

WORKING FOR AN EQUAL FUTURE

UNICEF Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Girls and Women



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Table of Contents

WHAT WE WORK FOR

SUMMARY

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	2
II.	UNICEF COOPERATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY.....	4
III.	GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNICEF OPERATIONS	9
IV.	ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING.....	11

What we work for

We in UNICEF, with our partners, work for and envision the day when all nations will value and care for girls and boys as equals; a day in which countries have not only placed the survival, protection and development of children among their first priorities, but also consciously promote and protect the rights, and develop the energies, of girls as well as boys; a day in which nations have ended discrimination against girls, wherever it occurs.

We work for and envision the day in which respectful relationships among girls and boys are understood to lie at the heart of a healthy and secure national future; a day in which girls and boys are educated and encouraged to know and to speak their own truths; a day in which all girls and boys have the specific knowledge and services they need to ensure a future of healthy reproduction and freedom from HIV and AIDS; a day in which being a girl or a boy is no bar to quality education, or to high achievement in any sphere.

We work for and envision the day in which all girls and boys have equal enjoyment of age-appropriate health care in accordance with their needs; a day in which girls and boys live fully and equally free from physical assault, demeaning labour, early marriage, harmful practices, abuse and exploitation, retaining undamaged their capability to enjoy the rewards of life, and embrace its full responsibilities.

We work for and envision the day in which women and men are supported by a range of services to lead mutually respectful lives with proportionate shares of domestic responsibilities and rewarding labour; a day in which children witness women and men alike achieve self-realization through continuing education and participation in public life and democratic leadership; a day in which both girls and boys recognize and claim their equal right to similar wellbeing, fulfillment and contribution to national development, securing the foundations of civil and political liberties down the generations.

Summary

What we work for

UNICEF works with partners –Governments, civil society, private sector, professional and other organizations - against discrimination of all kinds, and recognizes discrimination on grounds of sex as unacceptable. We acknowledge the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, together with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as central to our mandate.

UNICEF also works for the equal rights and empowerment of girls and boys, while also recognizing that gender equality provides an essential context and precondition for inclusive human development, as articulated in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and elsewhere. We work for women's rights as both fundamental and an inherent good for society, recognizing women's role as agents of development, in the knowledge that the empowerment of women is a prerequisite for the equal rights for all.

Our goal

The goal of UNICEF's work with partners in pursuit of gender equality and the equal rights of girls and boys is to contribute to poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through results-oriented, effective and coordinated action that achieves the protection, survival and development of girls and boys on an equal basis. To achieve this, UNICEF-assisted programmes in all focus areas of its Medium-Term Strategic Plan are designed to contribute to gender equality in well-defined ways, as measured and assessed by gender results statements and indicators.

Our role

UNICEF supports the development of national capacities to achieve equality for girls and boys - through the strengthening of both national counterparts in pursuit of development goals and human rights, and of enabling institutions and environments. Programmes of cooperation with Governments help develop the capacity of duty bearers to implement and operate these institutions and systems, and the capacity of women and girls, as well as men and boys, to claim their rights.

UNICEF also supports the development of national and international policies, legislative frameworks, institutions, gender- and child-responsive budgeting and service delivery systems that promote norms, services and protection for children in a gender-equal manner. UNICEF works in partnerships to promote equal development outcomes for girls and boys.

Mainstreaming gender equality into operations

UNICEF's operations and management practices have a direct impact on its performance on gender mainstreaming. UNICEF makes gender equality a consideration in its information management, performance management, human resources policy and practice and its budget and supply management, within the overall results-orientated framework of its MTSP.

Holding ourselves accountable

The UNICEF Executive Director oversees the application of this policy, supported by a senior-level Gender Equality Task Force. Members of the Global Leadership Team are accountable to the Executive Director for implementation, while senior and mid-level managers implement and monitor the policy.

Progress in implementing the Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) foundation strategy on Gender Equality, and the attainment of the corresponding results in the MTSP Results Framework, is reported to the Executive Board through the Executive Director's Annual Report and any other agreed mechanisms.

