



Volume No. 2, Issue 3 June 2001

See Also: [Other Issues](#)

Table of Contents for the Issue

- [From the Desk of the Focal Point](#)
- [Around the UN](#)
 - [CEDAW](#)
- [Did you know that](#)
 - [Mentoring programme for young professionals](#)
- [A Special welcome to the UN family to:](#)
- [Congratulations to new D-2 women in the Secretariat:](#)
- [Recognition to:](#)
- [Interview of Ms. Aparna Mehrotra, Focal Point for Women in the UN Secretariat](#)
- [Network to the Top - Interview of Ms. Jessie Mabutas](#)
- [Women and Peacekeeping -- a follow-up](#)
 - [Debriefing by Ms. Fatima Almana from the Kosovo Gender Affairs Unit](#)
 - [Gender Affairs Unit in East Timor](#)
 - [Women in Afghanistan - UN Gender Adviser gives briefing](#)
- [On the Spot -- Interview with a departmental Focal Points](#)
- [Article: Gender affairs in the International Organization of Migration \(IOM\) \(by Therese Hydén, IOM, New York\)](#)
- [Other Notes](#)
 - [Shelter and Return of Trafficked Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina \(BiH\)](#)
 - [Gender Mainstreaming in Disarmament \(by Claudia Flatz, DDA/Regional Disarmament Branch\)](#)
- [Statistics -- Gender distribution of staff in the professional categories and above in posts subject to geographical distribution as of 31 March 2001](#)
- [Of interest](#)
 - [Resolution on the human resources reform](#)
 - [UNICEF policy on breastfeeding](#)
 - [UN policy dealing with sexual harassment assessed](#)
- [Flash flash flash](#)

From the desk of the Focal Point

Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to inform you that the percentage of professional women on posts subject to geographical distribution reached 40.1 in March 2001 and 40.2 in June 2001.

The Office of the Focal Point has followed the process of the human resources reform in the General Assembly with great interest. The new programme was adopted by the General Assembly on 27 June 2001 in resolution A/RES/55/258. The resolution reiterates the principle of the gender balance and calls for the achievement of the 50/50 goal in appointments and promotions.

Ms. Rafiah Salim and her team in OHRM have also reiterated in the Human Resources Management Highlights No. 22 that the special measures for the achievement of gender equality (ST/AI/1999/9) will be enhanced under the new human resources programme which will take full effect during the course of next year. The special measures "will remain applicable except for those linked to seniority, since seniority requirements in use before will no longer apply". Ms. Salim has also ensured that the Focal Point will have a place in the new Central Review Body as an ex-officio member as she did before on the Appointment and Promotion Board (APB).

This issue of Network brings you reports of the work of the gender affairs units in the UN peacekeeping missions in Kosovo and East Timor. We have also received special contributions from the International Organization for Migration on the women's shelters in Bosnia and Herzegovina and on current themes in mainstreaming gender in disarmament. Network also had a chance to hear a briefing by the UN Gender Adviser in Afghanistan on the situation of women in that country.

I want to thank you all for your support during my period as the Acting Focal Point for Women. It was a pleasure to serve the Organization once again.

Best regards,
Fatma Ashour

Around the UN

Resumed session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), 9-11 May 2001

During the resumed session, the members of CSW adopted a resolution concerning comments on a proposed system-wide plan for the advancement of women 2002-2005 that stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming, including institutional follow-up and capacity-building. There was also a revised draft decision on a proposed programme of work for the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 2002-2003.

The resumed session concluded its work by adopting a series of draft agreed conclusions on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS. According to the document,

full enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights is of crucial importance in preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS. Gender inequalities render women and girls more vulnerable in the area of sexual and reproductive health, thus increasing their vulnerability to HIV infection. For that reason, governments were called on to adopt a long-term, timely, coherent and integrated AIDS prevention policy that includes public information and life-skills-based education programmes tailored to the needs of women and children.

General Assembly special session on Habitat, 6- 8 June 2001

The Member States renewed their commitment to the principles of adequate shelter for all and development of sustainable human settlements in the Declaration that was adopted on 9 June on "Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium". The special session was set to implement the outcome of the Habitat Agenda - document adopted in Istanbul in 1996. The Member States resolved to encourage social and economic policies designed to meet housing needs of families, with particular attention to the needs of children; and to promote changes in attitudes, structures, policies and other practices relating to gender in order to eliminate all obstacles to human dignity and equality in family and society.

