

Evaluation of **Gender Mainstreaming** in UN-HABITAT



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in UN-HABITAT

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DISCLAIMER

This evaluation was undertaken by external consultants, Ms. Lucy Earle and Ms. Britha Mikkelsen. The findings were shared with senior management and the gender focal Point team of UN-HABITAT. The findings and conclusions remain those of the consultants, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of UN-HABITAT.

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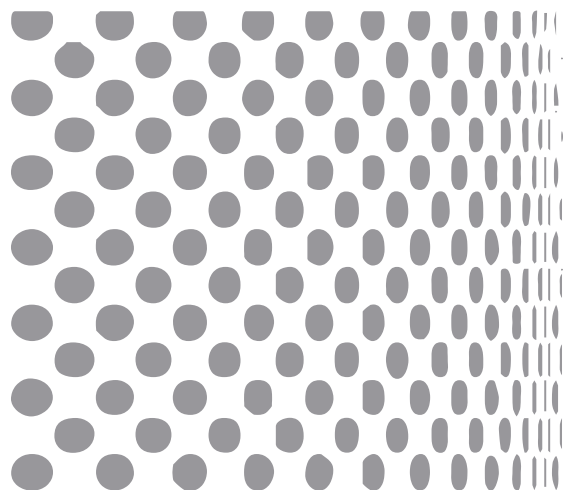
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ACRONYMS

ACHR	Asia Coalition for Housing Rights
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDC	Community Development Committee
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DAW	Department for the Advancement of Women
DFID	Department for International Development
DMP	Disaster Management Programme
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EGM	Expert Groups Meeting
ENDA	Environment and Development Action in the Third World
FA	Focus Area
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDV	Fondation Droit à la Ville
GAD	Gender and Development
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GLTN	Global Land Tool Network
GMU	Gender Mainstreaming Unit
GROOTS	Grassroots Organisations Operating Together in Sisterhood
GTF	Gender Task Force
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
HAP	Habitat Agenda Partners
HC	Huairou Commission
HPM	Habitat Programme Manager
HVBWSH	Human Values Based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTSIP	Mid Term Strategic and Institutional Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues
PO	Programme Officer



POW	Programme of Work
PSUP	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme
RGA	Rapid Gender Appraisal
ROAP	Regional Office Asia and Pacific
RTCD	Regional and Technical Cooperation Division
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound
SWM	Solid Waste Management
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
TCBB	Training and Capacity Building Branch
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UWLAT	Uganda Women's Land Access Trust
WAC	Water for African Cities
WHP	Women in Habitat Programme
WID	Women in Development
WLAT	Women's Land Access Trust
WSIB	Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Branch

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The mandate for this evaluation is a follow up to the Governing Council resolution of 20/72005 which requests the Executive Director ensures “that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches and units of UN-HABITAT address gender equality and women’s empowerment in human settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities”.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess UN-HABITAT’s efforts in mainstreaming gender across its programmes and policies, and the appropriateness of its institutional arrangements and strategic partnerships for the promotion of gender equality in human settlements. In addition to the accountability objective, the purpose of the evaluation is to generate lessons to inform decisions about how institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming and related strategic partnerships can be improved.

The following Summary sets out the findings of the Evaluation with regard to the achievements and challenges of gender mainstreaming in

UN-HABITAT, before presenting a summary of recommendations and next steps.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation involved a combination of methods, which included a literature review of sample policy and programme documents that were assessed for gender focus and analysis and face-to-face interviews with UN-HABITAT staff members plus a self-evaluation SWOT workshop with Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in Nairobi. A short field visit to Senegal and self-evaluation and email questionnaires with ROAP, Afghanistan and Pakistan gave regional and country perspectives, while telephone interviews and email questionnaires captured information from other UN agencies and partner organizations. Triangulation of data from different sources was used throughout to validate information.

The Evaluation Team attempted to gather information from a broad range of sources both inside and outside the agency. However, time and resources meant this could not be an exhaustive and in-depth evaluation of gender mainstreaming in all of UN-HABITAT’s normative

and operational work. The consultants have, where possible, attempted to draw lessons for the agency from the sample without claiming that generalizations can be made.

ACHIEVEMENTS

UN-HABITAT has committed itself to the promotion of gender mainstreaming through the Habitat Agenda. It is highly relevant to UN-HABITAT's work, given the agency's focus on human settlements where men and women have different needs, and where it is critical that women's rights to services and secure shelter are protected.

The evaluation's findings suggest that the agency has sought to mainstream gender into core areas of its work. However, these efforts are not uniform in strength across the agency, and UN-HABITAT should give greater focus to how the results of its work can contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

UN-HABITAT's institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming include many actors, primary amongst whom are a Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU), a network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs), and a Gender Task Force (GTF). Recent efforts to improve the coherence of the agency's work on gender mainstreaming include the preparation and endorsement of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) in 2009. In a significant effort to render the GEAP consistent with the agency's broader goals, it was aligned with the Focus Areas of the Mid Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP).

The formulation of the GEAP was an attempt by UN-HABITAT to pursue a more strategic and coherent approach to its work with gender equality and women's empowerment, as much as a response to recommendations of the 2003 and 2007 gender mainstreaming evaluations. The elaboration of plans for gender mainstreaming in each Focus Area (FA) in 2009

was a further step towards implementation of the GEAP.

Set out in a series of matrices, these frameworks specify outputs, activities, indicators, responsibilities, potential partners, expected funding and timeframe with reference to the anticipated strategic results and outcomes within each of the FAs. It is the Evaluation Team's assessment that the GMU made a commendable attempt to involve itself in the strategic planning process for gender mainstreaming, relating the GEAP closely to the overall mid-term plan, but was left on its own with limited input from programmes and Focus Areas.

UN-HABITAT counts upon a network of GFPs – staff members distributed throughout the divisions, regions, countries and programmes. A number of them have high-level expertise in gender analysis and technical skills and the group is potentially a powerful asset for delivering on the agency's commitments to gender mainstreaming. A loose network of gender focal points together with staff of the GMU are members of the agency's Gender Task Force.

POLICY AND PROGRAMMING

UN-HABITAT is to be commended for the high quality of numerous policy papers and research products that analyze gender inequalities in human settlements, and for the development of tools to counter discrimination.

UN-HABITAT's work on governance and security in cities has demonstrated an awareness of the problems associated with gender-blindness within local government institutions. The Training and Capacity Building Branch, in cooperation with the GMU, has taken steps to support staff and partners to recognize how this can lead to gender inequalities in human settlements through the development of training material on gender mainstreaming in local governance.

UN-HABITAT's well-regarded work on Safer Cities has also promoted a focus on greater gender

sensitivity in planning practice. A participatory budgeting programme implemented in Senegal, DRC and Mozambique has experimented with ways to increase women's representation and participation in local government.

The organisation has taken considerable steps to promote women's access to security of tenure and challenged gender inequalities that are structural in nature, such as legislation on land and housing that is discriminatory towards women. Going beyond support for equality before the law with regards to men and women's legal ownership of property, UN-HABITAT is supporting, assessing and disseminating information on new forms of tenure arrangement that help to improve women's security and, potentially, facilitate their greater control over decision-making within the household.

Its normative work in this area takes into consideration the needs of women in a variety of situations, including polygamous marriages and those living under Islamic law. The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) has further produced an innovative tool that can be used at the grassroots to assess the gender sensitivity of land policy that is gaining traction both inside and outside UN-HABITAT. The work of the agency thus responds to conclusions in the academic literature that women's rights to land and property may not be respected without specific affirmative measures to rectify the discriminatory practices of the past.

UN-HABITAT's work in access to water and sanitation provision shows a high degree of gender sensitivity. The Water for African Cities Programme has sought to engage stakeholders in local government and utility companies to raise awareness on the gender equality issues pertinent to the sector.

In partnership with the Gender Water Alliance (GWA) specialists have been appointed in each of the countries where the programme is operational to facilitate debate and training on gender equality. At headquarters level, the

appointment of a staff member with specialist knowledge of both gender and WATSAN demonstrates further commitment of the Water Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch to mainstreaming in its operational activities.

PARTNERSHIPS

In terms of agency-wide partnerships with organizations of gender equality advocates, UN-HABITAT's institutionalized relationships with the Huairou Commission and with UNIFEM through MOUs show commitment to entrench work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The agency's partnership with the Huairou Commission is highly strategic. This network of women's networks provides access for UN-HABITAT to organizations that have a wealth of knowledge on local contexts and outreach to informal groups and slum dwellers organizations that it would not be able to muster on its own. The agency's work to date on Safe Cities with UNIFEM provides a useful stepping stone to increase engagement with the new UN Women entity.

There is ongoing scope for partnerships with professional organizations such as surveyors, architects, researchers and also with local government. The working relationship between the GWA and UN-HABITAT's Water for African Cities programme is a positive example of a partnership at the level of operations established to deliver specialist technical advice and ensure gender mainstreaming in programming.

CHALLENGES

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Although the development of the GEAP was an important and strategic step to increase a focus on gender mainstreaming across the agency, a number of challenges remain. The GEAP is wide-ranging and ambitious, and attempts to monitor its implementation have yet to get off the ground.

An opportunity to discuss more substantive follow-up and monitoring of the GEAP was missed during the Gender Equality Action Assembly (GEAA) at the World Urban Forum in Rio in 2010. Monitoring of the plan is also hampered by the fact that many of the indicators in the GEAP-related frameworks for the six Focus Areas are expressed as unspecified numbers of outputs and activities.

In theory, the GEAP could help UN-HABITAT to achieve its objectives vis-à-vis gender equality, but this will require the agency as a whole to mobilise behind it. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit cannot implement the GEAP alone, nor can it hold sole responsibility for overseeing an extremely detailed and ambitious plan. An immediate task is to revisit gender equality activities in the MTSIP and the GEAP Focus Area Frameworks with a focus on areas already funded to make a selection of priority areas for further fundraising.

The establishment of a system of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) is a strategic tool for promoting work on gender equality. Unfortunately, this decentralized model based on a gender mainstreaming unit and gender focal points has not been adequately developed.

The criteria for being appointed a GFP and their roles and functions are unclear with a number never having seen their terms of references. Some units within the agency do not give adequate consideration to the best possible appointment to the position and nominate a young, female junior staff member who may not have the skills or motivation for the role. The relationship between the GMU and the GFPs is also unclear, as is their involvement in the Gender Task Force.

The agency has been heavily involved in the Women's Land Access Trusts (WLATs) in East Africa.¹ Theoretically pilot initiatives, have recently come to absorb much of the energy of GMU staff to the detriment of mainstreaming

activities within the agency.

It would appear that the agency's technical knowledge on housing and access to housing finance has not been adequately incorporated into the projects, and this has negatively affected their implementation. As it stands, WLATs have not helped the GMU to gain the respect required to coordinate more strategic and coherent gender mainstreaming work across the agency.

POLICY AND PROGRAMMING

UN-HABITAT should ensure that findings from its own research on gender equality are integrated into general guidance materials published by the agency. If key messages specific to women's rights in human settlements are not incorporated into overall policy publications, they may not reach such a large audience as busy staff often only have time to consult the core documents.

UN-HABITAT's short policy brief on gender and disasters explicitly sets out the need to pay particular attention to ensure that women's rights to land and property are upheld in the aftermath of crises such as wars and natural emergencies. It is not clear from the programme documentation seen by the Evaluation Team on post-crisis work on land mediation that work at country level will actively seek to ensure that women's rights to land are upheld. In post-conflict situations, and in countries where women's rights are systematically abused, it may not be sufficient for UN-HABITAT to take an 'equal access' approach.

UN-HABITAT publications and internal documents often refer to the 'integration of a gender perspective' into programmes and policies. However, this can be associated with a range of expected results, such as ensuring that service provision is sensitive to women's needs; increasing women's power over decision-making in the home or improving women's influence in the public sphere and over the development of human settlements.

¹ The Evaluation Team has been informed after finalization of the Draft Report that the agency has taken steps to relocate the responsibility for the WLATs from the GMU.

The extent to which these results can be said to equal women's 'empowerment' varies considerably. Some UN-HABITAT programme documents make a somewhat unreflective connection between inclusion of women in a project and their empowerment, without further analysis of how or why this should come about.

Traditional beliefs and practices that sometimes overrule rights enshrined in law adversely affect women's access to land, shelter and basic services, and their ability to engage in local governance and planning. Stereotyped gender roles surrounding domestic work place additional burdens on women in urban areas. These women are also often involved in income-generating activities outside the home. The issue of 'culture' comes into play here.

The extent to which UN-HABITAT programmes and policies set out a stated aim to confront this type of discrimination and alter the balance of power between men and women varies considerably between the different focus areas, and indeed between normative and operational work. The question must be asked, therefore, whether UN-HABITAT wishes to actively promote results relating to gender equality through its programming, or if it prefers to limit gender mainstreaming to ensuring its activities are gender sensitive and that they 'do no harm'.

PARTNERSHIPS

UN-HABITAT's draft Partnership Strategy has no provision for guidance on partnership formation in the areas of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. Criteria for partnership should include a willingness and ability to 'adopt mutual approaches to gender equality' in line with the agency's Policy and Strategy Paper for Focus Area 1.

UN-HABITAT's relationships with the Huairou Commission and with UNIFEM require attention and a concerted effort to operationalise the terms of the MOUs on which they are based. The obvious breakdown in trust between the Huairou Commission and the GMU is a concern and needs to be rectified as soon as

possible, given the strategic importance for the agency in reaching out to grassroots women's organizations. However, mutual understanding is required on UN-HABITAT's need for a wider outreach to professional and other organizations and not only to grassroots organizations.

The engagement with UNIFEM on the Safe Cities initiative could be stepped up, to ensure that UN-HABITAT takes on its role as 'lead global partner'. Productive collaboration on this programme could facilitate further engagement with the newly formed UN Women.

Findings from the field visit to Senegal show that partners who are implementing the agency's programmes and projects will not necessarily be either willing or able to ensure their work is, at a minimum, gender sensitive. Given the size and capacity of UN-HABITAT's country teams, there is a need for greater support for Habitat Programme Managers to promote work towards gender equality with partners. The GMU has facilitated staff and partner capacity building, for example, but could provide greater support for the critical role played by Gender Focal Points in regional offices to ensure Programme Managers are aware of, and have access to, key policy and training guidelines in appropriate languages that they can share with partners.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Implementation of the GEAP, including the Focus Area GEAP frameworks, requires prioritizing and operationalisation and the agency as a whole to mobilize behind it. More coherent work on gender mainstreaming requires mutual strengthening of activities and sharing of knowledge within and across programmes and units, headquarters and regions, normative and operational work.
- Monitoring of the GEAP and MTSIP must be aligned and selected sex-disaggregated indicators from both be selected. The MTSIP Steering Committee can ensure explicit gender equality goals in adjustment of the plan.

- UN-HABITAT has considerable gender mainstreaming resources in programmes, regions, country, units and in partnerships. The Gender Focal Point system is a strategic tool for promoting work on gender equality. This 'decentralised' model of a GMU and Gender Focal Points has not been adequately developed.
- UN-HABITAT texts display high-quality research and analysis. Its work on governance and safer cities stands out, along with work on joint tenure arrangements and Islamic law. There is a broad focus beyond that of female-headed households. Not all branches have undertaken such high quality analysis and there is frequently a disconnection between policy papers and operational work.
- In post-conflict work on land there is a need for active support for women's land rights, in accordance with UN-HABITAT's own policy papers.
- Choice of partners affects the extent to which project work is gender sensitive. Partnerships are dynamic and fluctuate according to personalities and other factors. Partnerships need to be nurtured and conflicts addressed and one cannot assume that non-gender specific partners at country level will have skills to undertake gender analysis, gender-sensitive surveys and so on. Support to build capacity is required, not least at country level.
- data for a selection of already existing indicators. The MTSIP steering committee must ensure this happens.
- Programme design should integrate analysis of potential impact on gender equality and include specific indicators of achievement. Achieve this through cooperation between gender specialists and technical staff. The Programme Review Committee should follow up, such as by using a marker system.
- In establishing a monitoring framework for UN-HABITAT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the agency should consider adopting a results-based monitoring and evaluation approach. It should combine and prioritise a manageable smaller number of quantitative indicator assessments with qualitative assessments and self-evaluations from the long list of 'gender indicators' of the MTSIP and the GEAP.
- Actively pursue opportunities to partner with UN Women, particularly at country level. Diversify the partner base beyond grassroots networks.
- To improve coherence between normative and operational work, place gender specialists strategically – in regions and in collaboration with the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division (RTCD).
- Work of GFPs should be recognised in the staff appraisal system the Electronic Performance Appraisal System (EPAS) and management should ensure there are appropriate incentives, accountability, time and dedicated resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose priority goals for the GEAP. Senior management, FA teams and the GTF should actively collaborate with the Gender Mainstreaming Unit on implementation.
- Senior management and programme managers must be held accountable for commitments made on gender equality in their work areas.
- Select a limited number of indicators, linked to prioritised areas, for monitoring the GEAP.
- Align the GEAP with the MTSIP monitoring processes. Collect sex-disaggregated
- It is recommended that the GMU should provide intellectual leadership; engage with senior management; mobilise partnerships; fundraise; coordinate gender mainstreaming and capacity building; capitalise on skills present across the agency; facilitate support to countries and regions and develop and disseminate knowledge products.
- The competencies in the GMU will consequently need to be revisited and made to tally with what UN-HABITAT decides to

prioritise and pursue in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.

NEXT STEPS

Recommended next steps to strengthen UN-HABITAT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment are:

The mandates, role and responsibilities of the three interdependent and mutually supporting groups – the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, the network of Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force (the "nucleus") - should be revisited and clarified as soon as possible.

The reform process should start immediately with a clarification of substance – i.e. results aimed for in UN-HABITAT's gender equality work at global, regional and country level – which will determine the required staff competencies and not vice versa. The GEAP will be the substance framework, and human resources will be mobilized from the Gender Focal Points, Gender Mainstreaming Unit and partners. The first step will be to agree on the major tasks and activities followed by tallying tasks with the most appropriate staff institutionalizing the reformed/reinforced 'gender architecture'.

The main role of a Gender Focal Point should be as a "catalyst" to assist gender mainstreaming in a respective unit or programme. Their manager needs to ensure that adequate time, conditions and financial resources are allocated so that the GFP can perform the tasks required.

The inadequate match between the expectations/ambitions/practices of the GMU and its current staff resources requires prompt attention. With the proposed approach to reinforce the 'gender architecture', clarification of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit's mandate, role and responsibilities will be part of the larger process of integrating it more strategically with the Gender Task Force and Gender Mainstreaming Unit.

The aim is to bring the GMU's mandate and staff profiles/competencies into sync but as part

of the extended "resource base" of the Gender Focal Points network and the Gender Task Force. Until a revised institutional set up is brought in, the GMU should draft Terms of Reference for its reinforced role as primarily a facilitator/catalyst and supporter of gender equality across the agency.

In the revised set up, when mandate, ambitions and staff competencies are better matched, the GMU will have been strengthened to provide intellectual leadership, take on coordination tasks within and outside the organization, take on advocacy towards senior management, mobilise and dynamise partnerships, undertake fundraising and establish mutually beneficial relationships with the Gender Focal Points through a reformed Gender Task Force.

The role of the Gender Task Force – a cluster of GFPs on a rotational basis - should be closely linked to overseeing and monitoring the operationalisation of the GEAP, helping to establish accountability for commitments to gender equality made across the agency.

It is recommended that the external gender specialist resources embedded in partner organizations, including women's grassroots organizations, are integrated and more visible in the functioning of the GTF. Representatives of key partner organisations could be invited to participate in the GTF, two to three at a time and, depending on the needs and interests of UN-HABITAT at a given time, at the very least as resource persons. In this way the GTF could become a type of extended gender working group.

The reform process should ideally be led by the Deputy Executive Director and involve senior management and representatives of the MTSIP Steering Committee, the Gender Focal Points network, Gender Task Force and Gender Mainstreaming Unit in a participatory process.

It is recommended that the GMU be located in the Executive Director's or Deputy Executive Director's office and the GTF be coordinated and administered from there, too.



UN-HABITAT has taken a number of steps to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, both in its programmes and within the institution itself.

1 INTRODUCTION



1.1 CONTEXT

This Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation takes place at a time when major reforms are being implemented within the UN system with One UN and UN Women certain to have worldwide implications in the coming years. UN-HABITAT is already undergoing substantial reforms through the Mid-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP), which are expected to be followed by radical organisational changes in the near future.

In the area of gender mainstreaming, significant changes have taken place since the amalgamation of the Gender Policy Unit and the Women in Habitat Programme in 1999 into the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and the last evaluation in 2003. The preparation and endorsement of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) in 2009 marked a strategic initiative with implications for the agency as a whole.

This evaluation has been requested to assess the results of these reforms in gender mainstreaming – the GMU and the GEAP. Have they contributed to a stronger strategic focus and coherent work? What have been the achievements in gender mainstreaming? How has the outreach to partners been and how well have partnerships

functioned to facilitate gender equality in human settlements? Have the institutional arrangements supported effective gender mainstreaming work? Is the role and location of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit within the agency optimal or should alternatives be considered?

These and other questions outlined in the Terms of Reference (Annex 5) have been the focus of the evaluation. The evaluation profile and methodology are presented below, with a more detailed description in Annex 2.

1.2 MANDATE, OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The mandate for this evaluation comes from the Governing Council resolution 20/7 (2005) which requests the Executive Director to ensure ‘that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches and units of UN-HABITAT address gender equality and women’s empowerment in human settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities.’

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess what UN-HABITAT has achieved so far in mainstreaming gender equality in its programmes, the appropriateness of its institutional arrangements and strategic partnerships for gender equality. In addition to the accountability objective, the purpose of the evaluation is to generate lessons to inform decisions about how institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming and related strategic partnerships can be improved (formative evaluation).

It is the aim that the evaluation will be widely utilized by senior management to strengthen institutional arrangements in view of the ongoing institutional reform; programme staff, who will be involved in implementing possible recommendations for gender mainstreaming; the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, to develop further strategies for gender mainstreaming and in their efforts to support the agency in implementing such strategies and member states, partners and donors which are interested in gender mainstreaming.

The evaluation is intended to be a building block in the overall assessment of the incorporation of gender aspects in the implementation of the MTSIP. The results of the evaluation may inform future funding decisions.

1.3 ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

After a brief discussion of methodology and approach, the main findings of the evaluation are presented in Section 3. This Section is divided into three parts.

- Section 3.1 evaluates the strategic focus and coherence of UN-HABITAT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment, through an examination of the Gender Equality Action Plan, the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and the institutional arrangements in place for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT.
- Section 3.2 is a 'portfolio review' of UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming work in programmes, projects and policies across Focus Areas 2, 3 and 4 with brief discussion of FA 5. The discussion of each Focus Area includes an overview of the current academic and policy literature on relevant themes to provide a 'benchmark' with which to assess UN-HABITAT's normative and operational work.
- Section 3.3 addresses the agency's partnerships and the extent to which the approach helps gender equality in human settlements.
- Section 4 presents options and recommendations for the strengthening and reorganisation of the agency's gender mainstreaming architecture.
- Section 5 concludes with an overview of achievements and challenges of gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT and recommendations.

1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Evaluation Team thanks the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and the staff of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, who supported the evaluation team throughout the evaluation process. The M&E secretariat facilitated contact with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to a wide range of UN-HABITAT staff in Headquarters, regions and countries and also to partner organisations in the UN system and grassroots women's organisations, who have contributed written evidence and invaluable oral information.

We want to express a particular appreciation to the Regional Office Asia and Pacific (ROAP) and to the many enthusiastic UN-HABITAT and partner representatives in Afghanistan and Pakistan who were mobilised through it. Lastly, the Habitat Programme Manager in Senegal is thanked warmly for hosting a field visit and for his and partner contributions to this evaluation.

2 | APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY



2.1 INTRODUCTION

A detailed description of Approach and Methodology in the Inception Report (November 2010) paved the way to a common understanding between UN-HABITAT's Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and the Evaluation Team from the outset. The draft inception report was discussed with stakeholders in Headquarters and adjusted accordingly. Parts of the detailed approach and methodology description are retained in Annex 2.

Highlights of the approach and methodology are:

- An evaluation framework matrix capturing focus questions, issues, criteria, methods and sources.
- Reflection on gender equality concepts.
- Elaboration of the evaluation's focus on results as much as on process.
- Preparation of interview guides and targeted questionnaires for different stakeholder groups for face-to-face and telephone interviews.
- Guidelines on how to conduct self-evaluations by use of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) methodology, and a SWOT workshop with gender focal points in Nairobi.
- Review of a sample of policy and programme documents guided by a framework to assess levels of gender analysis.
- Literature review linked to Focus Areas.
- Discussion of different institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming units or similar in other organizations in general and UN agencies in particular.
- Coverage of country and regional perspectives by a country visit to Senegal by one of the evaluators, and through intensive web-based contact by the other evaluator on self-evaluation guidance and questionnaires in ROAP Japan, and in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- Dialogue with key stakeholders and intensive exchanges with the evaluation's resource person throughout the evaluation process.
- Data triangulation – comparing data from different sources - to check and validate findings and conclusions.

2.2 LIMITATIONS

Specific limitations were:

- The difficulty of gauging results and impacts of programmes and projects from document review and interviews with staff members alone.
- Only one country office was visited and this for only five days.
- Despite requests for project documents and reports/evaluations from UN-HABITAT staff and partner organizations, these were not always received.
- The evaluation was only able to focus on a sample of the work of one regional office and this had to be done through email and telephone.
- The evaluation focused on a small and select group of partners – mainly a network of grassroots women’s organisations and UN-organisations. No government partners or technical/academic partners were contacted.
- The Evaluation Team was not able to meet with the partners/youth unit during their visit to Nairobi and were thus not able to make comparisons between the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and other similar units.
- Response from international and UN organizations was not always obtained in time for the drafting of the report.

The Evaluation Team attempted to gather information from a broad range of sources inside and outside the agency. However, time and resources meant this could not be an exhaustive and in-depth evaluation of gender mainstreaming in all of UN-HABITAT’s normative and operational work. Assessment of presentations, conference inputs, training materials and so on would have provided a broader picture. The consultants have, where possible, attempted to draw lessons for the agency from the sample but generalizations cannot be made.

2.3 MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation has been carried out by a team of two independent consultants, Dr Britha Mikkelsen (TL) Evaluation, Social Analysis and Gender Specialist, and Dr Lucy Earle, Human Settlements and Gender Specialist, in close consultation with UN-HABITAT.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit managed and coordinated the evaluation. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit supported the M&E Unit on substantive matters and facilitated the work of the consultants. The Gender Equality Task Force, which includes representatives from all divisions, reviewed deliverables and thus contributing to enhanced quality and relevance of the process.

An external resource person, Beth Woroniuk, has functioned as a sparring partner for the evaluation team and for the Gender Equality Task Force and M&E Unit. The evaluation is guided by the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards.

3 | EVALUATION FINDINGS



3.1 STRATEGIC FOCUS AND COHERENCE OF WORK ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

- i) Has the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) made UN-HABITAT's work on gender more strategic and coherent?
- ii) Has the programme of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU) become more strategic and coherent?
- iii) Institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT and their adequacy

INTRODUCTION

This section analyses UN-HABITAT's strategic focus and the coherence of its work on gender equality and women's empowerment. It examines the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU) and the institutional arrangements in place for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT. The assessment criteria in this section are strategic focus and coherence.

Strategic focus² concerns whether an explicit strategy guides UN-HABITAT's work on gender; how internally consistent the strategy is as a tool for pursuing set objectives (See Box 3.1.1) and how it tallies with the overall strategy MTSIP of UN-HABITAT; what is being done and by whom to interpret, disseminate, implement, monitor and adjust the strategy and whether the strategy actually helps UN-HABITAT achieve its objectives (is it the "right thing" to do?).

Coherence in this evaluation refers to the mutual strengthening of activities within and across programmes, relevant units and entities; the promotion of links between normative and operational work and between global, regional and local activities; a match between strategic ambitions and resources and the enhancement of mutual knowledge of what goes on within the agency and avoids duplication.

As with other UN and bilateral development organisations, UN-HABITAT has adopted a two-pronged approach³ to promote gender equality.

² There are other parameters which are important assessment criteria with regard to strategic focus, for example strategic partnerships and the gender mainstreaming strategy itself. These are assessed in other parts of this report.