I. INTRODUCTION

UNICEF and the rights of women and girls

UNICEF is committed to practicing and promoting non-discrimination of all kinds, whether on the basis of sex, age, religion, race, ethnicity, economic status, caste, citizenship, sexual identity, ability/disability and urban/rural locality. We are dedicated to working with partners at all levels to help end the intersecting discriminations that children face, and to redress the ways in which girls typically, and boys in some situations, experience discrimination on the grounds of their sex, in addition to other forms of discrimination that they may experience.

We ground our work with our partners in both the CRC and CEDAW. These Conventions are mutually and strongly reinforcing in the realization of UNICEF's mandate for the rights of children. Gender equality is both a human right under the UN Charter and many subsequent documents, and a pre-condition for the success of development cooperation for girls and boys.

A principal contribution of UNICEF to women's rights is through empowerment of the girls who will become women, so that they can take their place as adults able to claim their own rights, and assume their full responsibilities as duty bearers towards the next generation.

We also recognize that gender equality among adults, expressed in equal enjoyment of rights and mutually respectful relationships in both the public and private spheres, provides an essential context in which girls and boys can learn the gender-equal attitudes and behaviours that will sustain human development and development goals such as the MDGs over time.

UNICEF works for women's rights not only as an inherent good for societies as a whole, and in recognition of women as agents of human development, but specifically because the empowerment of women facilitates the very environment in which gender-equal results can best be achieved for children.

The need for a new policy

This policy revises and updates the *Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*, 1994¹. In 2006-2007, UNICEF undertook a major Evaluation² of the implementation of the 1994 policy, which laid the foundation for this update.

The Evaluation found that the strategies advocated by the original policy remain sound, and these are retained.³ However, it indicated that the policy required updating - to respond to new programme priorities, including the commitment to work more explicitly with men and boys as both agents and beneficiaries of gender equality, and to improve the priority and resourcing given to gender equality programming by the organization, and the grounding of its actions in CEDAW together with the CRC.

The policy was revised through extensive consultation among UNICEF staff and partners. It takes account of the changed inter-governmental context for development, especially new mechanisms and systems to

¹ UNICEF 1994. *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: a policy review*, E/ICEF/1994/L.5 with Addendum: *Recommendations of the Executive Director*. E/ICEF/1994/L.5/Add.1

² UNICEF 2007. *Evaluation of Gender Policy Implementation in UNICEF*.

³ These strategies are: integrating gender equality considerations appropriately in all UNICEF activities, undertaking gender-specific activities when needed and giving special attention to girls.

ensure strengthened coherence through the millennium process and UN reform, greater clarity on the human rights foundations of development and stronger emphasis on emergency/humanitarian activity.

Scope of this policy

This policy establishes the basis for UNICEF programme cooperation with Governments and other partners to promote equality between girls and boys; defines the core standards of performance that are expected; and sets out the organizational mechanisms that will help bring about results over time.

It articulates UNICEF's mission⁴ and mandate for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and creating "a world fit for children"⁵ in a gender-equal manner by operationalising the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC 1989) and the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW 1979), using results-based management principles and the methodology prescribed in the *United Nations Common Understanding on the Rights-based Approach to Programming*⁶.

The policy also reflects the requirement for all UN entities to adopt the gender mainstreaming methodology, as mandated by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, defined by ECOSOC 1997⁷ and reinforced by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination 2006⁸ and the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review 2007.⁹

The Contribution of CEDAW

The CRC makes no distinction between girls and boys and therefore applies equally to each, and yet we know that the paths to the full realization of their respective rights are different for girls and boys in many instances.

CEDAW makes no distinction as to age, and therefore applies equally to all ages. It provides the legal basis on which to address the rights enshrined in CRC in a gender-differentiated manner, so that the respective paths of girls and boys to full realization of their rights have complete and equal outcomes.

