UNIFEM is the women’s fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women’s empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of women’s human rights at the centre of all of its efforts, UNIFEM focuses its activities on four strategic areas:

- Strengthening women’s economic security and rights;
- Ending violence against women;
- Reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls;
- Achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war.

UNIFEM was created by a UN General Assembly resolution in 1976, following a call from women’s organizations attending the 1975 UN First World Conference on Women in Mexico City.

UNIFEM’s mandate is to:

- Support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities;
- Serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities, as often as possible at the pre-investment stage;
- Play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations’ overall system of development cooperation. (GA resolution 39/125)
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Over the past year, UNIFEM support has again demonstrated how innovative and catalytic efforts can trigger visible progress towards women's empowerment. In Mauritania, for example, women for the first time opened the door wide to political participation. In the occupied Palestinian territories, women started to run their own businesses, earning incomes in a fragile economy while changing social attitudes towards women's employment. In Latin America, women got involved in urban planning to secure commitments to make cities more secure.

I am delighted to be joining UNIFEM as its fourth Executive Director since it was founded in 1976 and to follow on the great achievements of its previous Executive Directors: Noeleen Heyzer, Sharon Capeling-Alakija and Margaret Snyder. This is a watershed moment for work on gender equality and women's empowerment. We are at the halfway point to the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). World leaders will be holding critical consultations in 2008 – from the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra to the High-Level Event on the MDGs in New York to the Financing for Development Conference in Doha. These will take place as skyrocketing food and fuel costs, environmental disasters and entrenched conflicts are producing development emergencies in many communities. Women pay a particularly heavy price in the context of these emergencies and also have a unique contribution to make to solving them. UNIFEM is working with partners worldwide to advocate tirelessly at these key gatherings of world leaders for more visibility, voice and resources dedicated to advancing gender equality and women's rights.

Financing for development, peace and security takes on new urgency in light of the food crisis and especially for women, given sharp inequities in access to resources, from land to decent wages. As the global community affirms principles for aid effectiveness and priorities for development effectiveness – and also how to pay for these – it is critical that we scale up investments in strategies for women's empowerment and gender equality, particularly in those already proven effective. Putting in place temporary special measures can be effective in ensuring that more women will have a voice in governance; building capacity of ministries of finance and other governmental and non-governmental actors to analyse budgets from a gender perspective can contribute to increasing resources for needed action; and allocating resources to ensure implementation of hard-won legislation and national plans to end violence against women is a prerequisite for reducing the impact of violence on families and communities. Women will be watching the outcomes of the deliberations to see what commitments for these and other gender equality priorities are agreed on by world leaders.

UNIFEM will remain an active proponent of opening new opportunities for women and promoting their rights, including in 2008 through its flagship publication, Progress of the World's Women, which will pose thought-provoking and provocative questions on accountability to the global commitment to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

I look forward to working with the extraordinarily broad base of partners and supporters in government, civil society, the multilateral and bilateral communities and the private sector that UNIFEM has fostered in the past 32 years. This base continues to expand, and UNIFEM could not have succeeded without it. I also want to publicly thank the entire staff of UNIFEM and my colleagues in the United Nations who have extended me such a warm welcome and whose dedication and commitment make me understand what a unique privilege I have been given.

Inés Alberdi
Gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but a prerequisite for reaching all the other international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Just past the halfway mark to the 2015 deadline for achieving the MDGs, it is clear that we must do more to achieve gender equality and promote women’s rights.

Across the world, too many women continue to be under-protected and underpaid members of their societies. In many developing countries today, women are denied access to property, credit and other building blocks of development. In many cases they still walk for miles each day hauling water and firewood to use in their homes, and have little or no time to go to school or to earn enough money to cover their basic needs.

With appropriate support, however, women can transform their lives. The right investments can help change discriminatory systems and attitudes that curtail women’s full economic and social participation. Such investments can create affordable, quality childcare and provide access to clean energy sources and water in the home so that women can reconcile paid work and family life. They can empower women to participate in public decision-making structures where they have the opportunity to shape social and economic policies.

UNIFEM has shown how these investments pay off, as this annual report chronicles. Through its programmes around the world, UNIFEM is helping to break down barriers to women’s political participation, revise discriminatory labour laws and address women’s vulnerability to HIV, including from gender-based violence.

There is a need for significantly enhanced investments in women and girls. The increase in resources to UNIFEM in 2007 is a welcome indicator of the growing commitment of governments to support women’s empowerment. Given the central importance of gender equality and the rising demand for its services, UNIFEM requires further new resources to continue achieving results and expanding the scope of its work. Its knowledge, advocacy and practical experience not only help it advance women’s rights through its own programmes, but also make it an important partner and source of expertise for other agencies within the UN family.

As we look towards 2015, we should all redouble our efforts towards creating more equitable, prosperous societies that – by upholding gender equality – achieve the full promise of the MDGs.

Kemal Derviş, Administrator, UNDP
Expanding the Scope of National Security

Sexual and gender-based violence threatens the safety of millions of women, and destabilizes families and communities, yet it is often shrouded in shame and silence. In 2007, the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) broke new ground by placing the scale and severity of this kind of violence among the major threats to national security. “There is no way we can talk about security when our mothers, sisters and wives are suffering from serious crimes,” says Captain Aimable Mushabe.