³ Adopted after the Fourth World Conference on Women which endorsed the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action (PfA), 1995

It supports women-specific programmes and women's organisations in order to address

BOX 3.1.1: OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER POLICY, GEAP AND THE PROGRAMME OF THE GMU

- i) The gender policy is based on two equally important objectives:
 - Women's right to empowerment through participation in Human Settlements Development
 - Gender mainstreaming in human settlements development (gender policy 2002:3)
- ii) The Gender Equality Action Plan aims to promote women's rights, women's empowerment and gender-responsive sustainable urbanization policies and practices at national and local levels. The plan strives to create an environment for governments, cities and local authorities to fulfil existing policy commitments related to gender equality in sustainable urbanization through its goal of reducing gender discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men in the provision of adequate services, security and employment opportunities in cities. (GEAP 2009:9)
- iii) The objective of the Gender Equality Programme is to reinforce gender as a cross-cutting issue in all UN-HABITAT activities. It strives for more equal rights, benefits, opportunities, quality of life, and participation in public life for both men and women in towns and cities. The Gender Equality Programme aims to unite all UN-HABITAT staff and partners to work strategically towards improving gender equality in human settlements and bring about measurable results. The GMU is a central point of contact to facilitate these efforts (The Gender Equality Programme, 2009:1).
- iv) The Gender Mainstreaming Unit, GMU, was and is responsible for coordinating gender mainstreaming into all UN-HABITAT programmes and activities and to promote women's empowerment in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. It's also responsible for UN-Habitat's implementation of the strategy for gender mainstreaming in the UN system (CEB/2006/2).
 - The GMU coordinates activities to bring systematic improvements. These include development of the GEAP 2008-2013; gender training for UN-HABITAT staff and gender reviews of programmes and publications within UN-HABITAT.
- v) GMU's activities focus on gender mainstreaming, advocacy, training, capacity building, technical advice, research and monitoring. It should ensure the systems, awareness, knowledge, skills, tools, resources and accountability mechanisms are in place to bring about real benefits to men and women, more equitably (Gender Equality Programme, 2009:1-3).

gender imbalances and promotes gender mainstreaming, with emphasis on assessing the impact on men and women of all policies, programmes and activities during design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The Evaluation Team does not want to overemphasise the dichotomy of 'women-focused initiatives' and 'gender mainstreaming' which the gender mainstreaming strategy has falsely contributed to and which, in many cases, has created more confusion than clarification.⁴ Adherence to the global two-pronged mainstreaming approach/ strategy is used only as one of several criteria in this evaluation (see specifications above) to assess the degree to which UN-HABITAT's work on gender has become more strategic and coherent. A brief resume of UN-HABITAT's institutional position on gender mainstreaming is set out in Box 3.1.1.

UN-HABITAT'S GENDER POLICY

Over the past few decades, UN-HABITAT has taken a number of steps to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, both in its programmes and within the institution itself. Notable amongst these are the development of a gender policy, first adopted in 1996 and revised in 2002.

In 2003, the Governing Council (GC) of UN-HABITAT adopted resolution 19/16 which addressed women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading. The 2005 GC resolution 20/7 went further and requested the Executive Director 'to ensure that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches and units of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme address gender equality and women's empowerment in human settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities.'

⁴ See discussion on the growing skepticism about the mainstreaming strategy below and in chapter 4.

The 2007 GC resolution 21/9 requested the promotion of access to housing finance by low-income women either as individuals or in housing cooperatives and associations.

UN-HABITAT's current Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008-2013 places a specific focus on gender equality in three of its focus areas⁵. Gender is specifically referred to in focus area 1 on advocacy, monitoring and partnership, with a special reference to women's groups; in focus area 2 on promotion of participatory urban planning, management and governance, in relation to inclusive and effective urban planning and in focus area 3 on pro-poor land and housing, in relation to gender sensitive housing, shelter relief and reconstruction modes in post-disaster and post-conflict areas.

When the MTSIP was adopted, the GC, in resolution 21/2, requested the ED to ensure that cross-cutting issues such as gender are duly reflected in the implementation of the enhanced normative and operational framework (ENOF),⁶ including in the indicators for each focus area.

UN-HABITAT is further guided by the system-wide policy on gender mainstreaming approved by the Chief Executive Board in 2006.

In response to recommendations from the 2003 Forward Looking Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT and from the Review of the cooperation between UN-HABITAT and the Government of Norway in 2007, the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2008-2013 was developed and approved in April 2009. The 2007 Review concluded that the 'Gender Mainstreaming Programme needs to be more coherently integrated in a shared strategic framework, instead of unrelated, discrete and disjointed set of activities'.

The GEAP, approved by the Governing Council in 2009, sets out to promote gender as a cross-

cutting issue across the focus areas of the MTSIP. It is also seen as a component of and a strategic contribution towards the operationalization of the UN-HABITAT gender policy, which was first called in the 2003 Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming.

THE GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GEAP)

The formulation of the Gender Equality Action Plan was attempted by UN-HABITAT to pursue a more strategic and coherent approach to its gender work, as much as a response to recommendations of the 2003 and 2007 gender evaluations. After the extended process of preparing the overall Mid Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP), UN-HABITAT decided to prepare the Gender Equality Action Plan 2008-2013.

It was acknowledged that the MTSIP was vague in its adherence to gender equality. The GEAP would compensate for this and also contribute to a more coherent approach to gender work. Following the structure of the MTSIP and its six Focus Areas, the GEAP would support the organisation in meeting its responsibility for promoting women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in all programmes and activities both at the normative and operational level, in line with the Governing Council resolution 21/2 and other relevant UN system resolutions.

The GEAP came about through a process of comments from programmes and partners in 2008 and involved an Experts Group Meeting (EGM) in January 2009. External consultants were called in to assist the process. Their response was critical of the process and of the draft GEAP document, of the timing, of missing participants in the EGM, including UNIFEM and UNDP, and poor provision at the meeting for discussing possible results, actions and indicators among a wider group of UN-HABITAT's own staff.

⁵ The focus areas are: Focus Area 1: Effective Advocacy, Monitoring, and Partnerships for Sustainable Urbanization, Focus Area 2: Participatory Planning, Management, and Governance, Focus Area 3: Access to Land and Housing for All. Focus Area 4: Environmentally Sound Basic Urban Infrastructure and Services. Focus Area 5: Strengthening Human Settlements Finance Systems

⁶ ENOF consists of strengthened partnerships and an integrated programme at global, regional and country level.

Other missed opportunities mentioned were tallying the GEAP with operational modalities at country level and with the ongoing One UN reform and establishing a baseline from which it is possible to measure progress and results. The comments were particularly critical with regard to no clear 'retrofit of the MTSIP' and how the MTSIP would lend itself to changes after the GEAP was completed (Lexow et al. 2009).

The GEAP was finalised and endorsed in 2009. Later that year, initial plans were elaborated for each Focus Area, in consultation with and with input from UN-HABITAT programmes and partners to strengthen the strategic focus and coherence of UN-HABITAT's gender work. Set out in a series of matrices, these frameworks specify outputs, activities, indicators, responsibilities, potential partners, expected funding and timeframe with reference to the anticipated strategic results and outcomes within each of the Focus Areas (FA).

It is the closest the Evaluation Team has seen to UN-HABITAT's gender work being presented in a Results-Based Management framework. Yet the nature of these frameworks makes them hard to implement as they are ambitious and wide-ranging and there is an issue with the quality of indicators (see discussion on indicators below).

It is the Evaluation Team's assessment that the GMU made a commendable attempt to involve itself in strategic planning for gender mainstreaming, relating the preparation of the GEAP to the overall MTSIP -even if the FA gender frameworks now need more systematic implementation, follow-up and monitoring. But some believe strategic weaknesses of the MTSIP are reflected in the GEAP as expressed in the following comment from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific:

'To a large extent, the GEAP provides the chapeau for UN-HABITAT's strategic work on

gender. Because it is aligned with the MTSIP, it follows the overall direction of the agency, as well as its weaknesses. (For instance, post-disaster and post-conflict work which accounts for 85 per cent of ROAP's portfolio is misplaced in the MTSIP.)'

The problem remains of aligning the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) with the MTSIP and the actual work of the agency. One might have expected that the GEAP, and the subsequent Focus Area GEAP matrices, would have been more operational and set out priorities in relation to the MTSIP.

As noted by the GEAP Expert Group, there is a critical need for the active engagement of division and department heads, as well as Gender Focal Points across the agency, to work toward prioritisation and implementation of the GEAP. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit cannot be held responsible as the primary actor for oversight of what is an extremely detailed and ambitious plan.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE GEAP

An important criteria for assessing whether the GEAP has contributed to more strategic and coherent work on gender is how it is being implemented⁷ and monitored⁸ Some monitoring of individual initiatives and their gender perspectives has been undertaken – for example, the Global Land Tool Network and the Water and Sanitation programmes. However, these were not evaluated with reference to the GEAP.

It needs to be borne in mind that it is the Programmes and Divisions, and not Focus Areas that do the reporting. Aligning the GEAP reporting with the MTSIP reporting has yet to be done.

⁷ How gender mainstreaming is implemented in programmes and projects is dealt with in section 3.2. The focus in this section is on monitoring.

⁸ See also section 4.

⁹ According to a report of the assembly, participants of the Gender Equality Action Assembly included government ministers, councillors, mayors, urban planners, architects, researchers, campaigners, UN-HABITAT staff, representatives of non-governmental organisations, including grassroots women's networks and other gender experts.

The First Session of the Gender Equality Action Assembly, held in March 2010 in Rio, was an ambitious initiative which could have been an epoch-making event for monitoring the GEAP. The Assembly was attended by 361 participants⁹ from 35 countries, partners and staff with an assessment of progress on the implementation of the GEAP as one key aim.

Work groups were organized around the Focus Area themes of the GEAP /MTSIP. However, the event has been characterized as a lost opportunity for monitoring the GEAP by several participants inside and outside UN-HABITAT consulted by the Evaluation Team. The proceedings from the Assembly brought few insights of achievements related to the GEAP or of specific Focus Areas and initiatives.

In hindsight, an assembly of this size and heterogeneity was not ideal for monitoring either the composite strategy or individual initiatives.¹⁰ What remains to be done is to work out adequate monitoring mechanisms for the composite Gender Equality Action Plan and the Focus Areas. A monitoring plan would reveal where indicators need to be to capture intended achievements of results, outputs and outcomes of gender equality and women's empowerment under a (mainstreaming) strategy which specifies activities, inputs, roles and responsibilities and partners. In the GEAP-related frameworks for the six Focus Areas, indicators are often expressed as unspecified numbers of outputs and activities.

The Chief of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit in November 2010 shared slides on 'Gender indicators' with the evaluation team but relevant indicators are hard to develop centrally, and the slides present embryonic plans only. For the gender indicators to be relevant for monitoring particular units, programmes and projects and to be of value to those involved in technical initiatives then generic gender indicators, impact assessment guidelines and the like need to be taken a step further and prepared with

discussions between the gender specialists and "subject matter" specialists.

It may be useful to consider two types of indicators: key performance-type indicators (corporate or general) such as the percentage of staff who understand the Gender Equality Policy, the percentage of new projects that include gender equality results and so on and specific programming indicators that are only relevant within a specific sector, such as the percentage of women on water management committees.

In establishing a monitoring framework for UN-HABITAT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the agency should consider a results-based monitoring and evaluation approach. It should also prioritise a manageable number of quantitative indicator assessments with qualitative assessments and self-evaluations.

Many objectives for gender equality in human settlements concern intangible yet important issues of changed awareness, behaviour and practices. However, their complexity means that they cannot be easily summarised numbers. (For a further discussion see chapter 4.)

The selected indicators could number between two and four and be organisation-wide. They should tally with the MTSIP and the GEAP. Both quantitative and qualitative indicators will need sex-disaggregated data.

BOX 3.1.2: IN LIEU OF A MONITORING PLAN

In lieu of a monitoring plan based on an assessment framework of objectives, indicators, expected outcomes and strategic results, progress reports from different areas keep the organisation abreast of what is going on. UN-HABITAT ROAP has, for example, made a brief Gender Equality Action Plan Progress Report for May-November 2009. It covers the objectives, activities and outcomes of A Training Event on Mainstreaming Gender in Human Settlement Programmes in Asia-Pacific, of Regional meetings, Conferences, Lectures and Training Events and additional activities for Strengthening gender components in normative and operational projects managed by ROAP.

¹⁰ Other objectives of the Gender Equality Action Assembly aside from 'monitoring progress' may have been met. These included sharing knowledge and forging partnerships to "bridge the urban gender divide".

PROGRAMME OF THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING UNIT

It is important to take the history and background of UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment work into consideration when assessing the current programme and role of the GMU (See

BOX 3.1.3: BACKGROUND TO THE GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMME AND THE GMU.

The Women in Human Settlements Development Programme, which later became the Women and Habitat Programme (WHP), was launched in UNCHS in 1990. It was located in the then Training Unit, and closely linked to the then Community Development Programme. From 1991 to 2000, the WHP was staffed by between two and four women, some of whom are still in UN-HABITAT.

The preparatory process for the 1995 Beijing Conference, as well as a perceived need to link with women 'on the ground', led to WHP actively linking with women's NGOs, principally the Habitat International Coalition - Women and Habitat Network (HICWAS). The relationship with HICWAS was officially recognized in a resolution of the 13th Commission on Human Settlements in 1991. In 1995, the Huairou Commission (HC) was launched during the Beijing Conference.

Some of the first programmes of the WHP focused on participatory data gathering to arrive at Women's Empowerment Indicators, Women in Construction and, very successfully, engendering the Habitat Agenda. The first Gender Policy, published in 1996, recommended the establishment of the Gender Unit to focus on gender mainstreaming within UN-HABITAT while retaining the WHP to continue on women's empowerment activities.

A Gender Policy Unit was established in 1997 to support implementation of the policy. For approximately a year this unit worked alongside the Women and Habitat programme which focused primarily on external¹¹ issues and the Gender Unit on internal issues. 'This was considered to be a best practice by the women's movement' (Huairou Commission, 2010:3).

When the first Coordinator of the WHP left in 1999, the WHP and the Gender Policy Unit were merged into a Gender Unit in 2000. The Women and Habitat Programme had essentially disappeared. The Gender Unit was staffed by three staff at the outset and was located in the Monitoring and Research Division (then known as the Urban Secretariat). In a lateral transfer the Coordinator of the Gender Unit was moved to the office of the Executive Director with some specific gender-related tasks until her retirement in mid-2001.

The gender policy was reformulated and published in 2002. The Gender Unit was renamed the Gender Mainstreaming Unit.

Box 3.1.3). The resources and capacity of the GMU are dealt with in chapter 4.

The current Gender Equality Programme includes a number of gender training events, EGMs, and the preparation of manuals and guidelines, awards, programme and project reviews which involve the GMU. It is difficult to see the logical links between the various gender activities, a point also made in the 2007 Review. The limited resources of the GMU to facilitate and ensure the quality of such events and of the Gender Equality Programme at large, detract from its strategic significance, leaving an impression of a programme which is still characterised by 'unrelated, discrete and a disjointed set of activities' (Kruse and Okpala, 2007:27).

As presented in written information provided by the chief of the GMU, the unit provides technical advice on a one-to-one basis on programmes and where necessary links these to relevant women's organizations with expertise in a specific field. For example, the GMU engaged with WATSAN staff over the need to communicate with the Gender Water Alliance, and on the appointment and subsequent activities of a gender and water specialist working with the Water for African Cities programme.

In the area of capacity building on gender and local governance, the unit contributed to the development of a training sourcebook on gender and local governance in collaboration with the Training and Capacity Building Branch (TCBB), including the review of draft outlines and chapters, and joint organization of an Experts Group Meeting to review the draft. The unit has also invested in pre-testing and rolling out the source book.

Also in the area of local governance, the GMU worked with the TCBB to incorporate a focus on gender equality into a capacity building for participatory planning, budgeting and gender mainstreaming initiative in three African

¹¹ The distinction between "external" and "internal" gender activities we owe to the Huairou Commission, Historical Overview: UN-HABITAT and Women. 2010

countries. Technical advice has further been given to the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme on the design of questionnaires to the Safer Cities Programme on using planning to combat women and girls' insecurity in cities and also to the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN).

Key stakeholders, both external and internal to UN-HABITAT, have grown increasingly sceptical of the GMU's attempts to continue to address most of the wide agenda which was earlier addressed by the WHP and the Gender Policy Unit. In the meantime, some larger programmes have established their own mechanisms with fully or part-time dedicated Gender Focal Points for strengthening gender perspectives, namely GLTN, Water and Sanitation, Climate Change, Safer Cities, ROAP and ROLAC.

It is not quite clear whether these programme or project-related gender activities belong to the current Gender Equality Programme, referred to in Box 3.1.3 for which the GMU is 'a central point of contact'. The uncertainty surrounding the relationship between the GMU and other gender specialists in the agency is of particular concern and is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

The Evaluation Team's investigations leave an impression of fairly strong self-contained gender mainstreaming initiatives in the mentioned programmes, side-by-side with a variety of ad hoc normative and operational gender activities, a number of which are run by the GMU. This should not be regarded a problem as there is room for multiple gender initiatives, and it shows that other parts of the agency are taking up the issue of gender equality.

The problem lies in poor motivation for and practice of dialogue and exchange of experience within the agency. This relationship is currently deemed by respondents to be too one-sided and based on 'extraction'; the GMU makes requests for information from gender specialists elsewhere in the organisation, but they feel they know little about what goes on in the GMU. Without the involvement of gender

expertise elsewhere in the organization, their competencies are not fully utilized to the benefit of gender mainstreaming. Improved sharing and communication would create a more coherent Gender Equality Programme.

There is a consensus amongst stakeholders within UN-HABITAT of the need to improve impact on the ground, a point made by the 2003 *Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation*. Findings from the Evaluation Team's review of policy and programme work also show that normative statements of intent to promote gender equality are not necessarily put into practice on the ground (see section 3.2). The mechanisms to ensure that gender mainstreaming commitments, as set out in policy statements and in programme documents, are reflected in operational work are weak. This is a common situation and not unique to UN-HABITAT.

The current gender screening mechanism for project proposals by the Programme Review Committee, on which the GMU is represented, has no systematic monitoring follow-up. There is also a lack of gender indicators in the MTSIP (see discussions below). These are two factors which detract from a coherent gender equality programme, which should link normative and operational work from the global to the local level.

Opinions within UN-HABITAT are split over *how* exactly to pursue the linkage between the normative and operational work in the area of gender mainstreaming. The dominant view is that the GMU should concentrate on normative work and focus on *facilitation* of training, capacity development, knowledge management and dissemination, advocacy, policy-influencing, and responding to requests for technical support.

This is reflected in a comment to the evaluation team from a regional office:

'GMU should be more normative than operational. It should seek to empower, capacitate and activate an internal network

of gender focal points within the substantive programmes of UN-HABITAT. It should be a coordinating unit, rather than an implementing one.'

The need for more support at country level was highlighted by staff in the country programmes, and was also apparent during the field visit to Senegal. It would appear that there is limited contact between regions or countries and the GMU.

The following are responses from email questionnaires:

'There are very limited discussions between HQ and operational activities in Afghanistan on gender (or on other issues).'

'A strong link with programmes/projects implementation at the country level may need to be established through more interaction such as collaborative country action plan development, information request to the field and feedback/guidance based on it.'

'The GMU has increasingly made improvements and gains in promoting gender equality and implementing gender programmes that are its value added, but there should be continued intervening at the country level too. In terms of implementation at the country level, more training and workshops on the gender mainstreaming in human settlements need to be conducted at the country level so that field project staff and government staff can be more aware of the issues and directly reflect into the project implementation at the local level.'

Thus the Evaluation Team recommends that the GMU considers how it could institute mechanisms for greater interaction with regional and liaison offices through Gender Focal Points and programme specialists to be better placed to support the agency's operational work, and to disseminate lessons from country-level experience to both internal and external audiences.

THE WOMEN'S LAND ACCESS TRUST PROGRAMME¹²

One recommendation from the 2003 evaluation was that the GMU "focus on specific and targeted projects at local level". The GMU appears to have interpreted this literally, to mean that it should engage more in operational work.

As a result, the GMU has become progressively more involved in the implementation of the Women's Land Access Trusts (WLAT) in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The programme seeks to develop practical solutions to security of tenure for and the economic empowerment of women.

BOX 3.1.4: THE WLATS – BRIDGING NORMATIVE AND OPERATIONAL WORK?

In 2009 a Women Land Access Trust Manual was developed by a consultant for UN-HABITAT. The intention was to facilitate the scaling up of WLATs. The rather detailed manual includes lessons learnt and recommendations which aim to optimise cross-cutting cooperation and coherence.

'The basic recommendation on what can be done to strengthen WLATs would be to create strong formal inter-dependent linkages and coordination between the Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF), Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operations (ERSO) and WLAT, GEAP and Youth and Partners Program so that some of the processes are not replicated but rather complement each other in the execution of the pro-poor housing agenda' (Taylor 2009:11)

Selected programme-related concerns mentioned in Uganda Women's Land Access Trust's¹³ progress report in 2010 were: "Highly-political, sensitive and scarce nature of land makes it difficult for the Central Government to allocate land for the project.' The report added that the lack of prioritization of housing as key development and infrastructural issues makes it hard to influence decision-making at the Central and Local Government levels. This would be, for example, in the event that UWLAT requested concessions in reducing high interest rates or deductions in the costs of building materials.

The report went on to say that a lack of coordination and limited networking among the various related projects both within the UN-HABITAT, governments and other actors at international and local levels cause duplicity, unnecessary friction and misunderstanding while a high number of unemployed youths within and beyond the project area do not feel the programme directly addresses their urban challenges.

There was a strong management recommendation that UN-HABITAT reconsiders this approach of using volunteers for highly rated Projects if the Project is to succeed (UWLAT report 2010: 5-6).

¹² The Evaluation Team has been informed in January 2011 that UN-HABITAT management has taken steps to move the responsibility for the WLAT's away from the GMU

¹³ UWLAT is the implementing Uganda partner

The programme centres on increasing women's economic capacity to access finance for housing development improving household incomes and living standards and enhancing security of tenure and ownership of land.

The programme has been justified as a pilot project with potential for scaling up, one that integrates both normative and operational perspectives. However, implementation of the programme has, for several years, been more complicated than anticipated (see Box 3.1.4).

What's equally problematic is that this is maintained by key stakeholders inside and outside UN-HABITAT and that the WLATs are being implemented with insufficient recourse to the technical know-how within UN-HABITAT itself, including the Human Settlement Financing Division. Project reports (UWLAT 2010) are highly critical of the loan facility, technical building standards, project organisation and limited outreach.

The programme thus risks tarnishing the image of the GMU and of UN-HABITAT itself. The GMU should liaise with the Human Settlements Finance Branch to consider withdrawing from the Women's Land Access Trusts, leaving them viable and sustainable (where possible) and in the hands of specialists who are equipped to deal with the financial complexities.

Most respondents are strongly of the opinion that the GMU's involvement in Women's Land Access Trusts – as an attempt to bridge normative and operational initiatives – has failed. The GMU's engagement in the project implementation, disjointed from other relevant programme areas, has been to the detriment of mutual learning on gender mainstreaming across the organisation.

This is a common tension. For staff with gender equality responsibilities, it is often more interesting and rewarding to work on a women's empowerment project rather than internal change. Dealing with resistance, and convincing colleagues to work towards gender equality outcomes, can be difficult.

Unfortunately, the case of the WLATs has been so problematic that it is hard to draw useful lessons on the links between access to finance, housing and women's empowerment for those inside and outside the agency. It must be concluded that the project has not made a strategic contribution to UN-HABITAT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment in human settlements.

From the assessment above, it should be apparent that the Gender Equality Programme is a collection of many discrete gender mainstreaming activities, each of which on their own may be significant. Without clear internal linkages, however, their coherence and contribution to mutual learning and progress towards improved gender mainstreaming come under question.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UN-HABITAT AND THEIR ADEQUACY

As should be clear from the above discussion, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit is just one part of an institutional architecture for this issue in UN-HABITAT but collaboration and exchange within the agency could be greatly improved. The GEAP is an attempt to draw the whole agency into working on gender equality and women's empowerment but in practice it has limited ownership outside the GMU.

The following comment from a senior staff member in a country office is illuminating of how an action plan parallel to the Mid Term Strategic and Institutional Plan easily becomes sidelined:

'It seems even senior project managers of the country office did not know the existence of the action plan. Therefore, it is hard to think that the action plan has practically had influence on the country level work. It may need to be 'translated into concrete goals and benchmarks within the specific context' to guide the country level work. That would be the area where GMU's inputs and support to the country office is required.'

There has been limited interaction between the GMU and staff in other divisions over the GEAP. Furthermore, the GEAP has been assessed by many stakeholders to have been second best to an integration of clear gender perspectives in the MTSIP from the beginning. It is recommended that the MTSIP Steering Committee ensure stronger, explicit gender equality goals in forthcoming adjustments of the Plan. This has been achieved in other UN agencies, notably United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (see chapter 4).

For this to happen, the MTSIP Focus Area Teams must take the GEAP Focus Area frameworks further towards implementation and monitoring preparedness. Secondly, there is a critical need for coordination to optimise the synergies between subject matter and gender equality work across the organisation. It is here that the Focus Area Teams, together with the MTSIP Steering Committee, have a role to play to ensure that gender mainstreaming is addressed as a cross-cutting issue in the organisation in all Focus Area activities, in line with the UN-HABITAT Agenda.

This is not to detract from the GMU's 'coordinating role for gender mainstreaming into all UN-HABITAT programmes and activities'. At the policy and technical level, however, these other players need to take on a proactive responsibility and, for the time being, the GEAP must be considered as a complementary and necessary plan.

UN-HABITAT has a system of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) distributed throughout the divisions, regions, countries and programmes. A number of them have high-level expertise in gender combined with technical skills, and the network is potentially a powerful asset for delivering on the agency's commitments to gender mainstreaming.

Unfortunately, this decentralized model based on a gender mainstreaming unit and gender focal points has not been adequately developed, either to the satisfaction of the GFPs themselves or for the gender mainstreaming work of the agency. The criteria for being appointed as a GFP and its role and function are unclear, as is the relationship between the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, the Gender Task Force (GTF) and the GFPs. Some have never seen Terms of References for their work.

Also, resources for GFPs vary considerably. In a few cases with the larger programmes, they have dedicated funds obtained from external programme funding but generally, GFPs are working on gender issues on a "voluntary" basis alongside other primary assignments.

The GFP function has not been institutionalized or given the authority and respect required for meaningful work. The tendency in some units to underplay the significance of the GFP position by appointing 'a young woman with no specific gender work experience, and no resources to hand for (voluntary) gender work' further undermines the GFP 'institution'.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, the Gender Task Force, composed of Gender Focal Points, does not function optimally and the small Gender Mainstreaming Unit attempts to undertake more gender work – normative and operational – than its capacity allows.

Beyond the GFPs and the Gender Task Force, UN-HABITAT has other systems in place that could potentially contribute to greater gender mainstreaming. One of these is the Programme Review Committee, on which the GMU is represented, where critical screening of project applications takes place. Here, the standard querying of whether 'gender issues are reflected' is rarely of satisfactory depth. This is a common but unproductive question in project review committees.

The Evaluation Team learned that the procedures of the PRC are being revised and a more

¹⁴ Discussions with UNIFEM and UN-HABITAT GFPs.

elaborate gender screening checklist will be worked out that will hopefully move beyond 'ticking the gender box'. Whilst this would be an improvement, the process of preparing proposals of a satisfactory quality is critical, as pointed out by many respondents.

Other organisations, such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 'Development Co-operation Directorate', (DAC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have developed marker systems for rating gender sensitivity that offer a way of tracking investments. It is recommended that Programme Review Committee considers how it could adapt and apply a marker system.

However, other organisations, such as the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) have been reluctant to continue with marker systems, facing difficulties in spreading a common understanding and application of the marker methodology throughout the organisation. This problem would be reduced if the system were to be used primarily by the PRC.

UN-HABITAT could do more to ensure that the programme design process incorporates analysis of how initiatives will potentially affect gender equality. UN-HABITAT's generic **Guide to gender impact assessment** (undated) is a useful starting point. Not all staff may have the skills to undertake this analysis but they need to be able to draw on, and learn from, someone who does.

As such, in areas where there is no specialist Gender Focal Point, the GMU may have a role to engage with the programme designers and work with them to generate understanding on how the proposed intervention might have implications for gender equality. This method has been adopted by UNEP (see chapter 4).

The current institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming have grown along with

and around the Gender Mainstreaming Unit. However, they are not functioning adequately: coordination and dialogue are missing, the agency's considerable resources for gender mainstreaming are not being fully utilised and attempts to promote more coherent work (by? the GEAP) are not being monitored.

An observation from the 2003 evaluation remains pertinent: "If the Gender Mainstreaming Unit is to mainstream gender **comprehensively** across the whole range of UN-HABITAT programmes, then commensurate co-ordinating and monitoring powers as well as adequate human and financial resources will need to be allocated, as called for in the current UN-HABITAT Gender Policy 2002" (2003:6).

