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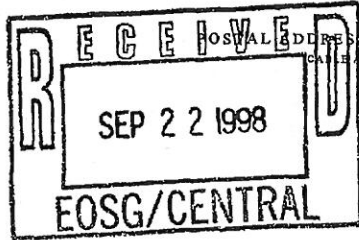
cc: The Deputy Secretary-General
Ms. King

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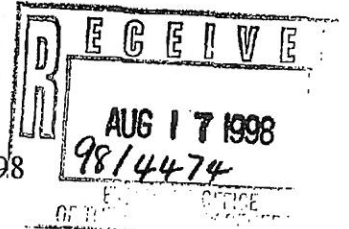
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14 August 1998



Dear Secretary-General,

Thank you very much for your letter of 19 June 1998 on the representation of women at the D-2 level in the United Nations, which I read with keen interest.

Mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the work of the UN has been one of the management issues to which I have attached importance since I joined the Secretariat in March 1997. As you may have noted in your report to ECOSOC (E/1998/64), the Department of Political Affairs organized its workshop on gender mainstreaming on 20 May this year, the first among various Secretariat units to do so.

In response to the recommendations submitted to me as a result of the workshop, I have established the new Departmental Management Advisory Group which will advise me on both gender mainstreaming and relevant management issues. The report of the workshop is attached for your reference.

I am also pleased to note that DPA will be able to bring Ms. Carina Perelli on board as the new Director of the Electoral Assistance Division effective 17 August. With this addition, two of the six divisions in DPA will be headed by women.

As a result of the departmental workshop, I have also instituted a monthly "town meeting" of the entire DPA staff members. I expect that the Advisory Group and the staff meeting be instrumental in promoting further gender equality and mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the work of DPA.

Yours sincerely,

Kieran Prendergast

Kieran Prendergast
Under-Secretary-General
for Political Affairs

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The Secretary-General
United Nations

KP 20/08/98
can share experience
cc Mr. King 10/8/98

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Substantive session of 1998
New York, 6-31 July 1998
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
**Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major
United Nations conferences and summits**

**Implementation of the agreed conclusions of the 1997
coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council on
mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and
programmes of the United Nations system****Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

1. The present report aims to provide the Economic and Social Council with the status of the follow-up activities requested by the Council in its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system¹ so that the Council may take any further action necessary to ensure a full implementation of those conclusions.
2. Follow-up activities related to operational activities are addressed in the report of the Secretary-General entitled: "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54). Other related reports before the Council are the report on the mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/CN.6/1998/3); and the report on follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (E/1998/53).
3. The status of follow-up to agreed conclusions 1997/2 is set out in section II below in a dual column layout: the left-hand column contains the provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2 that call for action; the right-hand column presents the status of follow-up corresponding to each action-oriented paragraph. The report concludes with a number of recommendations.

* E/1998/100.



<i>Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2</i>	<i>Implementation</i>
(b) The use of institutional directives rather than discretionary guidelines for gender mainstreaming;	<p data-bbox="841 289 1256 415">UNCTAD held an internal workshop to discuss ways and means of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of UNCTAD activities and of mainstreaming a gender perspective as a cross-sectoral issue.</p> <p data-bbox="841 449 1235 548">UNIDO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will consider gender policy and modalities for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.</p> <p data-bbox="841 575 1263 772">UNU will pay specific attention to gender-mainstreaming in the framework of developing the University's strategic plan as well as a personnel policy. The agreed conclusions will be used for academic activities, in particular the University's World Institute for Development Economics Research and Institute for New Technologies.</p> <p data-bbox="841 800 1268 947">The Department of Political Affairs conducted a workshop/teambuilding exercise for all levels of staff to develop modalities for reflecting a gender perspective in its work. This was followed by a "Town Hall" meeting to discuss the insights gained from the workshop.</p> <p data-bbox="841 974 1263 1100">The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women, is developing a project on mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peacekeeping.</p> <p data-bbox="841 1108 1263 1325">Further efforts are required. The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) addresses these issues in greater detail.</p>

Report to DPA on the Gender Mainstreaming Project
David Kelleher and Aruna Rao
June 19, 1998

A. Introduction:

This report highlights the objectives, process and outcomes of the Gender Mainstreaming Project of the Department of Political Affairs at the United Nations Secretariat. It sets out the principles underlying the approach we used, describes the various activities we carried out to orient the department and outline a work process, and develop with staff a substantive understanding of the relevance of gender issues to the work of DPA. It describes in brief the staff workshops, their outcomes and recommendations. Finally, it outlines a way forward for the department based on this experience and our analysis of what approach and steps may be most fruitful for the future.