“Freeing this important part of the population from violence is the basis of sustainable development and human security.”

Brutal and widespread sexual violence was part of Rwanda’s 1994 genocide; its devastating legacy is still very much felt in the country. Partnering with UNIFEM, and drawing on successful initiatives with the National Police, the RDF has embarked on a campaign to train several thousand military officers and cadets to understand, help prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. Since the campaign started, the Rwandan army has increasingly acted in cases of violence, taking advantage of its presence in communities throughout the country. Knowing that fast help is available has in turn encouraged more reports of violent incidents. A gender-based violence desk at military headquarters coordinates closely with a similar desk for the police.

Since prevention and protection are key, outreach to communities has been central to the RDF’s campaign. Clubs to help raise awareness have been established across the country and a community-based watch-dog system now provides early alerts on violent behaviour.
Outside Rwanda, in troubled countries assisted by international peacekeeping missions, other communities are also benefiting from the RDF’s efforts to protect women. All Rwandan battalions are trained on gender-based violence before deployment, leading to actions such as providing firewood patrols to safeguard women collecting cooking fuel. In Sudan, RDF soldiers helped build efficient stoves that minimize women’s need to move beyond camp perimeters for fuel.

Other initiatives to respond to the security threat of sexual and gender-based violence took place in Africa’s Great Lakes region. UNIFEM built on its support for a landmark achievement: the adoption of a protocol to prevent sexual and gender-based violence under the 2006 Pact on Security, Stability and Development. Continued assistance in 2007 helped the Rwanda Women’s Parliamentary Forum convene women politicians from the region and the world, including Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. In Kigali, they adopted a declaration urging increased numbers of women parliamentarians, the integration of gender in trade policies and the establishment of strong laws against gender-based violence.

In 2006, the UN Peace-building Commission invited the Government of Burundi to develop an integrated peacebuilding strategy, a blueprint for actions and resources to help the country recover from its brutal civil war. UNIFEM was involved from the start in assisting women’s groups to participate in negotiating the strategy and ensure it would become a tool for advancing gender equality.

Two women became members of the Steering Committee that in 2007 produced the Burundi Strategic Framework. Its comprehensive provisions for women include pledges to involve them in all aspects of peacebuilding, expedite their economic recovery, end discriminatory legal practices and reduce violence against women. It calls on women’s organizations to engage with government decision makers so that gender perspectives become part of all public programmes and policies.

During the negotiations, the women representatives maintained close ties with a coalition of experienced women’s groups. With UNIFEM assistance, this mobilized 3,000 women across Burundi to define top development priorities. Collectively, they identified these as pervasive poverty, violence against women and insecurity, all of which the Steering Committee ensured were eventually reflected in the Strategic Framework. They also agreed on indicators to monitor implementation of the Framework, such as new laws and support centres to protect victims of violence. Their continued engagement will ensure that this national agreement translates into real change in women’s lives.
When in 2007 Mauritania held its first free elections since independence, women celebrated a double victory. Not only had the long years of authoritarian governments peacefully come to a close, but a record number of women had become members of Parliament and been appointed as prominent ministers, ambassadors and regional governors. Women now comprise 22 per cent of parliamentarians, up from 3 per cent previously, and nearly 30 per cent of local administrators.

This success stemmed from a year of careful political strategizing, supported by UNIFEM in collaboration with UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). It was launched when 80 women’s associations from across the country, female politicians, journalists, trade unionists and lawyers convened to issue a charter calling for quotas to advance women’s political participation as among the top priorities for activism. Advocates divided into small groups and began meeting with politicians, including the 20 candidates running for president. Endorsement of quotas by all 20 led to sweeping new regulations stipulating high positions for women on party candidate lists and in the executive branch and local government.

Since the elections, women’s expanded influence has been felt in draft legislation to stop female genital mutilation, the introduction of quotas for public sector company boards and initiatives to address the overlooked problems of rural women, including dismally high maternal mortality rates. A new women’s ministry has emerged, with triple the budget of the small women’s unit that preceded it.

In other countries, UNIFEM assisted in setting up institutional infrastructures to support women’s political aspirations. Work in Nigeria aided the Independent National Election Commission.
MAking politics WoRk With WoMen

Kenya: A Coalition Helps Stem a Crisis

in establishing a gender unit and training 300 staff members before the 2007 elections. At a national conference, commission members met with over 200 women candidates and gender advocates to discuss the issues that women face, and they agreed to take steps to protect women candidates from election-related violence. UNIFEM also supported the creation of an electronic database of women candidates to track their performance, a voter education manual and guidelines on gender and political parties.

UNIFEM has focused in other parts of Africa on the low visibility of women politicians in the media, a constraint to their campaigns and constituency outreach. A regional initiative aims to improve coverage by building bridges between women politicians and journalists. A 2007 pilot workshop in South Africa brought politicians from four countries – Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya and Lesotho – together with InterPress Service journalists. The politicians picked up tips to engage the media and interview skills, practicing what they learned in a final press conference and on South African national television. Since the workshop, the journalists have increased their reporting on women in politics and gender issues, while the politicians are encouraging other women to use media outreach to compete in upcoming elections.

