

UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy

Foreword

The first edition of UN-HABITAT's gender policy was adopted in 1996 and published under the title, *Gendered Habitat: Working with Women and Men in Human Settlements Development*. The policy was adopted soon after the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Habitat II, held in 1996. The Habitat Agenda emanating from Habitat II, reinforced the Programme's mandate to take into account women's roles and needs in human settlements development, explicitly recognising the principle of gender equality in human settlements development. This new version comes at the conclusion of Istanbul+5, the United Nations session to review the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Reports received from member states during the Istanbul+5 review process indicate that progress has been made towards promoting gender equality in human settlements development but that much remains to be done. It is therefore fitting that the second edition of the policy coincides with Istanbul+5.

Since 1991 UN-HABITAT has been implementing programmes directly linked to women and women's participation in human settlements development and management, with the ultimate goal of ensuring women's rights through empowerment. This was done through the Women and Habitat Programme. After the UN Fourth International Conference on Women, the women and development agenda changed considerably with the specific focus on women and girls being complemented by *mainstreaming* strategies. Through the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (Beijing 1995) the international community agreed to strengthen women's position and role in development through both focused activities directed towards women and girls with the added aspect of gender mainstreaming. The Habitat Agenda further reinforced this by acknowledging the principle of gender equality in human settlements.

The Programme developed the original gender policy in order to accommodate these new requirements. Using the extensive experience the Programme had in implementing the Women and Habitat Programme, this policy separated the outreach and mainstreaming functions between the Women and Habitat Programme and the Gender Unit respectively. Restructuring of UN-HABITAT starting in 1999 produced a new strategic vision for the Programme. The new vision states that empowerment of women is to be used as a primary indicator of the success of all of the UN-HABITAT's interventions. The restructuring also resulted in the phasing out of the Women and Habitat Programme and the creation of a Gender Policy Unit responsible for gender mainstreaming. Further, in line with the new strategic vision, all branches and programmes of the UN-HABITAT have responsibility for gender mainstreaming. These changes have led to the need to review the Programme's Gender Policy.

The Programme continues to be guided by mandates already clearly stated in a number of ratified and adopted conventions and declarations that steer United Nations' interventions and policies. The purpose of UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy is to compile these decisions and steering documents into a coherent set of guidelines on achieving gender

equality in the human settlements arena. The current policy has been developed through internal discussion with the Gender Task Force, a centre-wide group established with the aim of strengthening gender mainstreaming within UN-HABITAT, as well as extensive consultations with relevant external partners.

The revised policy document retains, in principle, the goals and commitments outlined in the original policy document of 1996. The over all gender objective for UN-HABITAT remains to mainstream gender equality and women's rights into all of the UN-HABITAT's activities and policy decisions. This document is intended to guide the staff and management at UN-HABITAT in their day-to-day work and decision making in relation to gender mainstreaming. The purpose of its substance is to enable the user to better understand the Programme's gender goals and their implication for UN-HABITAT's work. The policy also identifies responsible stakeholders, in order to enhance accountability for gender mainstreaming. Finally, the document also outlines the underlying mandates in more detail, including the various steering documents of the United Nations.

I urge the management and staff of the UN-HABITAT to use this document as a guide to mainstreaming a gender perspective, and to promote a gender perspective in collaboration with our partners, thereby advancing gender equality and women's rights in all of the UN-HABITAT's interventions.

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Introduction

Before outlining the policy on mainstreaming gender equality and women's rights, some practical issues regarding this document should be clarified for the reader. This is ***a policy document and not a plan of action***. Thus strategies and direct activities are not outlined in this particular document, but rather the principles, objectives and overall purposes that should guide UN-HABITAT's work. The policy includes two parts: a policy document and an action plan that will develop further on the direct strategies and activities for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda with a gender perspective.

UN-HABITAT's Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan will be directly linked to the objectives and aims in the policy document. The Action Plan will have the purpose of outlining ***how*** specific goals formulated in the policy should be implemented in the field and on the ground.

The Policy document is based on two equally important objectives:

1. Women's right to empowerment through participation in Human Settlements Development and,
2. Gender Mainstreaming in Human Settlements Development.

These two objectives should always guide, and be mainstreamed within, the interventions planned and implemented by UN-HABITAT, and be taken into account when reviewing such activities.

Mandate and Steering documents

UN-HABITAT has a clear mandate, and is under strict requirement, to implement and promote gender mainstreaming in the international process towards equality between women and men, girls and boys through human settlements development. This mandate is clearly outlined in a number of internationally ratified and adopted documents and action plans, as well as in UN-HABITAT directly linked declarations and resolutions.

Of crucial importance to UN-HABITAT is the Istanbul Declaration with its action plan, the Habitat Agenda, adopted by the Second United Nations Conference for Human Settlements in Istanbul, 1996. This document is fundamental for all policies and policy decisions made by UN-HABITAT and its management. Its content is based upon ten goals and seven commitments for human settlements development, to be implemented by governments and stakeholders in general and UN-HABITAT in particular. As UN-HABITAT is the UN focal point for Human Settlements Development, the agenda set in Istanbul in 1996 is of crucial importance to the Programme's work.