B. Purpose of the Project:

When we met with the senior management of DPA in January we stated that the purpose of the project was to engage the department in a learning process about gender mainstreaming. This learning process would:

1. Consider some basic ideas about gender mainstreaming
2. Examine the work of DPA to determine how the work would be different and more effective if a gender perspective were more systematically included, and
3. Design and carry out a limited number of initiatives which would test the viability of the gender mainstreaming approach in the work of DPA.

C. Operating Principles:

Although the original request was for a gender awareness/sensitivity training program, our belief was that gender training as a primary strategy would not lead to significant change in work practices, organizational systems or culture. Gender awareness training is focussed on the learning of individuals rather than the learning of the Organization. Instead, we recommended an action-learning approach which assumes that the the Organization will change its way of working when it makes sense to its mission and context. A gender action-learning approach teams up organizational insiders with gender experts to do this as well as to challenge existing definitions of work, language and effectiveness.

We also believed that:

1. Organizational change and learning will be most likely if the focus (at least in the early stages) is on the work itself instead of more ephemeral and difficult issues as relationships, culture and staffing.
2. Gender mainstreaming will be adopted only if it satisfies a dual agenda -- a

strengthened gender perspective and organizational effectiveness.

3. Our work would not focus on human resource management issues such as hiring and promoting women. This is important but an educational process, such as the one we recommended, was unlikely to make an impact on these issues in the short term.
4. Improving relationships between men and women is best accomplished by involving them in a task that engages their interest and serves both as a model and an opportunity to examine effective and ineffective ways of working.

D. The Process:

Our work in DPA could be divided into three phases: Orientation to the department and developing a work process; building substantive understanding of gender in the DPA work context, and the staff workshops and feedback.

In order to develop an understanding of the department and the type of process required, we met individually with a number of managers in DPA to discuss mainstreaming and to assess potential directions. Based on this experience we developed an approach to the project, met with the "organizing group", then the senior management group and decided on the way forward.

In order to assess the substantive relevance of gender to DPA's work we also met with managers at DAW and UNDP to discuss approaches taken to mainstreaming in other UN agencies. We collected and examined documents and reports, and held discussions with focus groups of professionals within DPA to develop a deeper understanding of the work of the department. We met with three teams of DPA professionals to map the process of the work in three areas of the department: Preventive diplomacy, Peace-making and post conflict peace building, and Electoral assistance. Following this, a Working Group was set up and identified best practices in DPA regarding gender and also developed a number of recommendations as to how to deepen the gender perspective in DPA's substantive work. With the understanding gained from all of the foregoing as well as speaking with experts outside the UN such as Ms. Margaret Vogt from IPA, we then developed the "think piece"/materials requested by management at the January 8 meeting.

In the workshop phase, we designed and led a senior management workshop and six one-day workshops for staff. These workshops presented some basic ideas on gender mainstreaming, reviewed the report of the Working Group and developed recommendations for change both in substantive and institutional areas of DPA's work. Finally, we met with the entire department in a meeting to review the findings of the workshops and our recommendations for change.

E. The Workshops

1. Intent and Design (Detailed design appended)

The purpose of the workshops was to:

- * Acquaint staff with current thinking regarding gender mainstreaming;
- * Discuss the findings of the Staff Working Group; and
- * Discuss possible directions for change in the substantive areas and organizational practice of DPA.

In brief, the workshops began with a short presentation on gender mainstreaming and the potential implications for DPA. Small groups then reviewed the Working Group Report and developed recommendations for change in the substantive work of DPA. We then turned to the institutional barriers to gender mainstreaming. After a short presentation on institutional issues, groups analyzed what institutional changes were necessary to extend DPA's best practices in gender mainstreaming and to implement the recommendations the groups had made earlier in the day regarding the substantive work of DPA.

