programme on More and Better Jobs for Women and Men. It has edited a CD-Rom containing information on legislation, national action plans, trade unions policies, etc. entitled 'e.quality@work: an Information Base on Equal Employment Opportunities for Women and Men' (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/advance/surf.htm>). GENPROM disseminates good practices by publishing booklets on specific topics and projects. However, there is no assessment available.

[4] Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE).

WEDGE's website contains 'lessons learned' sections based on experiences with different programmes. See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/index.htm> (to access, click on InFocus Programme (under Job Creation and Enterprise Development), click on Women's Entrepreneurship development).

[5] Kantor, P., *Promoting women's entrepreneurship development based on good practice programmes: Some experiences from the North to the South*. SEED Working Paper 9, ILO, Geneva, 2001.

www.ilo.org/dyn/empent/empent.portal?p_docid=SWEKNOWLEDGEandp_pro
Review of relevant good practices from small enterprise development programmes in the developed world that have potential for replication to promote and support women's entrepreneurship in developing country contexts.

Valenzuela, M. E., *The incorporation of gender in employment and anti-poverty policies: Challenges for the future*, ILO, Geneva, 2003.

Analysis of links between gender inequalities and women's poverty with an emphasis on Latin America. Recommendations primarily aimed at governments and at incorporating a

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

gender dimension in anti-poverty policies. Based on secondary literature; no discussion of good practices.

awareness-raising and training. No review available; some information and preliminary assessment below.

Mayoux, L., *Micro-finance and the empowerment of women. A review of the key issues*, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/finance/download/wpap23.pdf>

This paper concludes that women's empowerment needs to be an integral part of policies. Empowerment cannot be assumed to be an automatic outcome of microfinance programmes, whether designed for financial sustainability or poverty targeting. More research and innovation on the conditions of microfinance delivery are needed. The paper finds that cost-effective ways of integrating microfinance with other empowerment interventions, including group development and complementary services, are still lacking. Unless empowerment is an integral part of the planning process, the rapid expansion of microfinance is unlikely to make more than a limited contribution to empowerment. This paper aims to clarify these issues in the context of the debate about gender mainstreaming. It is based on research by the author and secondary source material. Fifteen case studies form the main basis of the arguments.

Training materials

[6] *Mainstreaming gender eQuality in the world of work*, <http://learning.itcilo.it/gender/gms/>
Online course designed and offered by the Gender Coordination Unit at the ILO International Training Centre (ITC-ILO), based in Turin. No review available; some information and preliminary assessment below.

[7] *Modular package on Gender, Poverty and Employment*.
http://learning.itcilo.it/gender/gpe/gate_gpe.asp?p=1_0
Online course developed by the ITC-ILO in the framework of the ILO Gender, Poverty and Employment (GPE) Programme, as a basic tool for building an information base,

Bauer, S., Finnegan, G. and Haspels, N., *GET Ahead for women in enterprise. Training package and resource kit*, ILO, Bangkok, 2004.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/library/pub4c.htm>, link on WEDGE website.

Programme on training in business skills adapted by WEDGE from the ILO programme 'Start and Improve Your Business' (SIYB), which has already trained 100,000 entrepreneurs in 80 countries. WEDGE has incorporated issues on gender equality into the SIYB programme and called it 'Gender and Enterprise Together' (GET). The GET Ahead training package focuses on developing women's confidence, creating a 'business mentality', managing people and risks, and grasping opportunities in the business environment. No review available.

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEWS

First ILO Gender Audit

[1] The Gender Audit concentrates mainly on the institutional aspects of gender mainstreaming (staff and structure), since the ILO Action Plan also focused on mainstreaming the ILO organisation first, rather than on the substance of the work.

Analysis of relevant documents revealed that only a minority of ILO documents could be considered to be fully gender-mainstreamed in the sense that they addressed gender in terms of data and analysis systematically throughout the text or project cycle. Where data was not disaggregated by sex, the authors explained why. The majority of the documents were largely 'gender-blind'. In all key documents elaborating the Decent Work agenda, gender equality was a central concern. This is important as it stresses the inseparability of gender equality from decent work. Nonetheless, the documents are often more women-specific than gender-specific and do not address gendered power relations

and the way they are embedded in structures and institutions of society and of the ILO itself. The gender dimension tends to be operationalised in terms of women-specific projects. The complementary character of actions addressing women's urgent practical needs and those addressing strategic gender interests which challenge gendered power relations needs to be clarified.

Education

[2] The report *Good practices: Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour, 2003*, assesses 19 recent initiatives to promote equality between girls and boys, and men and women, in the battle against child labour. Specific criteria determine the activities that qualify as 'good practices' in terms both of action against child labour and of gender mainstreaming goals (p. 3–4). Each good practice is graded according to whether it is well developed and has been tested or is a first trial. The good practices were put in four categories:

1. Gender analysis of a situation: for example, a gender analysis of a child labour survey (p. 21–25). Not only were sex-disaggregated data collected on paid and unpaid labour, but the information collected was comprehensively analysed and interpreted, using the concept of gender roles to explain inequities in domestic chores done by boys and girls, reasons for employment, and given levels of income.
2. Gender-specific actions to combat child labour: for example, a project providing vocational training for girls involved in rural and domestic labour in Eastern Turkey combined with awareness-raising, anti-poverty measures, educational support and training in family planning. MainSCREAMing gender through education, the arts and the media is another good practice in this category: it consists of a series of educational modules using visual, literary and performing arts and applying networking and campaigning methods.
3. Gender-sensitive procedures which incorporate a gender perspective as part of the ongoing ILO/IPEC work: for instance, a practical guide for promoting gender equality in actions against child labour (*The GECL guide*), and guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the design and preparation of project documents at ILO/IPEC.
4. Initiatives that give girls and women a voice.

The lessons learned were:

- For all categories of good practices, staff and partners with technical expertise in both gender and child labour issues are required.
- Even where sex-disaggregated data are not readily available, requesting such information may motivate partner organisations to start to collect them and set off the gender mainstreaming process.
- To achieve real change, strategies should not be exclusively gender-specific but also involve the other sex as partner and ally. They must focus on men and boys as well as girls and women and on the relations between them.
- Routinised procedures and reminders make it easier to mainstream gender in child labour projects and make it less ad hoc and less dependent on the commitment of particular staff members.
- Specific activities (participatory approaches) are needed to make girls and women more visible and ensure their representation in projects.