How this recommendation might be taken forward is elaborated upon in chapter 4. However, the GMU is not the sole mechanism within the institution through which gender mainstreaming can be promoted. Processes around the MTSIP and the Programme Review Committee (PRC) could also potentially contribute to greater commitment to gender equality results in programmes.¹⁵

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

In terms of **strategic** focus, the preparation of the GEAP signalled a realisation that the MTSIP had not made gender equality goals and indicators adequately explicit in the overarching strategy for the agency. The GEAP was an attempt to put an explicit strategy in place to guide the agency's work on gender mainstreaming, as were the updated and more detailed Focus Area frameworks. Aligning the GEAP with the MSTIP was an attempt to make the GEAP internally consistent with the agency's broader goals.

Whilst this is laudable, implementation of the GEAP will require engagement beyond the Gender Mainstreaming Unit across divisions and programmes to ensure ongoing commitment.

¹⁵ An important player in the 'institutional architecture' has not been mentioned here – the partners of UN-HABITAT in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment work (see section 3.3).

Attempts to implement and monitor progress have had limited success to date.

The establishment of a system of Gender Focal Points (GFP) is a strategic tool for promoting work on gender equality. The GFP network is potentially a powerful asset for delivering on the agency's commitments to gender mainstreaming. This decentralised model based on a gender mainstreaming unit and gender focal points has not been adequately developed.

In terms of **coherence**, the network of gender specialists and GFPs and the existence of a Gender Task Force is potentially a way to strengthen activities within and across branches, units and programmes. Although there are a number of ongoing successful and innovative mainstreaming initiatives within the agency, there is little encouragement for exchange of experience within the agency, or dissemination to a broader audience.

Improved sharing and communication would create a more coherent Gender Equality Programme. The need for greater support for and documentation of work on gender mainstreaming at regional and country level has been highlighted repeatedly.

Ultimately, UN-HABITAT should work towards a programme design process that incorporates analysis of how initiatives will potentially affect gender equality. Not all staff may have the skills to undertake this analysis but they need to be able to draw on, and learn from, someone who does. As such, in areas where there is no specialist Gender Focal Point, the GMU may have a role to facilitate or engage with the programme designers to generate understanding on how the proposed intervention might have implications for improving gender equality.

The Programme Review Committee and the MTSIP are potential mechanisms for generating greater coherence across the agency for work on gender equality in human settlements. The MTSIP Steering Committee has a key role to ensure stronger, explicit gender equality goals in forthcoming adjustments of the Plan.

3.2 REVIEW OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PROGRAMMES/PROJECTS AND POLICIES

What has been achieved in integrating a gender perspective in human settlement related policies, programmes and projects?

The following section assesses UN-HABITAT's work on gender mainstreaming in programmes/projects and policies in focus areas 2, 3 and 4, with brief mention of focus area 5. The discussion of each of the focus areas is preceded by a short literature review. This review reflects current debate in academic and policy circles, and highlights the most critical issues for gender equality in human settlements, within each thematic area.

Although UN-HABITAT is contributing to these debates through its own policy work, examination of this contribution is undertaken separately in subsequent sections and with reference to programme/project work.

The discussion of UN-HABITAT's work on gender in each of the focus areas draws on a reading of policy and programme documents shared with the consultants; information from meetings with UN-HABITAT staff in Nairobi and where applicable, is complemented with data gathered during the field visit to Senegal.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

This section employs a **results focus** to take forward UN-HABITAT's thinking on its gender mainstreaming work, and to avoid limiting the evaluation to the overly general formulation of whether or not 'gender issues' have been integrated into policy and programme work.

The assessment criteria for this section therefore includes discussion of the type of **gender equality outcome** promoted or supported by policy and programme work as well as gender sensitivity of and the level of gender analysis in the documents reviewed.

Gender equality outcomes could involve a range of results including:

- Responding to the different roles, needs, priorities of women and men as they currently exist with sensitivity to women's and men's practical needs (often referred to as "gender sensitive").¹⁶
- Promoting equitable access to basic service provision.
- Promoting equality of opportunity, influence and benefit by responding to women's strategic needs.¹⁷
- Attempting to challenge the balance of power between men and women in the domestic and public spheres.

It should be noted that the divisions between these different types of results are not always clear. Furthermore, this evaluation does not set out to criticise initiatives that limit work on gender to ensuring sensitivity or responding principally to practical needs. It is frequently important to level the playing field between men and women in terms of ability to benefit from what city life has to offer; working on practical needs may serve as a starting point for later work on strategic needs or may trigger an impact on strategic interests.

The intention behind this analysis is to provide greater clarity for UN-HABITAT on what the 'integration of a gender perspective' really means, to firm up an understanding of 'empowerment' and to challenge the organisation to consider its role in the promotion of gender equality in human settlements.

The discussion on the type of gender equality outcome promoted in policy and programme documents is included in tables at the end of each Focus Area section. These tables also

indicate which documents have been reviewed and go on to assess the documents' focus on gender and scores them according to levels of gender analysis. The tables aim to provide clarity and transparency on how the documents have been rated.

A NOTE ON SAMPLING

The documents reviewed here are those made available by UN-HABITAT staff in Nairobi and Senegal and those found through searches of the UN-HABITAT website. The type of information available for each focus area, and indeed the type of work that UN-HABITAT undertakes under different themes (operational or normative), varies considerably and this is reflected in the discussion. This review cannot be exhaustive but aims to give a broad-brush portfolio review, through which lessons can be drawn for clarifying the organisation's work on gender mainstreaming.

INTRODUCTION – GENDER AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Men and women live in, experience and move through a city differently. Their ability to achieve their full potential as human beings and benefit from all that the urban way of life has to offer, can be restricted or improved in various ways.

For the most part, women are at a disadvantage to men, in terms of vulnerability, access to services and lack of power in urban areas. One reason is that women are generally over-represented amongst the urban poor, and this affects their ability to access land, housing and basic urban services.

Gendered differences in levels of poverty are in part caused by the type of work in which women are most frequently involved as it is

¹⁶ Practical gender needs 'are those needs which arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning, by virtue of their gender, within the sexual division of labour [...] in many contexts needs such as adequate housing, clean water supply, or community crèche facilities are identified as the practical gender needs of low-income women, both by planners as well as by women themselves' (Moser and Peake 1987: 29).

¹⁷ Strategic gender needs are those needs identified from the analysis of women's subordination, and, deriving out of this, the formulation of an alternative more satisfactory organisation of society to those which exist at present, in terms of the structure and nature of relationships between men and women (Moser and Peake 1987: 29).

often poorly paid, part-time and insecure. But while it is obviously not just women who are poor in cities, in addition to their unequal insertion into the labor market, women face further disadvantage in cities caused by gender blindness and/or inherent male bias in the institutions responsible for city policy making, service provision and planning and, finally, discrimination in formal and customary law and 'traditional' gender roles, which lead to unequal division of labor in the home.

These factors manifest themselves in and impact upon both public and private spheres, contributing to and exacerbating the feminisation of poverty. Women, and especially young women, are particularly vulnerable to violence in towns and cities.

FOCUS AREA 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY ISSUES IN URBAN PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

There are two main objectives behind a gender-sensitive approach to urban planning and management: to increase women's participation in human settlements development and to generate gender awareness and competence amongst men and women in the political arena and planning practice to ensure that all citizens benefit from what urban life has to offer (Beall 1996). Carol Rakodi entitled a 1990s literature review of gender and urban settlements *Women in the city of man* and, as Beall (1997: 39) points out, cities have been 'historically designed by men and for men – but inhabited by both women and men, who have diverse interests and needs at different stages of their lives and in different family and community contexts.'

It is therefore important to remember that over the centuries it has, for the most part, been male architects, planners and politicians who have designed, built and left their mark on the urban fabric. Even where planners and policy makers

employ a universal tone in their work, most of it assumes a male subject (Fainstein and Servon 2005:3).

The city of the modern era has been planned with a 'rational' separation of the domestic and the public spheres. The latter is generally the realm of the male citizen, who goes out into the city for productive work and the former that of the female, who remains at home involved with reproductive tasks such as maintaining the home and caring for children and elderly relatives (Beall 1997). As Beall (1997:41) points out, in some situations this 'stereotypical notion of nuclear families' and the separation of public and private spheres it engenders has never applied, and in others is no longer appropriate as patterns of labor have changed.

Specific areas where gender-blind planning can have a negative impact on women include transport and settlement planning. Transport services are often planned around those who are in formal employment and working office hours, the majority of whom tend to be men. Transport options at different times of the day can be more limited, rendering it harder for those responsible for taking and collecting children from school, or for going to markets to buy food for the household to move around the city. Public transport design may further fail to accommodate people who work in the informal sector, where women are overrepresented.

In the case of settlement planning, although it is often cheaper to lay out housing in a grid patterns, research has shown that women prefer clusters of homes so as to facilitate joint childcare and cooperation between households (Moser and Peake 1987) and to increase security and sociability (Beall 1996).

Outside of the home, urban design has a clear impact on public space, the dynamics of which can correlate with actual or perceived security in cities. This has different implications for men and women. Whilst insecurity in public space is often associated with the vulnerability of women in cities, men are also frequently victims of

violence. Young men in particular can have their freedom to move about the city curtailed by fear of gang activity (Jarvis et al. 2009).

An awareness of the need to incorporate gender perspectives into city planning to analyse the ways in which different groups of men and women inhabit, use and work in the city has gradually begun to inform the planning profession since the 1970s. However, 'a gender perspective will not inform urban policy and planning processes automatically' (Beall 1997: 39).

One barrier to the incorporation of gender perspectives into planning is the resistance of some members of the planning profession to accept the politicised nature of their work (Todes et al. 2009). A further problem is that the need to employ joined-up thinking and take into account the overlaps between housing, work and transportation does not sit easily with the way that planners organise themselves (Fainstein and Servon 2005). Finally, as indicated by Moser (1993:38) the needs of men and women in cities are highly contingent upon a number of social factors including class, ethnicity and religion.

Thus, a generalised reference within the planning profession to 'women's needs' is 'of limited utility when translated into specific planning interventions'. As such, for plans to respond to gendered needs, planners cannot rely on generic guidelines, and will have to analyse the conditions of 'various groups of men and women in particular contexts' (Todes et al. 2009:6).

URBAN GOVERNANCE

Until fairly recently, the technocratic approach to planning has been reflected in the concept of urban governance, which used to be equated solely with urban management: 'More recently it has come to be understood both as government responsibility and as civic engagement involving a full range of participants, and thus making it

more possible to integrate a gender perspective (Beall 1997: 43).'

The development literature supports the idea that 'that women are more politically active and influential at the local level' (Beall 2010), and that it is easier for women to become involved in local government (MacLean n.d). There has been a recent push from the international development community to promote female candidates for positions in local government and, as a response, quotas have been introduced in many countries.

However, there can be great hostility to female candidates standing for election (ibid), and they may have difficulties speaking out once in post. Furthermore, it cannot be taken as a given that greater numbers of women in local authorities will necessarily mean that policy and planning becomes gender sensitive. This assumes that once elected, they will have the capacity, influence and political will to ensure that cities are managed in a gender-responsive manner. It also assumes that as women, they will be gender-aware, although this may not be the case (Beall 1996).

It is also often assumed that women's interests are more closely aligned with the work of local rather than national government as they have greater levels of concern than men with the provision of local infrastructure and services. The promotion of the decentralisation agenda by international development actors is thus seen as a potentially positive step for greater inclusion of women's priorities in the local political agendas.

However, research on gender and decentralisation shows that while this level of governance is more closely linked to the problems affecting vulnerable groups, including women, it is also the level most associated with prejudices and conservative culture. Domination by local elites may make it difficult for poor people, particularly women, to influence local decision making (Todes et al. 2007).

THE INTEGRATION OF A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO UN-HABITAT'S WORK ON URBAN PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

This thematic area of UN-HABITAT's work is broad and encompasses an array of different areas of policy work and programming. It includes initiatives related to security in cities, participatory slum upgrading and the promotion of democratic and participatory governance.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

In the area of local governance, UN-HABITAT has published a valuable resource entitled *Gender in local government: A sourcebook for trainers* in 2008. Produced by the Training and Capacity Building Branch (TCBB), the book provides succinct and well-written overviews of the principal issues concerning gender equality in human settlements, interspersed with case studies and guidelines for activities.

The sourcebook represents a concerted attempt by TCBB to promote greater gender sensitivity amongst municipal government representatives. The introductory section to the guide notes that UN-HABITAT's innovative publication record of capacity building materials for democratic local governance has been 'deficient when it comes to gender mainstreaming and diversity analysis' (Khosla 2008: 3).

It was recognised that greater guidance was needed to help trainers mainstream gender into capacity building programmes with local government. It thus complements existing materials published by UN-HABITAT. Notable in the text is the presentation of gender training as a potential route to social and political transformation.

'Gender training is about changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices that are fundamental to the patriarchal order of most cultures. It is about changing the way we are influenced as women and men by social norms and values. Talking about gender and gender relations is a complex process and often elicits strong emotions and reactions from participants' (Ibid: 7).

With this attitude to change and transformation, the guide can potentially be used to challenge patriarchal culture within local government, working towards the greater emancipation and empowerment of women.

During interviews in Nairobi, UN-HABITAT staff made frequent reference to the sourcebook as a high-quality resource that has generated considerable interest amongst partners. In Senegal a partner organisation that works with local government singled out the publication, which has been translated into French, as one of UN-HABITAT's key contributions to its own work.

Anecdotal evidence would thus suggest that this is an example of a gender mainstreaming tool that has found purchase at the country level. However, it should be noted that the agency has no mechanisms or criteria to monitor and report on the extent to which it has successfully contributed to mainstreaming through this type of initiative.

UN-HABITAT has promoted further work on gender in local governance through partnership with the Huairou Commission. This involved support for six 'Local to local dialogues' in which grassroots women's organisations engaged with local government over development priorities. The experiences have been used to produce a guide entitled *Local to local dialogue: A grassroots women's perspective on good governance* (UN-HABITAT/Huairou Commission 2004). This was supported as part of the World Campaign on Urban Governance.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

With regard to the operationalization of work on gender in local government, during the consultant's visit to Senegal, interviews were held with staff members of Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), the partner NGO that has been implementing a Participatory Budgeting Programme, and with project staff and the local mayor. However, despite repeated requests for more detailed information on the programme, including evaluation reports and training curricula, these were not received.

This programme is funded by Spanish cooperation and is also being implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique. In designing the participatory budgeting process for the municipality of Rufisque Est in Greater Dakar, ENDA had installed a quota system, whereby delegates at the local neighbourhood level had to be represented at the higher 'zone' level on the budgeting steering committee by both a man and a woman.

They had also placed an emphasis on representation of young people and hired facilitators for neighbourhood and community level meetings with a purposeful gender and youth balance.

ENDA had further instituted a system whereby priority issues identified by the community would score more highly, and have more chance of funding by the programme, if they could be expected to have a positive impact on vulnerable groups, including women.

Interview respondents differed on the extent to which they thought the quota system had ensured that women's needs and interests were adequately voiced and represented on the steering committee. Even with the quota system in place, only seven women out of a total membership of more than 20 were represented on the committee. One facilitator noted that although some female members were dynamic and spoke up at meetings, others – generally those who were less well-educated – preferred to listen and contributed much less to the proceedings.

At the end of the participatory process, the priority issue chosen for investment was the clearing of a drainage canal. The latter issue was considered important for women because of the negative impact on children's health and safety caused by the presence of a channel of stagnant water on the streets.

The current mayor has only been in post since 2009, and was not able to speak at length about the programme. However, he was able

to talk about plans to work with a network of women's organisations that had been involved in the participatory budgeting process, planned training courses on micro-enterprise and his attempts to increase general participation in local governance.

A full evaluation of the project is beyond the scope of this assignment. According to interviews with programme staff, it actively sought to promote women's participation in local government, responding to strategic needs. It may have altered attitudes towards women in public life as well as responding to practical needs over childcare.

It should be noted that the gender sensitivity of the programme is largely due to the choice of partner organisation (see discussion in partnerships section). ENDA as an organisation is committed to greater gender equality as one of its institutional principles and took steps to ensure the promotion of women's voice and interests during the participatory budgeting process.

Two further initiatives related to urban governance and planning supported by UN-HABITAT in Senegal were also reviewed by the consultant: the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP), and the City Development Strategy for Dakar.

The overall programme document for the PSUP across Africa places an emphasis on gender as one of four themes for the first phase of the initiative, along with governance, slums and environment. This phase involved the drawing up of urban sector profiles and is complete in Senegal.

Two documents produced were reviewed by the consultant: the National urban profile for Senegal and Senegal: Dakar urban profile. The documents are divided up into thematic sections, one of which is gender equality.

These sections discuss the socio-economic situation of women in the country as a whole and its capital. Both documents end with a

series of mini-proposals for further work. These are again organised by theme and projects for 'women beneficiaries' are presented separately.

There is no mention of gender equality in proposals for work on slums, governance or environment; as such there is no evidence of mainstreaming. However, the production of these texts appears to have been largely a research exercise.

Whilst consultations were held with NGOs and other groups, the final documents have reportedly not been widely used by government, nor have the bulk of proposals found funding. Nevertheless, the participatory budgeting programme discussed above was, according to the programme document, a response to priority needs that emerged out of the Rapid Urban Sector Profiling. Thus the exercise may have had some impact on the donor community.

For the second phase, feasibility studies for slum upgrading will be carried out. Women-headed households are specifically mentioned in the programme document as a priority amongst the target group. This second phase of the programme has the potential to generate greater interest from government as the feasibility studies for slum upgrading can be used to seek financing for actual upgrading work on the ground. This phase has yet to start in Senegal.

The programme document is gender-sensitive, particularly with regard to its emphasis on the collection of sex-disaggregated data. It further flags the need for close collaboration with the GMU.

'Throughout the second phase the gender mainstreaming element will be taken care of through: assessing gender disaggregated data, gender responsive stakeholder involvement, a gender responsive strategy for formulation and decision making, the facilitation of gender responsive action planning and resource mobilization as well as the institutionalization of gender responsive slum upgrading frameworks and monitoring instruments (UN-HABITAT n.d.:8).'

This statement of intent for the second phase is backed up in the document in the sections that describe planned activities. These include regional seminars on gender and slums and the conducting of detailed socio-economic surveys.

A list of issues for survey teams to cover includes two items where gender is specifically mentioned. These are 'Gender equality assessed; literacy rates by age and sex, school enrolment' and 'Types of employment [...] by age, sex and household member'. Whilst it is perhaps important to single out these issues to stress the fact that the survey teams must address gender equality, the survey could clearly be enriched if sex-disaggregated data is collected for all aspects.

Most of the other items on the list for the survey have clear gendered implications. These include 'Opportunities for safe and healthy living assessed'; 'experience of crime and urban violence'; 'HIV/AIDS knowledge and access to treatment, care and support' and 'Distance from workplace and specific transportation arrangements'. Furthermore, greater clarity may be needed on what constitutes a 'gender responsive slum upgrading framework' if this laudable commitment is to be realised.

It became clear during the field visit to Senegal that positive outcomes of UN-HABITAT programming with regard to gender equality in governance are dependent on the choice of partner organisation.

In the case of the second phase of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, it cannot be assumed that the partner will be equipped to design a gender-sensitive survey, be able to undertake appropriate data analysis or integrate findings into feasibility studies. The country programme manager in Senegal has numerous responsibilities, and might not be able to oversee this work or have the particular skills to do so.

Support will clearly be needed from the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and Gender Mainstreaming Unit to ensure that the laudable

commitments to work on gender and slums set out in the programme document are adequately followed through in the implementation phase.

The *Urban Development Strategy for Greater Dakar* is currently in the final stages of production and is based on a two-year participatory process that involved broad-based consultation with local municipal authorities as well as with local associations, including women's groups; community leaders and members and NGOs.

In the draft seen by the consultant, the final document is completely gender blind and promotes no specific gender equality results. This is despite covering a number of areas – health, transport, local economic development and education – where sensitivity to gender difference will have a critical impact on the extent to which the plan's stated vision for 2025 will be achieved.

Whilst UN-HABITAT staff in Senegal argued that, as a strategic document, it cannot be too specific on population groups, Urban Development Strategies can be used to plan how the city will respond to particular vulnerable populations.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

UN-HABITAT's work on Safer Cities is well known, highly regarded and has an important gender component. The strand of work began in 1996 and has had a strong gender focus since its inception. UN-HABITAT's work on Safer Cities has undertaken and disseminated research on women's safety and on tools to address security concerns in cities.

In 2007, UN-HABITAT and partners (including Huairou Commission, Red Mujer y Habitat and Women in Cities International) published a document entitled *The global assessment of women's safety* (UN-HABITAT et al. n.d.). This publication was the result of a mapping exercise that sought to strengthen the relationships between different actors working on women's safety while identifying areas of concern for women in cities, and tools on how to address these.

The assessment found that the safety audit was the tool most frequently utilised amongst local government to assess women's actual and perceived security in cities. As a result, UN-HABITAT, in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Women in Cities International published a document entitled *Women's Safety Audits: What works and where?* (Lambrick and Travers n.d.).

The publication provides an international comparative assessment of the positive and negative aspects of the tool, and identifies the concrete results of its use. The evaluative study further aims to provide information that can be used to develop guidelines for local authorities implementing safety audits.

The Safer Cities Programme is continuing its work to promote women and girls' security in cities through a new programme entitled Social Inclusion and Gender Safety in Urban Public Space. This initiative seeks to gather, consolidate and disseminate knowledge on social inclusion and its links to women's safety in urban areas, through the generation of a searchable web database, the promotion of a partners' platform and a policy paper.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

UN-HABITAT's work on urban governance, management and planning responds to the two main results areas for gender equality in human settlements planning/governance as set out by Beall (1996): increased women's participation in human settlements development and greater gender-awareness and competence amongst men and women in the political arena and planning practice.

UN-HABITAT has taken steps to raise gender awareness amongst men and women in the political arena through the production of a well-regarded and comprehensive training source book. The organisation should continue to promote the use of the material and exercises presented in the source book in its work with local governments around the world.

TABLE 3.1: Rating of documents reviewed under Focus Area 2

Name of programme/ project/policy	Type of doc reviewed	Gender Focus ¹⁸	Gender Analysis ¹⁹	Potential gender equality outcome
Gender in local government	Training source book	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit in human settlements
Dakar Urban Profile	Research report/ findings	N	2	None specified
Senegal National Urban Profile	Research report/ findings	N	2	None specified
Women's Safety Audits what works and where	Research report/ findings	P	3	Promotes improved security for women in cities
The global assessment on women's safety	Research report/ findings	P	3	Promotes improved security for women in cities
Urban Development Strategy for Greater Dakar	Strategy Document	N	0	None specified
Capacity Building for Local Participatory Planning, Budgeting and Gender Mainstreaming	Programme document	S	2	Promotes representation of women in public sphere.
Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme	Programme document	S	2	Promotes equality of access to improved urban settlements
Social Inclusion and Gender Safety in Urban Public Space.	Programme document	P	2	Promotes improved security for women in cities

UN-HABITAT's work on Safer Cities also involves a focus on greater gender awareness in planning practice. Although guidance materials have been produced, UN-HABITAT does not appear to be evaluating how this type of gender equality resource is being used, or by whom or with what results.

As it is designed, the second phase of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme has the potential to generate gender responsive feasibility studies for upgrading work. That is, if implementing partners are given adequate support for generating and analysing sex-

disaggregated data and they clarify what is meant by 'gender responsive slum-upgrading frameworks'.

However, the case of the Urban Development Strategy for Dakar demonstrates that ensuring women's participation in consultations and discussion spaces does not necessarily lead to gender sensitivity in final outputs. This indicates that greater support for implementing partners at country level is needed if positive intentions for gender sensitivity in programme documents are to be realised in practice.

¹⁸ Adapting DFID's 'gender markers' discussed by Moser (2005) P = Principal objective; S = Significant project objective; N = Non-targeted.

¹⁹ 0 = none; 1 = minimal; 2 = average, 3 = extensive (Moser 2005).

FOCUS AREA 3

LITERATURE REVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY ISSUES IN PRO-POOR LAND AND HOUSING

HOUSING

Women's access to housing is a particularly critical issue in cities of the developing world. Although women are generally responsible for the domestic sphere, and spend greater amounts of time in the home than men, they suffer more from 'the inadequate provision by the state of housing and basic services' (Moser and Peake 1987:13), not least because of their greater physical vulnerability.

It should be stressed that women's access to secure tenure and the guarantee of their rights to land and property on a par with men's can have an important impact on gender relations by improving their control over household decision-making, including the disposal of assets.

Despite the importance of secure and adequate housing for women, as noted by Kothari (2005:8): 'Women are still grossly denied the right to adequate housing and related rights such as land and water'. Women's ownership and control of assets is, in general, limited when compared to that of men, and this includes home ownership. This is, in part, linked to women's lower earning potential (Chant 2007: 46).

Women face difficulties in accessing housing finance (see discussion of Focus Area 5 below) and in some countries there are also structural and cultural factors that impede women's home ownership. As Chant describes, gender imbalances in home ownership relate to the tendency for housing to be registered in the name of the male household head, which can mean that women lose their homes to their husband's relatives, after his death, or following divorce. Women may also be dispossessed as daughters (Chant 2007).

Where housing is provided by the state to low-income households, issues surrounding the different needs of men and women with regards to housing design are frequently overlooked. Housing design which supposes a 'traditional' nuclear family can have a negative impact on women and curtail opportunities to undertake income-generating work or to combine home-based work with childcare.

Zoning laws may prohibit the establishment of small or micro businesses in residential areas and inappropriate relocation of slum dwellers to new areas may also limit employment opportunities.

LAND

Gender inequalities in access to housing cannot be divorced from the question of land. Women's ownership of land varies from region to region, but is estimated to be less than 2 per cent worldwide.²⁰ Chant (2007) notes that obstacles to land ownership include both high levels of land concentration and lack of empowerment but in some countries women may be prevented by law, from owning or inheriting land.

Even where these rights are guaranteed in national legislation, such as in much of Southern Africa, 'land grabbing by a husband's relatives is common. In other parts of Africa and in various Islamic countries outside the region, polygamy can further undermine women's land and property entitlements' (Chant 2007: 56).

Many policy documents on urban land and gender equality focus on female-headed households as they are over-represented amongst the poorest members of society. This is often because women's reduced access to land ownership, when compared with men's, is in part linked to lower incomes.

However, as Varley (2007) explains, it is critical to ensure that married and co-habiting women are protected should they become widowed or divorced. Varley's research points to the need

²⁰ www.fao.org

for a proactive approach to secure married women's rights to property. Even where men and women's rights are equal before the law, 'legal shortcomings and popular understandings of property relations [can relegate] women to a secondary position' (ibid: 1740).

One example of such an affirmative approach involves the promotion of joint tenure where, in the case of married or cohabiting couples, the names of both men and women are recorded on the title document. Noting that 'where women's rights are not stipulated they are likely to be overlooked' (ibid: 1745), Varley's recommendations for improving women's access to land includes support for paralegal organisations that, along with NGOs, can generate public awareness and advise women on their rights to land and property.

THE INTEGRATION OF A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO UN-HABITAT'S WORK ON PRO-POOR LAND AND HOUSING

LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Since 2003, the Land, Tenure and Property Administration section has produced a considerable quantity of policy and research documents on the gendered aspects of access to land and property, and to secure tenure. Notable was a research programme carried out between 2004 and 2005 that examined men and women's differential rights to land and property in 13 countries across Latin America, Southern Africa and the Balkans.

This research was complemented by a global overview of shared tenure options for women, and on Islamic land and property rights in the Muslim world. The research is synthesised in a comprehensive and accessible document entitled *Policy makers guide to women's land, property and housing rights across the world* (Sait 2007).

Whilst earlier UN-HABITAT policy documents on land had been critiqued by Varley (2007) for their 'slippage' in language and reversion to a narrow focus on female-headed households,

the research programme encompasses broad discussion of property rights for married women, including those in polygamous marriages, with in-depth discussion of how to ensure greater protection for these women, in the event of divorce or widowhood.

Other innovative and notable research and dissemination work undertaken on the gendered aspects of land issues includes an overview of shared tenure options for women, with an in-depth review of evidence to date on the impacts of joint tenure initiatives and a study of the impacts on women of land registration in Ethiopia.

These documents have a specific focus on women and their publication as stand-alone texts reflects the Section's laudable attempts to increase awareness of the gender inequalities inherent in property and land regimes around the world. They draw attention to the ongoing failure in many countries to ensure that women's equal rights in law are translated into access to land and guarantee of property rights on the ground.

Two features of these texts stand out. Firstly they stress that without affirmative action equal rights in law will not have a positive impact on women's enjoyment of these rights – a conclusion also reached by Varley (2007). Without specific affirmative measures to rectify the discriminatory practices of the past, recognition of equal rights between men and women remains a theory for the many women who cannot afford to buy land or housing (UN-HABITAT 2005: 12).