Special session on HIV/AIDS, 25-27 June 2001

The Declaration of Commitment adopted by the special session agreed that the HIV/AIDS epidemic constitutes a global emergency and one of the most formidable challenges to human life. The General Assembly supported the establishment of a Global HIV/AIDS and Health Fund to finance an urgent and expanded response to the epidemic based on an integrated approach to prevention, care, support and treatment. The Fund will also assist governments in their efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, with due priority given to the most affected countries. 179 Member States made statements during the three-day special session on HIV/AIDS.

By 2005, the Assembly committed itself to implementing "measures to increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health, and through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally gender-sensitive framework."

A special welcome to

Ms. Aparna Mehrotra who has been appointed the new Focal Point for Women. She comes from UNDP where she has worked as Principal Adviser for UN Foundation's Affairs. She has served on the UNDP Recruitment and Grievance panels since 1993, and she has been Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/WFP/OPS Disciplinary Committee since 1996. One of her

functions during her assignment as Deputy Chief for the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean was to lead the gender empowerment programme for the region. She developed a UN inter-agency human rights campaign to combat violence against women together with UNIFEM. She has also served on two UN electoral missions in Mexico and Nicaragua.

The Permanent Representative of Guinea Bissau, **H.E. Ms. Luzéria dos Santos Jaló** who has been accredited since 8 February 2001, the Permanent Representative of Denmark, **H.E. Ms. Ellen Løj** who took up her post on 1 May 2001, and the Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines who was accredited on 12 September 2001.

Archdeacon Faga Tuatagaloa-Matalavea of Samoa who was installed to the position of Anglican Observer at the United Nations on 16 September 2001. She is the first woman to serve in this capacity. Prior to New York, she worked for the UNDP. She was the Archdeacon of Samoa, the first time such a position was held by a layperson and by a woman in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

Farewell to

H.E. Ms. Penny Wensley, Permanent Representative of Australia since September 1997. Ambassador Wensley made a distinguished contribution to gender equality issues in her work as chairperson of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, and as Co-chair of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS and in many other areas. Her work and her support of women has set an excellent example for all us.

Recognition to

Ms. Marcia Brewster, former President of the Group on Equal Rights for Women who stepped down.

NETWORK TO THE TOP

Interview of Ms. Jessie Mabutas

Jessie Rose D. Mabutas, the Assistant Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) was interviewed for Network by Heather Hill in Rome. Ms. Mabutas is the first woman to be promoted to the third highest post in WFP, Ms. Mabutas is married to a physician and has three children.

Q: What do you see as the main obstacles to women's career advancement in a male-dominated organization?

A: Because a woman is a woman, or because her physical appearance does not fit the profile or stereotype of a professional post, a woman may be denied a promotion even though she is eminently qualified for it. It seems absurd that this should still be an issue but in many workplaces it is.

The other obstacle is family responsibilities. It's an issue we face every day, particularly with demands for mobility within the UN system. I have friends who could have reached higher levels, if their husbands and families had been more supportive of them. Even if you have a supportive husband, there could still be problems because you are always feeling anxious that you might be neglecting him or the children.

For example, my son was having his last school event for an entire Saturday, and he said to me, "If you don't come this time, you will have missed all of my school activities for the entire year." The morning of his event, I was called to an FAO Finance Committee meeting so I went to attend the meeting across the town, and thought that by the time the meeting is finished I could go to my son's event. But the meeting was delayed for hours. So I decided to go and attend my son's event and while there, I was informed that we had to go back in the afternoon. It was only because my colleague volunteered to return to the meeting and keep me posted by cell phone that I was able to get to my son's school. Balancing all these responsibilities is difficult because as women, we want to have not just a good career but a good family life too.

Q: How can a woman break the glass ceiling?

A: First of all, there must be no glass ceiling. It must not exist, and I certainly will not have one in my department. But I know realistically that the glass ceiling has not entirely disappeared, and I think that if women are working underneath such a ceiling, they must certainly consider very seriously whether they want to stay in a place like that. There are organizations where they can move or transfer and feel happy about their work and career prospects. WFP, for instance, has no glass ceiling and neither did the state audit institution I worked for in the Philippines.

Q: What are the basic female qualities that give women an advantage over men when working in a big organization?

A: I think that women are more patient and more flexible because we're used to balancing many things in our lives. We naturally understand about time management, and about trying to keep our children, our husband, our sisters, our parents and ourselves happy, all at the same time. Women are also more ready to listen. So when the staff feels they're being listened to, that they're cared about, that someone is interested in their growth and development, they will be more motivated and responsive to their work.

I also think that women managers make better mentors because of their maternal instinct. For this reason, mentoring is something you find more among women.