The following commitment was made in the Habitat Agenda of 1996 and is of central importance to UN-HABITAT in all its interventions:

“(46) We commit ourselves to the goal of gender equality in human settlement development. We further commit ourselves to:

- (a) Integrating gender perspectives in human settlement related legislation, policies, programmes and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis;*
- (b) Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators;*
- (c) Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlement issues, including statistical means that recognizes and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and programme planning and implementation;*
- (d) Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resources management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas;*
- (e) Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlement planning and decision-making.”*

(Chapter III, Commitments, Habitat Agenda, 1996)

Although the Habitat Agenda is of specific interest to UN-HABITAT there are several other internationally adopted and ratified documents that are crucial to promoting gender and women’s rights in all societies, which should be considered by Habitat, as part of the international community. These include internationally ratified Conventions such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women), 1979; as well as the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action (1995). Based upon commitments made by all UN member states these should also guide the UN agencies in their work, as well as its Member States. (For more detailed information on CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action see Appendix 2 and 3)

UN-HABITAT’s mandate to work with gender mainstreaming towards the goal of gender equality is also outlined in a number of resolutions adopted by the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT and the General Assembly (GA), which are also worth paying attention to.¹ (See Chapter 2, in the Gender Policy on Gender Mainstreaming in Habitat).

All of the above mentioned documents demand gender aware and sensitive work from UN-HABITAT and its staff. They demand that women’s rights and the gender aspects of development in the field of human settlements development are taken into consideration in all policies, planning, and implementation at all levels. In order to abide by these demands on gender mainstreaming, respect to women’s as well as men’s roles and responsibilities must be taken into consideration in all activities that the Programme takes

¹ See CHS resolution 16/6 and 17/11 and ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 and Outcome Document from the GA 10 June 2000, for more recent decisions undertaken by the decision making bodies within the UN.

active part in. The commitment that UN-HABITAT has towards the international community is to follow these various guidelines and make sure that women and men take equal part in planning, and to equally share the benefits of programmes and projects implemented by the Programme. A wider commitment for UN-HABITAT is to facilitate an overall transformation through the adopted policy so as to strengthen women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in human settlement development.

1.2 Policy outline

UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy is structured around three specific areas in order to clarify the policy framework and objectives for the Programme's gender mainstreaming strategy. The following three major areas will be addressed and outlined in the Gender Policy:

1. UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy and its overall Goal and Objectives.
2. UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming approach.
3. UN-HABITAT's roles and responsibilities among staff and management.

1. UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy and its overall Goal and Objectives

Habitat's overall goal of mainstreaming gender equality and women's rights into all activities implies that the Programme has to be proactive regarding equality between women and men, girls and boys, in all areas of its mandate, according to the international commitments made.

The international community has affirmed and reaffirmed their commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality in a number of documents. The most important and strongest document in the area is CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women from 1979. (See Appendix 2 for a more detailed presentation). The binding commitments of the Convention (CEDAW) were reaffirmed in the equally important Beijing Declaration of 1995, and its Action Plan the Platform for Action. (See Appendix 3 for a more detailed presentation.) In this conference, the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, Governments reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen equality between women and men, identifying 12 critical areas of concern to this cause. The Beijing conference also adopted the strategy of gender mainstreaming as the overall approach to reach the objective of gender. The following paragraphs from the Beijing Declaration are important in setting the framework for gender mainstreaming:

(Paragraph 13) Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace;

(14) Women's rights are human rights;

(24) Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women;

(25) Encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality.

The goal of gender equality should be seen as an over arching objective that UN-HABITAT should contribute to as an **active participant**. UN-Habitat is expected to perform its role in an international context, as no single actor can alone achieve the goal of gender equality. The international community defines gender equality as women, and men's equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities will take both time and much effort to reach. However, it is something that UN-HABITAT must strive for in its work within human settlement development. It is in this process of reaching full equality between women and men that UN-HABITAT has a mandate to act, and is required to contribute.

According to UN-HABITAT's main steering document, the Habitat Agenda, the overall goal of promoting gender equality should guide all UN-HABITAT's interventions in the field as well as at the policy and decision making level. The goal is outlined in the original version of the Gender Policy from 1996:

Mainstream a gender-perspective and practice a gender sensitive approach in all new and ongoing activities of the Centre

To mainstream gender equality into all its interventions and work is therefore the main contribution to the overall goal of gender equality and women's rights made by UN-HABITAT. By being aware of the unequal status of women and men, boys and girls, contributing to lessen these gender-based gaps, the Programme will actively participate in the work towards the goal of gender equality.

1.1 UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy Objectives

Common to a majority of Senior Managers and staff of UN-HABITAT is the sincere belief in women's rights and gender equality. Although a gender mainstreaming approach of Habitat's programmes and interventions has begun, and there is a real commitment within the organisation to implement this work, challenges remains in strengthening the capacity to mainstream a gender perspective. This policy aims to articulate the main areas of the gender mainstreaming strategy of UN-HABITAT but the question of "how to" implement these still remains and will be further elaborated in UN-HABITAT's Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action.

Guidelines for the objectives of gender equality have been adopted centrally for all UN bodies. The following four objectives has been outlined specifically for UN-HABITAT:

(1) Adopt and develop a centre-wide approach and methodology for gender mainstreaming

An approach and methodology to be identified and developed for successful incorporation of a gender perspective into all of UN-HABITAT's interventions in a manner which influences goals, strategies, resource allocation and outcomes. UN-HABITAT must therefore outline its corporate gender mainstreaming strategy, which should be adopted, acknowledged and followed by management and staff.