UNICEF has always viewed motherhood as a critically important component of children's wellbeing, and understands that women's public roles are also important to child development and survival. It therefore supports the advancement and empowerment of women and girls in all spheres, including but far from only, as mothers and future mothers.

UNICEF is careful to ensure that the best interests of children under CRC are not taken to imply circumscription of women solely to the role of motherhood, and that the realization of women's rights under CEDAW is not achieved at the expense of children's best interests, knowing that the empowerment of women directly serves the best interests of the child.

To achieve this UNICEF works with women, men, girls and boys to broaden understanding of the interaction of CRC and CEDAW in promoting the personal, civic and political freedoms and responsibilities of all, and especially that parenting and duty-bearing towards children are the shared and joint responsibility of women and men.

⁴ The *UNICEF Mission Statement* of 1996, which includes the statement "UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities".

⁵ United Nations. 2002. *The Declaration and Plan of Action (A World Fit for Children)*.

⁶ UN Development Group. 2002. *The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation: Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies*.

⁷ ECOSOC 1997, *Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997*. A/52/2 Chapter IV, "Special Session on Gender Mainstreaming".

⁸ UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination 2006 *United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women: focusing on results and impact*. CEB/2006/2

⁹ United Nations 2007. *Report of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations Development System*. Paragraphs 72-84.

The policy outlines the parameters of UNICEF's work in the framework of its MTSP in contribution to:

- the equal rights of girls and boys 0-18 years old¹⁰; and
- the equal rights of women and men, as a necessary context for, and accelerator of, gender equality for children, and as an overall objective for the United Nations as defined in the UN Charter.

The policy addresses UNICEF's contributions to the development and equal rights of girls and boys through its cooperation both in regular situations and through humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery.

This policy also addresses the responsibilities and expectations of UNICEF staff at all levels. Meanwhile, UNICEF's specific policy on gender parity and diversity among staff is covered separately, in the *UNICEF's Gender Parity and Equality Policy – The Gender Balanced Workplace*¹¹.

II. UNICEF COOPERATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The goal

The goal of UNICEF work in pursuit of gender equality and the equal rights of girls and boys is to contribute - through partnerships, advocacy and programmes of cooperation in the framework of its MTSP - to poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs through result-oriented, effective and well-coordinated action that achieves the protection, survival and development of girls and boys on an equal basis. We also undertake to ensure that our humanitarian action is carried out in a gender-responsive manner as part of our long-term commitment to the development of partner countries, based on our Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Response.

The key result to advance this goal is that all UNICEF-assisted programmes are designed so that they contribute to gender equality in clearly defined ways, as measured by precise and evidence-based gender result statements and indicators. These are developed with Governments and other partners as an intrinsic element of the programme planning processes, incorporated into the MTSP Results Framework and linked with updated financial tracking mechanisms.

The pre-condition for the attainment of this goal is a vigorous management, intellectual and organizational culture that values, promotes and monitors consistent attention to every aspect of equality and non-discrimination as central to UNICEF's identity and effectiveness.

This goal is achieved through implementation of all aspects of UNICEF's MTSP and its foundation strategy on Gender Equality.

A human rights foundation

The commitment to achieve gender equality on the basis of human rights shapes our programming activities. We cannot meet our obligations to follow a human rights based approach without placing gender equality at the heart of our work.

¹⁰ This policy uses the term "girls and boys" rather than "children", to the extent that this is commensurate with clarity of the text. A lexicon of terms used in this policy is available at: <http://intranet.unicef.org/pd/genderequality.nsf>

¹¹ CF/EXD/2007 - June 14, 2007

UNICEF is guided by the United Nations Common Understanding on the HRBAP. This describes the approach by which UNICEF achieves its commitments under the CRC and CEDAW, the gender equality requirements of which are:

- Programme preparation ensures that results are designed specifically and explicitly on the basis of prior research and analysis of gaps in the realization of the rights of women and girls, and the differential power relations and dynamics between women and men, boys and girls which drive these;
- Programmes are implemented in such a manner as to ensure that human rights principles and standards are applied in all phases of the programme cycle; and
- All situation analysis, performance monitoring and reporting explicitly documents progress in achieving gender equality, in line with the principles and standards of the CRC and CEDAW.