There have been times when I would talk to my staff and suggest something about their career plans and professional growth, and they would say to me, "Jessie, you're the only one talking to me about my career." Of course, there are other managers who also do that, but I particularly enjoy that counselling role, including identifying areas needing improvement and how to do so. That is because I want to see them grow professionally and succeed.

Q: Could you describe some of the main obstacles you encountered in your career? Were some of these related to gender, and if so, which?

A: The first time in my career that I encountered any significant gender discrimination was in my first UN post, as Director of External Audit. Most of the people I worked with in that job were men; it was only my audit teams that comprised mostly women. As soon as I was introduced, I could see and feel right away their reluctance to take me seriously. Not only was I a woman, but I was short and small and looked younger than my age. They couldn't believe I was a Director of External Audit at the UN Board of Auditors.

At first I was shocked because it was also my first time to work full time in an international organization. I had seen gender discrimination at university but never before in the huge, multicultural world that is the UN in New York. There were some men who would not even invite me to sit down in their office. However, I said to myself, "Well, just do your job and let them see your performance and the outcome of your work." So I let my work speak for itself, and that attitude slowly disappeared -- I began to be consulted by these key officers and they responded to my audit notes and management letters.

So I know how difficult and frustrating it is to try to overcome this kind of prejudice, based not on what you can or cannot do, but simply on what they see. In these situations, not only do you have to do your job well, but you also have to manage all the fall-out of gender bias.

Fortunately, I was encouraged by one Under-Secretary-General. When we presented ourselves for the first time to audit his department, he appreciated the fact that all the auditors, including me as their director, were women. I personally felt his strong support for women in the UN. This notwithstanding, he received a long management letter on the audit of his department as a result of our work.

However, in the 20 years of my career before I took this post, I did not encounter any significant obstacles from my bosses, be they men or women, because I was a woman. And I myself did not have any sense of disadvantage because in my country, the Philippines, women play really major roles. Their influence on the family is very strong, and the family is the basic unit of Philippino society.

Now, in the Philippines in the early 1970s, accounting and auditing were male-dominated professions. I had trouble just getting a job because I was already married and had a child when I wanted to start work. But once I was there, the

management realized that women brought a new chemistry to the workplace. Male auditors clashed with male executives and staff; hence, audit engagements were not productive. Women auditors, on the other hand, were more diplomatic and more patient and persevering in getting to the bottom of issues, and with them, clients were more receptive to their recommendations. After a while, the women auditors were being hired away to better jobs. I myself was pirated by a client company. And in that line of work, we did all kinds of gender-bending things, like inspecting assembly lines in factories, and warehouses and oil tanks. I even climbed up container tanks of fuel oil to observe inventory taking.

Q: What message would you like to address to the women who are planning careers in the UN system?

A: Women who start working in the UN system should focus on how they can contribute to the achievement of either the development or humanitarian goals of the UN. Rather than targeting a specific position, you should just work conscientiously, help your team in achieving these goals of the UN and apply your talent and commitment and other strengths as a woman. Everything else will fall into place including the career growth as well as the respect, recognition and promotion you deserve.

Q: In your opinion, what should an organization do to achieve gender balance, what specific action plans would you recommend?

A: There has to be political will at the top of the organization. It starts from there. The political will says, "This organization must have a level playing field for every staff member regardless of gender. If we are not there now, we have to work to get there." There are short-term solutions that you can take, like mandatory hiring and promotion policies, but I see those as palliatives and impositions. Gender balance should come from within our guts, it should be in our DNA. I know it works. And I know that it has to come from all of us.

Did you know that

UN Caregivers Support Group

An informal support group for caregivers that was set up in October 2000 meets once a month to share information, access resources and to support other staff members in difficult times. The group currently consists of some 25 staff members also from other UN agencies. The group operates on a volunteer basis, and it organizes lectures and will soon have a website.

In addition to the services provided by Medical Service and the Staff Counsellor's office, there is no support structure for staff finding themselves in a care-giving situation be it for an ageing parent, spouse, child or partner. The group is aware of

the special difficulties staff in the field face when separated from their families but - at the interim - the group can only respond to the immediate needs of staff based in New York.

For more information, please contact Milagros Villanueva at villanuevam@un.org.

NB: Due to the tragic events that took place on 11 September 2001, the UN Staff Counsellor's Office has increased the number of full-time staff available for crisis counselling for staff at Headquarters.