Employment

[3] *Gender equality and decent work. Good practices at the workplace, 2005*, contains 25 good practices that demonstrate how ILO constituents – governments, trade unions and employers' organisations – have developed strategies to enhance gender equality in their respective structures. It is the first part of a forthcoming ILO Toolkit on Gender Mainstreaming in the World of Work. The selection contains examples of practices ranging from national-level plans involving many activities to specific smaller actions

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

addressing particular gender concerns. It issues a reminder that a good gender mainstreaming practice must be context-specific: what is good in one setting is not necessarily good in another. Therefore good practices should not be taken as blueprints which can be applied everywhere. Actions specifically geared to improving the position of women workers can be an appropriate way to narrow gender gaps, but the reasons for working with women only should be clearly understood and expressed. Actions that target men and boys can also be an effective gender mainstreaming strategy.

The good practices are classified according to eight strategies:

1. A multisectoral approach to gender equality in legislation, policies and strategies: for instance, governments enshrining the principle of gender equality in national legislation, employers adopting family-friendly business policies, trade unions addressing sexual harassment;
2. Policies and planning for gender equality: the adoption of action plans to promote women's right of access to economic resources (credit), women's entrepreneurship, equal participation at all levels of the union;
3. Use of sex-disaggregated data and information: for example, on migrant workers, on employee profiles;
4. Use of gender expertise, strategically placed: a ministry for the promotion of women, a women's entrepreneurship development unit, a women's department in a trade union;
5. Gender-specific actions, targeting women only or men only: policies on paternal leave, family-friendly human resources policies, quota systems to increase the number of women in union structures;
6. Building knowledge and capacity on gender equality: toolkits, setting up pools of experts, mandatory 'dignity at work' training for managing directors;
7. Strategic partnerships: sharing knowledge and resources between governments and employers, governments and trade unions, employers and trade unions, tripartite

- partnerships, partnerships with women's organisations, international alliances;
8. Participatory approaches involving stakeholders in the process, which is important for gathering good information (e.g. about boys and girls in child labour) and ensuring that the users of tools understand them and have a sense of ownership over them.

The book covers a wide range of activities and actors, showing how different actors in different contexts implement gender mainstreaming and the effects and effectiveness of different types of intervention. It has added a questionnaire for identifying good practices on gender mainstreaming. The report does not offer recommendations or summarise lessons learned. It has not focused on innovative practices.

[4] In the InFocus Programme for Small Enterprise Development (IFP/SEED), special emphasis is placed on increasing economic opportunities for women and on gender mainstreaming. WEDGE, established in 2001, spearheads SEED's work in this field. The remit of the WEDGE unit is to ensure that all of the ILO's work in small enterprise development (SME policies, business development services, job quality, association building and the informal economy) addresses key gender issues and concerns. The WEDGE website documents good practices.

Lessons learned include:

- Women entrepreneurs require business support services rather than support in the form of welfare or charity.
- It is advisable to provide support through 'women-friendly' channels such as special financing windows, or by using women trainers and business advisers.
- Women experience specific barriers mainly at the stage of entering into business. Once established they face the problems common to all entrepreneurs.
- Women have difficulty in getting access to finance.
- Women entrepreneurs are not a homogeneous group.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- Women are underrepresented in business or employers' associations.
- Networks of women entrepreneurs can provide much-needed support and boost women's self-confidence).
- Programmes for women entrepreneurs should take account of women's reproductive and household responsibilities, as well as existing gender relations and roles between women and men.
- Women's mobility is often limited (personal security, limited access to transport).
- Integrated approaches to the economic empowerment of women should be developed, including support for literacy, skills training (marketing approaches, modern means of distribution), and training in legal rights, health education and HIV awareness.

[5] *Promoting women's entrepreneurship development based on good practice programmes: Some experiences from the North to the South* does not describe specific good practices (apart from two case studies), but makes a systematic analysis of programmes offering support services. It identifies 11 success factors related to services supporting women's entrepreneurship, such as establishing partnerships between service providers in an area, promoting gender training for agency staff, decentralised service provision, a supportive public sector, and the use of female mentors. It also enumerates 10 success factors relating to different types of programme, for example:

- Design both group-based and individual programmes;
- Adapt programmes in terms of content, scheduling and length because women's multiple roles exclude them from participation in many programmes;
- Focus on sectors that can provide women with an adequate income, for instance moving women into higher-value markets;
- Provide basic business training using a flexible modular approach;
- Provide mentoring as post-start-up support;

- Provide training in new information technologies and develop ICT networks of women entrepreneurs.

The report also provides a gender checklist for evaluating programme design and delivery. It formulates recommendations on the importance of recruitment and awareness campaigns among potential women entrepreneurs, the need to investigate differences in outcomes between moderate-income and low-income women entrepreneurs, the importance of gender-sensitive needs assessments, the role of the ILO in coupling programme actions with policy work supporting women's entrepreneurship (p. 60–69). The report thus constitutes a useful tool for adapting the design of programmes supporting small entrepreneurship to the needs of women.

Training materials

[6] The online course *Mainstreaming gender eQuality in the world of work* consists of seven modules (costing US\$400 each) and takes up to seven months to complete. The course touches upon many relevant and useful topics. Modules 3–6 in particular seem to be well adapted to the needs of those who want to apply gender mainstreaming in their organisations.

- Module 3, 'Statistical tools', aims to assist producers and users of labour statistics. It identifies steps to ensure that gender issues are well reflected in statistics (concepts, variables, definitions and measurement methods) and provides tools with which to examine the limitations and strengths of the data being analysed from a gender perspective.
- Module 4, 'Approaches and methodologies', enables course participants to analyse and review commonly used gender policy approaches and methods and to apply them to their own work environment. It evaluates the 'women in development' (WID) and 'gender and development' (GAD) approaches, commonly used gender analysis frameworks (such as the Harvard Gender Roles framework,

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

the Women's Empowerment framework and the Social Relations approach). It teaches participants how to use a gender mainstreaming strategy and complementary approaches (gender budgeting, 'men and gender') and discusses postmodern feminist critiques of gender analysis frameworks.