UNICEF's role

UNICEF supports national capacities to achieve equality for girls and boys on two levels: (i) strengthening *understanding and competence among government counterparts and civil society*, both duty bearers and rights holders, and (ii) the establishment and/or development of *enabling institutions and environments*. In doing so, we note that human rights capacity includes the ability to *facilitate* the full realization of rights and to *refrain from* and *prevent* violation of rights.

UNICEF-assisted programmes of cooperation develop the capacity of duty bearers to implement and operate these structures and systems, and the capacity of women and girls, as well as men and boys, to understand their status as rights-holders and to claim their rights.

UNICEF has a normative role with regard to girls' rights and gender equality - supporting the development of policies, legislative frameworks, institutions, budget mechanisms and service delivery systems that promote norms, services and protections for children that reflect global human rights standards, including those relating to gender equality.

We understand gender equality to be a pre-condition for the attainment of the MDGs and integral to poverty reduction¹². UNICEF works for gender equality across all Focus Areas, as set out in the MTSP and its foundation strategy on Gender Equality.¹³

¹² *The Double Dividend: State of the World's Children 2007* describes how the empowerment of women leads directly to multiple benefits for children in health, nutrition, education, and their own empowerment and confidence.

Non-Discrimination

UNICEF recognizes the human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination as central to the consideration of gender equality and that gender-based discrimination is one of the most ubiquitous forms of discrimination that children face. On the other hand, ending gender-based discrimination underpins the achievement of all human development goals, including universal primary education, reducing maternal mortality and control of HIV and AIDS (See SOWC 2007).

UNICEF programming has as a premise that discrimination against women and girls is endemic, and where it is not addressed it is likely to be perpetuated.

UNICEF therefore tailors its cooperation as necessary to promote equal outcomes for girls and boys, so that gender discrimination is not being inadvertently perpetuated through its programmes.

This places special obligations of care and diligence upon UNICEF staff, which they discharge by adopting the human rights-based approach to development, as described in this policy statement. (See also Box 4, Gender Equality).

Discrimination against women is defined in Article 1 of CEDAW (see Lexicon).

UNICEF undertakes emergency/humanitarian response, including in post conflict situations, in a gender-equal manner as part of its overall commitment to national development and realization of human rights. Preparedness and risk reduction activities that take full account of gender differences enable partners to respond more completely when emergency strikes, and to “build back better” through the immediate establishment of rights-based processes and enhanced gender equality in the early post crisis and recovery phases, so that any opportunity for positive transformative change is seized.

We promote equal programme outcomes for girls and boys through four broad areas of intervention. These are:

- inclusion of the distinctive needs and rights of both girls and boys in analysis, policy dialogue and programme cooperation on children’s rights;
- inclusion of the needs and rights of female infants, children and adolescents as well as adults in policy dialogue and programme cooperation on women’s rights (a life cycle approach);
- policy dialogue and programme cooperation on the empowerment of women to claim and sustain their rights as:
 - a pre-condition for the full achievement of the MDGs, human development and equal rights of girls and boys; and
 - a specific requirement under international law and the global consensus on gender equality that guides all UN entities;
- knowledge generation and brokering on effective strategies to achieve gender equality and the equal rights of girls and boys, drawing on evaluation of field experience, disaggregated data collection, research and analysis, and systematic information exchange.