Women and peacekeeping - a follow-up

Debriefing by Ms. Fatima Almana from the Kosovo Gender Affairs Unit

The Chief of the Gender Affairs Unit in the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Ms. Almana gave a briefing at Headquarters on 4 May 2001. The Unit was established in September 1999. The terms of reference were developed in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in November 2000. Ms. Almana explained the main core functions of the Unit:

- To develop a comprehensive knowledge base on the situation of Kosovo women and provide cogent analysis of the specific problems faced by women.
- To design a policy statement, develop an action plan and mechanisms for monitoring and accountability.
- To promote the mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all areas of UNMIK's work and develop the necessary methodologies and instruments for this.
- To provide targeted support to women in key areas where it may be required
- To develop outreach strategies and information programmes to raise local and international awareness of the status and need of Kosovo women.

The Gender Affairs Unit in collaboration with the Office of Human Rights in the Special Representative's office and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have in regular meetings worked on strengthening the legal framework with measures addressing violence against women and trafficking in women and developing the family code. In addition, work has been done on property and inheritance rights for women. A training campaign on violence against women has been organized for boys and men.

Ms. Almana said that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and UNIFEM have been working on promoting women candidates for the upcoming elections. The number of women candidates is now about 8%. There is a great need to have more women in ministerial and senior decision-making positions. The women of Kosovo want to have their own strong national gender

machinery after the elections.

Due to language barriers, the local women's groups have done most of the work on the field. The Unit sees individual women with cases or complaints but refers most of the cases to the relevant departments, e.g. for domestic violence. The main work of the Unit is to strengthen the national machinery and to implement CEDAW principles in all the new legislation that is drafted.

Apart from the Gender Affairs Unit within UNMIK, there is also a Gender Policy Working Group within the Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC). The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has developed the Kosovo Women's Initiative and there is an Equal Opportunities Unit under the OSCE mission.

As one of the lessons learnt, Ms. Almana emphasized the need for senior management to feel that gender mainstreaming is important and understand that it is mandated. There is a great need for gender training and sensitization for the civil administration, both for men and women. With the adoption of the Kosovo Action Plan for Women which addresses questions of economy, education, health, social welfare and legal aspects - there is a need to build on the work already done, and to strengthen the national machinery and the network of gender focal points already in place.

Gender Affairs Unit in East Timor

The head of the Gender Affairs Unit of the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), Ms. Sherrill Whittington, gave a briefing on 27 June on the work and experiences of the Unit. Ms. Whittington's office has also produced a report to DPKO on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on the subject of "Women, peace and security". The mandate of the Unit is to "promote understanding of gender perspectives throughout all areas of UNTAET and the East Timorese Transitional Administration (ETTA). This includes reflecting the ideas, experiences and priorities of women as well as men in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNTAET programmes, policies and activities. The Unit works closely with the East Timorese Women's Network (REDE).

Ms. Whittington started her work on 1 April 2000 and built an office within the governance and public administration pillar of UNTAET. The main tasks were to create national machineries for women and programme oversight; outreach; liaising; research and analysis. The work is not only with the East Timorese administration but reaches out to the rest of the mission. The nine thousand strong peacekeeping forces receive gender orientation sessions as well as the civilian police and the Timor Loro Sae Police Service. The Unit has given gender orientation sessions to all new staff and will provide presentations to mid- and senior level management within UNTAET/ETTA.

In June 2000, the Platform of Action for the Advancement of the Women of Timor Loro Sae was adopted by approximately 500 women outlining the major social issues that concern Timorese women: women in decision-making; legislation which guarantees equality under the law; violence against women; equal participation of women in the political process and representation of women in the public service by at least 30 per cent.

UNTAET has incorporated the goal of gender equality into its legal framework and obligates all public officials to uphold international human rights standards and principles, including those of the CEDAW Convention. The Gender Unit has applied ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions (1997/2) on gender mainstreaming for this purpose. Ms. Whittington also said that the Security Council resolution 1325 came at a very important time and has boosted the work of the Unit also in the field. The Unit is represented in the Cabinet Legislative Committee that reviews and drafts UNTAET legislation to incorporate gender-sensitive provisions.

The Platform for Action called for 30 per cent women's representation across the board in police forces, civil service, high-level decision-making and in politics. The Special Representative specifically encouraged East Timorese political parties to stick to their commitment of at least 30 per cent women on high on their party lists in preparation of the elections this year. UNIFEM has together with the Unit trained women to be candidates.

The Special Representative, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, has also directed the Civil Service and Public Employment Service to hire at least 30 per cent women at all levels. The network of gender focal points in the districts are identifying qualified women with higher levels of education.

Ms. Whittington said that the goal is to make the Gender Unit a regular and sustained part of the East Timorese government not supported by bilateral donors only. International staff will step back to an advisory role next year to give way to East Timorese staff who already have been recruited for capacity and talent-building purposes, and to ensure transfer of ownership. Ms. Whittington said that it is important to have a Gender Affairs Unit in a mission from the outset and that it is placed at the highest level. Experience has shown that it is also important to set up an inclusive network of local women's NGOs and another for international NGOs and UN agencies.