- Module 5, 'Planning and evaluation', enables analysis, review and adaptation of practical tools, methodologies and checklists for mainstreaming gender equality issues in technical cooperation projects.
- Module 6, 'Advocacy, sensitization and networking', uses a detailed diagnosis of the organisation where the course participant works to enable him or her to design possible counter-strategies and tools, make suggestions for overcoming obstacles to changing the organisational culture, develop strategies for obtaining management support, and develop advocacy skills (communication, gender-sensitive language, gender training).

[7] The *Modular package on Gender, Poverty and Employment* was developed in 2000 by the ITC-ILO as an online tool for awareness-raising and training. The Gender, Poverty and Employment programme aims to raise awareness about the interfaces between poverty, gender and employment and to enhance national capacities to formulate and adopt gender-sensitive policies and programmes for combating poverty and social exclusion through decent work, as well as for improving the quality of women's employment. The online package fits the aims of:

- enhancing the capacity of policy-makers, trade unions and employers' organisations, local governments and managers of anti-poverty programmes to understand the interlinkages between gender, poverty and employment and to develop, implement and assess anti-poverty and employment policies and programmes which contribute to gender equality;
- integrating the gender and employment perspective into national and

international policy agendas on poverty reduction;

- strengthening the ability of development agents (international organisations, national institutions and NGOs) to provide assistance in this area.

The course consists of nine modules, including two on training and employment. Module 5, 'Investing in human capital: Focus on training', analyses inequalities experienced by the poor and women with regard to access to education and training, reviews different non-formal and formal training schemes, and identifies some new approaches. It formulates practical suggestions concerning recruitment, making training schemes flexible in order to cope with different needs and situations, and integrating training programmes and active labour market policies. Module 6, 'Expanding wage employment opportunities', highlights the main factors and processes of discrimination that women face in the wage labour market (including cultural constraints and lack of social services such as childcare), reviews strategies for enhancing women's access to paid jobs (including special employment creation schemes), and identifies the main elements of a gender-sensitive wage employment promotion strategy. There has been no previous review of the package.

Conclusion

The ILO has concentrated first of all on gender mainstreaming in staffing and structure. Therefore, the outcomes of the Gender Audit [1] also focus on these issues and on the audit process itself. Only after 2002 did the accent shift to the mainstreaming of 'substance'. Gender mainstreaming projects are still often understood to mean the insertion of a section or a component on women or girls. Many reports describe single projects only, which makes collecting information a time-consuming task. Moreover, the possibilities for replication of these projects have not been assessed. The reports on good practices, on the contrary, assess the lessons learned and show what gender mainstreaming is really about, offering useful recommendations for innovative approaches [2], examples of programmes

by governmental and non-governmental actors [3] and recommendations for the support of women's entrepreneurs and the design of business support tools [4–5]. The two online courses train participants in how to gender-mainstream projects, but there is no information available assessing their effectiveness [6–7].

UNESCO

UNESCO traditionally operates in the fields of education, science, social and human sciences, culture and communications. Gender is one of its 'mainstreaming issues', an issue that is present in all these thematic fields¹⁴. In 1994, an evaluation of UNESCO's actions concerning women and gender equality between 1988 and 1993 was carried out, entitled *Evaluation of UNESCO's Transverse Theme Women 1988–1993*. The evaluation showed that women's issues were not being systematically addressed in the planning and programming process. Activities in support of women remained generally scattered and often based on individual initiatives. The evaluation recommended, among other things, the development of an intersectoral and coordinated approach to the design and implementation of activities (UPSWGGE, 2000, p. 10–11; see [1] below).

This evaluation prompted UNESCO to review its policies in the field of equality of women. It presented a new approach in *The UNESCO agenda for gender equality*, the policy document submitted at the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing (1995). One of the new aims was to 'mainstream a gender perspective in the conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to development, peace and security'. The Beijing conference adopted gender mainstreaming as a key strategy to reduce inequalities between women and men. For UNESCO, this also implied a paradigm shift from the WID to the GAD approach. A crucial difference was the extension of policies in favour of the advancement of women and girls to include also men and boys 'as their involvement and attitude

change is essential in the process of creating social relations in which neither of the sexes will be discriminated' (UPSWGGE, 2000, p. 4).

In November 1995, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a three-pronged strategy in order to implement the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action. The strategy consists of:

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

Gender mainstreaming (or mainstreaming a gender perspective) is defined as 'the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action including legislation, policies, and programmes, in any area and at all levels' (ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions E/1997/100 in GEE, p. 5). Gender mainstreaming aims to:

1. forge and strengthen the political will to achieve gender equality and equity at the local, national, regional and global levels;
2. incorporate a gender perspective into the planning processes of all ministries and departments of government;
3. integrate a gender perspective into all phases of sectoral planning cycles, including the analysis development, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation policies, programmes and projects;
4. use sex-disaggregated data in statistical analysis to reveal how policies impact differently on women and men;

¹⁴ The other mainstreaming issues are youth, priority Africa, least developed countries, culture of peace, and dialogue among civilisations.

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

5. increase the numbers of women in decision-making positions in government and the private and public sectors;
6. provide tools and training in gender awareness, gender analysis and gender planning to decision-makers, senior managers and other key personnel;
7. forge linkages between governments, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure a better use of resources.
(UPSWG, 2000, p. 7)

Institutionally, the Section for Women and Gender Equality of the Bureau for Strategic Planning (BSP/WGE; also known as the Gender Unit; see <http://www.unesco.org/women>) coordinates the promotion of gender mainstreaming. The Gender Unit produces gender mainstreaming tools and organises awareness-raising activities in cooperation with the Gender Focal Point Network. Gender focal points have been designated in each programme sector at the UNESCO headquarters (HQ) and in almost all field offices (FOs). Their role is to stimulate the inclusion of gender concerns in all sector programmes and to collect and disseminate best practices and information. Since 2003, the Gender Unit has organised gender training workshops for the Gender Focal Points and other staff (HQ and FOs). Based on the experiences with the workshops, the Gender Unit produced a list of *Tips and good practices for conducting gender training for UNESCO staff* in September 2003. These include the following:

1. Gender training on its own is not sufficient; it is helpful 'if it is part and parcel of a comprehensive corporate culture of learning. This means that both the organisers and the trainees draw lessons from the training and apply this new knowledge to improve their daily work'.
2. Several tips aim at increasing the legitimacy and credibility of gender work, for example by involving external gender expertise, addressing the role of senior managers in encouraging participants to attend, and HQ + BSP presence. Men should be encouraged to attend.
3. Other tips highlight the importance of clarifying key gender terms, the

importance of language and careful translation, the importance of experience-based training (reviewing existing UNESCO projects from a gender perspective) and of developing a 'product' that participants will be able to use when they are back at their workplace, e.g. the Gender Lens series of checklists (see [3] below).