We also understand gender-based violence (GBV) to be a pervasive and particular outcome of gender inequality and discrimination against girls, boys and women, which undermines national development. UNICEF is a member of the Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign and collaborates in the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. We play an advocacy role to draw international attention to GBV in humanitarian contexts, and are a lead implementing actor in ensuring that international commitments, including UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1882, 1888 and 1889 on women, peace and security and sexual violence in conflict, are operationalized in humanitarian contexts. We also provide support to the implementation of the UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN staff and related personnel, and honour the humanitarian community’s obligations to provide support for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

How UNICEF fulfils its role

Through mutually-agreed programmes of cooperation, developed in the broad framework of the MTSP and its supporting strategies approved by the UNICEF Executive Board, Governments and UNICEF collaborate in the preparation of national and/or local development plans that fully reflect the various rights, interests,

¹³ The MTSP 2006-2013 contains five Focus Areas: Young Child Survival and Development; Basic Education and Gender Equality; HIV/AIDS and Children; Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse; and Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children’s Rights.

needs and contributions of women and men, girls and boys and the pursuit of gender-equal development results. UNICEF also promotes these priorities in all inter-agency planning instruments, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

In adopting a participatory approach to programme development, we promote the involvement of both girls and boys in the definition of their own priorities, and the development results that could deliver these priorities.

Gender Equality

No group of girls and boys, women or men is entirely homogenous. All include members of social sub-groups, defined by age, religion, race, ethnicity, economic status, caste, citizenship, sexual identity, ability/disability and urban/rural locality, and each sub-group may experience various forms of discrimination. Typically however, girls experience lower status than boys within the same social sub-group, and there is resistance to changing this status. They therefore experience a double discrimination based on the sub-group(s) to which they belong **and** their sex.

Because of the differing status of girls and boys, equality between them can rarely be achieved by providing exactly the same services and protections to each, or by providing services and protections in exactly the same ways, and so specially tailored development interventions are needed to ensure genuinely equal outcomes.

UNICEF supports partners to achieve gender equality by legislating equality of opportunity for girls and boys through normative and legal frameworks, and building on this, to ensure equality of outcome, through implementing and monitoring these frameworks meaningfully. Equality of opportunity is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the achievement of gender equality, which requires full attention to the prevention and ending of discrimination. Thus the UNICEF goal of gender equality will be achieved by a focus on equality of outcome, or substantive equality, as elaborated by the CEDAW Committee.

The obligation of due diligence that this places upon UNICEF staff is to identify clearly, through research and analysis, using age- and sex-disaggregated data, the specific gender discriminations and discrepancies prevailing in a given situation, and to help design programme interventions and knowledge brokering activities to address them explicitly. Most importantly, planned programme results must state clearly, in measurable ways, their precise contribution to gender equality: which aspects of gender discrimination do they reduce and to what extent.

Gender equality considerations are reflected at each stage of the programme cycle, on the basis of careful gender analysis of problems, gaps, challenges and opportunities, and using age and sex disaggregated data and information to the maximum possible extent¹⁴.

We pay particular attention to supporting the definition of national and local development results, based on the above-referenced analysis, so that they describe the changes in gender equality and/or advancement in women's and girls' rights that will be achieved. This involves: specifying which aspect of inequality will be narrowed; what forms of empowerment will be strengthened; which gaps in the realization of women's and girls' rights will be filled; and to what extent.

UNICEF programme evaluations follow the United Nations Evaluation Group standards on the integration of gender equality and human rights based approaches into evaluation processes, and the assessment of results from these perspectives.

In policy advocacy and dialogue, public statements and internal and external communications, UNICEF

staff should clarify the relevant gender equality considerations, articulating any discrepancies that may exist in the benefits, needs and contributions of girls and boys. As appropriate, these communications are also

¹⁴ Considerable challenges in the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by age and sex remain in many countries. Where this is the case, UNICEF will support wherever possible the research needed to obtain such data in the short term, and will also support national capacity development to remedy the situation in the longer term.

careful to articulate the ways in which equality between women and men is not only a policy requirement, but also serves the best interests of children.

Communications are carefully reviewed to ensure that there is no gender, age, ethnic or any other form of stereotyping.

UNICEF also aims to translate its global presence and experience into a broad and accessible knowledge base on innovation, cutting edge experience, emerging thinking and good practice on the achievement of equality between girls and boys.