(2) Identify entry points and opportunities within UN-HABITAT's work

Opportunities and entry points must be identified for introducing gender mainstreaming into UN-HABITAT's work and implementation of the Habitat Agenda. These opportunities should include all phases of the work from planning programmes and projects to policy development and decision making, in order for the UN-HABITAT to produce gender aware outputs. The most important aim within this objective is to make these entry-points visible and accepted within the organisation so that they are used and developed within its particular context by UN-HABITAT staff and management and routinely recognise them for their importance and necessity.

(3) Identify linkages between Gender Equality and Human Settlements Development

This implies identifying and outlining linkages between gender equality and the issues/areas or sector of the agency's mandate. In UN-HABITAT's case this means paying attention to linkages between gender roles and responsibilities within the area of human settlements. Outlining gender linkages in the areas of UN-HABITAT's mandate will strengthen the understanding of why promoting gender equality and women's rights are important in achieving the goals of sustainable development that have been identified for UN-HABITAT.

(4) To develop institutional capacity and knowledge to enable gender mainstreaming within UN-HABITAT

The final policy objective is in regard to the development of the institutional competence and knowledge within the Programme. All UN agencies must, according to UN regulations and mandate, develop guidelines for gender mainstreaming activities, utilising gender specialists whenever deemed necessary, and provide capacity building for all staff and management in the area of gender mainstreaming. This is a learning process that should be implemented at all levels. The responsibility of UN-HABITAT's management is to set aside adequate resources and allocate staff time for the Programme to strengthen its knowledge and capacity of gender mainstreaming.

All the four mentioned objectives above imply a strengthened knowledge and competence of the staff in order to identify *when* gender mainstreaming should be carried out and *how* it could/should be done. This therefore demands a learning process, as was mentioned above, to take place among staff and management within UN-HABITAT to be able to:

- a) promote and implement gender sensitive programmes,*
- b) initiate analysis of gender roles and relationships,*
- c) gender mainstream policies and activities guided by these objectives and,*
- d) promote gender equality as a cross-cutting goal in all human settlements development.*

The overall goal of gender equality for UN-HABITAT's external work will naturally be to strengthen gender equality and women's rights among the stakeholders in the diverse activities in the field. A *gender sensitive approach is not a goal in itself but a means to achieve equal rights between women and men, and to promote women's rights in particular* through interventions in diverse countries and communities globally. In most of the societies where UN-HABITAT is active, there are already commitments made on gender equality at a higher level, through adopted Declarations and Resolutions and signed and ratified Conventions. There are often, although not always, national legal frameworks and laws promoting gender equality and women's rights which are equally important to follow in UN-HABITAT's work, as well as lessons learned from the civil

society. As the overall objective of UN-HABITAT is in line with international standards, these commitments at the national level all refer to the very same goal.

1.2 Specific commitments required reaching UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy objectives

The above overall objectives for UN-HABITAT's work imply that staff and management give regular input in order to gender mainstream their work within the field of human settlements development. This has implications for all staff at the Programme in ***ensuring the following aspects in their roles as planners, decision-makers and implementers in human settlements development***. The policy objectives outlined above, are here linked to implications and demands on UN-HABITAT management and staff:

(1) Adopt a programme-wide approach or methodology to mainstream gender

- (a) Ensure that effort is made to mainstream programme-wide guidelines and policy documents to acknowledge and ensure that a gender perspective is a formal part of planning and decision-making within the Programme's activities.
- (b) Develop institutional guidelines for gender mainstreaming, linked to the work programme, are developed, both for specific issues/areas within the Programme's mandate, as well as on an overall level.
- (c) Ensure gender mainstreaming is acknowledged on all levels and adopted as the strategy for integrating a gender perspective and supporting women's rights in all activities of the Programme.
- (d) Ensure that all phases of the Project Cycle, from the appraisal to the follow-up/evaluation phase, are adequately gender mainstreamed.
- (e) Identify and promote adequate tools/instruments for follow-up and monitoring, such as indicators and benchmarks, within all interventions implemented by UN-HABITAT.
- (f) Establish and strengthen accountability mechanisms within the UN-HABITAT to ensure gender mainstreaming of all its interventions, such as the Project Review Committee (PRC) and other review processes.
- (g) Ensure gender components are included in all interventions when collaborating with partners and agencies.

(2) Identify entry points and opportunities within UN-HABITAT's work programme

- (a) Promote the avoidance of discrimination and hardship for both women and men in order for the development processes to avoid impoverishment of women and men, boys and girls alike.
- (b) Implement accountable processes of development for both women and men, within the field of human settlement development in general and in the Programme's activities in particular.
- (c) Ensure that women and girls through organisations and networks are active participants in the UN-HABITAT's programmes and projects, and that they are always equal partners and stakeholders at decision-making forums.

- (d) Collect and analyse relevant data on stakeholders (including target groups) for all activities and ensure that the outcome of these analyses is actively used in programme/project implementation.
- (e) Promote and support the development of gender-disaggregated data.
- (f) Ensure that knowledge within the field of gender mainstreaming is gained through the above-mentioned aspects.