2. Participant Evaluation of the Workshops

At the end of each of the workshops participants completed an evaluation form. A synthesis of the responses is appended to this report. The first question asked for an overall reaction to the workshop, asking participants to rate it from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). In response, 66% rated it either excellent or very good. This is a heartening number for a workshop which was compulsory to attend and on a topic that many did not see as a priority. However, some of that satisfaction sprung from the fact that staff were given a chance to talk about a variety of institutional issues as well as gender issues.

The participants were asked about the helpfulness of the readings. The most common response was that they did not receive them, followed by, "I did not have time to read them." There were a number of positive responses, some pleas for a less bulky package and 2-3 strongly negative comments that the readings were too abstract, too general and not sufficiently scholarly.

When asked what they found most valuable in the workshop, the overwhelming response was the group discussion. Participants liked the chance to discuss issues with colleagues, to hear others' point of view, to discover agreement and to hear stories which helped understand the issues. Many mentioned the discussion of "best practices" based on the paper prepared by the Working Group. There were some mentions of the presentations given by the consultants.

When asked about the least valuable part of the workshop there were fewer responses and little consensus. Mentioned most often was the feeling that the discussions could have been more focussed or better steered to allow fewer digressions by participants with a particular agenda. There were also some calls for a more concrete discussion rooted in cases.

When asked for suggestions as to how to improve the workshop, the most often mentioned was "to include the managers in the same workshop". A number of people commented on the need for follow-up and an on-going process and a few felt that the workshop could be shortened to a ½ day.

When asked what, if anything, they would do differently as a result of this workshop there were essentially four types of responses:

1. Most often people referred to a heightened awareness of the issue;
2. A number mentioned being more willing to speak up on this issue ("these workshops have legitimated the issue, I will be more willing to speak up now");
3. A few talked of changes they would make in their work ("I will attempt to include the impact on women in my reports").
4. Finally, a number commented that they would "wait and see what management does".

Our own perspective on the workshops is that by and large staff participated with energy and some open mindedness dealing with an issue that generates strong feelings. There was considerable interest in finding ways to make the gender perspective more prominent in the department. It is also important to note that there were a number who attended the workshop who were angry that they were required to come, and expressed little concern for gender equity and considerable cynicism as to the management's motive in sponsoring the program. While the discomfort of that kind of energy in a workshop would argue for making it optional and working with those who are interested, there were many others who, at the end of the day said that they would never had come but that it had been a valuable discussion.

3. Major Recommendations for Change Emerging from the Workshops

Recommendations Related to the Substantive Work: In general, there was support for the Draft Report of the Working Group (appended), though some changes of wording and priorities were suggested. A few concerns received the highest attention and priority:

1. It was recommended to involve more actively women and women's organizations and networks in fact-finding and information gathering activities as well as briefings of senior DPA staff, and Security Council delegates.
2. Participants recommended that the reports and other documents regularly prepared by DPA should be more gender sensitive, i.e. they should identify women's interests and needs in relation to the peace building and sustaining process and spell out any differential impact of recommended policies and actions on women.
3. Participants recommended that more women should be appointed as SRSG's and that male SRSG's should be briefed and sensitized to women's concerns and gender issues. Finally, the group recommended that women should also be appointed at high levels on missions and more women should be sent on all field missions.

Recommendations Related to Institutional changes: Participants prioritized a number of issues related to the institutional climate and arrangements within DPA:

1. They believe that managers should be more accountable to their staff on major decisions.
2. They want a better balance between their work demands and time required on the job and their own family or personal time. A number of staff complained that they were called in on weekends and consistently were required or expected to stay in the office very late by their managers.
3. Staff at all levels felt that managers should hold regular meetings with their staff --both professional and GS—to update them on the work, consult them on relevant issues, and simply to provide an opportunity for staff to get to know each other better. Staff felt that communication between managers and staff was poor and needed to be improved. A related point is that managers should lead with encouragement and support.
4. Participants felt that there was a lot of expertise and skills vested in the GS staff which were inadequately tapped and undervalued. They suggested that the

department work to enrich the jobs of GS staff to tap this expertise and involve GS staff more in the management and substantive aspects of the work of DPA.

5. Participants recommended that there should be greater transparency in hiring. They pointed to the practice of writing a job description to suit a particular person as a violation of this. This is a particularly sensitive issue now when the organization is under budgetary constraints and few if any new posts are being created making competition for the existing ones fierce.

6. Participants recommended that senior management work to achieve better gender balance at the top levels of the department.