Working with partners

UNICEF is strongly active in the “voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits”.¹⁵ We leverage these partnerships in support of gender equality goals.

UNICEF aims to exercise its strengths in partnership to promote equal outcomes for girls and boys. Our comparative advantages include: global reach and presence; convening power on matters affecting children ; technical expertise and efficient procurement; and the ability to catalyze policy and social change, make innovations accessible to partners and provide financial support. All these provide significant opportunities to advance gender equality.

UNICEF integrates the commitment to gender equality into its activities with global, regional and national partners, and also enters into partnerships specifically to advance gender equality goals, where this is necessary or has potential to bring about attention to girls as well as boys in policy advocacy and dialogue, programme cooperation and joint action, and/or to empower women and girls.

Where the commitment of a partner to gender equality has not yet reached international standards, and/or mechanisms to implement any commitments made are not yet in place or are incomplete, we are pro-active in supporting the further development of this commitment and institutional capacity.

Where formal agreements are made among partners, such as Memoranda of Understanding and Programme Cooperation Agreements , they provide valuable entry points for ensuring that equal rights and gender equality considerations are mutually addressed.

¹⁵ UNICEF 2009. *Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships* E/ICEF/2009/10. p.6.

Working with Men & Boys

Promotion of mutually empowering relationships between girls and boys is a key dimension of UNICEF’s work, providing for cumulative strengthening of gender equality over time, in both the public and private spheres.

Men and boys can be powerful allies in the achievement of gender equality. UNICEF informs and raises the awareness of men and boys on the benefits of more gender-equal social structure and relationships.

Men are the dominant decision makers in most situations, and yet are often overlooked in activities to promote gender equality. UNICEF understands their engagement in gender equality programming to be important to the achievement of positive outcomes.

Goals such as joint parenting, prevention of HIV and AIDS, reduction of risk-taking behaviour and women’s and girls’ empowerment, pre-suppose transformation of male attitudes, roles and behaviour, so the direct involvement of boys and men to advance their own processes of change and transformation is a necessity. Here UNICEF seeks to ensure that its programmes with boys’ groups are complementary with girls groups in the same neighbourhoods, so that relationships among them can be addressed.

UNICEF also works with boys to address the specific discriminations that they experience, for example in some education systems, or when forced into combat or sexual exploitation.

We are active in key inter-agency coordinating bodies at global and country levels, explicitly supporting the inclusion of girls and women's rights as well as equality between girls and boys in their dialogue and action. At the country level UNICEF is a member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) which coordinates UN development contributions to national goals and priorities.

Within the context of humanitarian reform, at the global level UNICEF is a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on humanitarian assistance, and the related IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action. The organization is designated as the Global Lead and co-lead of several IASC Humanitarian Clusters and sub-clusters,¹⁶ which provide a strategic opportunity for staff to be proactive in ensuring that the specific needs and capacities of girls, boys, women and men are not overlooked in humanitarian emergencies. We also play a major role as a member of Humanitarian Country Teams, which operate as key coordination mechanisms for humanitarian response.

Non-governmental and community-based organizations are often particularly well placed to facilitate engagement with women and girls, and wherever possible we develop relationships with those who advocate for girls' rights and build relationships with women's movements in the context of agreed programmes of cooperation.

Where requested, UNICEF also supports national partners to implement and report upon the human rights of girls and women through the CEDAW reporting process, and on the distinctive rights of girls and boys through the CRC reporting mechanisms. In particular, we support countries in their implementation of Concluding Observations and Recommendations made by the CRC and CEDAW Committees.

III. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNICEF OPERATIONS

We recognize that many aspects of UNICEF's institutional arrangements and operations practices have an impact on our effectiveness in working with partners for gender equality and in support of gender-equal development goals and outcomes.