Secondly, they assert the potential changes in power relations within the household that can be achieved by ensuring women's land rights. These will contribute to greater empowerment through increased access to and control over land and greater decision making power within the household (ibid: 4) and thus promote gender equality of influence, opportunity and benefit.

However, one text on land rights and tenure security produced by UN-HABITAT that is not

specifically about gender appears to present a slightly different message. In *Secure land rights for all*, the more political (and therefore challenging) potential outcomes from greater gender equality in access to land are not stressed. Instead, more emphasis is given to the promotion of women's land rights as a route to poverty alleviation and child protection.

Providing secure land rights for women makes economic sense and is important for poverty reduction. This is because of women's roles as food producers in rural and peri-urban areas, their responsibilities for feeding family members and their broader roles in household management. [...] When women are denied equal tenure rights with the same degree of security as enjoyed by men, then society as a whole and children in particular, suffer. When women enjoy equal rights, conflicts are reduced, environments are improved and household living conditions are enhanced (UN-HABITAT/GLTN 2008: 15).

Further, whilst this text promotes the idea of gender equity – of equal rights in law to land and property – there is little mention of the need for affirmative action for women, despite this being a key finding of UN-HABITAT's own research. It should be stressed that this is just one example of a lack of coherence within UN-HABITAT's policy work on land and the section has, in general, stressed the need for greater gender equality, notably through the publications and public events of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN). However, the agency should ensure, across its work, that gender relevant research findings are integrated into more general policy documents.

The fact that publications on women's land rights and access remain as stand-alone documents, mean that they may be perceived by policy makers as supplementary texts or add-ons, thus potentially limiting the extent to which their key messages are absorbed at country level.

More recently, the work of the Land, Tenure and Property Administration section has been largely focused on the Global Land Tool Network.

This programme aims to ensure that land tools around the world are pro-poor and gender sensitive.

A key output of the GLTN on gender and land is the *Gender evaluation criteria for large-scale land tools*. These criteria have been developed in a detailed, participatory manner and have been tested recently in three countries. They can be used by a range of different stakeholders from grassroots groups to land surveyors to assess the gender sensitivity of work on land.

GLTN is also working to help scale up advocacy initiatives on land by improving technical knowledge amongst grassroots groups on land issues. Critically, the GLTN work is generating interest and uptake within UN-HABITAT. In an interview, the head of the Shelter Branch, whose staff have been supporting the Kenyan government's review of its land policy through the donor group on land, asserted that the Branch would use GLTN criteria to assess the new policy and regarded the network's output to date as 'quite revolutionary'.

The work in Kenya shows a clear attempt by UN-HABITAT to support the government's development of land policy so it is responsive to the needs of women as well as men. A Sessional Paper from the Ministry of Lands sets out government commitments to repeal discriminatory laws, attempt to eradicate cultural practices that bar women from inheriting land and introduce public awareness campaigns (Republic of Kenya 2009). This is an important contribution to facilitating women's equal access to land and property in Kenya.

HOUSING

UN-HABITAT's production on housing rights and housing policy is less extensive than its work on land. This was attributed by UN-HABITAT staff to the chronic understaffing of the housing policy section.

Work on 'gender and housing' has a variety of meanings. These can include gender-sensitivity of housing policy; gendered needs in terms of

housing design and differential access of women and men to the housing market. It would appear that most output from the housing policy section that refers to gender equality has involved work on housing rights, covering similar issues to work on land an example a resource document entitled *Women's equal rights to housing, land and property in international law* (UN-HABITAT 2006) provides an overview of the legal instruments promoting and protecting these rights.

A fact sheet on the Right to Adequate housing, co-produced with the OHCHR contains a section on the impacts of inadequate housing, discriminatory laws and inheritance practices and forced evictions on women (OHCHR/UN-HABITAT n.d.). More recently, the Housing Policy Section has begun work on Shelter Profiles that set out to provide information for national governments and policy makers on the functioning of the housing sector.

To date the only profile to be produced is on Malawi and it is still in a demonstration phase. This document, around 150 pages long, has half a page of discussion of the gender sensitivity of formal versus informal land allocation, and the problem of land-grabbing by a husband's relatives after his death.

It is possible that a lack of sex-disaggregated data prevented the authors from undertaking more nuanced analysis of housing needs, migration patterns and savings schemes. It is hoped that future publications in the series give greater consideration to the gendered aspects of shelter throughout the text.

The section has also produced a series of seven 'Quick Guides' for policy makers on *Housing the poor in Asian cities*. The majority of these make reference to particular issues of concern for women, generally in separate sections – notably in terms of barriers they face to accessing land and property.

ACCESS TO LAND AND HOUSING IN POST-DISASTER/CONFLICT SITUATIONS

UN-HABITAT's own research has highlighted the importance of affirmative action in operational work to ensure that women's rights to land and housing are upheld.

The particularly problematic issue of women's rights to land and housing in post-conflict situations has also been acknowledged by UN-HABITAT in a concept brief entitled *Gender, disaster and conflict: A human settlements perspective*. This document notes that displaced women are particularly vulnerable to loss of property. On their return, 'without accessible systems to provide information about their rights as well as provide legal services, women often have little choice in land ownership' (DMP/UN-HABITAT 2004:2-3).

The extent to which these lessons are channelled into the organisation's programming across the world is less clear. In the case of the programme 'Capacity Building for Land Conflict Management in South Sudan', the programme document deals with gender in a single paragraph. This states that 'gender issues will be mainstreamed in all aspects of programme implementation' and refers back to programme activities already detailed in the document.

The most obvious entry point for work on gender in this programme is a component on public awareness of land related laws, policies and institutions. Reference is made in the gender paragraph to a dissemination strategy that will have a specific focus on how to reach women. This is particularly important given that, according to UNFPA, only 12 per cent of women in South Sudan are literate.²¹

The language used is, on the whole, vague with examples being 'gender issues will be raised', 'land dispute analysis will benefit from gender analysis'. As such it is difficult to assess whether the programme will actively champion women's

²¹ Source: www.unfpa.org.

rights to land. The use of a single paragraph to discuss how the programme will target women may just be a presentational choice but the logframe makes no specific mention of gender, apart from a footnote stating that gender indicators will be used where possible.

Reference is made to vulnerable groups, but on whole, the expected achievements and results monitoring framework are gender blind. A question mark therefore hangs over the extent to which the programme will enable women to claim their rights to land in South Sudan.

UN-HABITAT staff in Nairobi informed the consultants of a programme in DRC, similar to that in Sudan, which has involved the creation of land mediation centres. Documents for the operationalization of this programme were requested but not seen by the consultants. In an interview, the chief of the disaster management section stressed that there was an approach in place that fostered access for all.

In a (post-) conflict situation where women suffer high levels of discrimination, it cannot be guaranteed that an equal access approach will be sufficient to ensure that society is aware of women's rights to land, that these are upheld and that they receive equitable and fair treatment in case of land dispute. Given that the organisation is stepping up its level of intervention in post-disaster/conflict situations, it is critical that UN-HABITAT ensures that it is implementing its own recommendations for good practice.

The mid-term review of the GLTN recommended the use of the gender evaluation criteria for projects and programmes. In the case of the South Sudan and DRC initiatives, the use of the criteria at the design stage might have helped to highlight ways that these programmes could more proactively support gender equality in land mediation.

In terms of operational work on housing, much of UN-HABITAT's current work in this area involves post-disaster/conflict reconstruction. Project completion reviews from a variety of

projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan were shared with the consultants.

These projects involved assisting the poor (including returnees, IDPs and widows) to rebuild damaged homes. Widows and female-headed households were included amongst the criteria of vulnerable groups in the Japanese-funded Afghanistan Urban Rehabilitation and Employment Programme.

The project involved 'cooperation with the local authorities and consultation with community members' to identify beneficiaries. Families chosen to receive housing were given technical assistance but were given freedom to build according to their own priorities. Beneficiaries were also involved in producing building materials.

Project implementation lay with a Management Committee composed of community members, beneficiaries, local elders and the municipality. Beneficiaries had to provide evidence of land or property ownership to be included.

The document contains a couple of testimonies from widows who were beneficiaries but is otherwise gender blind. It refers only to 'families' and 'beneficiaries', with no sex-disaggregation. It is not clear whether women were involved in the management committee and if they were, the extent to which they were able to contribute to decision-making.

The fact that beneficiaries had to prove ownership of land and property may well have had a negative impact on women's ability to benefit from the project, due to their limited access to land and property. Given the chronic abuse of women's rights in Afghanistan, it might be expected that this project would have given some attention to ensuring sensitivity to their needs, and to trying to incorporate these into community-level interventions.

However, it is not clear that the project involved any such efforts, apart from targeting female-headed households and widows as beneficiaries. There is no information on how/if families

received title for the homes they built, and if any steps were attempted to institute joint tenure arrangements.

By contrast, an EU-funded project in Afghanistan entitled improved Shelter, Services and Urban Governance for Returnees and IDPs actively sought to include women in management issues. Community Development Councils (CDCs) were set up in each neighbourhood targeted by the project. Where possible, these were jointly formed by women as well as men although, in more conservative neighbourhoods, separate men's and women's committees had to be established.

The project took steps to facilitate both men's and women's contributions to the choice, design and implementation of interventions in their neighbourhoods. It did this by drawing attention to the Afghani context, including the 'bad treatment of women', the difficulty of integrating women's needs into programming and the male domination of traditional community authorities.

Whilst acknowledging mixed results, the project sought to improve local governance through greater gender equity and may have achieved results with regards to women's visibility and influence in the public sphere. The CDC model for men and women has also been used in slum-upgrading projects in Afghanistan financed by the UN's Human Security Trust Fund and CIDA.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is a lack of consistency within UN-HABITAT's normative work on pro-poor land and housing, with regards to gender equality. Whilst texts specifically on women's rights promote equality of access with a view to challenging power relations between men and women in the public and private spheres, other more generic texts are not quite as progressive. Thus, good resources on the gendered aspects of land and housing are not reflected in general guidance

papers and so may not reach such a large audience.

Despite this, the organisation has taken considerable steps to promote women's access to security of tenure. Going beyond support for equality before the law with regards to men and women's legal ownership of property, UN-HABITAT is supporting, assessing and disseminating information on new forms of tenure arrangement that help to improve women's security, and potentially facilitate their greater control over decision-making within the household.

The GLTN has further produced an innovative tool to assess the gender sensitivity of work on land. Thus UN-HABITAT is responding to Varley's (2007) conclusion that without specific affirmative measures to rectify the discriminatory practices of the past, women's rights to land and property may not be respected.

The need to pay particular attention to ensure that women's rights to land and property are upheld is also explicitly set out in UN-HABITAT's short policy brief on gender and disasters. However, it is not clear from the programme documentation on post-crisis work on land mediation which efforts at country level will actively seek to ensure that women's rights to land are upheld. In post-conflict situations, and in countries where women's rights are systematically abused, it may not be sufficient for UN-HABITAT to take an 'equal access' approach.

One area identified in the academic literature and in UN-HABITAT's own brief on gender and disasters where the organisation could consider working is in the provision of para-legal assistance and advice on women's rights to land. UNIFEM has some experience in this area and, given UN-HABITAT's expertise on land issues, this could be a potentially fruitful area for future collaboration.

TABLE 3.2: Rating of documents reviewed under Focus Area 3

Name of programme/ project/policy	Type of doc reviewed	Gender Focus ²²	Gender Analysis ²³	Potential gender equality outcome
Secure land rights for all	Policy document	S	2	Promotes equality of access
How to establish an effective land sector	Policy document	N	0	None specified
Policy makers guide to women's land, property and housing rights	Policy document	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Shared tenure options for women	Policy document	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Gender, disaster and conflict: A human settlements perspective	Concept Brief	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Gender evaluation criteria for large-scale land tools	GLTN briefing paper	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Not about us without us	GLTN policy document	S	2	Promotes the integration of men and women's concerns and equality of access.
Land registration in Ethiopia	Research report	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Malawi Urban Housing Sector Profile	Research report	N	1	None specified
Capacity building for land conflict management in South Sudan	Programme document	N	1	Integrates men's & women's concerns. May promote equality of access
Afghanistan urban rehabilitation and employment programme	Project completion report	N	0	None specified
Improved shelter, services and urban governance for returnees and IDPs (Afghanistan)	Project completion report	S	2	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit

²² Adapting DFID's 'gender markers' discussed by Moser (2005) P = Principal objective; S = Significant project objective; N = Non-targeted.

²³ 0 = none; 1 = minimal; 2 = average, 3 = extensive (Moser 2005).

FOCUS AREA 4

LITERATURE REVIEW ON ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

As a result of the sexual division of labor within the home that remains firmly entrenched in many countries, women have a particular interest in improved access to basic services (Beall 1996). Discussion in the policy and academic literature on gender and basic urban services refers, in the main, to access to water and sanitation. Chant (2007) notes that while women in rural and urban areas may have to travel similar distances to fetch water, in cities there is greater competition for these resources. The high incidence of water-borne diseases, particularly childhood diarrhoea, creates an additional burden for women, who are generally responsible for caring for sick family members (UN-Water 2006).

There is an overlap between many of the gendered issues surrounding basic urban services, and the discussion of planning above. Inappropriate design and location of standpipes and taps in urban settlements can prevent women and girls from using them, while the time that women and girls spend collecting water and undertaking other routine tasks could be greatly reduced if appropriate infrastructure is available (Chant 2007).

This, in turn, can free up time for education and income-generating activities. The location of public latrines can also have a negative impact on women, in terms of their safety, hygiene and dignity (Maili Saba 2005).

Water and sanitation programmes can promote more progressive results by involving women in water management and other community activities. In this way, these programmes can go beyond gender-sensitivity to attempt to empower women within their communities. Granting management control over a key resource to women can give them greater voice, increase their visibility and strengthen their influence in the public realm (Moser 1993).

The bulk of this section refers to water and sanitation (WATSAN) initiatives, and within them, the Water for African Cities programme. This reflects the number of reviews and reports on the programme that were shared by UN-HABITAT staff in Nairobi and Dakar. Programme evaluations and impact assessments do not feature in the table at the end of the section as they are by authors external to UN-HABITAT.

The Water, Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch (WSIB) used data from its programmes (mainly those in Africa) to put together a document entitled a *Framework for gender mainstreaming: Water and sanitation for cities*, published in 2006. It is principally based on Rapid Gender Assessments (RGAs) carried out in 16 African cities, and on a survey from 15 towns in the Lake Victoria region.

The framework sets out a commitment to mainstream gender into the six thematic priorities of WAC. These are:

- governance
- sanitation
- urban catchments management
- water demand managements;
- water, sanitation and health education
- advocacy

A recent impact assessment of UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming in the area of water and sanitation is largely positive:

This Gender Impact Assessment has found that, overall, great progress has been made by UN-HABITAT's WSIB in collaboration with its Partners, in demonstrating that pro-poor governance, gender mainstreaming and empowering women and youth to participate in decision-making – clearly contributes to water and sanitation improvements and benefits all members in a community (Nyander 2010: 53).

The Branch has made concerted efforts to mainstream gender into its work, as seen by the second phase of the Water for African Cities

programme. Reports from WAC II demonstrate that since 2005 UN-HABITAT has invested time and resources in raising awareness and building capacity amongst programme staff and partners in municipal authorities and water companies on the gendered aspects of water and sanitation provision.

Rapid Gender Assessments (RGAs) were undertaken by each of the 16 city teams, and an Expert Group Meeting was held in 2005. This acknowledged that not all stakeholders in all cities where the programme was operational had fully taken on the importance of gender analysis and the gendered roles around water and sanitation. Following a City Managers' meeting in 2006, it became clear that few cities had taken the necessary steps to integrate findings from the RGAs into their work and further steps were taken by Water for African Cities to raise the profile of the gendered aspects of water and sanitation provision.

Of particular note is UN-HABITAT's partnership with the NGO Gender and Water Alliance (GWA). Through this institutional engagement a GWA facilitator has been appointed in each of the 12 countries where WAC operates, and two-day gender mainstreaming workshops have been carried out in participating cities. Perhaps most important, UN-HABITAT has hired a gender expert with specialism in water and sanitation to coordinate these activities from Nairobi.

UN-HABITAT staff working on water and sanitation in Nairobi displayed high levels of gender sensitivity, and stated that the obvious biological and social differences between men and women with regards to water and sanitation had meant that working on gender issues was obligatory for them.

The agency's work on water and sanitation is clearly promoting an approach that takes into account women and men's biological differences and contingent needs, as well as their gendered social roles and responsibilities for water collection and domestic hygiene. Evidence from country reports and evaluations suggest that

progress is being made in terms of introducing gender analysis and sensitivity to stakeholders in water utilities and communities.

Some reports and evaluations suggest that working towards gender equality is presented to stakeholders as a way of improving efficiency and sustainability and increasing the numbers of people provided with services. An example of this was the two-day gender training workshops held across African cities had a module on gender and access to WATSAN. The aim of was to enable the participants' understanding of the gender issues in water and sanitation and how this approach contributes to efficient operations of WATSAN systems and social benefits' (UN-HABITAT/GWA 2007:7).

Whilst this may be the programme seeking to make the business case for work on gender equality to ensure the buy in of engineers and representatives of water utilities, it could have given greater emphasis to more transformative ways with the potential to work on gender equality in water and sanitation.

This includes introducing an empowerment component into these projects by giving women greater levels of responsibility in the public sphere. For example, in Burkina Faso, as part of the WAC II, women were given full managerial control of a small bore sewers network. Although no further details of this initiative have been shared with the consultant, this may be a way that the programme is attempting to challenge gender roles by giving women more visibility and authority in the public sphere.

An internal review of the programme noted that 'some of the projects provided employment opportunities for women, gave them dignity and provided them security in typically male dominated societies where they are usually excluded from decision making processes' (Seidu and Stordal 2010: 49).

However, it is not clear what type of employment the evaluators are referring to, and how women were integrated into decision

making processes. Nor is it clear the extent to which this type of approach – promoting women’s involvement in areas of public life traditionally taken on by men – is employed by the WAC programme.

In Senegal, the consultant posed a question on women’s empowerment to UN-HABITAT programme staff and was told that women had been given the responsibility for cleaning and maintaining the facilities in a public toilet project. This is an extension of their domestic roles into the public realm, which may not increase women’s profile as decision-makers and managers in the community and presumably does little to challenge expectations of gendered responsibilities.

As such, it would appear that while WAC II has increased gender sensitivity amongst stakeholders and made a sound contribution to meeting women’s practical needs in water and sanitation, there appears to be less emphasis on their strategic needs. Indeed, the water and sanitation work undertaken by UN-HABITAT may be reinforcing stereotyped gender roles.

During the visit to Senegal the consultant made suggestions that work on water provision could begin to challenge women’s sole responsibility for collection, especially considering their growing role in the waged labor market. These suggestions, however, were generally met with the response: ‘it’s our culture’, to reject them.

However, one component of the WAC is an educational programme entitled Human Values Based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (HVBWSH). The idea of this initiative is that, by working with children and others in the community, behaviour around water use will begin to change. Thus WAC is working in one area to change cultural attitudes and ingrained habits.

Further, the idea of challenging traditional gender roles around domestic responsibility for water has been raised in UN-HABITAT’s own framework for gender mainstreaming in WATSAN. The 2006 *Framework* discussed above highlights the burden on women and girls

for collecting water and notes that they have often been excluded from decision-making in and implementation of WATSAN provision.

Referring to the gendered imbalance around tasks relating to water and sanitation, the document states that,

‘A gender equity approach within the water sector must thus strive for a more balanced division between women and men in access to information, the amount of physical work, sharing contributions in time and cash, the degree of decision-making, access to resources and benefits, and the control over these resources and benefits.’ (UN-HABITAT 2006b:10)

In a section on water education in schools and communities it goes on to refer to the fact that illustrations and messages in educational materials reinforce traditional stereotypes and perpetuate gender roles. It calls for a ‘deliberate effort’ to change textbook writing and, ‘the role of teachers and community workers who invariably carry their gender perceptions and impart them to the children’. (ibid 18).

In a second UN-HABITAT publication, *Navigating gender in African cities*, based on the RGAs from WAC II countries, similar concerns are raised:

‘In the water and sanitation sectors a lot of the hygiene material continues to stereotype the roles of women and men in domestic water management and household responsibilities. Men are rarely shown caring for children or fetching water. Such stereotyping typically informs popular material developed for social marketing strategies, as well as that geared to professionals and practitioners in the areas of water, sanitation, hygiene, and related issues in human settlements in general’ (UN-HABITAT n.d: 73)

These findings should serve as key recommendations for the Human Values Based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (HVBWSH) education programme. Although the consultant was not able to access all the materials used

in this training course, the *Facilitators and trainers Guidebook* on HVBWSH (UN-HABITAT et al. 2006) that is available on UN-HABITAT's website does not appear to have taken on this message. While the text recognises that women in developing countries face a 'social burden due to water scarcity problems', there is no discussion of how this burden might be alleviated through more equitable division of domestic labor.

Representatives of UN-HABITAT in Senegal remarked that it was not the job of their organisation to promote this type of work. They saw it as the responsibility of UNIFEM/UN-Women.

However, it is the consultant's belief that this represents a missed opportunity for UN-HABITAT, which could have taken up a more challenging position *vis-à-vis* the gendered roles around water and sanitation. The textbooks could have served as an entry point for the introduction of alternatives to the gendered stereotypes around the division of labor within the household and yet, the guide only reinforces the idea that collecting water is a job for women and girls.

It should be noted that, in the main, projected results for gender equality in UN-HABITAT programme documents on water and sanitation principally involve equal access to services and sensitivity to women's practical needs, rather than more transformational outcomes.

This is raised in a recent gender mainstreaming impact study of UN-HABITAT's work on water and sanitation:

'It needs to be stated at the outset that the gender concept has not been easily understood in the programme country environments and often mistakenly interpreted as "women participation" or concerns of women and girls, only. The findings therefore reflect this situation and refer to what has been reported on women and their roles – as very little has transpired regarding the role, needs or activities of men, children (boys and girls) and elderly' (Nycander 2010: 22).

The crux of the matter is the type of participation that is being promoted in water and sanitation provision. An internal review recommends that 'gender mainstreaming and empowerment have to be stepped up at all stages of the project cycle to ensure that women and girls issues continue to feature prominently in the planning and implementation of the projects' (Seidu and Stordal 2010: 52). However, there is no discussion in the document about how the inclusion of issues of importance to women and girls will lead to empowerment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

UN-HABITAT's work in access to water and sanitation provision shows a high degree of gender sensitivity. The Water for African Cities Programme has sought to engage stakeholders in local government and utility companies to raise awareness on the gender equality issues pertinent to the sector. The decision to partner with the Gender Water Alliance is particularly laudable and the appointment of facilitators in each of the countries where the programme is operational has maintained debate and training on gender equality. At headquarters level, the appointment of a staff member with specialist knowledge of both gender and WATSAN shows a commitment of the WSIB to mainstreaming in its operational activities.

The focus of UN-HABITAT's work in WATSAN has largely been on women's practical needs – responding to biological differences and social roles. A reading of evaluation documents would suggest that more conceptual clarity is needed amongst partners and programme staff on the meaning of empowerment. There is perhaps an assumption that this will naturally arise from women's inclusion in programme planning and implementation processes.

UN-HABITAT needs to consider whether, beyond equity of access, it wishes to promote greater gender equality in the communities where its programmes operate. This could be achieved by considering ways to promote women's involvement in the public sphere in

TABLE 3.3: Rating of documents reviewed under Focus Area 4

Name of programme/ project/policy	Type of doc reviewed	Gender Focus ²⁴	Gender Analysis ²⁵	Potential gender equality outcome
Framework for gender mainstreaming: water and sanitation for cities	Policy document/ research report	P	3	Integrates men and women's concerns. Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit
Facilitators and trainers Guidebook on HVBWSH	Training material	N	0	Potentially contributes to equality of access
Navigating gender in African cities	Research report	P	3	Actively promotes gender equality of opportunity, influence & benefit

roles traditionally reserved for men. It could also begin to challenge gender stereotypes around the sexual division of labor, and take advantage of the entry point for working on cultural issues provided by the educational components of its work on water and sanitation.

FOCUS AREA 5

STRENGTHENED HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FINANCE SYSTEMS

As noted by Moser and Peake (1987:27) women often require special assistance to acquire a plot for housing building, and for financing the building of a home. This is because they have specific difficulties in accessing housing finance due to:

'Lack of information about credit programmes, low and irregular incomes, lack of collateral, complicated loan procedures, discrimination on the part of men bureaucrats, high interest rates, and women's lack of legal standing in certain areas.'

They note that projects attempt to compensate for these disadvantages by establishing saving cooperatives solely for women and providing loans for housing. However, Moser and Peake note that credit programmes to support income generating work have generally been more successful.

Put simply, the poorest women do not have incomes high enough for most housing finance

schemes. Women who are self-employed find it particularly difficult to pay back fixed amounts each month. Moser & Peake note, however, that despite these problems women tend to be more reliable borrowers than men.

In a SWOT workshop, UN-HABITAT staff noted the difficulty the organisation has had in involving women in housing finance schemes, due to low incomes and lack of assets that can serve as a guarantee. However, the housing finance branch has made attempts to find ways to include women in its two programmes Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF) and Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operations (ERSO), and more than half of its clients have been women.

These programmes have financed projects that have involved women in savings and loans programmes to build homes and improve facilities for their trading activities in markets in West Africa. They have also worked with the women's bank in Sri Lanka.

A staff member of the Housing Finance Branch expressed some doubt as to whether the initiatives in Africa could be sustainable as the women involved have struggled to maintain repayments. However, both programmes have experienced serious difficulties and not just in their women-focused activities. They are both now coming to an end and it is not clear if UN-HABITAT will continue to work in this area.

Other initiatives to provide loans for house building include the Women's Land Access Trusts

in East Africa. Staff across the organization expressed grave misgiving as to the viability of these initiatives. These are examined in more detail in section 3.1.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

UN-HABITAT is to be commended for the high quality and wide range of policy papers and research products that analyse gender inequalities in human settlements, and for the development of tools to counter discrimination. However, the findings of its research, and the accompanying messages of the need to actively promote women's rights in urban areas, are not always taken into account at programme's operational level. Of particular concern are projects relating to land and shelter in post-conflict/disaster areas, many of which do not appear to have incorporated the critical lesson that, in vulnerable situations, women's rights may need to be actively supported.

UN-HABITAT's work on governance and security in cities has demonstrated an awareness of the problems associated with gender-blindness within local government institutions and has taken steps to support staff and partners to recognise how this can lead to gender inequalities in human settlements. UN-HABITAT has also responded to gender inequalities that are more structural in nature and these include legislation, particularly on access to land and housing that is discriminatory towards women.

However, women's access to land, shelter and basic services and their ability to engage in local governance and planning are also adversely affected by traditional beliefs and practices. The extent to which UN-HABITAT programmes and policies set out a stated aim to confront discrimination and alter the balance of power between men and women varies considerably between the different focus areas, and between normative and operational work.

Thus the 'integration of a gender perspective' can be associated with a range of expected results, such as ensuring that service provision is sensitive to women's needs, increasing women's

power over decision-making in the home or improving women's influence in the public sphere and over the development of human settlements.

Whether these results can be said to equal women's 'empowerment' varies considerably. However, some UN-HABITAT documents make a somewhat unreflective connection between inclusion of women in a project and their empowerment, without further analysis of how or why this should come about.

The question remains as to whether UN-HABITAT wishes to actively promote results relating to gender equality through its programming, or if it prefers to limit gender mainstreaming to ensuring its activities are gender sensitive and that they do no harm.

3.3 PARTNERSHIPS

To what extent has UN-HABITAT established an:

- i) Effective partnership approach to facilitate gender equality in human settlement?
- ii) Outreach to more informal groups and emerging coalitions/ partners, such as slum dwellers organisations?

UN-HABITAT describes all the types of institutions that it engages with as partners and this includes national governments, city governments, other UN agencies, NGOs and grassroots organisations. The extent to which the Evaluation Team can address the agency's relationships with all the different actors is very limited but strategic examples have been chosen in an attempt to shed light on its approach to partnerships for work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

UN-HABITAT has acknowledged the need to review, clarify, define and structure how it works with partners. The *Partnership Strategy* remains a document in the making, and was in its sixth draft in 2010. Given its size, structure and resources, the agency is highly dependent

on partners to fulfil the goals of the Habitat Agenda, as noted in the *Policy and Strategy Paper* for Focus Area 1.

The *Paper* highlights the need for UN-HABITAT to reach out to work in more countries through partnerships, and states that, 'it is critical to identify partners who are willing to [...] adopt mutual approaches to gender equality' (UN-HABITAT 2010:10). However, in the draft of the *Partnership Strategy* seen by the consultants there is no provision for guidance on partnership formation in the areas of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. It is therefore recommended that provisions are worked into the draft in collaboration with the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and the Partnership Unit before the *Partnership Strategy* reaches its final stage.