REVIEWS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNESCO

There has been no review yet of fundamental policy documents on gender mainstreaming in education by UNESCO. Some of the following material provides building blocks for such a review. In the following list, numbers in square brackets indicate documents which will be discussed in the 'Findings' section.

General reviews

[1] Unit for the Promotion of the Status of Women and Gender Equality [USPWGE], *Gender equality and equity. A summary review of UNESCO's accomplishments since the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995)*, UNESCO, Paris, May, 2000.

[2] UNESCO, *UNESCO Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework for 2002–2007* [GMIF], Paris, 2002.

The GMIF provides guidelines on how to implement the policy expressed in the UNESCO Medium-Term Plan.

[3] UNESCO, Series of UNESCO Gender Lens documents, developed during gender workshops, Paris, 2003.

[4] UNESCO, *Handbook for Gender Focal Points in UNESCO National Commissions*, Paris, 2005.

Education

[5] Acharya, S., *Democracy, gender equality and women's literacy: Experience from Nepal*, Kathmandu Series of Monographs and Working Papers, no. 1, UNESCO, Paris, 2004.

[6] UNGEI, *'Scaling up' good practices in girls' education*, UNESCO, Paris, 2005.

UNESCO has also developed basic guidelines for the collection of disaggregated data on education. These include *Gender-sensitive education statistics and indicators – a practical guide* (1997), a handbook produced as a result of workshops in 1996–97 in Ghana, Ivory Coast and Jordan for the training of statisticians; and *UNESCO toolkit on gender indicators for engineering, science and technology* (2000), which aims to provide better quantitative and qualitative information on women and girls in science and technology, career choices and professional development.

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEWS

General reviews

[1] The report *Gender equality and equity. A summary review of UNESCO's accomplishments since the Fourth World Conference on Women* (2000) reviews UNESCO's accomplishments since Beijing. In general, it states that many projects are still anchored in the WID approach (special projects for women and girls) rather than the GAD approach. The inclusion of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary processes that accompany programming processes is still limited to more explicit earmarking of funds for 'women/girls specific projects' within major projects, also reflecting the persistence of the WID approach.

Concerning literacy and basic education for women and girls (p. 25–31), the following lessons learned may be deduced:

- having a higher percentage of female teachers than male teachers has a favourable impact on bringing girls to school;
- parents keep girls at home for security reasons;
- girls' work in the household is often irreplaceable;
- school curricula are most often not adapted to girls' needs and possibilities (p. 26).

The need to develop complementary non-formal delivery systems in education has therefore become a primary concern. Anchored in daily activities, non-formal education programmes offer innovative solutions to everyday needs and open up access to further development for girls and poor women. They place the learners at the centre of the learning process and recognises women's and girls' life experiences and responsibilities. They use radio, printed material, group activities, or short training videos projected on a white sheet or wall. Examples include the following:

- **A Lifeline for Afghan Women** reached women under the Taliban regime through radio soap opera and a cartoon magazine.
- In the framework of the programme **Promoting girls' and women's education in Africa**, a series of postliteracy booklets addressing gender issues is being produced during workshops involving African women and men.
- In several countries, skills-based literacy programmes for women have been developed, the contents of the material (*papad* making and packaging, fish cultivation, cooperative management, etc.) depending on local economic conditions and women's needs. As a result women have gained substantially greater income as a result of the knowledge and techniques gained. In Haiti, for instance, women learned new techniques by watching videos on how to dry fruit, make shoes, sew cloth, etc.

To be effective, the materials used must represent and reflect women's lives and cultures, be practical, incorporate gender sensitivity in their content, and provide income-generating solutions appropriate for illiterate women.

As regards technical, vocational and science education (p. 31–33), UNESCO's activities focus on the elimination of gender stereotyping in the education system. Obstacles for girls include the lack of female teachers, the fact that only courses such as tailoring, dressmaking and

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

secretarial work are available to girls instead of 'hard' technical courses, and girls' frequent failure to meet the mathematics entry requirement. The roots of the problem lie in biased ideas in the family about the roles of girls and boys. UNESCO's Special Project **Scientific, technical and vocational education of girls in Africa** encourages the revision of curricula, textbooks and teacher training in order to make them less gender-biased and introduce positive role-modelling for girls. There is no assessment of results as yet.

[2] *UNESCO Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework for 2002–2007* [GMIF]. One of the international development targets included in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2002–07 is gender equality. The target is based on the understanding that gender equality does not yet exist, as women and girls still represent two-thirds of the world's illiterate people and fewer girls than boys finish primary school. 'Progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women should be demonstrated by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005' (UNESCO, 2002, p. 16). The GMIF seeks to translate UNESCO's commitment to 'integrate a gender perspective in policy planning, programming, implementation and evaluation activities' into practical directives that yield concrete results. This is seen as the best approach to meet both the immediate practical needs and the strategic needs of women. The GMIF is said to be inspired by current best practice, but it does not discuss or assess existing practices. The 'practical directives' concern the measures necessary to mainstream gender in programme execution (UNESCO, 2002, p. 12):

1. Undertake an analysis of gender needs and gender context, as an integral part of assessments of global, regional and national challenges; a table is added (p. 11) indicating the core issues (women's and men's roles; factors that shape gender roles and the gender division of work; access to and control over resources and opportunities and their systems of distribution; access to and participation in decision-making processes; men's and women's practical and strategic needs and interests) and questions which should be asked for each issue.
2. Establish attainable and clear gender objectives, results and performance indicators in line with international development targets (example of result: increased number of the most disadvantaged sex enrolled and staying in school).
3. Align resources (human and financial) with objectives.
4. Ensure and request equal representation and participation of women and men (ensure at least a critical mass of 30%).
5. Make sure the attainment of gender objectives is measured through gender impact studies and evaluations.
6. Carry out training and knowledge-sharing for staff to raise the level of awareness and provide staff with the skills and tools to apply gender mainstreaming. An online resource centre, available at www.unesco.org/women/, and an online priority-gender discussion group have been created to enable and stimulate knowledge-sharing.