F. Consultants' Analysis and Recommendations

1. **Interest in Gender Mainstreaming:** There is considerable interest and has been an active engagement with the issue of gender mainstreaming. A range of recommendations have emerged for furthering a gender perspective.

The majority of participants in the workshops support changes that should be implemented more or less in agreement with the Working Group Recommendations. (See above list of recommendations for substantive change) A significant and vocal minority would add cautionary words--gender mainstreaming is not the main goal of the department,. Cultural differences hinder gender mainstreaming. The process should not be divisive. For many, the issue is promotion and hiring of women at senior levels and this is contentious.

2. **Institutional Factors Which Impede Change:** Many staff feel that institutional barriers and the internal functioning of the department may make significant change impossible. Some of these issues could be said to be gender inequitable, some could be seen to be gender neutral but blocking work on gender equity.

Some staff feel that senior management is not really committed to gender mainstreaming and that this effort is not real.

Others feel that gender is not an important issue when looked at beside other dysfunctional power relations in the department such as lack of managerial accountability, an entrenched caste system, and lack of a climate of respect.

Key organizational dynamics related to power and hierarchy will act to dampen motivation, social entrepreneurship and organizational change of all sorts, including gender mainstreaming.

3. **Hierarchy Blocks Learning:** Our assessment is that hierarchy blocks organizational learning in the following ways:

Decision-making by a few limits the number of perspectives brought to bear on a problem

Managerial learning requires pressure as well as support--lack of accountability of managers results in less pressure for learning and so less learning

Organizational learning demands a creative, entrepreneurial staff at all levels--hierarchical practice in DPA has made many staff cynical and risk-adverse.

4. **DPA's Readiness for Change** Experience has demonstrated that any significant change can only be undertaken if certain pre-conditions are in place. These are: pressure to change from important stakeholders, a clear vision of the change, leadership interest and capacity to lead the change, and sufficient resources (time and money). DPA needs to assess its readiness for change and if factors are missing they should become the first item on the change agenda.

A Way Forward:

Increasingly, experience shows that merely mandating change with policy and training is not sufficient. What is required is an on-going process of organizational learning in which key senior managers are seen as leaders and learners. However, what is also required is the participation and leadership of certain staff at all levels. This is particularly important in DPA because of the widespread belief among staff that change is impossible. Unless staff are involved, this cynicism could result in a passive resistance to management initiatives related to organizational change.

It is best to see the process as an incremental one which can win supporters as it goes. Further, this multi-level approach allows the department to challenge the traditional distribution of power and privilege by experimenting with a different model of decision-making.

The place to start which we believe would have the most support is with work practices. If small groups of people are experimenting with more gender-sensitive work practices that are also helping the department accomplish its mandate in a more effective way it will provide a base of credibility. Further, there is considerable support voiced in the workshop for the proposals outlined in the draft Working Group Report.

A possible process for beginning this work is as follows:

1. A Gender Mainstreaming Coordinating Team should be set up to co-ordinate the process of change. This group should include senior management, professional and general service staff. This group should be reasonably small (5-6 persons), include men as well as women and should be given time and responsibility to guide a process of change. The first step for the Coordinating Team should be to establish its work program for the first year, locate funding and decide on its accountability mechanisms. It should report to the USG every 3 months and to the staff as a whole at periodic all-staff meetings.

Although the Co-ordinating Team needs to do its own agenda setting, some recommendations for action that we would make are:

1. Ensuring that the recommendations from the workshops for the substantive work are written up in a document that can lead to action and monitoring.
2. Departmental mandate to include a statement on gender mainstreaming
3. Develop pilot projects that experiment with innovations such as allowing for a better work-life balance or better teamwork or reducing the distinctions between GS, professional and managerial staff or 360 degree evaluation.
4. Bring new perspectives to the department regarding the experience of women in peace, for example, guest speakers, panels, case studies.
5. Investigate the approaches to change taken by other UN agencies.
6. Organize follow-up meetings to assess movement.

* Appended are: The Synthesis of Workshop Evaluations, The Design of the Workshop and the Draft Report of The Working Group.