Women in Afghanistan - UN Gender Adviser gives briefing

Ms. Maysoon Melek, the former UN Gender Adviser in Afghanistan, gave a briefing on 27 June 2001. Ms. Melek presented an overview of the current situation. Ninety per cent of the population lives under the poverty line; maternity mortality is the second highest in the world; there are 1.5 million internally displaced persons; 3.5 million Afghani refugees in Iran and Pakistan. The country is suffering from the worst drought in years and the population has no access to

media or connections to the outside world.

Since the Taliban authorities took over Kabul in 1996, all women were confined to their homes without access to health care, employment or the right to express their opinion. The international community, WHO and UNICEF, re-employed Afghan women staff, doctors and nurses to work for the community. In 1999, the Taliban banned all Muslim and Afghan women from working or traveling in Afghanistan.

Ms. Melek said that patience and cultural dialogue has helped her in her work. Now women may work at home but not in public. She explained that it has taken numerous hours of negotiations and progressive interpretation of Islam to build trust in support of gender equality. It took months to set up a food processing project with simple technology that now employs 20 women.

In education, women were not allowed to have informal or formal training. By pressuring local authorities 2000 local community-based schools have been set up that now host 8000 students. There are literacy centres for girls to learn reading, writing and mathematic skills. One major breakthrough has been a nursing school for 56 girls. It is a formal learning institute that will now serve as a model for others to follow.

Ms. Melek told about negotiation process to arrange the first International Women's Day celebrations this year in Kabul. 800 women participated in this public event that was considered a big achievement towards women's rights. The Taliban also agreed to release some women prisoners on the occasion. Ms. Melek called for special attention to those internally displaced persons who are Afghan women in the worst situation without shelter, food, cloths, education for their children, or knowledge what will happen.

At the end of her two-year assignment in the field, Ms. Melek called for an in-depth understanding of the social, economical and political factors of the Afghan society. She said that the international community and the donors seem to have a blurred vision between humanitarian, human rights and gender issues with humanitarian work being all-dominant. She emphasized that despite the devastating situation - the poverty and ruined infrastructure - there are large settled communities where rehabilitation processes could start.

On the Spot - Interview with a departmental Focal Point

Ms. Thelma Kay, the departmental Focal Point in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), was asked to write about some of her experiences as Focal Point for Network.

Q: What are the most interesting aspects of serving as a departmental focal point?

A: The most interesting aspect is facing the range of issues which the department

focal point has to address. The focal point has to be fully conversant with the rules and regulations to keep colleagues informed and updated. The focal point also plays an important role in the appointments and promotion process to ensure that the provisions of the specials measures are followed. Female staff members have also sought guidance and mentoring from the focal point on their career and other work/family related matters.

Q: What are the special interests and needs of women working in ESCAP?

A: Among the professional women, some of the important concerns are job mobility and spousal employment. We are currently conducting a needs assessment survey to obtain a better picture regarding spousal employment as we have received reports that spouses find it difficult to get jobs in the local job market owing to obstacles such as language, work permit, lack of jobs commensurate with their qualifications and experience, etc.

The recently initiated voluntary managed reassignment programme whereby professionals at the junior level can apply for transfers from a roster of vacancies has been rather successful, although there is concern about such reassignment becoming mandatory.

Another important issue is the problem faced by female staff members who want to obtain training and professional skills to advance their career. Unlike staff members in New York (and other duty stations in developed countries) who can undertake further education/training without much difficulty, staff members in the field usually do not have the opportunity to pursue further studies. There should therefore be some support for field staff to offset this disadvantage.

Q: How do you think women view the advancement of women?

A: In a duty station like the regional commission where staff generally know their colleagues, advancement of women must be perceived to be based on merit. When advancement is to be perceived to be irregular, the resulting backlash is detrimental to the cause of the advancement of women.

It is also important for women to feel that collectively, through networking and building solidarity, they can forge concerted action to have a voice in the decision-making process in the Organization. For example, women should forge an alliance to advocate for more representation in various committees and advisory bodies.

Q: What do you think of training available for women?

A: At ESCAP, female and male staff members are generally perceived to be given equal opportunities for staff training. However, when selection for training is determined by the grade/level of the staff, women are often disadvantaged when it comes to management training as there are very few women at this level.

Furthermore, most training at ESCAP is work-related, e.g. word processing, supervisory skills, which is useful but does not meet the needs of women who need training to improve their professional skills and credentials in order to advance their career.