The longstanding support by UNIFEM for women’s political participation in Kenya positioned it to join with others to offer assistance after the disruptions of the 2007 national elections. As conflict spread, an international mediation team was put together led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and supported by the African Union. Diverse women’s groups also formed the Women’s Coalition for Sustainable Peace. Consultations facilitated by UNIFEM and partners such as ActionAid International, Vital Voices, Nairobi Peace Initiative and Urgent Action Fund-Africa produced an urgent appeal for action that drew national and international attention to women and children as the majority of those displaced by the conflict and the primary victims of increased sexual crimes and gang rapes.

Mr. Annan quickly affirmed that peace would depend on women’s full participation at the peace table and beyond. The mediation team welcomed women’s involvement in the national talks that produced agreement on the principles for a new government. In a formal declaration, the Coalition called for women to play a role in all public institutions and across all phases of implementing the 2008 National Accord and Reconciliation Act. It pushed for recognition that gender disparities have been part of the long legacy of inequality that sparked the crisis – including that Kenya’s Constitution still does not grant women full citizenship.

As Kenya moves towards peace, the Women’s Coalition will continue its campaign, building on earlier progress. Women gained a record 21 parliamentary seats in the elections, while advocates succeeded in lobbying for a Presidential Directive that established a 30 per cent quota for women when recruiting for government positions. This helps make a future case for applying similar measures to the larger arena of parliamentary and local government representation.

Making politics work with women

Kenya: A Coalition Helps Stem a Crisis

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Record numbers: women in Mauritania gained 22 per cent of parliamentary seats in 2007. Their expanded influence can be seen on issues ranging from female genital mutilation to the overlooked problems of rural women.

Ensuring participation: In Nigeria, UNIFEM assisted the Independent Electoral Commission in setting up a gender unit.
UNIFEM has assisted governments around the world in implementing the provisions of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Convention is often referred to as the women’s bill of rights, and 185 countries have ratified it. In 2007, UNIFEM support in Indonesia backed the passage of an amendment to the Law on Political Parties to require new parties to have at least 30 per cent female membership. Women must also comprise 30 per cent of managerial and political appointments. An additional amendment to the Law on General Elections in 2008 makes it a requirement that every third candidate on party lists is a woman.

At four-year intervals, CEDAW States parties comprehensively report on their women’s rights-related policies and laws to the CEDAW Committee. Committee members, all respected international experts, ask probing questions about shortfalls and recommend improvements. To assist the Indonesian Government in preparing for the presentation of their report in August 2007, UNIFEM replicated a practice that it had developed to help countries in the Pacific get ready for their CEDAW reporting. It sponsored mock sessions with stand-in “experts” posing questions, while a former CEDAW chair offered tips. The sessions focused on questions such as how to compile detailed data to define gaps and achievements – for example, the fact that Indonesian women and girls now enjoy nearly equal access to education. The CEDAW Committee Chair later applauded these preparations, requesting that UNIFEM provide similar training to all interested governments.

UNIFEM has also been instrumental in backing legal and policy changes in individual countries. Advocacy in India, for instance, focused on enshrining gender and equality across the National AIDS Policy. Discrimination makes women vulnerable to HIV and reduces their treatment and testing options. The policy calls for taking systematic actions to empower women to protect themselves – for example, through greater participation and involvement of women living with HIV and AIDS – and pays special attention to particularly vulnerable groups such as widows and survivors of trafficking or violence. All activities carried out by the National
AIDS Control Organization will take their potential gender implications into account. The policy will also help key ministries in adopting gender and HIV strategies.

In Nepal, despite political turmoil, UNIFEM has steadfastly stood by efforts to revise discriminatory provisions and pass a new law on foreign employment. Advocacy began in 2002, with a view to remove restrictions on women working abroad. A previous cabinet decision had prohibited women from seeking employment in Gulf countries. The 2007 Foreign Employment Act not only bans discrimination based on gender but also adopts special measures to guarantee women’s security and rights when seeking jobs abroad. Nepali women migrants now receive information about the contractual obligations of the employer and about migrant assistance centres in destination countries. The new law also contains provisions to regulate recruiting agencies and includes programmes for the families of migrant workers.

All women have a role to play in democratic politics, whether as voters, candidates or office holders. In Timor-Leste, UNIFEM has helped broaden the space for women’s political participation through a novel programme that combines policy advocacy, engagement with political parties and a dynamic public outreach campaign.

Timor-Leste’s 2006 National Electoral Law stipulated that one in four candidates on party lists for parliamentary elections must be female. In the run-up to the 2007 elections, UNIFEM mobilized women’s groups and national election officials to sponsor workshops for political parties. Women from 12 competing parties met to debate the challenges they faced and received expert advice. They also agreed to continue coming together in a women’s parliamentary caucus that had been established during the previous legislative period.

UNIFEM also launched the “Hau Bele” (“I Can”) campaign in collaboration with the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), the Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Women’s Network, Rede Feto. It featured striking posters of women leaders, radio spots with a popular theme song and public service television broadcasts profiling the dynamic, diverse roles women play in public life. It spread the message that women can overcome discrimination. “Women require greater confidence,” said the Chair of KOMEG, a national election-monitoring group assisted by UNIFEM. “They need to remember that, quite simply, they can.”