Together these measures constitute a 'gender lens' for the review of project proposals.

[3] UNESCO Gender Lens documents (UNESCO, 2003). A series of Gender Lenses was developed, each consisting of a list of questions which elaborate the measures in the GMIF Gender Lens. The questions are not specific to projects in the field of education. There are gender lenses for project design and review, development of terms of reference (TORs) of UNESCO surveys and research (e.g. 'Is there a gender balance of male and female data collectors?'), and planning and execution of programme evaluation (e.g. 'Did women face particular constraints or obstacles in participating in programme activities? Did men?'). The checklists will be helpful for policy-makers and programme designers. Nonetheless, for UNESCO, checklists with a more specific focus on education might be even more useful.

[4] The *Handbook for Gender Focal Points in UNESCO National Commissions* (available at www.unesco.org/women) is also based on the GMIF. It includes lists of initiatives and actions that a gender focal point (GFP) can take, and checklists as to how it is to best mainstream gender into projects. It guides the GFP step by step, for instance:

- Strategy 1. Get the facts [...]
 - 1.1 Read policy documents – obtain a copy of your country’s national action plan, [...];
 - 1.2 Identify sources of reliable sex-disaggregated statistical data (for example, national census bureaus, universities, women’s information services – to find the service nearest to you, consult the IIAV database at www.iiav.nl/eng/index.html);
 - 1.3 Make an inventory of activities driven or co-managed by your National Commission which concern women and/or promote gender equality [...]
- Strategy 2. Spread the word [...]
- Strategy 3. Network, support, cooperate and build coalitions [...]

The Handbook (p. 24–25) offers the following lessons learned from other GFPs:

- You can’t do everything, so establish priorities and stay focused on what will have the biggest impact;
- Take pride in your achievements;
- Approach private partners to strengthen their role as drivers of gender-sensitive change;
- Don’t hesitate to call on UNESCO’s Goodwill Ambassadors and Peace Artists;
- Involve parliamentarians and elected municipal officials, both women and men, in dialogue and national campaigns;
- Establish links among women in policy-making positions, academia, the media, and small and medium enterprises at national levels.

It presents and elaborates the Gender Lens from the GMIF. It gives tips on how to overcome cultural resistance to change

(p. 50) and lists useful literature. Unfortunately, it does not contain practical examples of best practice or any assessment of GFPs’ gender mainstreaming activities to date.

Education

[5] In *Democracy, gender equality and women’s literacy: Experience from Nepal*, Sushan Acharya assesses programmes combating adult illiteracy which evolved from programmes helping citizens to exercise fully their democratic rights to programmes contributing to changing cultural values and gender bias. Acharya sees a major shortcoming in ‘gender equality literacy programmes’ in the fact that the pedagogical practices and delivery of the materials concentrate only on women. This approach polarises men and women and does not change the social structure in which women are confined to housework. In addition, Acharya recommends that the values of different caste and ethnic groups on gender relations be identified and ‘incorporated, nurtured and discarded’ as appropriate in literacy curricula and teaching (p. 10). The report offers sex-disaggregated data on literacy in Nepal; an example of cultural values and practices that inform gender relations in specific castes or ethnic groups; and an overview of the revisions of the women’s literacy curriculum from a reproductive rights perspective, a legal rights perspective and a gender mainstreaming perspective. This overview shows how the perspectives are complementary but is unfortunately not further elaborated. The report can be read as a recommendation for the inclusion of men’s/boys’ programmes and the adoption of a context-sensitive approach, warning against ‘one size fits all’ literacy programmes.

[6] *‘Scaling up’ good practices in girls’ education* (2005). There is much material on mainstreaming gender into education programmes, especially basic education in developing countries, in the framework of the 2000 *Education for All* (EFA) programme. This report offers a review of good practices in this field, prepared by UNGEI, the United Nations Girls’ Education

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Initiative. It focuses on the strategy of accelerating action through 'scaling up' successful interventions that are amenable to replication.

The report argues that gender equality in education is a question not just of greater educational resources being required for women, but also of education with an empowering content and processes. When women and girls have access to resources they can become drivers of their own change processes. They can serve as change agents within their communities. Achieving gender parity in access is only the first step, and it is not fully achieved yet¹⁵. Gender equality goes further. In education programmes in developing countries, not enough attention is paid to the systemic reform required by a commitment to gender mainstreaming. There is a bias towards targeted girls' education initiatives. Although targeted interventions are important because they send out a clear message about the importance attached to girls' education and give them access to education, they do not alter the provisions in such a way that girls enjoy equality of treatment and equality of opportunity once they are in the system. Gender-aware reform of education systems is therefore crucial in order to sustain the changes. This gender mainstreaming challenge is not being addressed yet. It is important to know not only what works but also what makes strategies work. This requires donors and national governments to make a considerable investment in empirical research. Further work is needed, especially:

- independent assessments of gender-equality initiatives, investigating how they may be scaled up, what institutional support is required, and who is the responsible authority;
- the development of realistic cost models of gender equality initiatives;
- improving the structures, mechanisms and procedures of implementation, otherwise there will continue to be an imbalance between the development of ambitious and progressive policies and their translation into meaningful change in practice.

Constraints for girls in education include, on the demand side, domestic responsibilities and the imposition of social norms (early marriage, dowry practice); on the supply side, the distance between home and school, an unfavourable school environment (no sanitation facilities for girls, safety), the direct costs of education, the lack of female teachers and the low gender awareness of teachers. Supply-side reforms are important to ensure equal treatment within schools. Demand-side reforms tackle wider social and economic constraints. Both need targeted interventions and systemic reforms. Examples (p. 33) are:

- cutting the costs of school fees and giving scholarships;
- giving girls a second chance after they have dropped out;
- emergency schooling camps in situations of conflict;
- providing female teachers;
- providing separate latrines, and training to handle sexual maturation;
- encouraging teachers to engage with communities to overcome inhibitions about female schooling;
- reducing the distance between home and school through schooling expansion;
- Boys' Empowerment Programme, to include boys in discussions about gender-based violence through workshops;
- Girls' Education Movement (GEM), developing leadership skills for young girls;
- empowering mothers through organising women;
- a school re-entry policy for pregnant girls and adolescent mothers.