The Overview of the current situation set out in the *Draft Partnership Strategy* refers to the "mixed results" since Habitat II in 1996 of UN-HABITAT's attempts at active promotion of cooperation and coordination and the fostering of partnerships both outside and within the UN system (UN-HABITAT 2010b: 7). A variety of explanations of the mixed results are proposed but 'whatever the cause, UN-HABITAT's approach to partnership since then can be considered haphazard and inconsistent, rather than strategic and systematic' (ibid: 8).

In contrast with the 'remarkable lack of continuity' (ibid: 8) in partnerships over the years, two partner groupings, women and youth, are commended in the *Draft Partnership Strategy* for having 'been rather consistent, and positively so, in the collaboration with UN-HABITAT...enjoying a relatively high profile in activities to promote and implement the Habitat Agenda'. The explanation put forward is that this reflects, in part, the prominence of women's organisations at Habitat II, and 'the independent funding sources of the Huairou Commission, the principal women partner organisation of UN-HABITAT'.

Another explanation "may be the tradition of energetic activism found in women and youth

organisations" (ibid: 9). This assertion reflects the findings of the 2003 Forward Looking Evaluation that highlighted the intense and fruitful relationship maintained between the Women and Habitat Programme and its partners (Forti 2003).

AGENCY LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

HUAIROU COMMISSION

The Huairou Commission is a long-term and highly strategic partner of UN-HABITAT and the GMU in particular. It was appointed in 1995 by the then Executive Director to act as a 'watchdog' to ensure that the Habitat Agenda was implemented with adequate regard for gender equality. This 'super coalition' of women's networks has a broad international reach and thus facilitates the agency's engagement with informal and grassroots women's groups. A brief account of the history of collaboration is given in Box 3.3.1.

In the area of women's empowerment, the cooperation between UN-HABITAT and the Huairou Commission fulfils expectations for network cooperation as set out in the Policy and Strategy Paper for Focus Area 1.

'Working closely with all Habitat Agenda partners is a prerequisite for formulating participatory and inclusive policies and strategies, which facilitate the achievement of tangible results in all focus areas. Working with partners effectively is the best way to address this challenge and scale up interventions to a level where a significant impact is achieved. The role of partners in scaling up both the normative and operational levels is decisive and complementary to their role of boosting UN-HABITAT's catalytic function' (UN-HABITAT 2010: 12).

It also responds to this document's recommendation that the agency works with networks of networks, rather than individual CSOs.

BOX 3.3.1: COLLABORATION WITH INFORMAL GROUPS AND NETWORK ORGANISATIONS;

In 1995 the former Secretary General of Habitat II formally launched the Huairou Commission with the goal of creating an organisation to serve as an external advisor on women to UN-HABITAT. It is a global network linking women's community development organisations to influential development practitioners, including United Nations agencies and academic institutions.

This was an acknowledgement of the importance of incorporating a vehicle that would help the agency to work more effectively with women's networks, grass roots women and professional partners like planners, architects, researchers and so on.

From 1996 to 2010 the HC created a structure that includes women's organisations, grassroots NGOs and professional partners in 54 countries and now works in four areas including land and housing, resilience, governance and HIV/AIDS.

Since 2009 the Commission has a formal MOU with UN-HABITAT that spells out its relationship as a primary partner on activities including the Global Land Tools Network and Safer Cities Programme. It sits on the Advisory Committee for the Disaster Management Program and the Steering Committee of the World Urban Campaign. The Commission has also worked in partnership with the Gender Mainstreaming Unit on a number of key activities, including promoting and disseminating the HC Local-to-Local Dialogue process since 2002 and preparing the GEAP.

A highlight of the Memorandum of Understanding is a commitment to collaborative working on the creation of a grassroots women's web portal on human settlements. The portal will enable grassroots women's groups to network and to exchange information on strengthening policies and programmes for gender equality in towns and cities.

The agreement also strengthens joint work in promoting good governance, women's land and housing rights, urban safety and disaster risk reduction and recovery. It gives formal recognition to the important role of women at grassroots level in development programmes and policy making.

Source: www.unhabitat.org and Huairou Commission (2010).

The collaboration between UN-HABITAT and the Huairou Commission provides a type of outreach which is vital for the agency if it is to pursue its work on women's empowerment in human settlements at a global scale. It would appear to be a highly strategic approach as it facilitates the agency's engagement with more informal and grassroots groups that work towards gender equality. However, there is a need to acknowledge the existence of other groups – professional, grassroots, academia and others

– working as partners in relevant areas of gender and human settlements development.

One example of the value added by engagement with the Huairou Commission is the work to replicate Local to Local dialogue in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, supported by UN-HABITAT, which also included GROOTS Kenya. This initiative seeks to improve the workings of democracy for women at grassroots level, so that they can benefit from decentralization.

It produced resources for women at grassroots level to develop as urban citizens by reconfiguring power relations and impacting on the practices of governance. It seeks to enable women's organisations to have dialogue with critical actors such as local authorities, government departments, the private sector and development partners in an effort to address community problems and mobilize resources.

The Huairou Commission collaborates on a number of UN-HABITAT's programmes in regions and countries. One of the main points of contact for the Huairou Commission is with the GMU, and although the partnership continues, it is currently experiencing serious friction.

There appears to be a lack of clarity over the division of responsibility between the GMU and the Commission, which has led to misunderstandings. Respondents in both UN-HABITAT and the Commission referred to a lack of trust that has, in part, developed from different organisational cultures, conflicting interpretations of accountability mechanisms, various perspectives on strategies for work with women's groups and so on.

Partnerships are not static and depend upon good personal as well as professional relationships. The dynamism of partnership and the need for ongoing monitoring is highlighted in UN-HABITAT's FA 1 Policy and Strategy Paper:

'The partnerships have to be tailored towards normative and operational levels and require continuous monitoring and evaluation in order to ensure the envisaged objectives and

results are pursued and achieved. Well-defined, strategic partnerships are needed for achieving the stated goals' (UN-HABITAT 2010:12).

Given the importance of the Huairou Commission for the agency's outreach to grassroots women's organisations, there is an urgent need for both organisations – and in particular the GMU – to engage in constructive dialogue over future collaboration. This could involve a stock take of the relationship, focusing on the achievements to date and identifying working practices that have functioned well.

Following recommendations from the 2003 Forward-Looking Evaluation, it is critical that greater clarity is achieved over expectations, obligations and proposed objectives and outputs. At the same time, it is significant that both parties accept that UN-HABITAT's agenda requires an outreach to professional and academic fora, which goes beyond the reach of one network for women at grassroots level.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH UN ORGANISATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Most of UN-HABITAT partnerships with United Nations entities in the area of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment are informal. The overall picture is that collaboration – or rather contact – happens at international conferences and events, Expert Group Meetings, forums and so on where UN organisations are expected to participate. This is confirmed in responses from other UN organisations to questions posed by the Evaluation Team.

On these occasions, the GMU chief normally participates and delivers 'thoughtful comments', as expressed by one respondent. Most of the UN respondents to this evaluation have limited knowledge of any of UN-HABITAT's gender work, not to mention the Gender Equality Action Plan. Information was, however, provided by the Chief of GMU at WUF 5 2010 and at other inter-agency events.

UN Women is potentially an extremely strategic partnership for UN-HABITAT to achieve results

for gender equality in human settlements. UNIFEM has partnered with UN-HABITAT in the past, and a Memorandum of Understanding with UN-HABITAT was signed recently.

Areas of collaboration include broader issues of good governance, women's empowerment, political participation and gender equality and local governance. The next step is to find ways to operationalise this agreement through, for example, fundraising for joint initiatives.

The two agencies are currently collaborating on UNIFEM's Safe Cities programme, which has drawn on UN-HABITAT's long-term efforts to improve security in urban areas through its own Safer Cities initiative. According to the MOU, UN-HABITAT is expected to join as a lead global partner. However, UN-HABITAT staff remarked that they have been feeling something of a junior partner in this initiative, and that they have had limited input into the design of the programme's methodology.

UN-HABITAT clearly has much to contribute to the programme, and constructive collaboration on this initiative could open doors for future work. As such, gender advocates within UN-HABITAT, including both technical specialists and the GMU, should make the most of this current opportunity to partner with the lead UN agency on gender equality, taking on a more proactive role and improving dialogue. This is particularly important given the restructuring of the UN gender architecture currently underway.

Responses from the participants in the Nairobi SWOT workshop, as well as from regional and country offices, highlight what many experience as limited active cooperation between UN-HABITAT and other UN organisations in the area of gender mainstreaming. The establishment of UN Women is seen as an opportunity for significant sharing of experience and greater collaboration by many, not least those in the field in regions and countries outside Headquarters.

UN Women will be seeking to strengthen its presence in-country. This increased capacity

would, in theory, generate the potential to work in collaboration with UN-HABITAT towards greater gender equality in human settlements. This type of collaboration is in the spirit of the One UN initiative and it is recommended that the GMU actively seek out ways to engage with the new agency.

This type of networking could be facilitated by an increased focus on partnerships within the Gender Task Force (see Chapter 4). This engagement should be complemented by high-level discussions within UN-HABITAT on how it can work with UN Women for mutual benefit. The agency needs to appreciate that this type of engagement is time-consuming and managing the relationship will require human resource perhaps from the GTF.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

GMU WLAT PARTNERSHIPS

The Women's Land Access Trust (WLAT) projects aim to empower women and raise awareness about women's human rights – in particular housing rights - through housing development in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. These contain elements of broad-based public-private partnerships, in that they involve outreach to informal groups as well as bridging to local government, the private sector and financial institutions.

Unfortunately, these projects have also displayed serious difficulties and some relate to partnerships. The partners mobilised to work on the programme have limited experience in housing financing and women's housing schemes. While the intention was to improve outreach to grassroots organisations of poor women, their lack of experience has placed a heavy burden on the GMU for oversight of the initiatives and management of the WLATs currently takes up a considerable proportion of the work schedule of GMU staff.

Whilst this is an example of attempts by the GMU to work with different types of partners,

including local government and grassroots organisations of poor women, it illustrates how important it is to match the profile and capacities of partners with project objectives and strategy. It also touches on the issue of internal partnerships in UN-HABITAT as the GMU did consult relevant technical and financial knowledge in various parts of the agency to improve the robustness of project designs but the support was not sustained.

The WLATs are presented as pilot projects and the aim is to scale-up the model. In this, as in all pilot projects, effective learning mechanisms and dissemination practices are vital. This again places demands on the agency, in this case the GMU, to support the partner and facilitate exchange and dialogue.

PARTNERSHIPS IN COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

The UN Country Team mediates UN-HABITAT's engagement with national government 'partners'. This means that the onus for the promotion of work on human settlements is on the Habitat Programme Manager (HPM), who also negotiates programmes and projects with relevant ministries and local governments. The HPM is thus the key person to establish partnerships with governments, and yet the individuals occupying these posts have many different responsibilities and often work with minimal support in-country.

Whilst this access could be used, in the words of a respondent from a regional office, 'to improve, support or promote initiatives on gender platforms or female participation', it is hard to insist that gender be a core priority for the HPM, given his or her other commitments, unless adequate support mechanisms are in place.

This could be improved if all regional offices had a GFP with the resources, time and motivation to engage actively with HPMs. A further way of bringing gender equality more strongly into UN-HABITAT's programme of work at country level would be to forge strategic partnerships with UN-Women.

It should be highlighted here that UN-HABITAT is often highly dependent on partners at country level for the implementation of programmes and projects. Given that the agency is generally not in a position to bring significant levels of funding to these relationships, it is important to ask what the agency's contribution is.

Responses from stakeholders to the Evaluation Team's questions emphasise UN-HABITAT's role in facilitating engagement between actors at all different levels: the 'political, economic and social actors and entities around gender agendas'. One respondent argued that UN-HABITAT's profile helps counter resistance amongst politicians and other powerful actors in public decision-making bodies.²⁶

But UN-HABITAT could also provide greater support for partners through improved dissemination of policy guidelines and training manuals, including those on gender equality, and by having them translated into appropriate languages. For example, in Senegal, partners had taken up and adopted a key text on gender equality in local governance produced by UN-HABITAT. However, it is not clear the extent to which HPMS elsewhere are aware of these types of product, and whether they are being encouraged to share them with partners.

Materials received from Afghanistan illustrate that innovative approaches have been taken in Solid Waste Management (SWM). Here, health and hygiene education and capacity building has involved a network of 117 women health educators for home and school visits. Radio scripts and theatre campaign sketches on SWM have been prepared in partnerships between local government, UN-HABITAT and other multi-lateral organisations.

Findings from the field visit to Senegal provided evidence of two different ways that UN-HABITAT has established effective partnership approaches that facilitate the promotion of greater gender equality in human settlements. The first involves

a partnership between UN-HABITAT and the Gender Water Alliance, also present in all other countries involved in the Water for Africa Cities programme), that was put in place specifically to provide the programme with specialist advice on the gender aspects of water and sanitation work.

The second involves the partnership between UN-HABITAT and ENDA (Environment and Development Action in the Third World), an international NGO based in Dakar and which is implementing a UN-HABITAT project on participatory budgeting with a strong focus on gender.

WORKING WITH A SPECIALIST PARTNER TO SUPPORT PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

In the case of the Water for African Cities programme, UN-HABITAT has been working with the Gender Water Alliance since 2005. The GMU played a key role in facilitating the relationship which began with rapid gender assessments in the 17 cities in 14 countries where the Programme is operational. GWA also analysed the cooperation agreements that UN-HABITAT had established with implementing agencies at city level.

Based on a recognition that mainstreaming activities needed to be strengthened in all programme cities, the GWA hired a gender and WATSAN specialist in each country to provide ongoing support and advice in programme implementation. GWA-led activities at country level have since included training of trainers, sensitization workshops and a two-day gender seminar.

Work on water and sanitation, including the Water for African Cities programme, was singled out by UN-HABITAT staff in Nairobi as one of the areas where gender is fully mainstreamed. The institutionalized partnership has helped to ensure that the needs of both male and female stakeholders are taken adequately into account

²⁶ Latin American NGO respondent.

in the programme design and operationalisation. UN-HABITAT staff in-country and at headquarters emphasised the contribution of the GWA to the success they perceive the Programme to have achieved, in terms of training and support on gender issues.

IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES THROUGH PARTNERS

UN-HABITAT has worked with ENDA to put in place a participatory budgeting process in three local authorities in Senegal with funding from the Government of Spain. The programme, initially designed with GMU involvement, is regarded by observers in UN-HABITAT to have had a strong focus on gender.

ENDA, the implementing partner, ensured that women were represented as delegates in the budgeting process by imposing a quota, and women's participation in discussions of community priorities at neighbourhood level was supported by the appointment of female facilitators.

Criteria were also put in place to ensure that local issues regarded as a priority by women received extra weighting when it came to choosing between them for investment. Representatives of ENDA noted that their insistence on employing a gender-sensitive approach and promoting the needs of women are core to the organisation's mission and values.

This approach would thus have informed programme design and implementation whether or not UN-HABITAT was actively supportive. The Senegal HPM concurred on this point.

Representatives of ENDA regarded the UN-HABITAT publication *Gender mainstreaming in local government* as an important reference. However, this is just one of a number of guides that they have used, and they indicated that UN-HABITAT could do more to support work on gender equality through publications that document good practice on gender and governance from other countries.

Gender mainstreaming in local government has been translated into French and the HPM stressed that partners cannot be expected to read documents in English. The HPM added that UN-HABITAT should do more to ensure that a wider range of publications have been translated so that these can be distributed to partners.

Both of these examples of partnership show proactive attempts to mainstream gender in programming. In one, the impetus for a gendered approach has come from UN-HABITAT headquarters whilst in the other, the programme has benefitted from engagement with an NGO that has engaged in gender mainstreaming.

It is not clear that the public/private body Foundation Droit à la Ville (FDV), the partner most likely to collaborate on the project "the construction of prefabricated homes and resettlement of victims of recent flooding in urban centres", will be able to ensure that plans for the new settlement are adequately gender sensitive. During a meeting with five representatives of FDV, all of them male, the consultant's questions around women's access to land and housing were not given adequate consideration.

FDV representatives declared themselves fully able to undertake participatory processes and regard this as one of their unique selling points as an organisation. Requests were made to see documents that set out their participatory methodology but these have so far not been shared with the consultant.

However, ensuring the adequate participation of women is just one step in the production of gender sensitive plans for resettlement and housing construction. Without specialist training on gender and planning, it cannot be assumed that discussions will be led in such a way as to provide the data necessary for plans and settlement design to respond to the different needs of future residents.

When asked how this new project might incorporate a gender perspective, the HPM

replied that it was about responding to flood victims, that there were certain criteria for inclusion and that it was not about women. However, women would certainly be represented amongst beneficiaries and that if two families were equally poor, a female-headed household might be given preference.

This response is not surprising, and is an example of a typical confusion between gender mainstreaming and a women-centred approach. The consultant was not permitted to see the draft project document so the extent to which it takes adequate account of the potential risk of increased vulnerability created through relocation cannot be assessed. However, it is in danger of replicating the gender-blind approach apparent in some of the agency's post-crisis work in Afghanistan, as discussed in section 3.2.

UN-HABITAT's engagement with the Gender Water Alliance (GWA) is a positive example of a partnership forged to provide specialist advice in a particular programme area. Through the Gender Water Alliance, the programme was able to take advantage of a network of specialists across Africa. However, the implementation of programmes and projects through partners in Senegal highlights the critical need for the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, and the agency as a whole, to consider how it can better support HPMs to promote a focus on improved results for gender equality when it works with partners.

This issue is discussed in the section on institutional arrangements. It further suggests that the *Draft Partnership Strategy* should provide guidance on the selection of partners, in line with the FA 1 Policy and *Strategy Paper* cited above, that states that a 'mutual approach' to gender equality should be a key criterion.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

Given the large number of partners that the agency engages with, the Evaluation Team is not in a position to come to firm conclusions as to the extent to which it has adopted an effective partnership approach to facilitate

gender equality in human settlements. The cases examined would suggest that UN-HABITAT has had mixed results in this regard. At a general level, the *Partnership Strategy Draft* has no provision for guidance on partnership formation.

Partners who are implementing the agency's programmes and projects will not necessarily be either willing or able to ensure their work is, at a minimum, gender sensitive. There is a role for Global Focal Points in regional offices and for the GMU to ensure HPMs are aware of, and have access to, key policy and training guidelines in appropriate languages that they can share with partners. On the other hand, innovative lessons can also be learned from partners.

UN-HABITAT's institutionalised relationships with the Huairou Commission and with UNIFEM through MOUs show commitment to entrench work on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, both relationships require attention and a concerted effort to operationalise the terms of the MOUs.

The obvious breakdown in trust between the Huairou Commission and the GMU needs to be rectified as soon as possible, given the strategic importance for the agency in reaching out to grassroots women's organisations. The network provides access for UN-HABITAT to a wealth of knowledge on local contexts and outreach to informal groups and slum dwellers organisations, which it could never muster on its own. Yet no partner or network should monopolise UN-HABITAT's partnerships. These need to include a wider array of professional partners.

The engagement with UNIFEM on the Safe Cities initiative could be stepped up, within UN-HABITAT's limited financial but significant professional means, to ensure that UN-HABITAT takes on its role as lead global partner. Productive collaboration on this programme could facilitate further engagement with the newly formed UN Women.

The reform of the UN's gender architecture provides a critical opportunity for UN-HABITAT to establish a partnership for greater gender equality in human settlements. This would serve to counter the widespread feeling amongst stakeholders consulted that opportunities have been missed to forge partnerships with other UN agencies in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.

There is potential for collaboration in both normative and operational work. The intention of UN Women to increase its presence at country

level provides excellent opportunities for joint programmes in line with the One UN initiative.

The GMU has a role in promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building with partners. There is scope for continuous staff and partner training on gender analysis and a more informative and dynamic set of webpages, including through the newly-established agreement with the Huairou Commission on the development of a web portal. A reformed Gender Task Force could also play a role here (see Chapter 4).

4 INSTITUTIONAL OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE



- i) Perspectives on institutional set up and best practice from other organisations
- ii) Capacity and resources for gender mainstreaming
- iii) Options for institutional locations for the Gender Mainstreaming Unit

This section begins with a discussion of trends in institutional arrangements for work on gender equality in development agencies. It refers to the institutional arrangements for gender equality work in a selection of other organisations, including the UN and bilateral development agencies and civil society organisations.²⁷ It then examines UN-HABITAT's current institutional arrangements, and the extent to which the mandate of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU) is matched by its capacity.

It goes on to provide recommendations on how to strengthen the GMU and the broader architecture and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT. Finally,

suggestions for possible future institutional locations for the GMU are presented.

4.1 LESSONS ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

UN-HABITAT has been through different stages and models in the institutionalising of gender mainstreaming. The main modalities have been Women in Habitat Programme combined with a Gender Policy Unit located in the Executive Director's office and the current Gender Mainstreaming Unit located in the Division for Monitoring and Research, combined with gender specialists and Gender Focal Points in programmes, regions and countries and a Gender Task Force.²⁸

When placed in comparative perspective, what is noticeable is that most organisations have gone through a succession of institutional models for integrating gender equality and women's

²⁷ Organisations contacted include UN-Women, UNDP, UNDAW/OSAGI, UNIFEM, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, UNEP, UNECA, Huairou Commission, Groots, International Council of Women, Women and Peace Foundation and BP Foundation. The Evaluation Team and the evaluation's resource person also bring experience from a range of these and other organisations.

²⁸ For a brief history of the institutional set-ups for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT see Section 3.1 and Box 3.1.1 in particular.

empowerment in their work. The building blocks are normally gender divisions/units, gender working groups, individual gender specialists with gender and development and/or technical, subject matter experience, gender focal points and international and/or local gender specialists/consultants. The institutional models combine the elements to best suit the organization's needs and preferences at a given time and are institutionalized accordingly – close to the decision-making bodies of the organisation or in more peripheral positions.

Few organizations have found a model which they are satisfied to call best practice for gender mainstreaming and that has lasted a considerable length of time. There is no one best solution for all organisations, and the models employed may change over time as organisations evolve and develop greater capacity to address gender equality.

A quote on an approach to gender mainstreaming that has worked well in UNESCO provides an interesting comparison to UN-HABITAT's ongoing debate on the best location for the GMU.

'In the case of UNESCO, systematic advocacy by the Division for GE [gender equality] with Member States and senior management, along with mandatory customized gender training for all staff since 2005, were critical elements in enabling the Organisation to designate gender equality as one of its two global priorities in the 2008-2013 Medium-Term Strategic Plan. Since November 2009, UNESCO has its first woman Director-General who is committed to pursuing GE as a global priority and who has made it one of the pillars of her mandate.

As a result, this very high-level political support has made gender equality and gender mainstreaming most visible and critical in our organisation's work leading to the transfer of the Division for GE to the Cabinet, and significant reinforcement for the Division in terms of human

and financial resources' (UNESCO, December 2010).

A similar observation on the importance of having a gender equality division/unit to influence the organization's corporate development strategy, known as the Programme of Work (POW), came from UNEP:

'In the 2008-2009 biennium, an integrated gender mainstreaming approach in UNEP's work was lacking and consequently the need for a holistic methodology was critical. As a result the Gender Unit in the Quality Assurance Section developed a *"One UNEP Gender Mainstreaming approach"* to facilitate integration of gender perspectives into the POW 2010-2011 implementation and the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming.

We – the gender specialists - were there at the right time to influence UNEP's Programme of Work' (UNEP 2010).

Gender advocates within UNEP seem to have been more successful than those in UN-HABITAT in influencing agency-wide work programmes and strategic plans.

There are good lessons to learn from UNEP's approach to gender mainstreaming that involves substantive cooperation and continuous consultation between gender teams and project staff. During planning and design, thematic gender teams are established to work with project staff. In turn project staff work with the gender team in project implementation and monitoring.²⁹

SHIFTING MODALITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL SET-UPS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT WORK

Institutional arrangements for work on gender equality and women's empowerment change over time. A number of external and internal factors are at play: overall strategic shifts in development cooperation from projects, to

²⁹ See UNEP (2010) and (2010b)

sector programmes and also to budget support; the effectiveness and partner policy alignment agenda; decentralization; results-based management and so on.

Partner countries and partner organisations sometimes change according to political whims over and above the individual organisation and bring in new thematic priorities such as fragile states, conflict and disaster, climate change and others and these require new gender perspectives and knowledge. Within organizations, contexts change as dedicated resources, staff and gender champions rise and fall.

Over time, the gender equality discourse has taken different tracks – Women In Development, Gender And Development, Gender Mainstreaming and women’s rights to mention a few - whose protagonists favor different approaches to gender work.

When discourses change there is a time lag in how gender concepts and strategies are adapted, adopted and influence institutional arrangements. Despite these changes ‘gender mainstreaming’ is one such concept that will be difficult to substitute. This is because it is so deeply ingrained in international development cooperation in general, and the UN in particular, from where the normative concept originates.

Most organizations, including UN-HABITAT, continue to follow a gender mainstreaming strategy to pursue the goal of gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, many have moderated reference to what they call an alienating concept³⁰ to talk of rights of women and men, boys and girls, and to focus on combating *inequalities* and optimize inclusion of different vulnerable groups and minorities.

The newly-established UN Women epitomizes both a conceptual and institutional shift in plans to promote the rights and well-being of women worldwide. UN Women will work towards gender equality and women’s empowerment

BOX 4.1: DEMYSTIFYING THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING CONCEPT

Without falling into the trap of over-simplifying, it is important not to over-problematise gender mainstreaming. While it is necessary to explicitly highlight gaps and challenges, this should not create myths about gender mainstreaming being too difficult to implement or foster the perception that only experts can use the strategy effectively.

The comment of a transport specialist ‘Don’t give up on us (non-gender specialists). We can take gender perspectives on board in our own work, is particularly pertinent in this respect. Many discussions of gender mainstreaming have, to far too great an extent, focused on the complexity of the strategy rather than on concrete steps needed to implement it.

Gender specialists need to be aware of the risk of inadvertently hindering the implementation of gender mainstreaming by portraying it as too complex.... A great disservice is done to the promotion of gender equality when the perception is created that gender mainstreaming is so enormously difficult conceptually as to render it impossible to implement.

If the concept of gender appears to be difficult, it is possible to use women and men to clarify that the concept refers to women and men and the relations between them. [...] Flexibility and pragmatism are important.”

Source: Carolyn Hannan, Director, UN Division for the Advancement of Women, 2004

and ensure the effective delivery of its operational activities for development. It will also take on a coordination responsibility *vis-à-vis* the whole UN system, although this should not absolve the rest of UN of their responsibility to also work on gender equality issues.

Within UN Women, gender mainstreaming will remain a central strategy to achieve the goal of gender equality: ‘A strong, continued commitment to gender mainstreaming is one of the most effective means for the UN to support promotion of gender equality at all levels – in research, legislation, policy development and in activities on the ground - and to ensure that women as well as men can influence, participate in and benefit from development efforts.

There is a continued need, however, to complement the gender mainstreaming strategy with targeted interventions to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment,

³⁰ UNIFEM verbal communication, December 2010

particularly where there are glaring instances of persistent discrimination of women and inequality between women and men.³¹

UN-HABITAT's overall approach of working towards more sustainable human settlements through both normative and operational initiatives is clearly aligned with the two-tiered approach as set out by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI).

On the one hand gender perspectives need to be incorporated into Focal Area policy and programmes. On the other, the situation for women in human settlements is unlikely to improve unless targeted initiatives are undertaken at the local level. This way of thinking has been integrated into UN-HABITAT's gender work for a long time under the different modalities and set ups and should continue.

APPROACHES WHICH HAVE WORKED WELL IN OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The following list provides a selection of lessons on approaches for gender mainstreaming and work on women's empowerment, which is deemed to have worked well in different organisations and from which UN-HABITAT could learn.

- There needs to be serious highest-level commitment and budget for this purpose. Accountability of the institutional resources devoted explicitly to gender-centered components, programmes and partnerships. Strong policy position on gender mainstreaming with visible and practical support from the Director General/ Executive Director (UNIFEM and ILO).
- Policy direction from the institution's governance organs and Governing Body on gender mainstreaming in the organization's substantive work. A well-resourced (staff and separate budget line) gender unit in the organisation, reporting directly to the Director General/Executive Director. (UNEP, UNIFEM).
- Senior management support, competent gender equality dedicated staff, sufficient human and financial resources, well-defined and implemented accountability structures and mechanisms (UNESCO, DAW).
- Early development of an action plan to take forward the gender mainstreaming policy, and its constant monitoring and revision using a results-based management approach (results, indicators and allocation of responsibility).
- Mainstreaming of gender in the organization's programme and budget processes with effectiveness measured regularly and results disseminated to staff. (CIDA, ILO, UNEP).
- Regular development of mainstreaming tools or adaptation of tools from other organisations, general tools and also specific tools in technical areas, for staff and constituents/ partners. These include tools for project design, monitoring and evaluation and for more specific subject areas. (DAW, ILO, Danida).
- Effective gender and non-discrimination training programme for professional staff and constituents/ partners with follow-up training at regular intervals (Sida, Danida, ILO).
- Widespread use of participatory gender audit as a tool and process to promote organisational learning at the individual, work unit and organisational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender. (A number of Participatory Gender Audits were held in the Philippines during 2008-2010 and UN-HABITAT was one of the audited agencies. Some have involved focus group interviews at the level of beneficiaries of UN projects, funds and programmes in far-flung provinces which goes one step further on the ground than just implementing partners) (ILO).