In the elections, women won almost 30 per cent of the seats in the legislature.
In the floundering economy of the occupied Palestinian territories, women find few options for employment. Food insecurity and malnutrition rates are on the rise. To tackle these problems, women at the Kharas Sabaya centre proposed setting up a bakery that would help them learn new job-related skills and earn an income.

The centre is one of 18 similar facilities providing support services to Palestinian women. UNIFEM conceived and piloted the Sabaya women’s centres and expanded the initiative in collaboration with UNDP. In Kharas, a village in the West Bank, women have now established a bakery and produce delicious snacks each day for a school feeding programme that meets the nutritional needs of 4,000 children in 13 schools and 17 kindergartens. UNIFEM has helped them improve their managerial skills so they can boost production capacities and strengthen distribution.

Over a hundred women work about five hours per day. Besides producing food, they have also begun transforming conservative local notions that discourage women’s employment. Many now work into the evening with the support of husbands who have come to appreciate a new contribution to the household budget. Some have started planning new projects on a larger scale. “The bakery has increased our ambition for a better future for our families and the whole village,” said Wissal Al Hroub, one of the participating women. “We can feel the difference it has made in our lives and the community’s attitude.”

UNIFEM and its partners in the Kharas project, including the World Food Programme and the Ministry of Education, are now assisting four other Sabaya centres in managing their own food production. The goal is to establish bakeries in 30 centres all over the West Bank with the potential to reach 63,000 students through the school feeding project.

Modern economies flourish
Kosovo: Advocates Campaign for Their Future

when women are empowered across all economic sectors, a notion that has taken hold in Morocco as it strives for a foothold in the global information technology market. Building on a successful partnership in Jordan with the global firm Cisco Systems, UNIFEM helped introduce training for women in 12 out of 43 Cisco networking academies. Through the E-Quality project, women acquire technology expertise and learn how to position themselves in a competitive workplace. Job placement services identify prospective employers. Today, nearly half the 900 students in the E-Quality academies are women – the highest participation rate in the region for these kinds of institutes. About 60 per cent find jobs within the first three months after graduation, confirming that when doors open, women demonstrate how much they can do.

MAKING POLITICS WORK WITH WOMEN

Syria: Candidates Learn to Compete – and Win

In the Arab States, women now hold about 10 per cent of parliamentary seats. This figure is the lowest of any region in the world, comparing to 18 per cent globally. The UNIFEM Arab Women Parliamentarians initiative helps accelerate change. In nine countries, it supports women to become effective political leaders equipped to steer political support for gender equality across all facets of national development.

In Syria, women captured 31 of 250 seats in the 2007 elections. Half the successful female candidates had taken part in UNIFEM training. They learned basic skills required for public speaking, lobbying, negotiating and forming electoral platforms. A newfound sense of confidence proved equally important as they began rallying people to embrace their candidacies.

Many obstacles remain to women’s participation in public life in Syria. Female candidates from conservative areas struggle with basic logistical issues such as resistance to seeing women’s faces on campaign posters. One of the first orders of business for the new members of Parliament will be pushing for the revocation of discriminatory personal status laws that impede fundamental rights.

But increasingly, women know that progress is possible. Liven Shora, who participated in the UNIFEM training, became the first woman from her governorate to win a parliamentary seat. “I want to work to improve everything to do with women while I’m in Parliament,” she says. “We are proud that the representation of women is increasing and hope it will continue to do so.”
Many men have left Cochabamba, Bolivia, to seek work abroad in search of a better future, creating a shortage of traditionally male labour skills. Now the women of the area are learning to fill that gap. Financed by the municipal government, they are trained to be carpenters and bricklayers and can earn a decent living for themselves and their children. While the women are at work, their children are taken care of after school in a sports programme catering equally to boys and girls, also paid for by the local government. Both initiatives are the result of a new focus on gender-responsive budgeting in Cochabamba.

Since 1994, Bolivia has had a national law stipulating that citizens should participate in formulating local development plans. Supported by UNIFEM, the Instituto de Formación Femenina Integral (IFFI) of Cochabamba has mobilized and trained members of local women’s organizations to take advantage of this opportunity and bring a gender perspective into local public policies. As a result of IFFI’s advocacy campaign, an article was introduced in the municipal budgetary guidelines making it mandatory to allocate budgetary resources to programmes that promote gender equality and to provide services for women victims of violence.

UNIFEM has supported similar initiatives in 30 countries worldwide, working with government officials and women’s organizations so that national and local budgets focus on how collecting revenues and spending public funds can advance equality and women’s human rights. In countries pursuing
the decentralization of public functions, UNIFEM increasingly partners with local governments, as in Cochabamba, to ensure that women are part of local decision-making and accountability.

Across Latin America, women and men have flocked to urban areas – now home to 77 per cent of the region’s people. Women confront new dangers in cities. Building on a two-country pilot jumpstarted through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, UNIFEM, together with UN Habitat, UNDP and other UN organizations as well as local government and civil society partners, has supported the spread of the regional Safe Cities programme to more than half a dozen countries. It models options for women-friendly urban renewal through participatory policy reform, urban planning and service delivery.