Q: As a focal point, what accomplishments are you most proud of?

A: One of the most useful functions of the focal point is the "watchdog" role which has a deterrent effect on those who may want to deviate from the special measures (for the achievement of gender equality). The role of the focal point is however, not just a passive one and there have been occasions where the intervention of the focal point with top management has led to remedial action and successful redress of grievances.

Q: Do you feel that as a duty station away from Headquarters there is a difference in implementing the Special Measures?

A: Yes, having been to Headquarters, I feel that there is greater awareness of the special measures, and a heightened sense of solidarity among female members. Also in terms of implementing the special measures, I feel that a more concerted and determined effort is made at Headquarters. In the regional commission, I often feel that there is insufficient monitoring of the special measures and lack of accountability for not implementing them.

Q: What policy would you like to see implemented for general service women?

A: Many general service women in ESCAP are very well qualified and they should be given the opportunity for job enrichment and enhancement through more challenging work assignments. Female general service staff members have served successfully in peacekeeping operations, and such service should be encouraged and promoted. The experience and knowledge gained by these field service staff should be recognized and utilized upon their return to their original duty station.

Furthermore, there is a need to address the disinterest of female general service staff in the special measures as they perceive those measures as being more applicable to women at the professional level.

Article

Gender affairs in the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

by Therese Hydén, IOM, New York

As the only intergovernmental organization working specifically with migrants of all types - of which there are an estimated 150 million worldwide - the International

Organization for Migration (IOM) works closely with the UN and NGOs to ensure assistance and support to women and men who migrate. Conscious of the increasing feminization of migration - women migrating in their own right, as opposed to just following their husbands - IOM is strongly committed to promoting and ensuring the rights and needs of migrant women. This has, among other things, led to growing collaboration with the UN system in the field of women and gender issues. On the policy level, IOM participates as observer in the ACC Inter-Agency Meeting on Women and Gender Equality (IAMWGE) and its subordinate Task Forces. IOM is also a full member of the Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

To promote gender mainstreaming in programme activities, IOM is guided by a policy on gender issues and a gender mainstreaming strategy. Under this strategy, a network of more than 80 voluntary Gender Focal Points at IOM's Headquarters and in field missions contribute to the formulation of, and support for, gender-sensitive programming and priority setting. GFPs prepare annual Gender Plans of Action to help them advance these issues, with the support of a Working Group on Gender Issues at Headquarters level. IOM also produces a quarterly Gender and Migration News, distributed to all IOM staff. This newsletter is available to the public on the IOM web site (www.iom.int).

In 2001, a small budget allocation was set aside for the first time to support programme initiatives which promote activities that take into consideration gender-related needs of migrants. So far, grants have been made, inter alia, to prepare a manual for researchers and practitioners on how to conduct studies on trafficking in human beings, to produce a video promoting the return of qualified Afghan female doctors, and for an information campaign aimed at employers of female housekeepers in Costa Rica.

A disturbing - and growing - phenomenon that affects women and girls disproportionately is trafficking in human beings. This organized criminal business has received much attention in recent times, not least because of growing awareness of its horrifying realities. IOM has been working on counter-trafficking projects since the mid-1990's. Its activities embrace both research and operational work. In order to remedy the lack of reliable data on the trafficking phenomena, and in order to foster better understanding of the scope of the problem, IOM has undertaken studies in several countries. In addition, awareness raising is done through information campaigns to make women, girls and the general public aware of the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking, how to avoid it, and what to do if one ends up in a situation of exploitation. To date, such information campaigns have been carried out in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, the Philippines and Ukraine, and several more are in the planning stage.

The IOM also assists persons who have already become victims of trafficking. Victims having escaped from their traffickers are often in need of protection. IOM

assists them with safe shelter (where they receive lodging, food and medical attention and counselling) while arrangements are being made for return to the home country, provided that is the wish of the victim. IOM also assists in trying to help the victim find a way to reintegrate and start a new life at home. Assistance programmes of this type are currently being implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia, Thailand and Vietnam.

IOM is an international intergovernmental organization established in 1951 with headquarters in Geneva. Some 2,500 staff work in 80 field offices world wide. While not part of the United Nations system, IOM works closely with many UN partners. IOM currently has 86 member states and 41 observer states.

Other notes

Shelter and Return of Trafficked Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

The International Organization for Migration has an action programme providing for the protection and safe return home of trafficked girls and young women entrapped in the sex industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina. IOM offers shelter, counselling, medical care, and transportation home for these women. IOM also arranges for their reception in the home countries and provides reintegration stipends.