³¹ www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm. Accessed 12.01.11

Strong gender focal points in an extensive global network and senior gender specialists located in each region. These will have dedicated resources and clear catalytic roles, responsibilities and links with the gender focal points / gender unit at the organization's headquarters.

Gender Focal Points throughout the organisation should be appointed on merit and not simply handed out to the youngest woman in the unit, unless merit so suggests. Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force to have clear terms of reference and responsibilities and commensurate dedicated resources (DAW, UNESCO, and ILO).

There should be active involvement, collaboration and networking with other gender units in UN entities and in other partner organisations, including universities and research institutions (ILO).

These lessons are relevant in relation to the discussion in the following sections on capacity for gender mainstreaming and on possible institutional locations for the Gender Mainstreaming Unit in UN-HABITAT.

4.2 CAPACITY AND RESOURCES FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UN-HABITAT

In the first decade of this millennium, the then Executive Director was instrumental in securing funds for gender work in UN-HABITAT and for the GMU in particular. Between 2006 and 2010, the GMU received the bulk of its funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under a series of two-year agreements between Norway and UN-HABITAT.

During this period the GMU has continuously lost staff, who migrated to other positions within the organisation, including to regional and liaison offices. These staff members, many of whom still operate as Gender Focal Points in their present positions, are in principle still an important resource for the GMU and consultations are regular. However, without clear mechanisms that define this relationship, it is

our contention that the skills and knowledge of these resource people are not adequately utilized.

The GMU itself is at its lowest staffing level with only the Director, a Programme Officer (on a time-bound contract) and an administrative assistant to manage the wide agenda which it tries to cover. Donor funding for staff positions has become scarce as Norwegian funds have been channeled to other priority areas, such as youth, and also to fund gender work on water and sanitation, climate change and land.

To reverse the downward spiral, which is exacerbated by GMU's limited funds, the agency has an opportunity to strengthen and mobilise resources. These could include the internal gender network, resources embedded with external partners and management's own support for gender-mainstreaming work.

It should be noted that there are, in practice, already two models for gender mainstreaming in place in the agency and these exist side-by-side. The first is the 'traditional' system that revolves around the GMU and the GFPs. The second is the presence of gender specialists working in programmes and in technical teams.

Some might regard these specialists as high-level GFPs, and therefore an integral part of the first model. However, in practice, coordination is lacking and the consultants were left with the impression that the GMU and the specialists are relatively independent of each other and the flow of information and mutual learning is inadequate.

As a result of the presence of gender specialists and staff who take on extra gender work through personal commitment – notably in the Training and Capacity Building Branch, Global Land Tool Network, Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Branch.

Safer Cities Programme and Cities and Climate Change Initiative, – the agency has produced progressive, and in some cases cutting-edge, normative and operational work in support of

improved gender equality in human settlements. However, the GMU could do more to recognize these staff, and utilize their technical knowledge and fruits of their work benefit of women and men in human settlements more generally.

At the moment, the two models are brought together through the GTF and yet the role of the Task Force is ill-defined. How to reconcile the two models and draw maximum benefit from the agency's considerable achievements in normative and operational work to date will be discussed below.

CLARIFICATION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The Evaluation Team has been requested to discuss possible institutional locations of the GMU. However, regardless of where the GMU is located, the Evaluation Team is of the opinion that both the GMU and the agency's broader gender-mainstreaming arrangements need to undergo significant reform.

There is a critical need to strengthen the match between the GMU's mandate, capacity and resources and to ensure that existing resources and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming within the agency are used more effectively.

Three steps to achieve this are sketched briefly here. They are:

- Revising the profile of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit
- Clarifying the role of Gender Focal Points
- Revitalizing the Gender Task Force

REVISING THE PROFILE OF THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING UNIT

As demonstrated in the preceding sections of this report, there is confusion over the role and responsibilities of the GMU. The Evaluation Team was not presented with the mandate but, according to a brief prepared by the GMU, it is 'charged with the responsibility for

promoting women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in all UN-HABITAT programmes and activities both at the normative and operational level' (UN-HABITAT 2007).

An overview of GMU's Gender Mainstreaming Work further specifies four pillars:

- Gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT activities
- Gender and local governance
- Economic Empowerment of Women through land and housing
- Advocacy, networking and partnerships (Kiwala 2008)

This mandate is broad, challenging and requiring considerable efforts to reach out to management and technical staff across the Focus Areas to ensure buy-in and support for work focused on greater gender equality in human settlements.

In order to achieve this buy-in and support, the GMU needs to be recognized across the agency for its strategic focus and coherence and for the quality and relevance of its work. This includes interest and recognition from colleagues at HQ and country-level staff.

The current ad hoc 'unrelated, discrete and disjointed set of activities' (2007 Review) tends to undermine the credibility of the unit and leads to a downward spiral which can only be reversed if the Gender Mainstreaming Unit itself is reshaped and its mandate revisited, clarified and rendered manageable.

Following discussions with UN-HABITAT staff, it seems clear that the GMU needs senior staff who are able to:

- Provide intellectual leadership on gender equality in human settlements, commanding respect through a track record of relevant work
- Speak at international conferences and raise the profile of the agency in this area
- Liaise at the highest level with UN Women to establish meaningful

partnerships that could potentially extend to country-level collaborations

- Find ways to reach out across UN-HABITAT to dynamise and motivate senior management to improve their commitment to gender equality results in their focus areas
- Catalyze the establishment, coordination and sustainability of partnerships from networks of women at a grassroots level to other UN agencies
- Build bridges with the GFPs and gender specialists, and establish mutually beneficial relationships through a reformed Gender Task Force.

The Evaluation Team was informed that the GMU's staffing is expected to be strengthened, in terms of an upgrade of the P-4 to a P-5 and two P-3 positions (one new and one unfrozen). It is, therefore, urgent that discussion and agreement on the substance of the unit is undertaken to establish a match between the mandate of the GMU and its staffing.

This is not so much a question of number and formal grades of staff as a question of the right profiles. To define the formal positions before the contents and responsibilities attached to them seems to be backwards reasoning.

The quality, relevance and visibility of gender mainstreaming work undertaken and facilitated by UN-HABITAT is just as important as the institutional location of the GMU. Both will have an impact on the internal and external appreciation of the organization's gender mainstreaming work. The interplay between the GMU, the Gender Focal Points (GFP) and the Gender Task Force are also central to improving the coherence and quality of the GMU's work and to raising its profile.

CLARIFYING THE ROLE OF GENDER FOCAL POINTS

Despite several requests, the Evaluation Team was never presented with a list of GFPs in UN-HABITAT, nor were they provided with the TOR for the GFPs. During the SWOT workshop

in Nairobi, a number of participants noted that they had never seen TOR for the position. Whilst these issues are clearly problematic, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit should grasp the opportunity to make a fresh start and reconnect with the network of GFPs, many of whom are highly-skilled and committed professionals.

Drawing up a list of GFPs that includes information on specialist areas, seniority and levels of gender knowledge should help to identify which areas either lack them or where they need greater support. This process should involve engagement with senior colleagues across the agency to discuss how GFPs are appointed and to define criteria for their selection.

The GFPs themselves could then be involved in a participatory process to define their TOR, and to set out manageable goals with regard to gender mainstreaming in their own work. This could involve taking a closer look at how gender networks function in other organisations.

The ILO could be an interesting case for comparison as its gender network is one of the key institutional arrangements identified to operationalise the 1999 ILO Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy. The network consists of Senior Gender Specialists based in some regional offices, headquarters-based Gender Coordinators for each sector as well as some key units and Gender Focal Points in both headquarters units and field offices. The network, of approximately 130 women and men, is coordinated by the Bureau for Gender Equality.

The role of ILO Gender Focal Points is:

'To act as a "catalyst" to assist gender mainstreaming in a respective office or unit. While GFPs may be directly involved in implementing certain gender-specific activities including with constituents, their contribution should focus on aiding colleagues and management to identify strategies and work methods that will enable and build further capacity of colleagues to integrate gender

concerns into their own areas of work. *This is critical to avoid all gender-related work assigned only to GFPs.* (Evaluator's emphasis)

The manager needs to ensure that adequate time, conditions and financial resources are allocated so that the Gender Focal Point can perform the tasks required. It is also important that managers bear in mind that these functions are not to be regarded as an add-on to an already full workload' (ILO 2006).

The process of defining TOR may also help GFPs identify particular training needs as it should be acknowledged that not all are specialists. Further engagement will be needed between the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and senior management across the organisation to ensure that GFPs are able to perform their tasks – as suggested in the ILO model above.

A rough outline is drawn up below for a model that will help reshape the GMU, using existing staff resources for gender mainstreaming more effectively - first and foremost the GFPs.

A REVITALIZED GENDER TASK FORCE – AN EXTENDED GENDER WORKING GROUP

According to the GEAP, 'a network of gender focal points and the Gender Mainstreaming Unit will be charged with the responsibility of developing the operational plan for each year in consultation with branch and unit chiefs' (UN-HABITAT 2009:16). This network is, in essence, the Gender Task Force.

The GEAP further states that, 'The MTSIP Steering Committee, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director and comprising Directors and other senior staff of UN-HABITAT, is designated to serve as the decision-making organ for the implementation of the gender equality action plan' (Ibid). The MTSIP Steering Committee thus has a role to play in the much needed clarification of the mandate of the GTF.

The role of the Gender Task Force should be closely linked to overseeing and monitoring the operationalisation of the GEAP, helping

to establish accountability for commitments to gender equality made across the agency. A reporting framework on progress towards the GEAP has yet to be established. Whilst the GTF can provide support to the development and implementation of such a framework, achieving it will require the full engagement of senior staff in each of the Focus Areas and the MTSIP Steering Committee (see discussion on accountability and reporting below).

The GTF functions and roles need to be clearly established and disseminated throughout the organisation. Alongside clarification of the GTF's role in giving policy direction and monitoring of gender mainstreaming activities, TOR should set out the relationship between the Task Force, the Gender Focal Points and the GMU.

It should be stressed that a revitalized and focused GTF is one way to improve the functioning of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit. In general, the GMU needs to extend its outreach both inside and outside of the agency with much improved communication mechanisms.

This could be achieved through the GTF, which could provide a forum for better dialogue between the GMU and gender specialists, communicating UN-HABITAT's considerable technical knowledge to a broader audience and designing and running advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns.

It needs to be reiterated that UN-HABITAT, including the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, is deeply dependent on partners for the implementation of operational activities and, to some degree, for normative, knowledge-production and dissemination activities. Over the years many partnerships have emerged and a few of them have been strong network partnerships. This is a gender resource which should be handled with care and respect, and nurtured to complement the capacities of the GMU and GFP network.

The Evaluation Team recommends that this external resource, embedded in partner

organisations, is integrated and becomes more visible in the functioning of the GTF. Thus, representatives of key partner organisations could be invited to participate in the Gender Task Force, at the very least as observers and resource persons.

To keep the partner representation to a manageable number, decisions could be made on which representatives would be most relevant at a given point in time, taking into account ongoing and forthcoming initiatives. A rotational principle could be followed of two or -three partner representatives at a time. In this way, the GTF could become a type of extended gender working group.

A NOTE ON FUNDRAISING

The GMU will require a budget for training, networking and resource development. Increasing the visibility and outreach of the GTF and stepping up gender mainstreaming efforts across the agency will require a concomitant increase in funding for gender focal points and specialists.

Managers will also need to ensure that the work schedules of GFPs permit higher levels of engagement. Funding time spent by GFPs on mainstreaming is problematic across UN and other international development agencies so resources must be found if the commitments to gender equality in the Habitat Agenda are to be fulfilled. The networking functions of a revitalized Gender Task Force will also require funding.

While increased funding from the agency for the work of the GMU and GTF is desirable, UN-HABITAT is currently displaying positive results through the gender-specialist model, whereby staff have dedicated time and resources through programme funding to work on promoting gender equality results. The GMU should consider ways to build on this model, possibly

through sharing specialist staff in other branches through an innovative approach to fundraising.

The GMU, and the chief in particular, could apply themselves to fundraising for more gender posts in programmes. One could be in areas where there is a critical need for greater gender sensitivity, such as post-conflict work on land and housing. This would mean engaging with senior managers and technical staff in the branches and units, and putting forward proposals for funding in which there is a part- or full-time gender post. The GMU could then fund a smaller percentage of this staff member's time for more general mainstreaming activities in their specialist area, and for contributions to the work of the GTF.

As noted by one senior UN-HABITAT staff member in Human Resources, donors have made gender equality a priority. As such, the money is out there, but the GMU needs to follow it. Thus the GMU needs to look for alternative funding sources and innovative ways of bringing more staff into the agency who have a specialization in gender.

The focus of the GMU cannot just be on the Unit itself. It has a mandate to promote a greater focus on gender equality across the organization and, to date, this broader vision and outreach have not worked satisfactorily.

4.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR OPTIMISING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GMU AND GFPs

In order to visualize a better integration of resources in the area of gender mainstreaming work between the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and Gender Focal Points, a simple illustration is presented. The model consists of a matrix that outlines gender mainstreaming tasks against staff resources in the GMU and the GFP network.

³² Should the staff expansion in GMU not take place, then it must be considered how the tasks can be undertaken by others, in most cases GFPs, who will then need to be given a clear mandate and matching resources.

These are staff resources which are already in place or are expected to be strengthened, as per the discussion on staffing above.³² Indeed, the number of Gender Focal Points is much greater than indicated by the matrix but few have full-time dedication.

The matrix lists areas of gender mainstreaming work that have to date been covered by

the GMU, GFPs and specialists, sometimes voluntarily. Without being exhaustive, these are areas or tasks where future gender mainstreaming work needs to be addressed in a more coherent and strategic way.

The weight between each parameter/task is not defined here and may become an issue when the model is translated into concrete

BOX 4.2: Sketch of a model of gender mainstreaming tasks and staff responsibilities

Task/staff	GMU 1	GMU 2	GMU 3	GFP 1	GFP 2	GFP 3	GFP 4	GFP 5	GFP n
Knowledge production on GE-HS	Xxx										
Advocacy/policy influence	Xxx										
Gender, youth, inclusion											
Operational guides/tools											
Capacity dev./ training											
Link with GFPs in FAs			xxx								
Link with GFPs in regions/ countries		Xxx									
G Task Force coordination	xxx	Xx	Xx	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x
Link with partners	xxx	X	X	xx	xx	xx	X	-	-	x	x
Fund raising/ donor links											
Monitoring and Evaluation											
External communication./ dissemination											
...											
...											
...											

NOTE: a) GMU 1, GMU 2, GMU 3 exemplifies 3 GMU staff. b) GFP 1.....n indicates the current number of GFPs. b) Boxes to be ticked, e.g. with symbols indicating 'main responsibility' xxx, 'sharing responsibility' xx and 'participating' x'.

tasks. The division of roles and responsibilities is not fully developed either but will require more specification than the Evaluation Team is mandated to develop. The work with results matrices (discussed in section 3.1), which has already been undertaken in each of the Focus Areas to bring the GEAP a step further towards implementation, will be a possible stepping stone.

Additional qualifications of this basic model are required:

- The few crosses inserted in the matrix are indicative only; they refer to generic positions, not to any specific person. Responsibility for the tasks set out in column one (which are not exhaustive) will be allocated to the most suitable staff, i.e. the GMU chief and two GMU staff or to Gender Focal Points.
- Some Focus Areas already have dedicated GFPs. Their role will continue and could possibly be extended with additional responsibilities and matching resources.
- Responsibilities will be allocated according to qualifications and capacities. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit will be staffed with a chief (GMU 1) whose qualifications will match the responsibility for facilitating knowledge production on gender equality and its links to human settlements, policy dialogue and advocacy, partner and donor contacts and fundraising. It is important that the role of GMU chief is to facilitate rather than undertake all assigned tasks personally.
- The remaining tasks will be shared between the two other GMU staff and relevant GFPs. Initially, it would be wise to give the main responsibility for regional/country contact/linkages³³ to one of the GMU staff in particular, and the main responsibility for contact with Focal Areas to the other GMU staff. This would be in collaboration with the GFPs already deeply immersed in Focal Areas programmes.

- With a reformed Gender Task Force promoting more regular engagement with key institutional partners, the GMU staff should take on a coordinating role and act as a principal point of contact for partners to avoid duplication and optimize synergies.

4.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING MECHANISMS

The important role of senior management has been mentioned in various places throughout the report. Other agencies have identified as prerequisites for success the role of the former Executive Director in securing recognition of UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming work and funds for the GMU and the importance of high-level commitment and budgets.

This is why there is the need for the proposed reform process to be led by the Deputy Executive Director (see chapter 6). It is unlikely that the proposed changes in gender equality work and institutional arrangements will happen without the involvement and commitment of senior management.

It is the senior management's responsibility to ensure that the organization's achievements in mainstreaming gender equality are documented and that lessons learnt are accessible. The monitoring and reporting of key policies and strategies will be important accountability mechanisms, with examples being the MTSIP and the GEAP.

It is envisaged in the GEAP that monitoring of the implementation of it should be done concurrently with the monitoring of the MTSIP on a half-yearly basis. The MTSIP Steering Committee should make this a mandatory requirement, with the support of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. This is responsible for preparing reports on implementation of the MTSIP.

³³ Responses from regions and countries indicate that the knowledge of what goes on in the GMU is very limited. Greater dialogue and exchange was requested. The same issue was raised by several UN organisations and other partners

GEAP periodic reports should also be submitted to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a half-yearly basis as the MTSIP progress report. It is vital that monitoring of gender perspectives/sex disaggregated indicators of the MTSIP and the GEAP are tallied and, in the longer run, possibly integrated into the MTSIP reporting.

In many organizations, the development of a monitoring system is delayed because the organisation cannot decide on which gender indicators to use. However, problems devising ideal SMART indicators for gender mainstreaming work should not be used as an excuse for not reporting on progress on the GEAP or for doing it on an ad hoc basis.

An intermediate type of monitoring which lies between the ideal-type monitoring by results-matrix with pre-determined gender-equality indicators and *ad hoc* or no reporting, should be introduced across the agency as soon as priorities have been clarified. This could be one of the first tasks of a revamped GTF. Self-evaluations and reports using primarily qualitative indicators (to be agreed) could serve as useful accountability mechanisms before a formal system is put in place.

Indications from the Evaluation Team's assessments are that UN-HABITAT will have difficulties in fulfilling its mandate to work on gender equality and women's empowerment unless real commitment from senior management for the implementation of the GEAP is achieved and adequate mechanisms for monitoring and accountability are established.

Ideally, the organization should have structures and mechanisms in place to report on progress on implementing gender equality policies on a regular basis. There would be an ongoing process or reporting and monitoring that would offer a picture of progress toward agreed results.

This may result in the following types of reporting:

- Reporting on institutional processes, achievements and results relating to gender equality (regular GEAP reports).
- The agency's overall results reporting process (regular MTSIP reports).
- Programme/ Project reporting (responding to which type of gender equality results programmes and projects contribute to).
- How individual project and programme reports are rolled up to offer a picture of gender equality results being achieved across the organization.

The Evaluation Team wishes to call attention to a possible framework for assessing gender results developed by CIDA, from which UN-HABITAT may take inspiration (CIDA 2010).³⁴ The central question the framework is designed to address is the extent to which an agency's development results reflect its policy commitment to gender equality.

The framework sets out an approach to performance assessment that differs in significant ways from more familiar project-based performance measurement because it focuses on the agency's performance on a cross-cutting theme, rather than on a specific investment. What is of particular interest is that the tool includes guidance on assessment and rating of specific elements of institutional strategy, structures and achievements.

It is not possible to undertake a fully-fledged overall rating of the institution/organisation with regard to gender equality in this evaluation. This would need more systematic monitoring data.

A preliminary, impressionistic assessment by the Evaluation Team is that UN-HABITAT would have nothing to fear but much to learn if it

³⁴ 'Gender equality results' refers to results that contribute to reducing inequality between women and men.

subjected itself to an assessment based on the criteria set out in the gender equality results assessment framework. On the four-point rating scale - good, promising, "fair" and of concern, - UN-HABITAT would obtain a reasonable score. The exercise itself could promote greater accountability for gender results within the agency.

4.5 OPTIONS FOR GMU'S INSTITUTIONAL LOCATION

To sum up the assessments from the report, and from this section in particular, the Evaluation Team presents two options for the GMU's possible institutional location. The Evaluation Team is of the opinion that, whichever option is chosen, the GMU needs to undergo significant reform, as indicated above. This will need to take place simultaneously with a revitalizing of the network of Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force.

Option 1: To help raise its profile and facilitate engagement and influence in high-level policy

processes, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit could be located closer to the decision-making level of the organisation. The GMU could thus be located in the *Executive Director's or the Deputy Executive Director's office*.

Option 2: A second option is to keep the GMU in its present location but with the necessary revisions and clarifications as described above. This is perhaps the most straightforward model at this juncture, when a major institutional change for the whole organisation is foreseen within a relatively short time.

The Evaluation Team has placed an emphasis on the GMU's role as a catalyst and supporter of gender equality across the agency, rather than its engagement in programmatic work. The Team thus believes Option 1 to be the preferable location for the GMU as it will facilitate engagement with all Focus Areas. This also reflects the majority of responses received from respondents in UN-HABITAT's HQ and regions. (See further discussion in section 6.2 on Next Steps).

5 KEY FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED



5.1. KEY FINDINGS

The following section summarizes the main findings of the evaluation on UN-HABITAT's work on gender mainstreaming in terms of strategic focus and institutional arrangements (including the GMU and the GEAP); policies, programmes and projects and, finally, partnerships. Section 5.2 presents lessons learned.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The development of the GEAP framework in 2009 set out outputs, activities and indicators for each focus area, and includes potential partners, information on responsibilities and expected funding. This was an important step taken by UN-HABITAT to strengthen the strategic focus and coherence of its work on gender and this framework is aligned to the MTSIP – a commendable attempt to render gender mainstreaming a more integral part of the agency's work.

The Focus Area frameworks accompanying the GEAP are ambitious. Many activities are not yet funded and appropriate indicators have not been developed. There is some evidence to suggest

that senior project managers in country offices tend not to be aware of the Gender Equality Action Plan's existence. In order to render the GEAP more manageable, there is a need for key players in the agency – the GMU, GTF, Focus Area teams and senior management – to prioritize activities and interventions.

Implementation of the GEAP requires engagement across divisions and programmes to ensure awareness and ongoing commitment. In theory, the GEAP could help UN-HABITAT to achieve its objectives *vis-à-vis* gender equality, but this will require the agency as a whole to mobilize behind it.

The mechanisms to ensure that gender mainstreaming commitments in programme documents are reflected in operational work are of concern. After some criticism, the criteria for assessing contributions to gender equality in programme documents are currently being revised by the Programme Review Committee.

However, unless commitments are translated into programme indicators, it is not clear that ongoing monitoring of how these are being integrated into work on the ground will take place. This matter is, therefore, closely related to

problems across the agency in the development and quality of gender indicators.

The issue of gender indicators is replicated at a higher scale in the MTSIP. Gender equality outcomes are specified at the highest purpose levels of the Plan but then disappear at the level of expected accomplishments.

Without lower-level proposed gender equality results according to each of the focus areas, and the integration of these into work plans/programmes with accompanying indicators, there is no institutional incentive or sanction for UN-HABITAT staff to commit their time and resources to working towards greater gender equality in human settlements.

The GMU has been working on what it has called a gender equality programme. This is best understood as a set of disparate activities, including training, conferences and support for the implementation of the Women's Land Access Trusts, which are a problematic set of projects.

Several staff have migrated to other positions in the agency. Staff in country programmes have called for greater support to help them work with their partners towards gender equality in human settlements development.

In several cases it appears that the contact between regions/countries and the GMU has contributed to growing gender sensitivity among officers and field staff, yet more contact is requested. There is a key role to be played by regional- and country-based Gender Focal Points.

The dominant view is that the GMU should concentrate on normative, advocacy and policy-influencing work, and generate greater value added from work that is already being undertaken by gender specialists elsewhere in the organisation. In programmes where there are staff with dedicated time to work on gender outside of the GMU - Water and Sanitation, GLTN and Climate Change - the impression is of strong self-contained gender mainstreaming initiatives.

Although the GMU has engaged with these and other programmes through technical advice and linking up with relevant women's organizations, there is a critical need for much-improved dialogue between the Unit and others working on gender issues within the organisation. This relationship is currently deemed to be one-sided and based on extraction, where the GMU makes requests for information from gender specialists elsewhere in the organization but these staff members do not feel recognized or provided with up-to-date information.

Given that innovative work is being undertaken in the above-mentioned programmes, the GMU should be facilitating the dissemination of knowledge both inside the organisation and to a wider audience.

The existence of the Gender Task Force is a positive step, and could serve to help with dissemination and improved dialogue between the GMU and programme and gender specialists. However, the Gender Task Force currently appears to be without strategic direction. It is an under-utilized resource but one with some dynamic members who are committed to supporting the organisation to improve gender-equality results.

Some branches and sections of UN-HABITAT have not given the appointment of gender focal points the attention this deserves. Young, junior, female staff members should not be the default choice.

The quality, relevance and visibility of gender mainstreaming work undertaken and facilitated by UN-HABITAT are just as important as the institutional location of the GMU. Both will have an impact on the internal and external appreciation of the organization's gender mainstreaming work. The interplay between the GMU and the Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force are also central to improving the coherence and quality of the Unit's work and to raising its profile.

POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

NORMATIVE WORK

UN-HABITAT is to be commended for the high quality and broad range of policy papers and research products that analyze gender inequalities in human settlements and for the development of tools and training materials that have been designed to counter discrimination.

Of particulate note is the work of the Land and Tenure section and the Global Land Tool Network.

A key recent output of the GLTN on gender and land is the *Gender evaluation criteria for large-scale land tools*. This is generating interest and uptake both within UN-HABITAT and more widely and has been described by one senior staff member as 'quite revolutionary'.

UN-HABITAT has taken steps to raise gender awareness amongst men and women in the political arena through the production of a well-regarded and comprehensive training source book. The organization's work on Safer Cities also involves a focus on improved gender awareness in planning practice at city level. Although guidance materials have been produced, UN-HABITAT does not appear to be evaluating how this type of gender equality resource is being used, or by whom or with what results.

However, in other normative work, UN-HABITAT's non-gender specific outputs do not always carry such progressive messages on gender equality outcomes. Greater coherence is needed within UN-HABITAT's policy documents with improved integration of gender-relevant research findings into general guidance material.

Whilst it is laudable that the agency has produced publications on gender issues in specific thematic areas, the fact that they remain as standalone documents means they may be perceived by policy makers as supplementary texts or add ons, thus potentially limiting how their key messages are absorbed. Good resources on the gendered aspects of land and

housing are not reflected in general guidance papers and may not reach a larger audience.

UN-HABITAT documents often refer generically to gender perspectives, including, it must be noted, the Habitat Agenda. This can mean many things - from being aware of gendered roles, needs and division of labor to actively trying to change the status quo and work to counter subjugation, inequalities of and discrimination against women.

In general, the organisation needs to decide how far it wishes to push the gender equality agenda: is it committed to proactively promoting women's equality of opportunity, influence and benefit in both the public and private spheres in urban settlements? Or is the eradication of inequalities in access to basic services a sufficient goal?

OPERATIONAL WORK

In terms of work at country level, the Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Branch has shown a strong commitment to responding to women's needs. Particularly commendable is its decision, prompted by advice from the GMU, to partner with the Gender Water Alliance and their facilitators in each country where the Water for African Cities programme is operational. This is to raise awareness and support implementation.

Other notable work has included efforts to promote greater visibility and influence of women in local government through participatory budgeting processes in three African countries. This programme has experimented with ways to increase women's representation and participation in local government, and potentially provides useful lessons that could be incorporated into future training materials for participatory budgeting/governance initiatives.

There are examples of excellent work on promoting gender equality at country level, including innovative radio and theatre scripts for waste management in Afghanistan. However, there are also examples of a lack of coherence

between normative and operational work.

For example, UN-HABITAT policy documents on land, housing and governance strongly advocate for the active promotion of women's rights in urban areas, noting that without affirmative measures these may not be respected or upheld. This message is not always reflected at the operational level.