Lessons learned:

- Simultaneous and complementary reforms (package of demand and supply-side measures) are important.
- Special measures (e.g. alternative schools or nonformal education) have to be linked to the formal school (bridge schools).
- Approaches must be adapted to particular national circumstances.

¹⁵ The costs of missing the goal of gender parity in access amount to a missed opportunity to: increase per capita growth by 0.1–0.3 percentage points; lower fertility rates by 0.1–0.4 children per woman; lower rates of under-5 mortality by 5.8 per 1,000 live births; and lower prevalence of underweight children under 5 by 2 percentage points (*Scaling up*, p. 14).

- Political will makes a critical difference.
- Reaching out-of-school girls through targeted approaches is critical while simultaneously ensuring that the education system becomes gender-responsive.

Six key strategies for 'scaling up' girls' education are presented (p. 39):

1. targeting disadvantaged populations with extra allocation of resources to overcome demand-side constraints;
2. reforming education systems include teacher training, curriculum and pedagogy;
3. improving the accountability of services (through improved disaggregated data collection, monitoring systems, building effective review mechanisms);
4. developing effective partnerships between multiple providers;
5. working with communities in a sustained manner to support changes in social norms;
6. developing strong legal frameworks that support the above changes.

The report shows how scaling up successful projects by using these strategies enables systemic change. It combines information from individual projects and academic literature. It also gives critical perspectives on scaling up: the danger that scaling up means making routine and may thus kill innovation; the danger that it may result in 'one size fits all' projects or 'one large project' which entails the risk of excluding non-state actors. Finally, it offers a concise checklist for operationalising gender equality in educational policy (p. 71). This recent report offers a promising view on strategies for gender mainstreaming in education projects.

Conclusion

After ten years, gender mainstreaming at UNESCO is beginning to become more than a focus on women and girls. The reviews point up some important weaknesses, notably the focus on access to education, the lack of programmes focusing on men and boys, and the lack of programmes focusing on underlying gender relations/social norms. Moreover,

such programmes should be designed in a culturally context-specific way. During the past ten years, the focus was also on mainstreaming UNESCO staff. Nonetheless, gender focal points are still too isolated within their sectors and offices to be able to implement a paradigmatic shift. Therefore, the focus on staff training and on developing checklists for project design would seem to be logical steps before further real progress in implementation can be expected.

THE WORLD BANK

The World Bank is one of the strongest international organisations in terms of its implementation capacity. While this makes it a potentially very strong actor for gender mainstreaming, its strong emphasis on 'hard' economic criteria and its traditional resistance to the addition of non-economic or social criteria, and also its weak connections to the NGO community, imply that the implementation of gender mainstreaming is not necessarily a smooth process (Razavi and Miller, 1995).

The start of gender mainstreaming at the World Bank is linked to its participation in the Nairobi conference, as a result of which the first explicit (voluntary) WID guidelines were included in the Bank's *Operations Manual*. From the mid 1980s attention to gender equality was increasingly linked to framing in terms of economic efficiency, which provided a better fit with the Bank's overall mandate (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2002). This resulted in a first gender policy paper in 1994, and the adoption of the goal to 'reduce gender disparities and enhance women's participation in the economic development of their countries' (World Bank, 1994; see [7] below). The **Women's Eyes on the World Bank** campaign, launched in the aftermath of the Beijing conference, urged the Bank to take further action. Since then, the Bank has promised to implement reforms, and described their efforts in a series of reports. The progress made from 1990 to 2000, according to the Bank, has been mostly in terms of installing gender units and personnel, increasing women in the staff, installing regional resources, and

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

increasing spending on women's projects. In addition, a database with statistical data has been constructed, gender training has been given to staff, gender impact assessments have showed that some 40% of the projects in the period 1995–99 included some attention to gender, and a monitoring process has been started, even if there is no single Bank-wide set of indicators yet (World Bank, 1998, 2000).

The major issues relevant to education and employment in the gender mainstreaming activities of the World Bank are poverty reduction, and work connected to the Millennium Development Goals.

REVIEWS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND EDUCATION

There are a few independent assessments of the development and the results of gender mainstreaming. Most reviews are made within the UN system.

Assessments and reports by international organisations, or requested by them

Miller, C and Razavi, S., *Gender analysis: Alternative paradigms*. Gender in Development Programme, United Nations Development Programme, 1998.

This paper is a good introduction to the changing ideas on the gender relevance of the work of the World Bank in the 1990s. The body of work on gender analysis existing at that time is reviewed in this study.

Gender mainstreaming in the CCA and UNDAF process. Desk review. Inter-agency Task Force on Gender Mainstreaming in the CCA/UNDAF process, draft February 2003.

The empowerment of women and integration of gender perspectives in the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Report of the Secretary-General, A/58/135, July 2003.

Gender mainstreaming in operational work of the United Nations system. Note by the Secretariat, 2004.

[1] Gender mainstreaming in the CCA and UNDAF processes. Desk review, commissioned by UNIFEM, presented to the Inter-agency Task Force on Gender Mainstreaming in the CCA/UNDAF process, May 2002.

[2] The gender perspective in the CCA/UNDAF and PRSP processes and priorities in West and Central Africa, A UNICEF-led inter-agency assessment, 2002.

[3] World Bank, Chapter on Gender in the PRSP Sourcebook. <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/chapters/gender/gender.htm>.

[4] Poverty reduction strategy papers: detailed analysis of progress in implementation, prepared by the staffs of the IMF and World Bank, approved by T. Geithner and G. Nankani, 15 September 2003.

[5] United Nations Development Group, An assessment of the role and experiences of UN agencies in poverty reduction strategy papers, UNDG, 17 November 2003.

[6] World Bank, Gender in the PRSPs: A stocktaking. World Bank Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, Gender and Development Group, 9 August 2001.

[7] Gender and Development Group, *Implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy: Second Annual Monitoring Report, FY03*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2004.