Through the programme, women came together in Rosario, Argentina, and in Santiago, Chile, for example, for exploratory walks to identify security risks in poor and derelict communities, such as vacant lots that could encourage drug crime, and the lack of proper street lighting or regular public transport. Subsequently, they became a prominent voice in public forums to address these risks and develop new projects to revitalize their neighbourhoods. People in one area opted for a new community centre that also offers health care to families living close by. In other neighbourhoods, priorities were sports facilities, libraries and the rehabilitation of public squares to create spaces for recreational activities.

Moving forward: in Bolivia, municipalities are now obliged to allocate resources to promote gender equality and stop violence against women.

In late 2007, Ecuador held a Constituent Assembly election that became the first poll fully consistent with its Electoral Quota Law — a seven-year-old statute mandating that half the candidates for the national legislature be women. With the law as a critical advocacy platform, UNIFEM supported Ecuadorian women to push for full compliance. Public monitoring showcased parties that were not living up to their obligations. A revised computer programme tightened scrutiny of improperly drawn-up candidate lists.

One by one, parties bowed to the pressure, abandoning the past practice of ignoring the law or assigning women to unelectable positions. The law requires political parties contesting elections to draw up party lists with alternating male and female names, so that equal numbers are at the top of the list and poised to capture seats.

Aminta Buenaño, the new Vice-President of the Assembly, reflects that democracy is impossible without women. “Affirmative action has brought attention to a major segment of the population that had been kept invisible,” she says. “Women now occupy a strategic space, where they plan to introduce the most important demands of women into the constitutional discussion. And in the next elections, even more women will continue the fight for parity.”

Ecuador: A Push for Electoral Compliance Pays Off

MAKING POLITICS WORK WITH WOMEN
Violence against Caribbean women continues to be widespread, despite new laws for prevention and punishment. About a third of women there will suffer from domestic physical abuse. UN Crime Trends Surveys suggest that three of the region's small island states are among the ten countries with the highest incidence of rape worldwide.

UNIFEM has supported new strategies to eliminate violence – including by addressing its roots in the minds of men who perpetrate it. In four countries, the Partnership for Peace project helps create court-managed batterer intervention programmes. Men who have been arrested must attend 16 sessions that bring home the twin messages of women's rights and men's accountability. Participants confront harmful ideas about women, examine the unequal power relationships that fuel violence and learn new strategies to manage emotions like anger. For most, it is the first time they have spoken about these issues.

More than 100 people have been trained to conduct the course. In Grenada, the courts have given it extra teeth by enforcing pending jail sentences for men who fail to complete it, a critical move given the high recidivism rates for gender-based crimes. As a result, completion rates have edged steadily upward. Graduates speak of learning to respect their families. “I accept the programme, it changed my life,” said one simply. A number of men who completed the course have come together in a self-help group to support each other in leading lives free of violence.

Another UNIFEM-assisted initiative to end violence took place in Haiti, this time focusing on one of the most popular events of the year: Carnival. In the months before
the festival, an advocacy campaign featuring a documentary in Creole and widely broadcast television and radio spots promoted respect for women’s bodies. It stressed that sexual stereotyping – common at Carnival time – can end in violence. Municipal authorities subsequently adopted a protocol banning sexual stereotypes in public advertising and music. Carnival bands complied – some even sang about protecting women’s rights. No cases of gender-based violence were reported during the celebrations, compared to 15 the previous year.

Addressing the links between violence and HIV was part of a regional UNIFEM programme to assist national AIDS commissions in the Caribbean. In training workshops, government officials sat with gender experts and systematically reviewed the gender implications of their national AIDS strategies. Moving issue by issue, they identified gaps and learned to design responses to women’s vulnerabilities to HIV. Sexual violence and lower economic status are among the factors that sharply curtail women’s abilities to protect themselves.

Barbados’ most recent strategic plan now recognizes that low-income single women are among the populations most vulnerable to HIV. Many turn to transactional sex and multiple partnerships to survive, at great risk to health and safety. The plan will improve prevention and testing services for this group and expand awareness through new courses in schools on human sexuality and gender relations.

Caribbean: Women Politicians Network Across Party Lines

From across the region, women politicians and leaders have come together to form the Caribbean Institute of Women in Leadership. This non-partisan network enables them to strategize and to debate common issues — all aimed towards helping each other expand women’s foothold in Caribbean politics.

In 2007, the Jamaica Women’s Political Caucus invited the network to engage with journalists and women candidates running in the general elections there. Candidates listened as experienced women politicians described techniques to respond to derogatory statements, attract media attention and manage effective campaigns.

Earlier activities in Guyana and St. Lucia engaged political party leaders, women candidates and campaign supporters in media events broadcasting a message of women’s regional solidarity.

The institute is supported by UNIFEM in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Caribbean Community.

One ongoing initiative, in collaboration with the University of the West Indies, is a comprehensive assessment of women’s political participation in a number of recent elections. The research will help future women candidates to fine-tune campaign strategies and increase their chances of winning the vote.
Reforming Development for Women

In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS), the transition to market-based economies has hit women hard, causing a drop in basic social services and a deteriorating labour market. Gender equality advocates in the CEE/CIS were therefore among the first to recognize the importance of new approaches to national development planning, under which external donors agree to align their efforts around nationally formulated strategies, rather than pursuing separate initiatives. This provides an opportunity to strengthen commitments to gender equality across all economic and social sectors, and to advocate for high-level political attention and critically needed development resources for women.