Of particular concern are projects relating to land and shelter in post-conflict/disaster areas, many of which do not appear to have incorporated the critical lesson that in vulnerable situations women's rights may need to be actively supported. An equal access approach may not be sufficient in these contexts.

Given the fact that the majority of UN-HABITAT's operational work is undertaken in post-disaster situations, it is critical that the organisation considers how its work in these areas might promote improved gender equality results. The GLTN's own tool on gender evaluation criteria could be applied to its work on land in Sudan and the DRC, for example.

Many UN-HABITAT programme documents and reviews lack clarity on what the 'integration of a gender perspective' really means. This can be associated with a range of expected results that respond to practical or strategic needs. UN-HABITAT staff need to give greater analytical thought to what type of gender equality results programmes and projects could contribute to, and be more exact in their use of language in this regard. For example, in PSUP documents it is not clear what a 'gender responsive slum-upgrading framework' would look like.

Similarly, some UN-HABITAT programme documents, reviews and evaluations assume that inclusion of women in a project as beneficiaries, or the promotion of women's participation in planning processes, is synonymous with empowerment. This suggests more conceptual clarity is needed amongst partners and programme staff on the meaning of empowerment. There is a need for better analysis of how women might gain influence

and voice inside or outside the home through their involvement in programmes and projects.

This point above relates to housing and resettlement projects in Afghanistan where initiatives with different funders showed very different approaches towards the incorporation of men and women into project design and management. In one case the gender focus involved providing homes for widows. In another, the project took active steps to ensure women were engaged in management and design processes.

It is not clear the extent to which survey work that will be carried out for slum-upgrading will ensure that sex-disaggregated data will be collected across all the areas of the survey. Further, it cannot be assumed that partners will be equipped to design a gender-sensitive survey or to undertake analysis of the data collected.

One issue that requires debate is how UN-HABITAT's programming engages with so-called 'cultural' attitudes towards the sexual division of labor in the home. This relates to the question as to what UN-HABITAT wishes to commit itself to as an organisation, in terms of gender equality outcomes in human settlements.

While the work of the organisation on access to basic service provision is increasingly gender sensitive, it is not necessarily contributing to greater gender equality. It could even be said to be reinforcing both inequalities within the household and gender stereotypes on engagement in the public sphere.

The organisation has not used its work on water, sanitation and hygiene education to challenge gender stereotypes around household labor, despite the fact that this issue has been raised in programme evaluations and research reports. The question remains, therefore, as to whether UN-HABITAT wishes to actively promote results relating to gender equality through its programming on basic service provision, or if it prefers to limit gender mainstreaming to ensuring its activities are gender sensitive and that they 'do no harm'.

PARTNERSHIPS

Given the large number of partners that the agency engages with, the Evaluation Team is not in a position to come to firm conclusions as to the extent to which UN-HABITAT has adopted an effective partnership approach to facilitate gender equality in human settlements. The cases examined would suggest that UN-HABITAT has had mixed results in this regard.

The *Draft Partnership Strategy* has no provision for guidance on partnership formation in the areas of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. This despite the fact that the agency's *Policy and Strategy Paper for Focus Area 1* proposes that partners should be selected according to their willingness to adopt mutual approaches to gender equality. Findings from the field visit to Senegal show that partners who are implementing the agency's programmes and projects will not necessarily be either willing or able to ensure their work is gender sensitive.

The working relationship between the Gender Water Alliance and the agency's Water for African Cities programme is a positive example of a partnership established to deliver specialist technical advice and ensure gender mainstreaming in programming. Partnerships with such professional agents are vital and should complement UN-HABITAT's outreach to networks of grassroots women's organisations.

In terms of partnerships with organisations of gender equality advocates, at an agency-wide level UN-HABITAT's institutionalised relationships with the Huairou Commission and with UNIFEM through MOUs show a commitment to entrench work on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, these relationships require both attention and a concerted effort to operationalise the terms of the MOUs. The consultants were concerned by the clear breakdown in trust between the Huairou Commission and the GMU.

The engagement with UNIFEM on the Safe Cities initiative could be stepped up, to ensure

that UN-HABITAT takes on its role as lead global partner. Productive collaboration on this programme could facilitate further engagement with the newly formed UN Women.

The reform of the UN's gender architecture should be seen as a critical opportunity for UN-HABITAT to establish a partnership for greater gender equality in human settlements. There is potential for collaboration in both normative and operational work. The intention of UN Women to increase its presence at country level provides excellent opportunities for joint programmes in line with the One UN initiative.

5.2 LESSONS LEARNED

- International development organisations have, over recent decades, gone through a succession of institutional models for integrating gender equality and women's empowerment in their work. Using different 'building blocks' such as gender divisions, working groups, specialists and focal points, models combine different elements to best suit the organisation's needs at a given time.
- They are institutionalised accordingly – close to the decision making centres of the organisation or in more peripheral positions. Few organisations have found a model which they are satisfied to call best practice for gender mainstreaming and that has lasted a considerable length of time. Thus there is no one best solution for all organisations and the models employed may change over time as organisations evolve and develop greater capacity to address gender equality.
- The discourse on gender equality and development has undergone a number of iterations. However, gender mainstreaming is one concept that will be difficult to substitute, as it is so deeply ingrained in international development cooperation, and in the UN in particular, from where the normative concept originates. Most organisations, including UN-HABITAT, continue to follow a gender mainstreaming

strategy to pursue the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment, but many have moderated reference to what they call an alienating concept³⁵ to talk of rights of women and men, boys and girls and to focus on combating inequalities and optimize inclusion of different vulnerable groups and minorities.

- UN-HABITAT's overall approach of working towards more sustainable human settlements through both normative and operational initiatives is aligned with the two-tiered approach. Gender analysis and gender equality objectives need to be incorporated into Focal Area policy and programmes while the situation for women in human settlements is unlikely to improve unless targeted initiatives are undertaken at the local level.
- Relevant gender indicators are hard to develop centrally and generic advice may be of limited use. The gender indicators included in the GEAP Focus Area matrices need to be prioritized and operationalised. For gender indicators to be relevant for monitoring purposes in particular units, programmes and projects, they must be developed and prioritized in close collaboration with the "subject matter" staff – the technical specialists who are familiar with the thematic area and country contexts where the programme will be implemented.
- This may require substantial dialogue – an iterative process based on face-to-face discussions between gender specialists and programme specialists. UN-HABITAT needs to invest in this dialogue.
- Having staff with gender expertise dispersed throughout the agency is an excellent resource and clearly contributes to gender mainstreaming in particular thematic areas. However, UN-HABITAT can gain extra value from these staff through improved coordination and more dynamic engagement with the GMU. This will require leadership to give strategic direction and coherence to the work of these specialists, facilitating the group to become more than the sum of its parts.
- UN-HABITAT's programme and project documents use vague terminology around gender equality and women's empowerment. Reference to the 'integration of gender perspectives' is not useful as it does not help staff to define how their work will impact differently on men and women, and in what ways it may contribute to different types of gender outcomes. For example, while both endeavors are commendable, there is a big difference between ensuring that service provision is gender sensitive and actively promoting a change in gender power relations in a community through joint tenure arrangements.
- Partnerships are not static and depend upon good personal, as well as professional, relationships. Partnerships are not self-sustaining but require nurturing and re-energizing when tensions escalate over organizational cultures, personalities and so on.

³⁵ UNIFEM verbal communication, December 2010

6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS



Findings throughout this report have prompted recommendations that are summarised in section 6.1. Several of these relate to reforms and changes within the gender mainstreaming architecture of the agency. There are unavoidable overlaps between some of these reforms and changes and section 6.2, in which immediate next steps are elaborated.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To turn the GEAP into a strategic document in line with the MTSIP and a guide for the organisation it is recommended that focused attention is now given to operationalising, implementing and monitoring of selected activities outlined in the GEAP and in the follow-up GEAP Focus Area Frameworks. This will require simplification, choosing priority goals for the GEAP and dissemination – including to country offices.
2. This should also involve active collaboration between the Gender Task Force, Focus Area Teams and senior management. Senior management and programme managers should be held accountable for commitments made on gender equality in their work.
3. Align GEAP with MTSIP monitoring processes. The MTSIP Steering Committee should make this a mandatory requirement and the two monitoring processes of the MTSIP and the GEAP be integrated in the MTSIP monitoring in the long run. A limited number of sex-disaggregated indicators, linked to prioritized areas, for monitoring the GEAP should be selected.
4. The monitoring system should distinguish between overall institutional performance indicators and programme related indicators and take inspiration from results-based monitoring systems. The responsibility for coordinating monitoring of the GEAP should rest with the Gender Task Force with outreach to Gender Focal Points in Headquarters, regions and countries.
5. The Programme Review Committee should ensure that commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in project/ programme documents are included in monitoring frameworks for necessary follow up, and the Programme Review Committee (PRC) should investigate possibilities for employing a marker system for rating gender sensitivity and tracking investments, in line

with the practice of other UN agencies.

6. The agency needs to count on a Gender Mainstreaming Unit that is more strategic. This will require clarification of GMU's mandate (and those of the Gender Equality Programme) and its role within the agency and with partners. Improved mechanisms should be put in place to facilitate greater interaction between the GMU and the regional and liaison offices, GFPs and programme specialists, so that the GMU is better placed to support the agency's operational work and disseminate lessons from regional/country-level experience to both internal and external audiences.
7. The GMU should consider alternative and innovative ways to fundraise for gender specialist positions in the agency through, for example, 'sharing' of specialist staff in other units/branches through programme funding.
8. General policy guidance material produced by UN-HABITAT should integrate key findings from relevant research on gender equality and women's empowerment, ensuring there is coherence in the policy messages that the agency is disseminating. The agency needs to find a way to track the take up of the knowledge documents it produces, including training materials and the impact of their use.
9. During the programme/project design process, UN-HABITAT staff should give greater consideration to the potential impact of the intervention for gender equality and women's empowerment, and incorporate these into a results framework. Programmes and projects should not assume that women's participation is equal to empowerment.
10. Programmes on basic service provision should consider moving beyond a focus on ensuring gender sensitivity/equality of access. They should seek to introduce more transformative ways of working towards greater gender equality. This could involve actively promoting women in management roles so as to afford women increased visibility and influence in the public sphere.
11. Greater coherence between normative and operational work is needed, as is greater support for Habitat Programme Managers (HP) to promote work towards gender equality with partners. Gender specialists should be placed strategically in regions and in collaboration with Regional and Technical Cooperation Division.
12. Gender Focal Points in regional offices have an important role to play in ensuring HPMs are aware of and have access to key policy and training guidelines in appropriate languages that they can share with partners. The GMU, and the agency as a whole, should consider how they can contribute to improved dialogue and links between country and HQ levels.
13. The agency's own policy lessons on the need to actively support women's rights to land and housing, most critically in post-crisis situations, must be incorporated into programming. The agency should consider applying the GLTN's gender evaluation criteria to its own programmes dealing with land in post-conflict situations, and consider working on actively promoting women's rights to land and housing through supporting the provision of paralegal services, potentially in collaboration with UN Women. This is particularly critical in post-crisis situations.
14. The organisation should use its educational training materials – for example, on water, sanitation and hygiene education – to challenge gender stereotypes around household labor. Where programme work involves the use of surveys, these should facilitate the collection of sex-disaggregated data across all thematic areas.
15. Partners and programme staff may need extra training and support for the design of surveys and analysis of data. Gender specialists have a role to support their colleagues during the design

process. Where none are in place, the GMU should facilitate access to gender specialist knowledge if required.

16. The (draft) *Partnership Strategy* should include criteria on the willingness and ability of the proposed partner to adopt mutual approaches to gender equality in line with the agency's Policy and Strategy Paper for Focus Area 1. Given the stated aims of the newly-created UN Women to increase its work at country level, UN-HABITAT should identify opportunities for joint programming. With UNIFEM, UN-HABITAT should increase its engagement on the Safer Cities initiative, establishing ways to take on its role as lead global partner.
17. The tensions between the GMU and the Huairou Commission need to be resolved as soon as possible, given the strategic importance for the agency in reaching out to grassroots women's organisations. A wider outreach by the GMU and programmes to professional and academic partners is also required, and monopolisation of partnerships should be avoided by establishing greater clarity on the responsibilities and roles of the GMU and strategic partners in the area of mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment.

6.2 IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

A major lesson in this evaluation is that the questions under analysis are so intertwined that a solution for one issue will have repercussions on others. It is impossible to address questions related to the strategy – the GEAP – without contemplating the role of the institutional structures and actors. The challenge is to break the 'circular' arguments and identify the strategic entry point, rather than recommending an ad hoc number of disjointed activities.

Thorough assessment and wide consultation have led to the conclusion that the load-bearing structures of UN-HABITAT's work on mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment need immediate reform. Unless

the three pillars of the agency's gender equality work are mutually reinforced there is a risk that the 'house of gender equality' will collapse. There are untapped resources and synergies between and within the three partly-overlapping groups that need to be reformed.

This leads to the following recommendations:

- The mandates, role and responsibilities of the three interdependent and mutually supporting groups – the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, the network of Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force - should be revisited and clarified as soon as possible.
- The reform process should start immediately with a clarification of substance – results aimed for in UN-HABITAT's gender equality work at global, regional and country level – which will determine the required staff competencies and not vice versa. The GEAP will constitute the substance framework, and the major human resources are embedded in the (global) Gender Focal Points network, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and external partners.
 - * The first step of the process will be to agree on the major tasks and activities, the second step to tally tasks with the most appropriate staff (see matrix sketch in chapter 4) and the third step to institutionalise the reformed/reinforced gender architecture (GFP Network/ GTF/ GMU).
- Terms of reference for GFPs should be revisited and revised. This could be done in a participatory manner with serving GFPs. A list of current GFPs should be drawn up to identify where there is a need for further support.
 - * The main role of a Gender Focal Point should be to act as "catalyst" to assist the process of gender mainstreaming in a respective unit or programme. Guidance for branches and divisions on appointment of GFPs should be

produced. The work of GFPs should be recognized in the Electronic Performance Assessment System. Managers must ensure that GFPs have time and dedicated resources to undertake activities to bring gender into the mainstream.

- The role of the Gender Task Force – a cluster of GFPs on a rotational basis – should be closely linked to overseeing and monitoring the operationalisation of the GEAP, helping to establish accountability for commitments to gender equality made across the agency.
 - * Strategic terms of reference are required for the Gender Task Force, which should make explicit how the GMU will work with it. The GTF should facilitate better dialogue between the GMU and gender specialists; communicate UN-HABITAT's technical knowledge on gender equality in human settlements to a broader audience inside and outside the agency and design and run advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns.
 - The inadequate match between the expectations, ambitions, and practices of the GMU and its current staff resources requires prompt attention. With the proposed approach to reinforce the gender architecture, clarification of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit's mandate, role and responsibilities will be part of the larger process of integrating it more strategically along with the GFPs and the, GTF.
 - * The aim is to bring the GMU's mandate and staff profiles and competencies into sync but as part of the extended resource base of the GFPs network and GTF. In the transition phase, until a revised institutional set-up is brought in, the GMU should draft Terms of Reference for its reinforced role as primarily a facilitator, catalyst and supporter of gender equality across the agency.
 - In the revised set up, when mandate, ambitions and staff competencies are better matched, the GMU will have been strengthened. It will then be able to provide intellectual leadership, take on coordination tasks on capacity building within and outside the organisation, facilitate support to countries and regions, provide advocacy towards senior management, mobilise and dynamise partnerships, undertake fundraising and establish mutually beneficial relationships with the Gender Focal Points through a reformed Gender Task Force.
 - It is recommended that the external gender specialist resources embedded in partner organizations including, but not limited to, women's grassroots organizations are integrated and become more visible in the functioning of the GTF. Representatives of key partner organisations should be invited to participate in the GTF, at the very least as resource persons.
 - * To keep partner representation to a manageable number, decisions should be made on which representatives would be most relevant at a given point in time considering on-going and forthcoming initiatives. A rotational principle could be followed of two to three partner representatives at a time. In this way, the GTF could become a type of extended gender working group.
 - The reform process should ideally be led by the Executive Director or the Deputy Executive Director and involve senior management and representatives of the MTSIP Steering Committee, the GFPS network, GTF and GMU in a participatory process.
 - It is recommended that the GMU be located in the Executive Director's or DED's office and the GTF be coordinated and/ or administered from the same office. This will facilitate engagement with all Focus Areas and coordination of activities across the organization in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The larger context and changing modalities for international development cooperation in which UN-HABITAT gender mainstreaming work is set

have been analyzed and lessons learnt. These are that UN-HABITAT's agenda of normative and operational work at global, country and local levels and with focal area themes lends itself well to the two-tiered gender mainstreaming approach. The Habitat Agenda requires that gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives be mainstreamed into all policies and practices.

It is recommended that UN-HABITAT communicates widely, both internally and to partners, its intention to retain and reinforce the two-tiered gender mainstreaming strategy – of cross-cutting initiatives and women-focused interventions. There is rich scope for the GTF/ GFPs/ GMU to help demystify the gender mainstreaming concept.

ANNEXES



The term 'gender mainstreaming' was first coined at the United Nations' third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 and then explicitly endorsed ten years later at the Beijing Conference.

ANNEX 1: POSTSCRIPT



The evaluation has been carried out in accordance with the Evaluation Team's interpretation of the Terms of Reference in dialogue with the M&E Unit and its resource persons. During the process, it became clear to the Evaluation Team that several key questions in the TOR led our investigations onto tracks where it was difficult to change direction within the time allowed for the evaluation.

We are fully aware that Evaluation Teams at the end of an evaluation often feel prepared to write 'better' and more relevant Terms of Reference. This is not what we are setting about to do, but we want to share a few thoughts on the focus of this evaluation and on a possible wider perspective concerning the agency's future work on gender equality and women's empowerment. This is not fully pursued in the evaluation report.

Evidence collected throughout the evaluation process made it more and more clear that interchanges between the GMU and actors in the organization involved in gender mainstreaming, in general were not very productive. The evaluation builds on this evidence and therefore recommends that the nucleus of the gender architecture - the Gender

Mainstreaming Unit, the Gender Focal Points and the Gender Task Force - must have their roles and responsibilities re-defined. To some readers this may look as a recommendation for "more of the same".

The Evaluation Team agrees that we do operate with a model for immediate next steps containing the nucleus of the current gender architecture – however, with a significantly improved and focused nucleus. A strong point is made that UN-HABITAT must prioritise substance and decide on gender equality results it wants to pursue before detailed decisions are taken on the necessary staff competencies, levels and numbers of the GMU.

While investigating the evaluation questions and arriving at recommendations for the "nucleus" model, the Evaluation Team could not pursue evidence for a model of gender mainstreaming addressing inequalities more widely. This model was, however, brought to the table by UN-HABITAT senior management during our presentation of the evaluation findings on February 2nd 2011, and reinforced embryonic ideas of a broader mainstreaming initiative generated during the evaluation process.

The rationale for the inequality approach would be that UN-HABITAT's work on human settlements touches on a variety of inequalities defined by class/socio-economic status, age, race, ethnicity and faith for which a common mainstreaming approach should be attempted. A second rationale would be to keep an opening for optimal gender mainstreaming 'models' in view of substantial institutional changes of UN-HABITAT overall which are foreseen in 'the near future'. Hence, this should be an optimal time such as mid-February 2011 for UN-HABITAT to discuss the proposed "nucleus" model, but also to open up for a discussion on mainstreaming work to combat a wider array of inequalities.

It may then be in light of revised overall strategies and structures that gender mainstreaming and institutional arrangements shall be defined, and hopefully be spelled out at the most central level to avoid the 'mistake' of a separate *Gender Equality Action Plan* from that of the current *Mid-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan*.

As UN-HABITAT restructures its work on gender mainstreaming, we would like to offer some principles which are important to keep in mind for any model:

- Considering gender inequalities as one of a 'basket' of inequalities offers both potential and challenges. Investments will have to be made to ensure that the gender dimension is not sidelined or forgotten if UN-HABITAT opts for a broader inter-sectionality approach to inclusion and cross-cutting issues.
- In a revised institutional model for UN-HABITAT, certain issues will continue to cut across policies, thematic areas and activities. These may not be organized in units as they are today but expected results need to be defined and staff requirements, roles and responsibilities spelled out as well as performance and accountability measures established.
- If progress is to be made in the future, then there is a greater need to focus on gender equality results and on how UN-HABITAT programmes will contribute to reduced gender inequalities and women's rights and empowerment. In the evaluation report it is recommended that UN-HABITAT familiarizes itself with an innovative approach to integrate gender equality results into planning and monitoring. The model devised by CIDA (2009) lends itself to UN-HABITAT's serious scrutiny and inspiration for how to define 'inequality results' and indicators.
- The work does not necessarily become easier by working with broader and different forms of inequalities. Gender and social impact assessments (SIA) of the work of UN-HABITAT and its partners still need to be done. SIA methods have been developed by other agencies – integrated with environmental issues – which are S&EIA-ready for UN-HABITAT to take inspiration from and adjust to its own needs.
- Gender equality mainstreaming requires investments and dedicated personnel, regardless of the structural model chosen. It is to be anticipated that UN-HABITAT will optimize the use of gender expertise scattered throughout the organization in Headquarters, regions and countries and with partners.
- A high-level champion is needed to shepherd the process of agreeing on the mandate and optimal location of the proposed gender equality 'nucleus', or agreeing on a structure and mechanisms for addressing mainstreaming work on inequalities. This must include specification of mechanisms by which resources are allocated to particular cross-cutting themes and activities.

ANNEX 2: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY³⁶



GENDER IN UN-HABITAT AND THE EVALUATION IN SHORT

As noted in the TOR for this evaluation, UN-HABITAT is the focal point for coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The main document to come out of the 1996 Habitat II conference in Istanbul, this sets out explicit commitments for gender equality in human settlements, which include the following:

- Integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programmes and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis
- Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators
- Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, including

statistical means that recognize and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and programme planning and implementation

- Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally-sound and sustainably-resourced management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas
- Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making³⁷

UN-HABITAT has taken a number of steps to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, both in its programmes and within the institution itself. Notable amongst these are the development of a **Gender Policy**, first adopted in 1996 and revised in 2002 and the creation of a Gender Policy Unit in

³⁶ Excerpts from the Inception Report, November 2010

³⁷ The Habitat Agenda Goals and Principles, Commitments and the Global Plan of Action, page 17.

³⁸ The focus areas are: Focus Area 1: Effective Advocacy, Monitoring, and Partnerships for Sustainable Urbanization, Focus Area 2: Participatory Planning, Management, and Governance, Focus Area 3: Access to Land and Housing for All. Focus Area 4: Environmentally Sound Basic Urban Infrastructure and Services. Focus Area 5: Strengthening Human Settlements Finance Systems

1997, which was later merged with a Woman in Habitat Programme to form the Gender Mainstreaming Unit.

In 2003, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT adopted resolution 19/16 which addressed women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading. The 2005 GC resolution 20/7 went further and requested the Executive Director 'to ensure that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches and units of the United National Human Settlements Programme address gender equality and women's empowerment in human settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities.' The 2007 GC resolution 21/9: Women, land and property rights and access to finance, requested promotion of access to finance by low-income women, as individuals or in cooperation.

UN-HABITAT's current Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan, for the period 2008-2013, places a specific focus on gender equality in three of its focus areas³⁸. Gender is specifically referred to in focus area 1 on advocacy, monitoring and partnership, with a special reference to women's groups; in focus area 2 on promotion of participatory urban planning, management and governance and in relation to inclusive and effective urban planning and also in focus areas 3 on pro-poor land and housing, in relation to gender sensitive housing, shelter relief and reconstruction modes in post-disaster and post-conflict areas.

When the MTSIP was adopted, the GC in resolution 21/2 requested the ED to ensure that cross-cutting issues such as gender are duly reflected in the implementation of the enhanced normative and operational framework (ENOF)³⁹,

including in the indicators for each focus area.

In response to recommendations from the 2003 Forward Looking Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT and from the *Review of cooperation between UN-HABITAT and the Government of Norway* in 2007, the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2008-2013 was developed and approved in April 2009.

The 2007 *Review* concluded that the 'Gender Mainstreaming Programme needs to be more coherently integrated in a shared strategic framework, instead of unrelated, discrete and disjointed set of activities'. The GEAP, approved by the Governing Council in 2009, sets out to promote gender as a cross-cutting issue across the focus areas of the MTSIP.

UN-HABITAT is further guided by the system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women approved by the General Assembly in 2006.

Since 2007 the GMU has been largely funded by the Governments of Norway and Spain. Limited programme funds have been allocated from the regular budget and the Human Settlements Foundation.

COMMENTS ON KEY CONCEPTS

The term 'gender mainstreaming' was first coined at the United Nations' third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 and then explicitly endorsed ten years later at the Beijing Conference.

In addressing inadequate educational opportunities, governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.⁴⁰

³⁹ ENOF consists of strengthened partnerships and an integrated programme at global, regional and country level.

⁴⁰ Paragraph 81 of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995. <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instate/e5dplw.htm#five>, accessed 07.12.09.

Put simply, the ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is the achievement of gender equality. The idea is to transform the question of gender equality and women's empowerment from a special issue into a general concern in specific areas, programmes and projects.

However, gender mainstreaming has generated considerable debate over recent decades. The most salient critique is that it has led to the sidelining of its ultimate, highly politicized aim – to eradicate gender inequality within society. For many observers, the political principles that gender mainstreaming is based upon have become obscured by a focus on process and the use of particular tools, with far less focus on reducing inequality.

It is also widely acknowledged that gender mainstreaming has, to date, had limited success. Attempts to incorporate a gender lens into policy making and planning in aid agencies and international development organisations have come up against a number of obstacles.

A core issue is the misinterpretation, or partial interpretation of gender mainstreaming. Confusion that has arisen is that between affirmative action and gender mainstreaming: 'Gender mainstreaming and equal opportunity policy are complementary terms, not equivalents'.⁴¹

A further misinterpretation involves women-specific policy/ programming and gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming means introducing a gender perspective into a given focus area but it does not take the actual gender imbalances as the starting point for developing policies and programmes.⁴² This means that along with initiatives to deal with women's strategic needs (that result from their subordination to men), there will need to be

specific policies in place to address women's practical needs (that result from the specific conditions they face as women).

Women-focused policies and programmes are still required in most organisations and countries. However, it has been argued that the practice of mainstreaming has been used as an excuse to shut down programmes and policies explicitly directed towards women, despite the fact that advocates of mainstreaming have always called for a two-pronged approach.

This has been one of the perverse effects of mainstreaming, leading to the complaint that the processes surrounding gender mainstreaming 'are being used to deny the very existence of women-specific disadvantage'.⁴³

Beyond problems of interpretation, observers of gender mainstreaming have noted an acute problem of policy evaporation, whereby policy statements endorsing practices that will lead to the promotion of gender equality do not get implemented. One way that observers attempt to account for the failings of the gender mainstreaming process is to point to technical issues – lack of funding, weak mandates for those charged with promoting gender equality, or locational inappropriateness or instability.

However, it is increasingly apparent that entrenched patriarchal attitudes within institutions are a barrier to more gender-sensitive planning and implementation. It must also be recognised that analytical skills and basic understanding of gender-based exclusion are required to undertake gender-sensitive planning and monitoring, in normative as well as operational activities.

The evaluation will use the globally dominant terminology of a two-tiered gender mainstreaming strategy aiming at gender

⁴¹ Woodward, A (2001). *European Gender Mainstreaming: Promises and Pitfalls of Transformative Policy*. Brussels, Free University of Brussels, Page 68

⁴² See for example Council of Europe (1998). *Gender Mainstreaming: Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices*. Final Report of the Activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming. Strasbourg, Council of Europe, Page 13.

⁴³ Jaquette, J and K Staudt (2006). 'Women, Gender and Development' in *Women and Gender Equity in Development Theory and Practice: Institutions, Resources and Mobilisation*, edited by J Jaquette and G Summerfield. Duke, Duke University Press, Page 39.

equality and women's empowerment, by integrating gender equality perspectives and targeting women, concepts that are also applied within UN-HABITAT as illustrated, for example, in the GEAP.

SCOPE

Concerning scope, the TOR stipulate that the evaluation will cover the period from the previous *Forward-Looking Evaluation* (2003) to date. Other baseline documents against which progress in integration of gender perspectives in human settlements-related policies, programmes and projects of UN-HABITAT will be assessed are the Gender Policy (2002), the CG resolutions 19/16 (2003) and 20/5 (2005) and the Gender Equality Action Plan (2008). Thus, the degree to which recommendations from previous evaluations and reviews have been effectively implemented will be assessed.