Making information available to staff and partners

We maintain an easily accessible depository of documents needed for conceptual clarity and programming on gender equality, or links to such documentation. This includes the MTSP foundation strategy for Gender Equality and all documents referenced therein.¹⁷ An operational guideline supports and guides the implementation of this policy, with detailed coverage of each of the Focus Areas of the MTSP.¹⁸ Further guidance and tools are provided in the relevant sections of the Programme Policy and Procedure Manual (PPPM).

Detailed guidance on the MTSP foundation strategy on Gender Equality is prepared in conjunction with the MTSP itself, articulating the gender-equality dimensions of each MTSP Focus Area, linking them with

¹⁶ Because of the complex and cross-sectoral character of humanitarian response, the IASC has grouped member agencies into "clusters" that can bring a range of expertise and experience to the coordination function with regard to several critical humanitarian functions, such as camp management, water, sanitation and health (WASH), nutrition etc. Full details can be obtained from the IASC website: <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/>

¹⁷ In addition to the Operational Guidance and the PPPM, this package includes the UNICEF Policy on Gender Parity (2006); The UNICEF Gender Evaluation (2007) and Management Response (2008); relevant sections of the PPTM (on gender mainstreaming and the human rights-based approach) and links to similar documentation prepared by sister agencies of the UN system (for example the ILO Participatory Gender Audit), and a range of external partners.

¹⁸ *Operational Guidance on Gender Equality in UNICEF*.

relevant human rights standards. The corresponding gender equality development results and indicators are integrated into the MTSP Results Framework.

UNICEF also ensures the availability of appropriate communication tools that fully support gender equality programming.

Deploying human capacity

Interview panels scrutinize the skills, commitment and experience of candidates for recruitment to verify their ability to contribute substantively to the promotion of gender equality in line with this policy. UNICEF also ensures that the capacities needed to implement the policy are available to and within each office. This is supported by job descriptions that include the requirement to contribute to its goals in specified ways. Capacity needs for gender equality programming are assessed regularly and reflected in office management and training plans.

The professional capacities to implement this policy include: conceptual clarity on the rationale for gender equality in UNICEF's work and on gender analysis methods; understanding and competence among managers and supervisors of their specific responsibilities under this policy¹⁹; and understanding and competence among staff of the ways in which this policy is reflected in their respective tasks. For most staff, this involves introducing the outcomes of gender analysis into decision-making, knowledge generation and information-sharing.

Staff are individually responsible, with the support of their supervisors, for contributing to the implementation of the principles and expectations of this policy at their specific level and as adapted – by them and their supervisors - to their specific tasks. This is tracked through the performance assessment process. Individual work plans include activities designed by staff and their supervisors to promote gender equal outcomes.

Budget and supply

UNICEF uses budget mechanisms, including the gender marker²⁰, to monitor and report upon the implementation of its commitments for gender equality. We consult with partners and update these mechanisms on an ongoing basis.

Programme staff promote the inclusion in agreed budgets, wherever appropriate, of targeted funding for activities that support equal outcomes for girls and boys. They use gender and child-responsive budgeting methods in order to assess the need for such funds and to track their disbursement and impact.

UNICEF works closely with funding partners to ensure that available funds support and promote UNICEF's gender equality mandate; and allocates these to programme cooperation activities in agreement with partners, commensurately with the gender equality results described in the Focus Areas of the MTSP Results Framework, including sufficient funds for adequate monitoring of gender equality results.

UNICEF offices pay explicit attention to the resources needed for gender mainstreaming, and include in their fundraising strategies, information to attract funding for gender equality goals.

¹⁹ Key requirements for managers and supervisors are to include gender equality considerations in all advocacy and outreach activities, and in results-based management of performance goal setting and tracking, with supervisory support provided to ensure that the goals are met.

²⁰ The gender marker is being piloted in 2010 and is expected to be rolled out in 2011.

In procuring supplies, including from field level suppliers, UNICEF implements its commitment to gender equality and women's and girls' rights by favoring companies that comply with ILO conventions on employment rights of women and men, and international norms and standards on their terms and conditions of employment²¹.