[8] World Bank, *Integrating gender in the World Bank's work: A strategy for action*, 2002. See <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/strategypaper.pdf>

Independent assessments

Elson, D., The Millennium Development Goals. A feminist development economics perspective. Dies Natalis Address, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 7 October 2004.

Hafner-Burton, E. and Pollack, M., Gender mainstreaming and global governance, *Feminist Legal Studies* 10, p. 285–298, 2002.

Khundker, N., A gentle touch? Gender and the World Bank – a critical assessment, Paper prepared for ‘Reforming the World Bank: Will the gender mainstreaming strategy make a difference?’, hosted by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Gender Action and Bank Information Center, Washington DC, 13 January 2004.

Renard Painter, G., *Gender, the Millennium Development Goals, and human rights in the context of the 2005 review processes*. Report for the UK Gender and Development Network, 2004.

Subrahmanian, R., Gender Equality in Education: Definitions and Measurements. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2003.

Zuckerman, E. and Garrett, A., *Do Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) address gender? A gender audit of 2002 PRSPs. A Gender Action Publication*, 2003. [Http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000306/P306_PRSP_Gender.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000306/P306_PRSP_Gender.pdf)

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEWS

Assessments and reports by international organisations

Recent reports of the World Bank see several problems in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the organisation. Assessments of country-based experiences with Common Country Assessments (CCAs) of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), completed in 2002 [1, 2], revealed mixed results as regards the extent to which gender perspectives had

been effectively mainstreamed into the CCAs and UNDAF. Although there had been some achievements in mainstreaming gender perspectives into CCA/UNDAF documents, limited attention had been given to gender mainstreaming in country programming follow-up. Building consensus on gender equality and women’s empowerment goals and the means of achieving them was identified as a particular challenge. The reviews also revealed that the CCA indicators on women’s empowerment were not systematically used to assess women’s status and establish trend analyses. While the majority of country offices used the indicators on women’s political empowerment, less than half of the countries used the indicators on secondary education and women’s share of paid employment. The assessment also emphasised that there were some doubts about ownership and accountability for gender mainstreaming and that gender mainstreaming activities were limited to a few entities.

The analysis and recommendations contained in the CCA/UNDAF documents reviewed tended to focus on women’s concerns in education, health and the microeconomy. Economic policies and programmes, for example in finance, taxation, industry and formal and informal sector employment, rarely reflected gender perspectives.

A sourcebook [3] developed by the World Bank to assist countries in developing and strengthening poverty reduction strategies includes a chapter on gender which provides a rationale for integrating gender perspectives into the poverty reduction strategy (PRS) process. It outlines ways in which gender analysis techniques can be integrated into the poverty diagnosis and used in defining priority public actions in the PRS. It also provides guidelines for ensuring the monitoring and evaluation of the involvement of women and men in PRS programmes and for evaluating gender differences in the outcomes and impacts of these programmes.

The sourcebook summarises the attention to gender perspectives in a sample of the

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

I-PRSPs (Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) and four PRSPs completed up to February 2001. Detailed discussion of gender equality had been provided only for education and health. This was confirmed in a World Bank/IMF study of 2003 [4]. Some attention had been given to gender perspectives in relation to labour markets, employment, microenterprise development, agriculture, and some other fields less relevant to this report.

The World Bank and the IMF noted in 2003 that attention to gender issues tended to decline when moving from diagnosis to public actions and monitoring. A report of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in 2003 [5] noted that the limited focus on sectors other than health and education in PRSPs originated from the lack of sex-disaggregated data in other sectors. A World Bank desk review of 18 full PRSPs, published in 2004, found that the proportion of PRSPs with extensive diagnosis of gender inequalities almost doubled between 2002 and 2003, increasing from 17% to 33% over that period. While only 45% of all 32 PRSPs reviewed proposed gender indicators, 67% of the most recent PRSPs did so, indicating that progress has been made during the last few years.

The *Guidelines for Joint Staff Assessments [JSAs] of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* requested staff to assess the participation of women's groups in the process; the extent to which poverty data had been disaggregated by sex; whether indicators and targets appropriately capture disparities by gender; and to what extent the PRSP had included measures to expand opportunities for the poor and to distribute the benefits of growth and public services more equally by sex. Since the Bank and the Fund rely on JSA analyses as a basis for approving PRSPs, JSAs are an important leverage point for ensuring that gender perspectives are reflected in PRSPs.

A 2001 World Bank review on gender in the PRSPs [6] found that fewer than one-quarter of JSAs of I-PRSPs recommended further steps in diagnosis,

actions or monitoring related to gender equality. Specific plans to consult with poor women or women's organisations were identified in only two of the 19 I-PRSPs. Only one JSA suggested that more attention should be paid to the inclusion of these groups in the consultations. In none of the four JSAs of full PRSPs did staff make any assessment of gender issues in specific sectors. In one case, the JSA made a general suggestion that gender issues could have been treated more thoroughly.

Independent assessments

The work on poverty reduction and the MDGs at the World Bank incorporates attention to both education and employment. The following section, therefore, will not make a distinction between these two fields.

In the paper by Miller and Razavi (1998) several themes emerge. The authors observe that the institutional focus of gender training frameworks has widened over time from the household to other institutions through which gender inequality is reproduced. The type of development intervention targeted by the frameworks has moved from the project level to sectoral and macroeconomic policies. The frameworks differ with regard to their underlying developmental approach. Finally, the extent to which the frameworks view development institutions themselves as 'gendered' has changed over time, raising issues of organisational change for each of them. This analysis of the gendered nature of the World Bank as an institution is at the heart of the gender mainstreaming efforts at the Bank. The aim has been to achieve a structural approach of gender mainstreaming.

The first academic study of the World Bank's efforts toward gender mainstreaming (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2002) concludes that the Bank was relatively late in adopting gender mainstreaming, as a result of its relative distance from the international women's movement, and its dominant neoliberal frame. Yet, when it did adopt the strategy, its greater implementation capacity

resulted in a record that exceeds that of the UNDP. The authors describe a strategy of strategic framing in the World Bank as important for this relative success.