In eight CIS countries, UNIFEM has assisted national partners in ensuring that gender is integrated across national development plans by sharpening advocacy skills and pursuing new forms of gender equality analysis and measurement. As Kyrgyzstan began formulating its new development strategy, for example, UNIFEM worked with gender equality advocates and civil society as a whole to raise the profile of gender equality measures. They helped provide rationales for including a series of references to gender equality in the strategy eventually endorsed by the Government. These encompass measures to increase women’s political participation, perform gender analysis of school curricula, reflect gender differences in pension reform and end violence against women.

Kyrgyzstan has also pioneered a set of gender-responsive development indicators, harmonized to capture both national priorities and international commitments to gender equality, such as those in the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and the MDGs. This is an important step towards performance-based systems to monitor national strategies and demonstrate how gender equality, in reducing economic and social disparities, contributes to...
In Kyrgyzstan, measures to increase women's political participation, reflect gender differences in pension reform and end violence against women are part of the National Development Strategy. The indicators have been picked up by Azerbaijan and Tajikistan. Armenia, Georgia and Moldova plan to use them as well.

In Tajikistan, under the leadership of the State Committee of Women and Family Affairs and with extensive facilitation by UNIFEM, the collective efforts of women's groups, policy makers and donors significantly contributed to a national development and poverty reduction strategy. It guarantees women and men equal access to economic resources, based on analysis spelling out the overall economic benefits of such an approach. The strategy also contains specific provisions for encouraging women entrepreneurs and protecting women's land rights. Georgia's Economic Recovery and Poverty Reduction Paper includes a commitment to improve the gender-responsiveness of labour legisla-

Throughout the negotiations to settle the future of Kosovo, there were no women representatives on the Kosovar side. Women's groups, with UNIFEM support, raised this issue wherever they could – in the media, in public demonstrations and in meetings with high-level officials, including the members of the UN Security Council during their 2007 visit to Kosovo as well as the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Martti Ahtisaari, who led the talks. Although the negotiating team was still all male by mid-2007, when the Special Envoy forwarded a set of recommendations on the status of Kosovo to the UN Security Council, more women had joined expert working groups supporting the negotiations. And while a Security Council resolution on the future status of Kosovo has yet to be deliberated, women's advocacy has succeeded in introducing citation of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security into preliminary drafts. These efforts have drawn upon and contributed to the overall UNIFEM regional strategy to support the implementation of resolution 1325 across the Balkans.

In Kosovo, there are some concerns that existing progress on gender equality may falter once the country's status is resolved. If women remain marginalized from decision-making, gender concerns could be driven underground – despite the fact that women today are at the forefront in responding to the urgent need to repair troubled ethnic relations. But there is also the promise that women will make gender equality integral to a new state. UNIFEM has helped them lay a strong foundation through a national gender plan, legal reform and the adoption of gender guidelines by the police.
Is the sexual violence women increasingly suffer in armed conflicts a matter for the world’s foremost peace and security body? On 19 June 2008, the UN Security Council answered that question with a resounding yes – voting unanimously for a resolution that describes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a matter of international security. Rape can never again be dismissed as the “collateral damage” of war.

Security Council resolution 1820 demands the “immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians”. By noting that “rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide”, the resolution counters a prevailing culture of impunity.

In raising the political, military and economic cost of this crime, resolution 1820 is both a milestone in itself and a reinforcement of its path-breaking predecessor, resolution 1325. It calls for women’s participation in peace talks and other processes related to ending sexual violence, urges sanctions for perpetrators and requires that sexual violence be excluded from amnesties reached at the end of conflict. Security actors are empowered to respond with as much alacrity as they would to any other atrocity.

This historic resolution swiftly followed a ground-breaking conference, conceptualized and co-organized by UNIFEM in collaboration with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on behalf of UN Action against Sexual Violence, and the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom. Titled “Women Targeted or Affected by Armed Conflict: What Role for Military Peacekeepers?”, the meeting was convened on 27–30 May 2008 at
A historic vote: on 19 June 2008, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution that describes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a matter of international security.

Wilton Park in the United Kingdom and provided a focused forum for exploring how political and tactical responses to violence against women could be strengthened. Animated discussions among military commanders, policymakers and police centred around the unsettling fact that, as one seasoned peacekeeper put it, “it is now more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier in modern conflicts”. Security sector actors had the opportunity to share innovations that they were implementing, including firewood and water-route patrols, the provision of security around camps for displaced people and refugees, and the increased deployment of women peacekeepers. They also considered ways of integrating the issue into training, mandates and doctrine. An inventory of emerging good practices prepared by UNIFEM was recognized by civilian protection experts as a unique contribution to understandings of how peacekeepers can combat sexual violence.

The conference provided the impetus for the momentous Security Council meeting on 19 June. This was chaired by United States Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, who acknowledged that “sexual violence profoundly affects not only the health and safety of women, but the economic and social stability of their nations”. Analytical background to the debate was provided by the report on the Wilton Park conference, which was tabled as an official document for the session.