(3) *Identify linkages between Gender Equality and Human Settlements Development*

- (a) Outline and acknowledge how women and men experience human settlements development differently within specific areas of UN-HABITAT's areas of work.
- (b) Outline how women and men contribute to and gain from human settlements development differently.
- (c) Understand and acknowledge how human settlements development has different impacts on women and men in all interventions of UN-HABITAT.
- (d) Identify international Declarations and Conventions adopted or ratified by the international community in general and the specific country in particular, that ensure women and men equal rights, opportunities and possibilities, which could be used as references in diverse activities.
- (e) Take into consideration relevant national policies based upon international Conventions and Declarations adopted to ensure and promote gender equality and women's rights within the national legislation.
- (f) Acknowledge and cooperate with already active bodies, such as NGOs, civil society groups and community-based organisations and individuals in the field of interest and make use of their knowledge and capacities, as well as strengthen them in their work.
- (g) Ensure gender components in all collaboration with partners and other agencies are in place.
- (h) Analyse the importance of globalisation and urbanisation on gender roles, as well as identify emerging opportunities for women, vis-a-vis, the changing cultural context, and diversification of employment chances for women.

(4) *Develop institutional Competence by allocating staff time and resources*

- (a) Avail adequate resources to be spent on gender mainstreaming in the form of development of competence through training, workshops, handbooks, manuals and guidelines.
- (b) Allocate adequate staff time.
- (c) Earmark resources (both financial and regular staff time) for training and capacity building. This form of institutional learning should be encouraged and supported by management within UN-HABITAT.
- (d) Raise awareness on UN Conventions and Declarations relevant to the goal of gender equality and promotion of women's rights and empowerment.

2. UN-HABITAT's Gender Mainstreaming Approach

Mainstreaming is established as the overall strategy for promoting and strengthening gender equality at the international level, through documents such as the Platform for Action adopted by the Member States at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995). The mandate of mainstreaming in all interventions has been carried forward by a number of international and national policies, which all demand that attention, effort and resources are given to create a gender sensitive practice at all levels and in all sectors of society.

2.1 UN-HABITAT's 10 Gender Mainstreaming Principles

UN bodies are all mandated to fulfil this demand for gender mainstreaming in all their activities within the context of the respective agencies. In related steering documents directly linked to the issue of gender mainstreaming in all UN activities and interventions,² the basic principles of mainstreaming for UN bodies are outlined. Compiled, they amount to the following 10 principles for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT's work:

- (1) Initial definitions of issues/problems across all areas of the human settlement field should be done in such a manner that gender differences and disparities will be visible and diagnosed.
- (2) Assumptions that human settlement development is neutral from a gender perspective should never be made.
- (3) Gender analysis should always be carried out in both recommendations to policy and planning as well as in operational areas of work before implementation and decisions are made by UN-HABITAT.
- (4) Systematic use of gender analysis, sex-dissagregated data and commissioning of sector-specific gender studies and surveys are required for all areas of UN-HABITAT's activity.
- (5) Responsibility for implementing the mainstreaming strategy is system-wide, and rests at the highest level within the agency, and its departments; and adequate accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress in UN-HABITAT's interventions need to be established within each and every area of work. The staff and management are also to be committed to promote and ensure a gender perspective in their collaboration with partners and other agencies.
- (6) Political will from the Senior Management by providing competent leadership and enabling allocation of adequate resources for gender mainstreaming, including necessary additional financial and human resources in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.
- (7) Gender mainstreaming requires that efforts be made to broaden women's equitable participation at all levels of decision-making within the human

² Such as the ECOSOC agreed resolution from 1997 (1997/2), the Secretary-General's communication on gender mainstreaming from 13 October, 1997 and the Outcome Document from General Assembly, from 10 June 2000,

- settlement field. In all UN-HABITAT's interventions care will be taken to ensure that women are consulted equally with men, and that women are involved in projects and programmes, decision-making processes on an equal basis with men. UN-HABITAT should also ensure that assessments are made in every case of the likely impact of the activity on gender equality in the community served.
- (8) Mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes, and positive legislation, nor does it do away with the need for gender units or focal points.
 - (9) A specific gender mainstreaming strategy for UN-HABITAT should be formulated, and priorities for its interventions established within every branch and unit within the Programme.
 - (10) Provision of training to all personnel at UN-HABITAT headquarters and in the field is essential, as well as appropriate follow-up in order to reach strengthening of competence and knowledge regarding gender mainstreaming and awareness for staff and management.

The direct implications for UN-HABITAT in line with these 10 principles will be outlined in much more detail in Habitat's Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan. However, these principles should be converted into acknowledged and visible objectives for the work of each and every staff member within UN-HABITAT.

2.2 Accountability Mechanisms

Equally important to developing and promoting mechanisms and approaches for gender mainstreaming, is to make these mechanisms accountable within every phase of the work, from planning and decision-making to follow-up and evaluation. The staff and management of UN-HABITAT should be accountable for mainstreaming a gender perspective within all interventions. For this the Programme needs to develop accountability mechanisms that will routinely review the work and ensure that gender mainstreaming is implemented.

Project Review Committee -- (PRC)

This committee is already installed and working in UN-HABITAT reviewing projects and programmes with a budget of US\$100,000 to give input and request clarification before the final decision-making on the further implementation is done. A Terms of Reference for including gender components in evaluating proposals has been developed.

Indicators and Benchmarks

Indicators to measure the outputs of programmes and projects should always be developed in programmes and projects in order to be able to follow-up and review their impact on gender equality. These should include both quantitative as well as qualitative data from the operational activities and should routinely be followed up in the framework of programmes and projects. This aspect is also checked at the PRC.