Increasingly, Bosnia and Herzegovina has become both a destination and a transit country for trafficking to other countries in Europe. Given high rates of domestic unemployment, it is also becoming an origin country for trafficking. To date, IOM has assisted over 300 trafficked women in BiH, of whom some 10 per cent have been girls under 18 years of age. Most of the trafficked girls and women come from Central and Eastern Europe. Almost 50 per cent come from Moldova and another 45 per cent from Romania and Ukraine, but all told some 10 nationalities have been assisted.

The IOM works with many organizations to ensure an efficient network of referrals. Most women are referred to IOM following a raid by local police on bars, brothels, and cafés. These raids are carried out by the local police in cooperation with, and monitored by, the International Police Task Force, which in turn assesses the women's legal status. Within BiH, IOM works with a number of private and international partners to ensure the availability of temporary safe houses, where women can stay while their case is being reviewed. Once a determination is made that the woman has been trafficked, IOM provides shelter, clothing, food, medical care, and social/psychological and recreational support to the victim while she awaits her documentation and return home.

Within Sarajevo, IOM operates and manages two shelter facilities - one for high security cases, which includes women willing to testify against their traffickers,

and another for women who do not face any immediate security threats. The local police, under the auspices of the Federation Ministry of Interior, provide 24-hour protection and security for both shelters. The shelters can hold up to 60 women and are supervised by trained shelter managers who provide social counselling, comfortable and clean accommodation, three meals, coffee, fruits, sweets and toiletries. Prior to departure, IOM provides each trafficked woman with medical assistance, travel documents, plane tickets and a one-time reinstallation grant of US\$150. IOM also organizes transit assistance, including board and lodging, and provides escorts door-to-door for trafficked girls. In addition, IOM arranges reintegration assistance in the home countries.

To implement this project, IOM cooperates with International Police Task Force, the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), local NGOs and many governments. To date the project has received funding from the Soros Foundation, Kvinna till Kvinna, Oxfam/Great Britain, the U.S. Government, UNICEF, Packard Foundation, Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Office of the High Representative, Swiss Emergency Fund, and several private individuals. IOM is very grateful for the support received and anticipates a continuing caseload of some 500-600 women a year.

Anyone interested in making a U.S. tax-deductible contribution in support of the shelters should contact Fran Sullivan at fsullivan@iom.int or send a check to the U.S. Association for International Migration, c/o IOM, 1752 N Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036. Contributions in other currencies may be made out to IOM and sent to: Donor Relations Division, IOM, PO Box 71, CH-1211 Geneva 19. Contributions go directly to the shelter.

Gender Mainstreaming in Disarmament by Claudia Flatz, DDA/Regional Disarmament Branch

In recent years, as the face of war has changed, women and girls have been increasingly affected by conflicts, both as victims and as perpetrators. Armies and armed groups often abduct women and girls for sexual and other purposes, and rape and forced prostitution are common. The enduring social stigma of sexual violence can hamper victims' reintegration into their own households, families and communities.

Women and girls also face the threat of other abuses and violations of their human rights, such as forced participation in warfare. The experiences of women soldiers and female child soldiers often result in psychological scars, unwanted pregnancies, and sexually transmitted disease, including HIV/AIDS. Social pressures often leave girls and young women reluctant to seek medical assistance or emotional support.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) has begun to study systematically the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all aspects of its substantive work.

DDA has a general policy which continuously promotes the participation of women in disarmament discussions - as technical experts, representatives of civil society, spokespersons and as decision makers. Recently, in an effort to make the important connections between gender and disarmament, DDA together with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, prepared Briefing Notes on the linkages entitled Gender Perspectives in Disarmament.

Other specific actions have been taken in the field of women's participation in various disarmament bodies, such as the Fellowship Programme, the Advisory Board of the Secretary-General on Disarmament Matters, and the Expert Group. Furthermore, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean has carried out training programmes for peacekeeping personnel with a special consideration given to women and children. The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa organizes a 'Train the Trainers' seminar on small arms control, disarmament and demobilization in Africa, in which DDA has encouraged women's participation at all levels.

However, women also need special requirements in the field of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants. Very often women are still excluded from the benefits generated by the DDR programmes. Families and orphans of ex-combatants, who were killed, wounded or disabled, are too often overlooked and excluded. Many women have been active fighters themselves, especially in "national liberation" wars, and grants for resettlement and food and non-food items should reach them.

Another important fact is the issue of physical safety during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration for women. After years of war and human rights violations, including rape, the only protection women have had was to defend themselves with arms. Once weapons are surrendered and disarmament itself takes place, women disarmament officers should be an essential part of peacekeeping operations. Besides that, women need to be involved in the political decision-making process, and in all aspects of peace building.