'Strategic framing' refers to the linking of the goal of gender equality to another mainstream goal in an attempt to make it more acceptable. For example, people tasked with gender mainstreaming in the World Bank strategically frame the concept of mainstreaming in the instrumental language of efficiency by stating that investing in women will provide better economic returns, rather than in the languages of equity or rights, which are less in keeping with their institution's ways of understanding the world.

Recent independent assessments of the World Bank's efforts to engage in gender mainstreaming are rather critical. Khunder (2004) examines the basic premises which define the World Bank's gender strategy. She concludes that unless these fundamentals are questioned, it would be difficult to make significant progress in terms of gender in key areas such as education. In fact, it may lead to imbalances which affect women adversely. Some of the key premises underlying the Bank's gender strategy are, for instance, that

- (a) gender equality, especially with regard to rights, resources and voice, leads to higher economic growth and greater poverty reduction;
- (b) men and women face different constraints and opportunities in the process of economic growth;
- (c) there is a relationship between inequality in terms of incomes and gender inequality, i.e. there is greater gender inequality amongst the poor within a country, and in poorer countries;
- (d) the comparative advantage of the Bank lies in defining economic policies.

Based on these basic premises, the key elements of the Bank's gender strategy, as laid down in documents such as *Integrating gender into the World Bank's work: A strategy for action* [8] consist of conducting periodic gender assessments in a country (CGAs), designing country-specific

strategies based on cultural and social differences (in particular, different patterns of gender relations), and building partnerships with civil society and other UN bodies to define strategies and share knowledge. The recognition of gender as a cross-cutting issue calls for interventions in a wide range of sectors in a country, not just a few. Gender training of Bank staff is an integral part of this strategy.

Khunder concludes that, at the very least, the Bank has to address the wider issues of social inequality and justice before it can address those of gender equality, given that the two are not divorced from each other. The pattern of growth supported or initiated by the Bank, even if successful, frequently exacerbates social inequalities. Operational imperatives also mean that there is an excessive focus on statistics, rather than mechanisms and policies, in addressing gender issues. Khunder also points out the limitations of the purely individualistic (rights, resources, and voice) approach to attaining gender equality goals, and states that the MDGs will remain largely unrealised unless these imperatives are taken into account.

In the analysis of Zuckermann and Garrett (2003), the World Bank and the IMF are making de facto national plans with budgets, since they introduced PRSPs as a prerequisite for borrowing by their poorest and transition-country clients. To achieve their poverty reduction targets, PRSPs must address the gender dimensions of poverty, including promoting women's rights and committing to other gender-responsive interventions. Unengendered PRSPs implicitly reinforce unequal gender patterns that hinder development. This audit of the 13 PRSPs produced during 2002 demonstrates that only three PRSPs address gender issues commendably, if not completely. Another eight PRSPs apply an outdated WID approach, defining gender issues as reproductive health, girls' education and a few other issues that vary by country. The remaining two PRSPs neglect gender almost entirely. Only two PRSPs actually promote women's rights. No PRSPs engender structural adjustment measures such as trade liberalisation and

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THREE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

privatisation. Most PRSPs state that women are included in their participatory consultations, but none disaggregates the numbers of men and women consulted or indicates whether their surveys included gender-related questions. Few PRSP data are sex-disaggregated. The analysis also found that the majority of JSAs that accompany PRSPs to the Bank and Fund Boards contain superficial gender analyses.

Renard Painter (2004) finds problems with the use of indicators, especially in the MDG reports and the executive summaries of Task Force reports. Both sets of reports show dismal performance in gender mainstreaming. According to Renard Painter, the underlying assumptions are problematic. Women are seen as vulnerable victims and as mothers rather than as agents of development. Statements by the World Bank and the IMF reflect instrumentalist understandings of the links between gender and the MDGs. Renard Painter sees the World Bank's relationship with civil society as problematic. Global civil society organisations are engaging critically with the MDGs, but they have been slow to participate in a process which many feel has been delivered from the top down. Many organisations are engaging with the MDGs at only a superficial level.

According to Subrahmanian (2003) there are several barriers that continue to prevent gender advocacy from being translated from the rhetoric of commitment into the reality of transformation. A fundamental one is the lack of women's 'voice' and their limited inclusion in policy processes. A related problem is the lack of transparency in policy decision-making processes. Advocacy at the international level has resulted in some significant gains, but transparency does not exist further along the process of policy implementation, and there is broad scope for decisions to be subverted or contested. The watchful presence of gender analysts and advocates along the whole process of policy implementation – not just located at the level of aid agencies and international cooperation – is necessary.

Subrahmanian links her analysis to an assessment of current trends in education which are fuelled by an emphasis, driven by human capital theory, on skills and productivity that fit in neatly with neoliberal discourses of the entrepreneurial citizen and the growing policy emphasis on self-employment through microenterprise. Investing in women, it is argued, serves to alleviate household poverty and debt, and also state debt that is based on borrowing development capital from agencies such as the World Bank. All other ends – particularly those that relate to women's political agency and capacities – are seen to become subordinated to the ends of capital and the market. Hence, Subrahmanian interprets the mobilisation of demand for female education as a strategy in which women's development becomes instrumental to furthering the neoliberal agenda. Such instrumentalism is deplored as an extension of the WID era, when arguments that investing in women was good for development proliferated.

The independent studies reviewed here are mostly informed by feminist development economics. According to Elson (2004), feminist development economics goes well beyond the 'engendering development' approach proposed by the World Bank (World Bank, 2001). It does not assume that gender inequality in the economy is primarily a result of 'traditional' social norms or that it resides primarily in households. It shows how competitive markets are quite capable of creating and sustaining gender inequality. It does not assume that economic growth and gender equality are necessarily mutually reinforcing: it shows how fast rates of growth have gone hand in hand with some forms of gender inequality. It argues not only that women should not be economically dependent on men, but also that national economies should not be dependent on poorly governed international markets; and that poor countries should not be dependent on rich countries. It brings together a concern for women's human rights and the use of resources, arguing that economic and social policy must be consistent with human rights. It has a holistic vision.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Conclusion

Gender mainstreaming at the World Bank began relatively late, then took off fast, but there are many implementation problems.

Some studies are available already. These studies criticise the lack of a structural

approach and express concerns that gender mainstreaming is largely used as another label for what still is a WID approach. They also express concern about the absence of women's voices.