Follow-up and Monitoring

Institutionalised follow-up and monitoring linked to the above mechanism (the indicators and benchmarks) should be planned for all programmes and projects to review the on-going operational activities and their impact on women and men.

Management Accountability

Management of divisions, branches and units should institutionalise mechanisms in their respective areas of responsibilities, to ensure that gender mainstreaming is implemented through using a gender perspective and that women's empowerment and participation is taken into consideration in all interventions. This could be done through checklists, branch/division specific Projects Review Committees and institutionalised follow-up mechanisms integrated already at the planning stage of activities.

3. UN-HABITAT's roles and responsibilities among staff and management

Equally important to any policy document, aside from the goals themselves, are the owners of and decision-makers behind the document. In this case the relevant questions to be addressed by UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy would be the following:

1. *Who is accountable and responsible for the implementation of the Policy?*
2. *Who will provide support to the process of gender mainstreaming?*
3. *Who is the Gender Policy written for?*
4. *Who will benefit from it?*

Outlining the stakeholders of the policy document makes them visible to the user and therefore accountable to the objectives of the document. A policy document without a known owner is not likely to have an impact or be firmly founded in the organisation. On the other hand a policy document that openly identifies the responsibilities and roles of diverse stakeholders will be more useful and have a larger impact. This section of the Gender Policy will therefore outline the responsible and relevant stakeholders of UN-HABITAT.

3.1 Who is accountable and responsible for the implementation of the Policy?

The responsibility for the UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy is at the highest level of management within the Programme, that is the Executive Director (ED) of UN-HABITAT. The ED of UN-HABITAT will always be ultimately accountable for the end result of the Programme's work as well as its policy decisions, and the implementation of the Gender Policy by UN-HABITAT.

However, as the overall owner of the Gender Policy, the ED will not be able to implement the direct demands of the policy. In every day work, the responsibilities outlined in the policy will therefore be delegated according to the structure of the Programme. Therefore, the Senior Management is responsible for gender mainstreaming in their specific Branches and Divisions.

This system of delegation will be followed throughout the Programme and in the day-to-day work of the staff acknowledging the Gender Policy in the overall framework of the Habitat Agenda. This implies that the ED, together with the Senior Management, has the overall responsibility to ensure that UN-HABITAT's Gender Policy is implemented, and they are accountable for the outreach and impact of its objectives. However, the professional staff of the Programme must be responsible for the direct implementation of the policy document in their day-to-day work and activities.

3.2 Who will provide support to the process of gender mainstreaming?

To support staff in implementing the objectives of the Gender Policy, the Gender Policy Unit (GPU) has been established with the aim of building capacity and strengthening

awareness within the Programme. The gender specialists within the GPU will provide support to all levels of the Programme in order to enable a better understanding of and attaining the Gender Policy objectives.

Another support function within the Programme is the Gender Task Force (GTF), consisting of gender focal points from all branches and divisions within UN-HABITAT, including the four regional offices. The members meet on a regular basis to discuss and develop strategies and institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming within UN-HABITAT. The conveyor of the task force, elected by the GTF takes part in Senior Management Board (SMB) meetings in order to incorporate a gender perspective in the decision-making and the procedures at this level. The GTF is also responsible for assessing gender mainstreaming work within the Programme on a yearly basis.

3.3 Who is the Gender Policy written for?

The policy is designed to be used by all professional staff and management in their everyday work as a reference for planning, decision-making and implementation of interventions.

The identified implementers of the Gender Policy, UN-HABITAT's staff and management, are the identified target group as they are crucial in the implementation of the policy objectives, as the agents of gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT's work. This includes Senior Managers, middle managers and the professional staff within UN-HABITAT.

As such, the UN-HABITAT staff and management must be viewed as the primary stakeholders of the policy document. The secondary stakeholders, of the Gender Policy, are the numbers of beneficiaries for programmes and projects implemented by UN-HABITAT. These include the women and men in countries affected by UN-HABITAT's operational activities.

3.4 Who will benefit from the Gender Policy?

The overall target group of the Gender Policy are the stakeholders of UN-HABITAT's activities, or the women and men among partners and within Member States. This includes the beneficiaries of programmes and projects, partners such as institutions and NGO's and the government bodies with whom the UN-HABITAT collaborates.

This therefore includes a large number of people and bodies which should all be taken into account in all planning, decision-making and implementation of activities. To be able to reach this group it is crucial that implementers, e.g. staff and management, use the policy in their work to reach the end users or beneficiaries. This implies that these groups of beneficiaries are always kept in mind and analysed from a gender perspective at all levels in implementing the Habitat Agenda.