While these ideas find common approval, their implementation in the field may look completely different. It is sadly far too often the case in the field that male dominance prevents women - whether international staff, local staff or victims of war - from articulating their concerns. Every woman who has served in a field operation must have come across such a situation. It is therefore important not to lose the momentum of gender mainstreaming, and to keep focused on what was established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs, its staff and the Under-Secretary-General, is committed to a general policy for gender mainstreaming. It makes a big difference to be in a working environment where the awareness of women's

concerns is high.

Statistics

Network is particularly pleased to report that the percentage of women in the professional category on geographical appointments reached 40 at the end of March 2001.

Gender distribution of staff in the Professional categories and above in posts subject to geographical distribution as of 31 March 2001

Level	Male	Female	% Women
USG	19	4	17.4
ASG	13	4	23.5
D-2	55	17	23.6
D-1	125	78	38.4
P-5	310	152	32.9
P-4	429	261	37.8
P-3	339	290	46.1
P-2	167	171	50.6
Total	1457	977	40.1

Source: Human Resources Planning and Management Information System Service.

In your interest

Resolution on the human resources reform

The A/RES/55/258 was adopted by the General Assembly on 27 June 2001. Here are excerpts from the resolution with all the paragraphs regarding gender:

Recruitment and placement

7. "Requests the Secretary-General to have the Office of Human Resources Management maintain and supervise the recruitment process to ensure that the principle of equitable geographical distribution and the goal of gender balance are respected, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions..." (42/220, 51/226 and 53/221).

21. "Reiterates that the recruitment, appointment and promotion of all staff shall be made without distinction as to race, sex or religion, in accordance with principles

of the Charter and the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations."

23. ..."requests the Secretary-General to conduct an inspection through the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the issue of possible discriminations due to nationality, race, sex, religion and language in recruitment, promotion and placement, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session."

Status of women in the Secretariat

2. "Urges the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution reaffirmed in...resolution 53/221."

UNICEF policy on breastfeeding

UNICEF is committed to creating a working environment that fosters and protects breastfeeding. The Division of Human Resources adopted new guidelines (CF/AI/2000-023) on 23 October 2000. Staff members with infants who are two years or under are entitled to time away from their desks to express milk at the office for retention and later pick up by the caregiver. Those who live close to the office may go home. For those with infants under six months old: 30 minutes time off twice a day and a reasonable time off for commuting. For those with infants from six months to two years old: 30 minutes time off twice a day but time off for commuting is discontinued.

UNICEF also pays for the following travel expenses for breastfeeding infants who are 24 months old or less and who accompany their mothers on official duty travel: 10 per cent of the costs of the mother's ticket and 10 per cent of the applicable DSA. No travel expenses are paid for baby sitters or for travel to a non-family duty station.

UN policy dealing with sexual harassment assessed

The Group on Equal Rights and the Panel of Counsel organized an event on 2 April 2001 around a pro bono work done by a New York-based law firm evaluating the existing UN policy. Mr. Bernard McCarthy representing Chadbourne & Parke LLP - a company which has years of experience in US employment law - presented his report that was initiated a few years back.

The report outlines check points for a good policy and gives eleven recommendations on how the current UN policy could be changed. The report called for one single document covering the prohibition against sexual harassment; the definition and examples of sexual harassment; the procedures for reporting; and the investigatory and disciplinary processes. A policy should have a strong zero-tolerance message; clauses for prompt corrective action; strict confidentiality, and prohibition of any form of retaliation. The report gives

recommendations on sensitivity training and distribution of the policy to all staff members. The report can be obtained from the Panel of Counsel.

In June 2001, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues convened an inter-agency working group to revise the current UN policies to deal with sexual harassment. The group has looked at policies in other international organizations; training for senior managers and all staff; points of entry to make a complaint, including issues of confidentiality; and guidelines for investigation.

Flash flash flash

Network is pleased to inform you that for the elections in 2001 for the ad litem judges for the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, Member States have put forward 17 women candidates out of 55 candidates. 11 new judges start their four-year term on 16 November 2001.

You can read Network on-line at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

Dear Readers ... If there is any manager--female or male--that you would like to recognize as someone who shares our commitment to improving the status of women in the Secretariat, let us know. We will highlight her/his work in our next issue.

Read Network on-line at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>

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Design and Layout: DPI
Web-Design: WomenWatch
Production team: Johanna Klinge, OSAGI/DESA
Printed by the UN Department of Public Information, New York
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[To the Top of the Page](#)