The evaluation focus will be on the degree to which UN-HABITAT has become more strategic and coherent in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. There will be a focus on the validity of the partnership strategy and practices in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment. And finally, the appropriateness of the institutional arrangements for promoting gender equality, including the role and function and optimum location of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, will be examined.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework and matrix below is an elaboration of the evaluation questions set out in the TOR section 5. DAC's evaluation criteria are to be followed with a "focus on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and to some extent impact and sustainability" (TOR: 3).

The evaluation team takes note that the matrix of the TOR includes four Evaluation focus areas: strategic focus; gender mainstreaming; partnerships and institutional arrangements. Since the overall topic is "Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT" we will deal

with this topic in relation to each of the evaluation focus areas. In other words, gender mainstreaming and strategic focus, gender mainstreaming and partnerships and gender mainstreaming and institutional arrangements.

The evaluation issues labelled Gender Mainstreaming in the matrix can be interpreted as looking more at effectiveness and to some degree, impact and sustainability with partner institutions and countries, which are also important for assessing what UN-HABITAT has achieved. These perspectives will best be covered if information and results 'on the ground' in countries or at regional and global levels are included.

We also take note that the evaluation issues mentioned in the matrix are not all discrete. For example issues 5, 6, and 7 have significant elements that relate to institutional arrangements. It is important to note that the evaluation issues should be interpreted in relation to the characteristics of UN-HABITAT as an organisation and in relation to the specific contexts in which the agency works.

A brief reflection on the evaluation focus and issues suggests:

- UN-HABITAT's work is defined in focus areas. This poses a significant challenge to an evaluation of mainstreaming of gender equality, which is a cross-cutting issue. It cuts across as well as within specific focus areas of human settlement-related policies, programmes and projects.
- Institutional arrangements in UN-HABITAT are strongly influenced by the fact that it is a small agency which has to create impact through partnerships. In this situation, it is vital to know who the strategic partners for normative work and for operational work, at international, regional, national and local level are. In this particular case, it is also important to know who the strategic partners for cooperation on integrating gender perspectives in the short but hopefully also longer-term perspective will be.

TABLE 2.1: Evaluation framework – focus, issues and questions, assessment criteria and means of verification

Focus	Evaluation issues and questions	Assessment criteria	Methods and means of verification
Strategic focus	<p>1 To what extent has the Gender Equality Action Plan made UN-HABITAT's work on gender more strategic and coherent?</p> <p>2 To what extent has the programme of the Gender Equality Unit become more strategic and coherent?</p>	<p>Strategic follow up of GEAP. Achievements in terms of (i.t.o) implementation and actions in Habitat's focus areas/ programmes/ divisions/regions. Who has done what?</p> <p>Resource allocation to gender mainstreaming in overall programming of UN-HABITAT (core funding) and earmarked funding for gender equality work</p> <p>Capacity building and gender mainstreaming training</p> <p>Observable/experienced changes related to GEAP in UN-HABITAT's strategic focus areas – normative and operational; coherence across focus areas/ programmes/ divisions and coherence within xyz?</p> <p>GMU's programme components and processes re. women-targeted activities; gender mainstreaming support to other divisions' programmes and projects and development of guidelines, tools, indicators, M&E etc. Changes since GEAP? (Before-after).</p>	<p>Assessment of achievements, strategic results, capacity built, outcomes and outputs of the GEAP.</p> <p>Coherence (i.t.o) of complementary / mutually reinforcing activities re. mainstreaming of Gender Equality.</p> <p>Interpretation by different stakeholders of strategic focus; coherence and GMU's programming and priority-setting over time.</p> <p>Stakeholder and beneficiaries' perceptions.</p> <p>Reports, e.g. reviews /progress of MTSIP and programmes. Interviews. SWOT analysis.</p>
Gender Mainstreaming – programme aspects	<p>3 What has been achieved in integrating a gender perspective in human settlement related policies, programmes and projects?</p> <p>4 Which tools and approaches for gender mainstreaming have worked in UN-HABITAT and which have not?</p> <p>5 To what extent have resources been utilized efficiently? What is the past, present and future need for resources?</p>	<p>Extent to which policy and programme documents reflect UN-HABITAT's conceptualisation of the links between gender equality and human settlements. Comparison with 'baseline' (see column to the right) and with best practice from other institutions.</p> <p>Observable impact of tools in programme design and implementation with regard to gender mainstreaming/ women's empowerment.</p> <p>Extent to which funding has been channelled towards priority initiatives, as set out in policy documents.</p> <p>Role of gender focal points. Time and resources given to staff to work on gender mainstreaming. Extent to which work on gender equality and women's empowerment forms part of performance appraisal and can contribute to career promotion. Incentives to work on GEWE. Extent to which gender unit and focal points are able to respond to demands for technical assistance.</p>	<p>Review of overarching policy documents (where available) to establish UN-HABITAT's conceptualisation of the link between gender equality and human settlements, and gender equality in disaster management.</p> <p>Literature review (academic work and policy papers from other institutions, including other UN bodies) on key aspects of gender equality and human settlements to establish the state of the art and serve as a baseline for comparison with UN-HABITAT's work.</p>

Gender Mainstreaming – programme aspects	<p>6 What are the accountability mechanisms/ demand for effective gender mainstreaming?</p> <p>7 How is the capacity/ supply for gender mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT? If not sufficient, how can it best be strengthened?</p>	<p>Level of knowledge on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment among staff. Ability to undertake gender sensitive analysis, planning and monitoring. Level of interest in gaining expertise in this area.</p> <p>Extent of demand for and use of gender mainstreaming tools/training. Relationship of gender mainstreaming unit to other UN-HABITAT's departments.</p>	<p>Analysis of programmes and policy documents in areas of core concern for gender mainstreaming as set out in MTSIP: partnerships, urban governance, access to land and housing and policy on disaster preparedness/ response.</p> <p>Staff assessment of gender mainstreaming (including on use of tools and demands for technical assistance made and met) gauged through interviews.</p> <p>Progress reports and evaluations.</p>
Partnerships	<p>8 To what extent has UN-HABITAT applied a more effective partnership approach to facilitate gender equality in human settlement?</p> <p>9 To what extent has UN-HABITAT been able to reach out to more informal groups and emerging coalitions/partners, such as slum dwellers organisations?</p>	<p>Types of partners at different levels (global, regional, national, local and community) and experience with human settlement thematic/focus areas. Does the strategy facilitate incorporation of new strategic areas, e.g. gender and disaster/ crisis management, fragile states? and others (a.o).</p> <p>Selection of partners for gender equality work – ad hoc or strategic criteria. Which? Normative and/or operational?</p> <p>Can lessons be learnt from network programmes' selection of gender sensitive partners or not?</p> <p>Partnerships with other UN organisations, such as UNIFEM, UNDP and UN-Women.</p> <p>Consideration of partners' experience/ capacity for gender mainstreaming and/ or women-focused activities, and approach for working with gender equality in human settlement. Capacity for scaling up (e.g. policy influence). Changes over time – why?</p> <p>Advantages/disadvantages of working with informal groups and emerging coalitions/ partners. Difference between focus areas/ programmes.</p> <p>Sustainability in partnerships.</p>	<p>UN-HABITAT's partnership strategy – are gender perspectives explicit / acknowledged?</p> <p>Elicit experience with gender-sensitive partners from normative and operational areas across focus areas, HQ, regions, countries and programmes/ projects.</p> <p>UN –HABITAT's staff judgement of effectiveness in partnership approach re. gender-sensitive partners.</p> <p>Assessment of gender-sensitive/effective partnership with UN-HABITAT by selected / sample partners.</p> <p>Mainly interviews and SWOT analysis.</p>

Institutional arrangements	<p>10 What are the institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming, and how have these functioned, including the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, Gender Focal Points, Gender Equality Task Force, the MTSIP Steering Committee, the programme Review Committee and the MTSIP Focus Area Teams?</p> <p>11 What is the value added of the Gender Unit's involvement with other UN-HABITAT programmes? What needs to be improved?</p> <p>12 What are the advantages and disadvantages with different institutional locations for the Gender Mainstreaming Unit?</p> <p>13 How does the institutional set up of the Gender Unit in UN-HABITAT compare with best practice in the UN system and public sector generally, in terms of location and resources (human, financial, capacity)? What lessons can be learned from best practice elsewhere?</p> <p>14 What would be the optimum location of the Gender Unit within UN-HABITAT?</p>	<p>Mode of operation and effectiveness of current institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming in Habitat and for implementing the GEAP.</p> <p>Pros and Cons of GMU's involvement with other UN-HABITAT programmes re. gender mainstreaming, e.g. in normative areas, operational areas, training and capacity building, establishing guidelines, indicators, M&E systems a.o.</p> <p>GMU's perception of how the Unit contributes to coherence in gender mainstreaming across focus areas/ programmes and within these.</p> <p>Lessons on institutional arrangements for gender equality work from e.g. UNDP, ILO, FAO and other agencies/ public sector.</p> <p>Comparative assessment of better practices elsewhere with GMU in Habitat re location and resources – i.e. dedicated staff with gender equality mainstreaming skills/ capacity - within GMU / in other Divisions/ units - and core and ear-marked funding.</p> <p>How comparable or not is UN-HABITAT's with other agencies' arrangements?</p> <p>Optimal location of the GMU in UN-HABITAT's as regards a variety of criteria, e.g. ability/willingness of the organisation to promote gender equality mainstreaming work, implementation GEAP, staff motivation, responsibility/ accountability at all levels, achievements/performance, resource mobilisation, for developing guidelines and tools, M&E and strategic influence at policy level – in normative and operational work - and regarding new strategic areas such as disaster/ crisis management.</p>	<p>Overview of institutional arrangements - major actors /mandates/ responsibilities for gender mainstreaming in HQ/ regions and focus areas and changes in these.</p> <p>Documentary assessment of institutional arrangement for gender mainstreaming in reviews, action plans, progress reports, evaluations etc. Actual and potential changes.</p> <p>Individual and group interviews with senior management, Gender Task Force/ GFPs, Reps of committees, and GMU re. perception of GMU's role and responsibilities in UN-HABITAT vis-à-vis senior management's responsibility for gender equality mainstreaming.</p> <p>SWOT workshops/ analysis with Gender Equality Task Force including inputs from regions/ countries/ programmes.</p> <p>SWOT workshop/ analysis with senior management.</p>
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These are contextual parameters which are shared to some degree by UN-HABITAT and other agencies – UN agencies in particular. For this reason, comparative analysis will be undertaken. The issues cannot be answered a priori but will influence how we go about the evaluation and draw on the expertise and experience of UN-HABITAT's stakeholders.

RESULTS AND/OR PROCESS

It is the aim of the team to take on board important lessons which have been gained from other gender mainstreaming evaluations, some of which are mentioned in section 1.2.4. To better support the organisation in moving forward, we think the time has come to push beyond assessment of processes (did the organisation do gender-training, do they have guidelines, etc.) to ask about how they are planning for and measuring actual results relating to gender equality.

Thus, questions such as 'how does this policy/ programme/ project contribute to narrowing gender inequalities?' or 'how does this policy/ programme/ project contribute to strengthening women's and men's participation – or the rights of girls and women?' become important.

When reviewing UN-HABITAT's reports on results, for example, we will be looking for whether there is evidence of results relating to gender inequalities or differences or to women's rights. This can help to focus on whether or not the attention given to process issues and institutional arrangements in UN-HABITAT is making a difference to what the organisation is doing. This being said, we also need to appreciate that this is not an impact evaluation and optimal evidence is not likely to be available in all cases.

An appreciation that the evaluation aims to focus on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment with regard to UN-HABITAT's strategic focus, partnerships and institutional arrangements, has underpinned the need to elicit evidence from both the normative and operational work through consultations during

the Inception phase. The TOR are not explicit on this but do state that 'more in-depth review of selected programmes/processes can be undertaken as appropriate' (p 5).

COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

It was requested that special efforts should be made to engage staff in regional offices. Consultations with UN-HABITAT staff suggest that the country perspective of the evaluation could be reinforced by a country visit by one of the evaluators. It was proposed that countries should be chosen where a range of UN-HABITAT initiatives, including key global programmes and specific gender-focused initiatives, are being rolled out.

It is, therefore, suggested that Lucy Earle will review gender mainstreaming in the implementation of UN-HABITAT programmes in Senegal, where there are currently initiatives underway in Water and Sanitation, Participatory Slum Upgrading and Participatory Budgeting and Gender Mainstreaming in Local Governance. Senegal has also been selected for the next round of National Urban Forums and of UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents.

The regional perspective can be reinforced through liaison with the ROAP office. Substantive contact has already been established between Lowie Rosales, the Gender Focal Point in the regional Asia office, and Britha Mikkelsen about a selection of programmes which can be assessed in more detail. It is proposed that programmes/projects should represent a variety of UN-HABITAT initiatives where gender mainstreaming has been attempted, including disaster / post conflict management - and possibly climate change initiatives – as well as specific gender-focused initiatives that are being rolled out. The programmes may be selected from a limited number of countries.

Some documentation has already been received on initiatives in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Other significant disaster management initiatives have been mentioned in Banda Ache, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The

method of assessment will involve substantial dialogue, discussions and interviews with key stakeholders by phone and mail and short questionnaires will also be employed.

If possible, the ROAP Gender Focal Point will organize a joint meeting to respond to questions and to comment on the results of the self-evaluation report using SWOT, which was conducted in Nairobi 11 November. She will also establish contact with UN-HABITAT programme staff, other GFPs and partners.

The timeframe for the country and regional assessments is from mid-November to mid-December.

APPROACH TO ANALYSIS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

As noted in the discussion of the MTSIP in the TORs for this evaluation, gender is specifically referred to in focus area 1 on advocacy, monitoring and partnership, focus area 2 on promotion of participatory urban planning, management and governance, and focus area 3 on pro-poor land and housing.

During discussions with the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit during the inception phase of the assignment, it was suggested that the evaluators give particular attention to focus areas 2 and 3 and that they limit engagement with focus area 1 to the issue of partnership. However, it is clear that gender equality is also a critical issue in UN-HABITAT's work on sustainable urban services – particularly water and sanitation. It is also relevant to work on housing finance.

As such, the evaluation will also cover initiatives that fall under focus areas 4 and 5, albeit in less depth. In order to respond to the questions set out in the TOR, the issue of partnership will be dealt with in a stand-alone section of the report, and will include case studies of key institutional relationships at HQ level and discussion of

partnerships at country level.

The analysis of UN-HABITAT's work in focus areas 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be foregrounded with a discussion of the agency's stated policy and understanding of key issues for gender equality in human settlements, where this is available. This will be considered alongside a brief resume of current academic and policy debates on gender equality and women's empowerment in urban governance, access to land and housing, basic services and, to a limited extent, housing finance.

The evaluation will then consider a selection of policies, tools, programmes and project documents under each focus area, bearing in mind that some programmes cut across two or more focus areas. The choice of documents will be guided by a number of criteria. The sample will:

- Include policy, programme/ project documentation for both operational and normative work
- Cover at least one key global programme in each focus area
- Provide relevant lessons and recommendations for broad areas of Habitat's work
- Be guided according to the work that Habitat is carrying out in the country to be visited (Senegal) and in the Asia region.

The selection of programmes, policies and tools for review will also be dependent on the availability of documentation.

The review of documentation will be guided by an adaptation of Caroline Moser's Gender Audit Methodology. This sets out a categorization of documents according to focus (gender as a central issue, some gender components and no explicit gender focus) and provides a framework to assess levels of gender analysis and, where appropriate, gender activities and monitoring indicators.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The paper is available at www.brookings.edu/views/papers/200505moser.pdf

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The evaluation is organised into successive and partially overlapping phases (see work plan, chapter 4). The approach during the Inception Phase is to collect and review documents (see tentative list of documents in TOR) and undertake explorative interviews with key stakeholders representing HQ Divisions, Regional and Liaison offices and external expertise, as a way to provide sharper focus to the evaluation than that which is outlined in the TOR.

Guides for further data collection and analysis through document reviews, individual and group, face-to-face, mail and telephone interviews will be developed during the Inception Phase. These, and possible case studies and country/field visits, are tentatively presented in this Inception Report but will need to be discussed further with UN-HABITAT. This will be undertaken during the ET's Inception visit to Nairobi 7-20 November.

It is the intention to supplement document review and interviews **with self-evaluation using SWOT** – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats - analysis of UN-HABITAT's gender mainstreaming. Tentatively, a SWOT workshop is planned with the Gender Task Force in Nairobi during the Inception Phase. The workshop will be facilitated by the Evaluation Team.

To ensure participation of Gender Focal Points, (GFPs) in locations other than Nairobi, the Self-evaluation/SWOT report will be shared with the GFP in Regional Offices in Asia and Pacific. The recipients will be invited to comment and add viewpoints to the report, individually or as a group.

The Self-evaluation serves as part of the learning process, letting stakeholders individually and/or in groups reflect on UN-HABITAT's Gender Mainstreaming work. The SWOT report will serve as input to the evaluation team's assessment.

During the explorative interviews in the Inception Phase and during the SWOT workshop with GFPs, suggestions were raised that Self-evaluation should also be undertaken with senior management including heads of Divisions and Units. This could not be arranged during the Inception visit.

Dialogue with key stakeholders throughout the evaluation process is vital for the ET. Presentation of preliminary results and draft reports will take place at workshops as appropriate during the Inception Phase and a visit to present the final draft.

Assessment of different institutional arrangements for Gender Mainstreaming Units or similar will build on interviews on pros and cons, tentatively with representatives of selected UN organisations such as UNEP, ILO and FAO; partner organisations and donor organisations. The experience of the Evaluation Team and external specialists will inform the analysis.

The different types of data and data collection methods will be used strategically in the sense that data triangulation will be applied to check and validate findings and conclusions. As an example, data from the country and regional selected cases will be used to put other data from document studies and interviews into perspective and vice versa.

It is our experience that anecdotal evidence can also be relevant, in particular to identify entry points for probing on specific key issues.

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ANNEX 4: LISTS OF PEOPLE MET AND CONTACTED FOR THE EVALUATION



Nairobi

Surname	Name	Role
Acioly	Claudio	Chief, Housing Policy
Alabaster	Graham	Human Settlements Officer, Water and Sanitation, African Cities
Andersson	Cecilia	Associate Human Settlements Officer, Safer Cities Programme
Barugahare	Martin	Chief, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
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ANNEX 5: TERMS OF REFERENCE



EVALUATION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UN-HABITAT

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Secretary-General's bulletin of 19 April 2000 entitled "*Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation*" (ST/SGB/2000/8), the overall objective UN-Habitat evaluations is to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of policies and programmes, thereby enabling UN-HABITAT to engage in systematic reflection, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of its policies and programmes, by altering content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives.

This evaluation aims at assessing what UN-HABITAT has achieved so far in mainstreaming gender equality in its programmes, the appropriateness of its institutional arrangements, and strategic partnerships for gender equality.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING, THE GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMME (GEP) AND THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING UNIT

UN-HABITAT is the coordinating agency within the United Nations system for human settlements and focal point for coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as well as the human settlements chapter of Agenda 21, and the MDG Goal 7 Target 11 of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020.

In 1991, UN-HABITAT established the Women in Habitat Programme under the Community Development Programme. In 1996, a Gender Policy was adopted which was revised in 2002. The policy outlines gender mainstreaming in all UN-HABITAT programmes both at the normative and operational level following two approaches: (a) supporting specific women programmes and (b) promoting gender mainstreaming. The Gender Policy Unit was established in 1997 to support implementation of the Gender Policy. In 1999, the Women in Habitat Programme and

the Gender Policy Unit were merged to form the Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU). The GMU is responsible for coordinating gender mainstreaming into all UN-HABITAT programmes and activities and to promote women's empowerment in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions, as well as the strategy for gender mainstreaming in the UN system (CEB/2006/2).

The Governing Council of UN-HABITAT, in resolution 19/16 of 9 May 2003 addressed women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading. In April 2005, the Governing Council adopted resolution 20/7 on Gender equality in human settlements development, requesting the Executive Director "to ensure that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches

and units of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme address gender equality and women's empowerment in human settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities."

In April 2007, a Medium-term strategic and institutional plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013 was approved for UN-HABITAT derived from its mandates, focusing on six focus areas. The MTSIP is expected to be implemented through an enhanced normative and operational framework (ENOF) consisting of strengthened partnerships and an integrated programme at global, regional and country level. Gender is specifically referred to in focus area 1 on advocacy, monitoring and partnership, with a special reference to women's groups; focus area 2 on promotion of participatory urban planning, management and governance, in relation to inclusive and effective urban planning; and focus area 3 on pro-poor land and housing, in relation to gender sensitive housing and gender-sensitive shelter relief and reconstruction models in post-disaster and post-conflict areas. When adopting

the MTSIP, the Governing Council in resolution 21/2, requested the Executive Director to ensure that cross-cutting issues such as gender are duly reflected in the implementation of the ENOF, including in the indicators for each focus area.

A "Forward Looking Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT" was conducted in 2003. The evaluation recommended: (i) to revise the 2002 gender policy to make it more operational, (ii) that the Gender Mainstreaming Unit focus on specific and targeted projects at local level, (iii) that UN-HABITAT prioritize and select a few, but strategic and realistic gender-related goals in each programme area, (iv) to develop gender-related quantitative and qualitative indicators for the various programmes, (v) the Gender Equality Task Force monitors the implementation of gender mainstreaming, and that the Programme Review Committee effectively, (vi) sufficient human and financial resources are allocated, and (vii) that UN-HABITAT clarifies its partnership approach.

A "Review of the cooperation between UN-HABITAT and the Government of Norway" (Kruse and Kapala), of August 2007, concluded that the Gender Mainstreaming Programme needs to be more coherently integrated in a shared strategic framework, instead of unrelated, discrete and disjointed set of activities.

In response to the recommendations of that review, a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2008-2013 was developed and approved in April 2009. The Action Plan covers each area of UN-HABITAT's Medium-Term Institutional Plan 2008-2013, to facilitate that gender-concerns cut across all work. Activities have ranged from capacity building on gender mainstreaming for UN-HABITAT field staff, women grassroots leaders, and trainers of local government institutions, gender analysis of urban inequities surveys, gender indicators and advocacy. Partnerships have been formed with local authorities and UN agencies at global and country level. For more information, see <http://www.unhabitat.org/gender>

Since 2007 the GMU has been largely funded by the Governments of Norway and Spain. Additional programme funds have been allocated from the regular budget and the Human Settlements Foundation.

3. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The objective of the evaluation is to assess what UN-HABITAT has achieved so far in mainstreaming gender equality in its programmes, the appropriateness of its institutional arrangements, and strategic partnerships for gender equality.

The purpose of the evaluation is to inform decisions about how gender mainstreaming and related strategic partnerships can be improved, including the institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming and the role of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit. More specifically, evaluation will be utilized by:

- UN-HABITAT senior management to strengthen institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming, with particular attention to ongoing institutional reform.
- UN-HABITAT programme staff, as it is expected that the evaluation will translate into concrete recommendations for gender mainstreaming.
- Gender Mainstreaming Unit to further develop strategies for gender mainstreaming and in their efforts to support the agency in implementing such strategies.
- Member states, partners and donors who are interested in gender mainstreaming. The evaluation will serve accountability purposes and might inform future funding decisions as appropriate.

The evaluation will constitute a building block in the overall assessment of the incorporation of gender aspects in the implementation of the MTSIP.

4. SCOPE

The evaluation will cover the period from the previous evaluation in 2003 to date. The evaluation will focus on:

- Actual progress made in the integration of gender perspectives in human settlements related policies, programmes, and projects of UN-HABITAT, with reference to the Gender Policy (2002), the GC resolutions 19/16 (2003) and 20/5 (2005), and the Gender Equality Action Plan (2008).
- The degree to which UN-HABITAT has become more strategic and coherent in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The validity of the partnership strategy and practices in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The appropriateness of the institutional arrangements for gender equality, including the location of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit.

The degree to which recommendations from previous evaluations and reviews have been effectively implemented should be assessed.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation will focus on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and to some extent impact and sustainability. Illustrative questions will include, but not be limited to, the following:

EVALUATION FOCUS

Strategic focus

- To what extent has the Gender Equality Action Plan made UN-Habitat's work on gender more strategic and coherent?
- To what extent has the programme of the Gender Equality Unit become more strategic and coherent?

Gender Mainstreaming

- What has been achieved in integrating a gender perspective in human settlement related policies, programmes and projects?
- Which tools and approaches for gender mainstreaming have worked in UN-HABITAT, and which have not?
- To what extent have resources been utilized efficiently? What is the past, present and future need for resources?
- What are the *accountability mechanisms / demand* for effective gender mainstreaming?
- How is the *capacity / supply* for gender mainstreaming in UN- Habitat? If not sufficient, how can it best be strengthened?

Partnerships

- To what extent has UN-HABITAT applied a more effective partnership approach to facilitate gender equality in human settlements?
- To what extent has UN-HABITAT been able to reach out to more informal groups and emerging coalitions/partners, such as slum dwellers organisations?

Institutional arrangements

10. What are the institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming, and how have these functioned, including the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, Gender Focal Points, Gender Equality Task Force, the MTSIP Steering Committee, the Programme Review Committee, and the MTSIP Focus Area Teams?

- What is the value added of the Gender Unit's involvement with other UN-HABITAT programmes? What needs to be improved?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages with different institutional locations for the Gender Mainstreaming Unit?
- How does the institutional set up of the Gender Unit in UN-

- Habitat compare with best practice in the UN system and public sector generally, in terms of location and resources (human, financial, capacity)? What lessons can be learned from best practice elsewhere?
- What would be the optimum location of the Gender Unit within UN-HABITAT?

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

A thorough discussion of the lessons learned and recommendations based on key findings is required. Recommendations related to gender mainstreaming are expected to be practical, timed (immediate, mid-term and long-term) with clear responsibilities and estimated resources, if necessary.

7. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The consultants are expected to outline the details of their proposed methodology in the Inception Report. It is anticipated that the assessment will be organized into successive and partially overlapping phases focusing on:

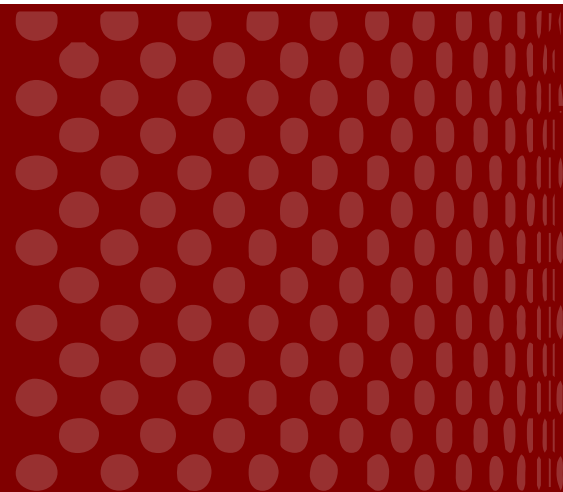
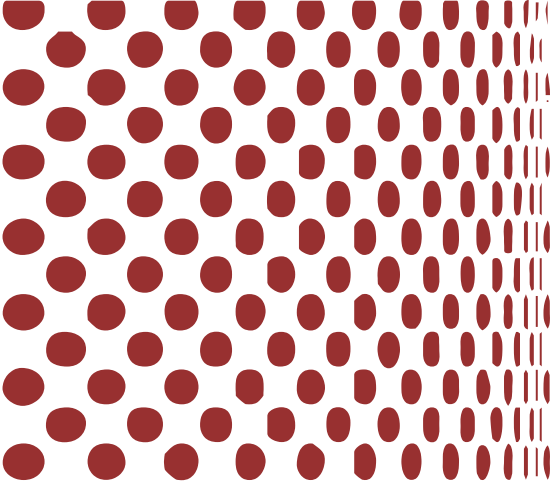
- Document review and analysis.
- Interviews with key stakeholders, both through face-to-face in Nairobi and by telephone/email. This will include senior management, programme staff and Habitat Programme Managers, gender focal points, Governments, other Habitat Agenda partners and local government associations. Special efforts should be made to engage staff in regional offices and liaison offices.
- More in-depth review of selected programmes/processes can be undertaken as appropriate.
- Comparative analysis of the UN-HABITAT Gender Unit with selected Gender Units within the UN system and in relation to public sector best practice in terms of policies, responsibilities, programmes, staffing and location within the agency.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit will manage and coordinate the evaluation. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, which is organizationally placed under the Executive Director, is responsible for improving monitoring and evaluation systems and coordinating monitoring and evaluation activities of UN-HABITAT. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit will support the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit on administrative issues and facilitate the work of the consultants as appropriate.

The Gender Equality Task Force, which includes representatives from all Divisions, will be utilized for the evaluation. Its members will review deliverables, and as such is expected to contribute to enhanced quality and relevance of the process. The MTSIP Steering Committee will be informed of the process, and will be invited to provide feedback to draft findings and recommendations. The donors will be invited to comment on inception and draft reports.

The evaluation will be guided by the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards.



UN HABITAT

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