3.5 Partners and Resources

UN-HABITAT should always aim to implement the Gender Policy in collaboration with external partners from civil society. This includes NGO's, community based organisations and other groups active in the area of human settlements development and gender mainstreaming/women's rights. Staff and management are advised to consult with women's movement and similar groups on a regular basis in their implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Civil society should have a clear entry point in participating and giving inputs to UN-HABITAT's interventions. (See UN-HABITAT's Partnership Policy for more detailed presentation of the partners, roles and responsibility)

3.6 Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The secondary stakeholders of the Gender Policy, as was stated above, are the beneficiaries of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. These stakeholders must be visible and their presence articulated in all programme and project planning for UN-HABITAT to be aware of gender differences.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: A Conceptual Guide to "Gender"

The term "gender" refers to economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. In almost all societies, women and men differ in their activities and undertaking, regarding access to and control over resources, and participating in decision-making. Gender roles and responsibilities, therefore, refer to the differences between women and men in societies based upon their sex. The use of the word "gender" highlights the insight that these differences are not innate or predetermined and are not the same as the biological differences between women and men. Gender differences have been built up and reinforced by socio-cultural and economic institutions, over time and are therefore different in diverse contexts and societies. ***Gender roles, responsibilities and differences are not the same in different societies, but differ according to the historical development and institutions of that particular society, although there are similar inequalities between women and men, girls and boys, globally.***

A focus on gender inequalities does not imply that all women are worse off than all men. Rather, the argument is that gender (being male or female) is an important social division characterized by inequality. ***Whether you are a woman or a man will influence how people see you, the social expectations about how you should behave, people's assumptions about what you might be "good at" or what skills you might have, and your life chances.*** (Sida, 1997)

There is a danger, and a frequent mistake, to confuse "gender" with "women"; it is therefore important to understand the differences between these two concepts. In order to focus on gender inequalities one must have knowledge of both women and men's roles and responsibilities as it is the comparative analysis between these that will highlight the gender (in-) equalities of any society. An analysis of women or men separately can be of importance but can never replace a gender analysis or perspective as it only highlights part of the reality. ***To only state that girls don't go to school adequately isn't necessarily based upon gender inequalities as boys might attend in equally low numbers, it is when you compare these two data that a gender analysis can be made and its origin further investigated.***

For UN-Habitat's work, this implies that the Programme must take into equal consideration and equally address ***equality in control over and access to land, equal participation and roles in decision-making forums as well as an equal say in urban planning and development.***

Women, or men, as a constituency can organise themselves around any common cause or interest but it is equally important to remember that these groups are not homogenous. There is a need to take into consideration a variety of different criteria, such as class, ethnicity, backgrounds and so on. ***Consequently, the interests of women and men,***

separately or linked, may be determined as much by their class positions or their ethnic identity as by their sex or gender roles. (UNCHS, 1996)

Appendix 2: CEDAW -- a Brief Overview

In 1946, a Sub-Commission on the Status of Women was appointed as a subsidiary body to the UN Commission on Human Rights, to support the Commission members on issues regarding women's rights. The Sub-Commission later on became a Commission in its own right through the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)³, which was further strengthened through the adoption of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1979.⁴ While its predecessor, the Convention on Political Rights of Women, from 1952, dealt specifically with women's political rights to participate in election and to vote, CEDAW had a more broad ranged approach to women's rights.⁵ It took thirteen years to adopt the Convention from its first draft in 1966 up to the adoption in 1979. Today, 168 Member States have ratified the text.⁶

CEDAW emerged as the comprehensive treaty on women's rights. The process of compiling an overall treaty was facilitated by the first global conference on women, the 1975 International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City, and was by this occasion elevated to one of the priority areas on the UN agenda. The following decade, from 1975 to 1985, was labeled the Women's Decade by the UN. The initial Conference in Mexico 1975 was followed by three others, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985, and Beijing 1995.

CEDAW comprises 16 substantive Articles⁷:

- Article 1 Definition of the term "discrimination against women."
- Article 2 State parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms.
- Article 3 (*State parties*) To take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development and advancement of women in all fields, including legislation.
- Article 4 To adopt temporary measures aimed at accelerating the de facto equality between women and men.
- Article 5 To take measures to modify social and cultural conduct that discriminates women, and enforces stereotypes.
- Article 6 To take all measures, including legislative, to suppress all traffic in women.
- Article 7 To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination in political and public life.
- Article 8 To take appropriate measures to ensure that women on equal term with men have the opportunity to represent their Government at the international level.
- Article 9 To grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality.
- Article 10 To ensure women the equal right to education.

³ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index.html> for more information on the CSW.

⁴ In 1980 the first 12 Member States ratified CEDAW.

⁵ Important to pay attention to is the even later predecessor the Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, from 1967, which has only a few variation from the Convention itself.

⁶ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/states.htm> for updated information on specific countries and their ratification of CEDAW.

⁷ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm> for the whole Convention text, with all 30 Articles.

- Article11 To take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment.
- Article12 To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination in the field of health care, including those related to family planning.
- Article 13 To take appropriate measures to eliminate all discrimination against women in areas of economic and social life.
- Article14 To take into account the particular problems faced by rural women.
- Article15 State parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.
- Article16 To take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family, including the right to own and acquire property.

Several countries reserved themselves to text in the final Convention, as governments could reserve their right not to apply a specific part of the treaty by submitting a reservation.⁸ Much controversy has been created regarding the CEDAW because reservations in many cases appear contrary to its very aim.

CEDAW, like other legally binding conventions, lays down state obligations for the implementation of rights and freedoms safeguarded in the Convention. These are necessarily worded in abstract terms so as to provide a general framework to be applied worldwide and adapted to changing circumstances. (Sida, 1999)

CEDAW lays down three levels of obligations to be met by the ratifying States: 1) Formal recognition that all human rights and fundamental freedoms apply equally to women and men, 2) Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of those formally guaranteed rights and creation of equal opportunities for women to exercise all rights and freedoms, and 3) Identification and elimination of gender specific obstacles to the equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms. This requires that legal as well as other forms of obstacles is identified, such as cultural and social attitudes that discriminate against women and should subsequently be changed. (See box 1)

The Convention recognizes 2 layers of discrimination against women:

1. *De Jure* Discrimination:
Examples of discrimination: Electoral rights only for men, inheritance rights only for sons.
Measures for its elimination: Constitutional amendments and legal reforms.