“i Know” Politics

The first virtual network linking women in politics, the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (www.iKNOPolitics.org), celebrated its first anniversary in 2007, having racked up 11 million hits from a million visitors in 150 countries. An initiative of UNIFEM, UNDP, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the site’s innovative combination of more than 1,000 resources supports women’s expanded role in public life. Visitors can seek advice from a cohort of political experts and share experiences on diverse issues such as eliminating violence against female candidates in Venezuela or overcoming clan barriers in Somaliland. They can find data on elections or fine-tune their negotiating or budgeting skills. In-depth interviews with high-profile women leaders have featured personal observations from Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland, and Lourdes Flores Nano, the President of the National Unity Alliance of Peru, among others. Showcasing what’s possible inspires women embarking on political careers. Says one contributor from Costa Rica: “I’m really pleased reading all the enthusiastic comments from all over the world. It is not only our right, but our duty to promote women’s leadership and gender equality. Three things are important: knowledge, networking and political action.”

iKNOPolitics helps women access all three.
To increase global awareness on the pandemic of violence against women and to encourage support for the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women that UNIFEM manages on behalf of the UN system, UNIFEM in 2007 launched its Internet-based campaign Say NO to Violence against Women. A website – www.saynotoviolence.com – issues an invitation in six languages for people to add their names to a call to action, aiming to demonstrate ever-growing momentum for ending gender-based violence. The website also provides information about the UN Trust Fund and invites people to make a donation. In its 11 years of operation, the Trust Fund has awarded some $19 million in grants to over 260 initiatives in more than 120 countries.

More than 180 NGOs, UN organizations and private sector entities representing millions of women have joined UNIFEM and Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman in the Say No campaign. For each of the first 100,000 names, the UN Foundation donated $1 to the UN Trust Fund. World leaders, including the whole Senegalese Cabinet led by President Wade, President Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Spanish Government as well as government ministers and mayors from countries ranging from Austria to Japan and Nepal signed on, along with internationally acclaimed artists and activists such as Catherine Deneuve, Hillary Swank, Christopher Lee and Sir Bob Geldof.

UNIFEM also joined global cosmetics company Avon to promote women’s empowerment and end violence against women, with Avon committing $1 million to the UN Trust Fund. The contribution will bolster critical work of Trust Fund grantees on the implementation of laws, policies and government plans to prevent and reduce the prevalence of violence against women. The funds will be raised through the sale of a special Avon product, the Women’s Empowerment Bracelet.

Forging New Partnerships to End Violence Against Women
UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women: 2007 Grantees

AFRICA
Algeria – Centre d’Information et de Documentation sur les Droits des Femmes et des Enfants
Develop a network of NGO counselling centres in 10 cities and the first database on violence against women; raise awareness to improve services and strengthen existing laws. $150,000

Cape Verde – Instituto Cabo-verdiano para Igualdade e Equidade de Gênero
Support implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender-based Violence with a particular emphasis on domestic violence; improve information, services and social support structures. $100,000

Côte d’Ivoire – Renaissance Santé Bouaké
Train public authorities and community members on links between violence and HIV to reduce infection rates and discrimination. $100,000

Democratic Republic of Congo – Réseau National des ONGs Pour le Développement de la Femme
Train 400 police and local leaders in six districts with high HIV and violence rates to provide assistance and legal redress to women survivors, including through psychosocial support centres. $200,000

Ethiopia – Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
Develop judicial capacities to enforce legal provisions against gender-based violence; address intersections between violence and HIV. $150,000

Ghana – Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy
Assist women’s collectives in advocating public understanding of links between violence and HIV; train HIV-positive women to champion the rights of people with HIV and train tertiary students to urge transformed male behaviours. $99,800

Guinea – SidAlerte-Fria
Raise awareness among sex workers and workers in mining zones on links between violence and HIV; support improved physical security and peer support groups for sex workers. $100,000

Mozambique – Forum Mulher
Work in two districts to improve services for women survivors of violence; conduct community dialogues to reduce harmful traditional practices increasing the risk of HIV infection; launch a national men-to-men campaign to end violence and stop HIV. $100,000

Rwanda – District of Ngomoa
Promote national and district policies to end gender inequality and gender-based violence; inform community members and leaders on rights and laws; produce a district action plan. $100,000

Sierra Leone – International Rescue Committee
Develop a national action plan and state capacities to apply new laws protecting women and girls from sexual and physical violence. $100,000

Southern Africa – Gender Links
Work with seven countries to implement national action plans to end gender-based violence, including through comprehensive monitoring systems and legal literacy. $200,000

European & CIS
Albania – Refleksione Association
Pilot an inter-agency protocol for comprehensive delivery and access to justice. $293,600

Asia/Pacific & Arab States
Cambodia – Gender and Development for Cambodia
Study contemporary Khmer masculinity to inform more effective policies and programmes; create community men’s groups; support women’s access to legal aid and support services. $300,000

Egypt – Al Shehab Foundation for Comprehensive Development
Raise awareness of women’s rights in support of legal prohibitions of female genital mutilation; advocate for the establishment of monitoring bodies. $200,000

Latin America & The Caribbean
Argentina and Brazil – Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir
Train professionals working with women survivors of domestic violence, with an emphasis on prevention; hold national meetings of experts to exchange experiences. $120,000

Colombia – Corporación Centro de Apoyo Popular
Partner with women’s organizations in Soacho to prevent violence, including by advocating for women’s rights and creating a women’s agenda to eradicate violence and support survivors. $100,000