UNICEF ensures that the standard minimum inventory of supplies (especially items such as clothing and hygienic provision) includes items identified as priorities for girls and women. Its emergency kit composition also reflects the specific needs of girls and women.

UNICEF monitors the distribution of supplies to help ensure that they reach women and girls equally with men and boys.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

Accountability mechanisms

The UNICEF Executive Director oversees the application of this policy, supported by a senior-level, global Gender Equality Task Force. This Task Force, chaired by the Director, Policy and Practice and comprised of Deputy Directors from Headquarters and Regional Offices, promotes, supports and monitors the application of this policy and the implementation of the MTSP foundation strategy on Gender Equality, reporting to the Executive Director and the Global Leadership Team.

The Executive Director also guides UNICEF action in accordance with this policy, such that the management, intellectual and organizational culture reflects commitment and dynamism to advance the equal rights of girls and boys, accountability and professional responsibility are exercised at all levels, and that UNICEF uses the most effective mechanisms to plan, monitor and report upon its contributions to promoting equality between women and men, girls and boys, through programme cooperation, advocacy and partnerships.

Each Country Office undertakes a Gender Equality Assessment or Review of the UNICEF-assisted country programme at least once during each programme cycle. This assessment covers both programme and operational aspects, and its outcomes are fed into planning, programme design and reporting processes.

The UNDG Gender Equality Scorecard, adapted to UNICEF usage, is completed by Country Offices as part of their collaboration with the UNCT. Its outcomes inform planning and reporting processes.

A Gender Equality Community of Practice, comprising the global network of Gender Focal Points, Gender Focal Point Teams (in larger offices) and/ or Gender Experts, supports managers in exercising their accountabilities under this policy. Each office will adopt one of these mechanisms for ensuring good practice in gender equality in its work.

²¹ See the "NORMES" page of the ILO website for a broad overview of international labour standards: http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/InternationalLabourStandards/lang--en/index.htm, and in particular "Equality of opportunity and treatment" and "maternity protection" under "Subjects Covered by International Labour Standards" of the same website: http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/InternationalLabourStandards/Subjects/lang--en/index.htm.

Individual accountabilities

The members of the Global Leadership Team (GLT) are accountable to the Executive Director for the implementation of this policy in their respective areas of responsibility, ensuring that managers within their units assume similar responsibility at their levels.

Specifically, senior and middle management are expected to:

- Make clear their intention to implement this policy as appropriate to their unit, explaining this commitment to ensure understanding and action;
- Identify the ways in which this policy is relevant to their units and how their units will contribute to the achievement of its defined results;
- Define the gender equality outcomes that they wish their staff to achieve, and see that these are reflected in the activities and outcomes of unit and individual work plans and in the result statements of programmes; and
- Track progress towards the achievement of these results as a distinct and routine part of collective and individual performance monitoring and evaluation.

Reporting

The GETF conducts a rolling peer review and discussion of organizational progress and major actions in gender equality programming and other aspects of this policy. Its members inform the Task Force on the progress of their respective offices and regions in implementing this policy and the MTSP's foundation strategy on Gender Equality, including the outcomes of country programme Gender Equality Assessments and Reviews, Gender Equality Scorecard findings and activities associated with the action plan and follow-up to the Evaluation.

Progress in implementing the MTSP's foundation strategy on Gender Equality, and the attainment of the corresponding programme results and performance indicators in the MTSP Results Framework is reported to the Executive Board through the Annual Report of the Executive Director and any other means as may be agreed with the Executive Board.

The Annual Report Guidelines request UNICEF Offices to report on their progress with regard to the MTSP's foundation strategy on Gender Equality, the UNDG Gender Equality Scorecard, and the periodic Gender Assessment.

Evaluation

This policy will be formally evaluated and updated at least every eight years in accordance with the integrated monitoring and evaluation framework of the MTSP, and adjusted as needed during intervening periods, for example to comply with evaluation recommendations, or in response to the decisions of the UN Economic and Social Council's Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review or the Agreed Conclusions of Treaty Bodies.

For more information, please contact:

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