Design Notes
UN Staff Workshops
May 1997

Purpose:

1. Acquaint staff with current thinking re gender mainstreaming
2. Discuss the findings of the Staff Working Group
3. Discuss possible directions for change in the substantive areas and organizational practice

- 9:30--10:00 Intro and workshop expectations
- 10:00--10:20 Presentation on Best Current Thinking and possible application to DPA.
- 10:20--11:00 Plenary Discussion
- 11:00--11:15 Coffee break
- 11:15--1:00 Small groups discuss Best Practices related to Gender Mainstreaming in Preventive Diplomacy, Peace Making/Peace Bldg and Electoral Assistance.
- 1:00--2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 -- 3:00 Group presentations and discussion
- 3:00-3:20 Presentation: Institutional Barriers to Gender Mainstreaming.
- 3:20--4:00 Group Discussion--How to Extend and Institutionalize Best Practices? What are the Institutional Barriers?
- 4:00--4:15 Break
- 4:15--4:50 Group reports
- 4:45-- Wrap-up, evaluation.

CHRONOLOGY OF PROGRESS ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN DPA

- Sept. 95 The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing adopted its Platform for Action.
- July 96 ECOSOC adopted resolution 1996/34 on the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001.
- Aug. 96 Ms. Angela King, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, informed Mr. Goulding that the Commission on the Status of Women had identified a number of Secretariat entities, including DPA, who were not being included in the activities reflected in the system-wide medium-term plan (resolution 40/10).
- Sept. 96 Mr. Goulding approved DPA's plan of action for gender mainstreaming based on the discussion between Ms. King, Ms. Maria Maldonado (DPA Focal Point for Women), Ms. Joan Seymour (Alternate Focal Point) and Mr. Hitoki Den (OUSG).
- Oct. 96 Ms. Seymour attended an Expert Group meeting on "Political Decision-making and Conflict Resolution: the Impact of Gender Differences" held in Santo Domingo.
- Feb. 97 The report of the Secretary-General on "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women" (E/CN.6/1997/2) reported that DPA "subsequently identified a number of steps that could be taken to ensure participation in the implementation of the Platform for Action, and to promote mainstreaming within the Department's areas of responsibilities, including the organization, in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women, of workshops and seminars for its staff members. Existing collaboration between the Division and the Electoral Assistance Division on compilation of data disaggregated by sex and gender impact assessment is being strengthened".
- March 97 Ms. Telma Abascal was appointed as the Focal Point for Women replacing Ms. Maldonado.
- April 97 Mr. Prendergast endorsed the plan of action on gender mainstreaming, originally approved by Mr. Goulding, and included gender mainstreaming in the new department Work Plan for 1997-1998; DPA also included in its 1998-1999 Programme Budget the provision for training programmes designed to raise the staff members' gender awareness.
- July 97 ECOSOC defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows: "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality".
- Sept. 97 DPA started its discussion with OHRM regarding the funding for Workshops on gender mainstreaming.

- Oct. 97 The Secretary-General wrote to Mr. Prendergast and requested him to ensure that "analytical reports and recommendations on policy or operational issues within your area of responsibility are presented for intergovernmental decision-making in a manner that fully accounts for gender differences". The SG also asked DPA to: (1) formulate specific strategies for ensuring that gender issues are brought into the mainstream of activities within its area of responsibility; (2) systematically use gender analysis of information and data disaggregated by sex and age, sector-specific gender surveys and gender-sensitive studies on particular issues in the preparation of reports or in operational activities; and (3) prepare medium-term plans and programme budgets in such a manner that a gender perspective is apparent.
- Nov. 97 Ms. Seymour attended the Workshop on "Documenting the Best Practices of Women in Peace-Building and Non-Violent means of Conflict Resolution" held in Addis Ababa.
- Dec. 97 DPA, in collaboration with OHRM, identified two consultants to help organize its workshops on gender mainstreaming. Material from the Addis Workshop was used by the consultants as inputs for the DPA workshops.
- Jan. 98 The proposal for the Workshops was approved at the Directors' meeting.
- March 98 The consultants organized a series of meetings with a group of DPA staff at all levels on the modalities of the Workshops.
- May 98 DPA Workshops on gender mainstreaming were attended by some 170 staff members; Mr. Prendergast chaired a departmental meeting to wrap up the Workshops and subsequently reported the results to Ms. King.
- June 98 The report on the DPA Workshops was issued. Mr. Prendergast established a new Departmental Management Advisory Group to deal, *inter alia*, with gender mainstreaming in response to the recommendations of the report.