Guyana – Help & Shelter
Strengthen police and judicial capacities to implement domestic violence laws; advocate for a more rigorous Sexual Offences Act. $125,190

Jamaica – Women’s Media Watch and Bureau of Women’s Affairs, Ministry of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports
Sensitize members of the judiciary on international women’s rights conventions; train government and private sector employees on national sexual harassment policies. $174,810

Latin America – FEIM Argentina
In four countries, research intersections between violence and HIV and promote integrated public policies. $180,000

Mexico – Colectivo de Investigación, Desarrollo y Educación entre Mujeres A.C.
Devises follow-up mechanisms for national anti-violence legislation, including by advocating new state laws and judicial reforms. $300,000

Peru – Centro de la Mujer Peruana “Flora Tristán”
In the Villa El Salvador district, provide training, conduct advocacy and develop health centre capacities to encourage safe behaviour and reduce HIV-related stigma. $100,000

Venezuela – Asociación Venezolana para una Educación Sexual Alternativa, Fundación de Apoyo al Centro de Estudios de la Mujer de la Universidad Central de Venezuela
Bolster the capacities of civil servants, judicial officials, the media and service providers to implement anti-violence laws. $100,000

PHOTO by AvON
$100,000
$99,800
$150,000
$200,000
## UNIFEM Contributions from Governments and Other Donors in 2007

All figures included in this report are expressed in thousands of US dollars for the year ended 31 December.

### GOVERNMENTS

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* Less amounts paid in 2007

### TOTAL FROM GOVERNMENTS

| 43,784 | 41,847 | 15,081 | 3,352 | 104,064 | 54,080 |

### UNIMER NATIONAL COMMITTEES

| AUSTRALIA NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 83 | - | - | - | 83 | 75 |
| FINLAND NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 156 | - | - | - | 156 | 121 |
| ICELAND NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 15 | 2 | - | - | 17 | |
| JAPAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 41 | - | - | - | 41 | 90 |
| SINGAPORE NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 73 | - | - | - | 73 | |
| SWITZERLAND-LIECHTENSTEIN NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 21 | 23 | - | - | 23 | |
| UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE | 2 | 4 | - | - | 6 | |
| UNITED STATES NATIONAL COMMITTEE | - | 15 | - | - | 15 | 32 |
| OTHER NATIONAL COMMITTEES | - | - | - | - | - | 77 |

### TOTAL FROM UNIFEM NATIONAL COMMITTEES

| 393 | 21 | - | - | 414 | 395 |

### OTHER DONORS

| UN AGENCIES | - | - | - | - | 11,297 | 1,165 |
| ARAB GULF PROGRAMME FOR UN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS | 145 | - | - | - | 145 | 65 |
| COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT | 69 | - | - | - | 69 | - |
| HINDUSTRAN LEVER LTD | 57 | - | - | - | 57 | - |
| JOHNSON & JOHNSON FAMILY OF COMPANIES | - | 700 | - | - | 700 | 700 |
| OMEGA WATCHES | 25 | 25 | - | - | 50 | 127 |
| OTHER DONORS | 32 | 2 | - | - | 34 | 928 |
| UNIFIP TURNER FOUNDATION | - | 91 | 20 | - | 111 | 93 |
| UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE | 110 | - | - | - | 110 | |
| WORLD BANK (INT'L BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT) | 1,200 | - | - | - | 1,200 | 21 |
| ZONTA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION | - | 50 | - | - | 50 | 1 |

### TOTAL FROM OTHER DONORS

| 12,635 | 868 | 20 | - | 13,624 | 3,100 |

### GRAND TOTAL

| 43,784 | 55,175 | 15,970 | 3,372 | 118,302 | 57,575 |

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**UNIFEM ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008**
The amount of $46875 is already allocated to multiyear funded projects with durations which last through 2009.

### Top 20 Contributors in 2007

in thousands of US dollars

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<th>Cost-Sharing</th>
<th>Violence TF</th>
<th>Other Sub-Trust Funds</th>
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* Includes amount of $9,208 paid in 2007

### UNIFEM Statement of Income and Expenditure

in thousands of US dollars

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<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tr>
<td>REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
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<td>COST-SHARING CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
<td>55,175</td>
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<td>VIOLENCE TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
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<td>3,573</td>
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<td>SUB-TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
<td>3,372</td>
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<td><strong>SUB-TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>118,301</strong></td>
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<td>INTEREST INCOME</td>
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<td>REIMBURSABLE SUPPORT SERVICES</td>
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<td>OTHER INCOME</td>
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<td><strong>SUB-TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>63,290</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<td>GENERAL RESOURCES</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
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<td>EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</td>
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<td><strong>FUND BALANCES</strong></td>
<td><strong>46,875</strong></td>
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</table>

**The amount of $46,875 is already allocated to multiyear funded projects with durations which last through 2009.**
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Armenian International Women’s Association
Baha’i International Community
Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd
International Alliance of Women
International Association of Women in Radio and Television
International Federation of Business and Professional Women
International Federation for Home Economics
International Federation of Women in Legal Careers
International Federation of Women Lawyers
International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres
International Federation of University Women
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Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund
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World Union for Progressive Judaism
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Text: Gretchen Luchsinger
Photo Editor: Susan Ackerman
Design: Kathi Rota
Print: Prographics, Inc.