2. *De Facto* Discrimination:
Examples of discrimination: Unequal political representation, sexual harassment, unequal workload and responsibilities.
Measures for its elimination: Change of attitudes, awareness raising, questioning and revalue of norms.

The implementation of the CEDAW is monitored and reviewed by the so-called CEDAW Committee, which was established in 1982. The committee is enlarged with the number

⁸ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations.htm> for the details on reservations made by specific countries.

of countries that becomes a party to CEDAW. The actual members of the committee today are 23 delegates that hold annual sessions.⁹ Members of the committee serve as independent experts, but are elected at meetings of all states that are a party to CEDAW.¹⁰ The Committee gives general recommendations to States on the implementation of CEDAW and monitor that these are followed in each and every country party to the Convention. Recommendations do not constitute law, and therefore do not amount to obligations that States ought to follow, but should rather be seen as contributions made by the Committee on guidance in translating CEDAW into domestic law and practice.

The Convention is linked to reporting requirements for states party to CEDAW, the reports should be submitted every fourth year.¹¹ The guidelines for the preparation of reports are constantly revised by the Committee members to adjust to the changing climate of the world.¹² These reports are submitted to the Committee which reviews them and then holds so called "constructive dialogues" with representatives from the respective governments and other relevant invited bodies. Quite often these dialogues relate to issues, which have not been addressed in the report, but does also venture into examining laws and policies adopted by the State bodies.¹³ To support these dialogues NGO's from the respective countries can submit so called "shadow report" with alternative sources of data and information for the CEDAW Committee members to use during the follow-up dialogues with the country representatives.

In October of 1999, the General Assembly adopted a 21-article Optional Protocol to CEDAW. The Optional Protocol entered into force in December 2000, following the ratification of the Tenth State party. Today, 68 States have ratified the Optional Protocol and by doing so are obliged to follow its procedural requirements. By ratifying the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, States recognise the CSW to receive and consider complaints from groups, as well as individuals, within its jurisdiction. The Optional Protocol offers a new opportunity for women, as individuals or groups, to confidentially or officially, complain on discriminatory treatment and/or unjust procedures against them by States.¹⁴

Appendix 3: The Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action (Pfa) - - a Brief Overview

⁹ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/members.htm> for updated information on the members and their meetings.

¹⁰ All human rights treaty bodies fall into the same pattern: members are nominated and elected by governmental delegations, but in their capacity as members of these bodies they work as independent experts.

¹¹ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/countryreports.htm> for updated information on country reporting.

¹² Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reporting.htm> for reporting guidelines and general recommendations.

¹³ Enter http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/country/country_may25.pdf for a good overview of country reports.

¹⁴ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/current.htm> for more detailed information on the Optional Protocol as well as the full text.

The Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action¹⁵ (PfA) were the outcome documents adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995. The Conference was prepared years in advance by preparatory meetings among governments both on the international as well as regional and national levels.¹⁶ Equally important to the preparatory process initiated by states, were the preparations made by the civil society which took place parallel, or some times linked to the official preparations when NGO's lobbied their respective Governments on issues of importance. The two primary concern for this extensive preparation was 1) to make the process visible and known in all countries in order to flag the importance of its aim to improve women's rights and gender equality, and 2) to identify the critical areas of concern for the continuing process.

The Platform for Action, or the actual Action Plan adopted in Beijing is a document of intent based on consensus. It reflects the outcome of detailed negotiations among governments on wording that they finally could agree upon. Given the aim for consensus, several issues were discussed but not included in the final document, such as the issue of sexual orientation. In many areas, governments had to take on a compromising position to achieve an adopted document. Critical areas especially affected by the negotiations includes *C. Women and Health* (especially on the issue of reproductive rights¹⁷), *G. Women in power and decision-making* (on issues such as affirmative action) and *L. The Girl Child* (on all standpoints).

The Beijing Declaration formulates the political framework and commitments made by the Governments in adopting the Platform for Action.¹⁸ The document includes six components on different aspects of commitments made by Governments in adopting the final outcome, from financing to accountability mechanisms (see box 1).

The Platform for Action includes six components:

- 1) *Mission Statement* with the overall goals of the Platform for Action stating that the PfA "emphasizes that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality."
- 2) *Global Framework* which elaborates more on achievements and obstacles from a historical perspective as well as on the trends that will affect progress on gender equality in the future.
- 3) *Critical Areas of Concern* which is the core of the document and which are elaborated in more detail under *Strategic Objectives and Actions*.
- 4) *Strategic Objectives and Actions*, which include the strategic commitments, made by adopting the twelve critical areas of concern.
- 5) *Institutional Arrangements*, which outlines the accountability mechanisms for governments and international organizations in implementing, gender mainstreaming

¹⁵ Can be ordered from UN Department of Public Information, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

¹⁶ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/official.htm> for more background information.

¹⁷ CEDAW on the other hand is the only human right treaty that affirms reproductive right of women.

¹⁸ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html> for the full outcome document.

processes.

6) *Financial Arrangements* for committing adequate resources.

The most important aspect of the Platform for Action and its forward-looking strategies was the commitment to integrating a gender perspective in developing all aspects and spheres of society. This commitment to integrate, and take into consideration, women and men's diverse roles, responsibilities and opportunities in all forms of development and political processes has been labeled "*gender mainstreaming*" and is today the agreed overall strategy internationally to achieve the goal of gender equality.

In the preparatory process twelve areas were identified as crucial for the strengthening of women's right and gender equality and outlined in the final outcome as the "*Critical Areas of Concern*" and described further in "*Strategic Objectives and Actions*".¹⁹ The twelve areas are elaborated in the action-oriented part of the PfA containing commitments from Governments on actions to be undertaken. Although several groups of stakeholders and actors are mentioned as responsible parties in the documents, Governments bear the overall responsibility for positive change.²⁰

The twelve critical areas outlined in the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing in 1995

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and Health
- D. Violence against women
- E. Women and armed conflict
- F. Women and the economy
- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl-child.

Each of the 189 countries that adopted the Platform for Action in 1995 committed to the development of national action plans, as stated in paragraph 297²¹:

"Governments, in consultation with relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations, should begin to develop implementation strategies for the Platform; and, preferably by the end of 1996, should have developed their strategies or plans of actions...these implementation strategies should be comprehensive, have time bound

¹⁹ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html> for more detailed outline.

²⁰ In the end of each critical area responsible stakeholders are outlined under "Actions to be taken by..."

²¹ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/confer/beijing/national/natplans.htm> for a country-by-country list with national action plans.

targets and benchmarks for monitoring, and include proposals for allocating or reallocating resources for implementation."

In most countries today, governments have therefore developed national plans of action linked to the Platform for Action.²² In June 2000, a Special Session was held in order to follow up on the progress made of the national level in implementing the Platform for Action.²³

²² Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/countrylist.htm> for the follow up on these national action plans.

²³ Enter <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5.htm> for detailed information on the preparatory process, the event and its outcome.

Appendix 4: Useful Resources and Information on the Internet

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/world/#>

A web site including information on all regions with country specific information such as Gender Profiles, national Follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, national Plans of Action based of the Platform for Action, the national report to the CEDAW Committee, (Unofficial) NGO reports (the so-called "shadow report") and references and coordinates to the national responsible machineries, such as Ministry of Women Affairs and similar organs.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

The basic web site for information on UN's work and commitment to gender equality and women's right. Here you find links to all major UN agencies such as DAW, CSW and UNIFEM, as well as all information on all crucial documents, such as the CEDAW and the Platform for Action, and the processes surrounding them.

<http://www.focusintl.com/widnet.htm>

A very substantive web sites that, among other things, includes a database on gender and development. The web site includes several useful resource bases divided into three overall areas: Statistics, Themes and Resources, and are available in both French and English.

<http://www.dawn.org.fj/>

The web site belongs to one of the largest women's organization based in the South. DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New era) is a network of women scholars and activists from the economic South who are working for development alternatives that are equitable, gender just and sustainable. The web site includes links and resources to Research themes, Regional engagements, Publications and general information and debate on the theme of gender and development.

<http://www1.oecd.org/dac/gender/index.htm>

The web sites includes useful gender mainstreaming guidelines, reports and research as well as publications and a very useful source book on concepts and approaches. Another strength with this web site is the links to other related sites on gender equality and women's rights.

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/>

Bridge is a part of IDS (International Development Studies) at the University of Sussex and specializes in information and analysis regarding gender equality and women's rights. Bridge's objective is to assist development professionals and organisations to integrate gender concerns into their work. They have a substantive and extensive resource base on issues relating to this field and when using their gender information exchange, GENIE, it is easy to access Gender Country Profiles as well as to get hold of gender experts and consultants. In this section, information on best practice databases and other resource bases can be found through "key word" searches.

<http://www.oneworld.org/whrnet/>

whrNET (Women Human Rights Net) is a collaborative Information and Communication Technology project developed by an international coalition of women's organisations (including UNIFEM and OneWorld Online). It includes links to several relevant web sites as well as access to resources and publications in the field, it also includes forums for dialogues and discussion on the area of women's rights.

<http://www.worldbank.org/gender/>

The World Bank has a very comprehensive and useful web site on gender equality with resources, data and links. The site both gives general data such as very useful statistics given country by country, as well as analysis on specific themes on topics such as transport and technology as well as poverty reduction strategies and rural development. The web site also provides links to other resources and partners in the area of gender mainstreaming.

<http://www.wld.org/>

WLD, or Women, Law and Development provide a web site with very useful resources and news on women's rights from a legal perspective. A newsletter can also be found on the web site with the latest update in the area, as well as links to other relevant sites and organisations.

<http://www.undp.org/gender/>

UNDP's web site contains useful guidelines (in the form of a "Gender Mainstreaming Information and Learning Pack") as well as samples of "Good practices" in the area of gender mainstreaming. The site provides data and statistics in the form of studies, and research as well as references to indicators to use for gender mainstreaming.

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/eldis/gender/Gender.htm>

A useful resource centre with a large number of links and information, including publications, Gender Country Profiles (including statistics), research themes, network contacts and thematic e-mail lists. Eldis web site on gender also offers a constant update on new information and publication. (Can be linked through Bridge web site)

<http://www.huairou.org/>

The web site of the Huairou Commission, very active in the field of gender equality and women's rights in human settlements development, with which Habitat has had very strong collaboration over the years.