

**UNDP REGIONAL BUREAU
FOR EUROPE & THE CIS**

REGIONAL GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

2008-2011

UNDP REGIONAL BUREAU FOR EUROPE & THE CIS REGIONAL GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY 2008-2011

Accelerated regional progress towards sustainable human development

Contents

I. Background

- A. Context
- B. Charting the Direction
 - a. Vision
 - b. Lessons Learned
 - c. Goal
 - d. Strategic Actions and Outputs

II. Operational Activities

- C. Coordination and Partnership
- D. Focus Areas

III. Institutional arrangements

- E. Accountability
- F. Knowledge Management
- G. Communication and Advocacy
- H. Human resources
- I. Financial Resources
- J. M&E framework

Annexes:

1. Definitions of Key Concepts
2. BCPR 8-Point Agenda for Gender Equality
3. Action Plan

UNDP Mission Statement on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The Millennium Summit of 2000 reaffirmed gender equality and women's empowerment as development goals in themselves (MDG3) and underlined their importance as a means to achieve all of the other MDGs. UNDP is committed to supporting capacity development of its national partners to adopt approaches that advance women's rights and take account of the full range of their contributions to development, as a foundation for MDG achievement.

Drawing on a vision in which human development guide all policy-making and development, UNDP supports national partners to accelerate their progress towards the MDGs by identifying and responding to the gender equality dimensions of its four inter-related Focus Areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery and environment and sustainable development.

With strong operations and institutional arrangements for gender equality, UNDP will extend continued support to the improvement of nationally-relevant and sustainable gender equality results and in the identification and removal of internal barriers to women's advancement into senior management, including women from developing countries.

UNDP will ensure the implementation of this strategy by dedicating sufficient internal human and financial resources to its implementation, and actively mobilizing complementary external resources where needed. It will continue and expand its partnerships with UN agencies, including through the up-scaling of innovative models developed and tested by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

“It is impossible to realize our goals while discriminating against half the human race”

KOFI ANNAN
Former Secretary General of the United Nations
DFID 2007. *Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-2009.*

“At the World Economic Forum we recognize that the advancement of women is an important economic, business and societal issue with a significant impact on the growth of nations.... Each country must follow its own unique path based on its cultural practices, structure and priorities, but as it becomes increasingly evident that gender-based biases are detrimental to today's global marketplace, we must ensure that these biases hold no place in our collective future.”

KLAUS SCHWAB
Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum
Global Gender Gap Report 2007. p. vii

I. Background

1. The RBEC Gender Equality Strategy (2008-11) describes in concrete terms how the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (RBEC) will contribute towards the gender equality outcomes defined for the organization as a whole in its global Strategic Plan (SP) and the parallel and complementary UNDP Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2008-2011.

2. The last two UNDP planning cycles have been characterized by turbulent change and transition in the region. These have had multiple complex impacts on both women and men. However, as stated in the RBEC Strategy 2008-11, transition and development processes in the region have occurred without the full participation of women, weakening women's position in political and socio-economic life. These trends need to be reversed, in order to ensure that the benefits of transition equally reach both sexes. Major challenges identified include: (a) weak UNDP internal capacities to implement and monitor its gender-related commitments; and (b) under developed state capacity to produce greater gender equality in line with international commitments and national legislation¹. Despite this overall picture, regional variations and specificities require a highly nuanced approach to the advancement of gender equality in the region.

3. The RBEC Gender Equality Strategy (R/GES) draws on this complex legacy to suggest a feasible range of locally-relevant and targeted activities and outputs that will lead to sustainable improvements in national capacity to identify and advance gender equality considerations, and ultimately contribute to long-term improvement of women's situation in the region. The strategy features a parallel programme of developing and strengthening internal capacity to ensure solid operations support to regional governments. It also includes other institutional arrangements that must be put in place for a meaningful enhancement of national capacity for gender equality programming.

4. The R/GES follows broadly the same structure as the GES. As such, it addresses the regional and sub-regional dimensions of UNDP's operational activities in its twin mandate of the UN system coordination and national capacity development. The strategy also articulates the institutional arrangements that must be put in place at a regional level if the identified targets are to be achieved².

5. In accordance with the GES, RBEC will focus its substantive activity on the development of national capacity in three critical arenas, as indicated in Box 1. These priorities will be applied across

Box 1: Three Critical Arenas for Action

RBEC will support governments to achieve gender-responsive capacity improvement in the following three broad areas, across all of its Focus Areas:

- Participation of women in governance and leadership
- National policy-making and planning that reflect women's needs, contributions and interests
- Strengthening the national knowledge base on gender equality through increased research, data collection and analysis

each of the UNDP Focus Areas, in ways that correspond with national priorities. There is clear understanding that action in each of these areas should also focus on the reduction of Gender-based

¹ Regional Strategy 2008-11, p. 13. Regional Gender Compact 2008.

² The strategy recognizes the unique characteristics of three geographical sub-regions: the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries; Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) including the Balkans; and Western Europe.

Violence, not only because of its prevalence in the region and its negative impact on MDG achievement, but also since it directly violates women's rights.³

6. The emphasis will be on strengthening institutions rather than individuals⁴. This implies learning at the level of society or community, which is the model that UNDP has adopted to guide its national capacity development activities. Consistent support to the preparation of gender-sensitive national capacity assessments, and their use in shaping coordinated UN system support will provide the foundations for such institutional strengthening.

7. As the name implies, this is a *regional* strategy, with responsibility for the implementation of its various components resting with senior management in headquarters, regional office and country offices. The gender unit is available to take the lead in certain activities, especially with regard to the provision of guidelines, tools and capacity development, and to provide support to other units in their respective areas of responsibility, as indicated in the Action Plan that accompanies the strategy.

8. The terms "gender" and "gender equality" imply concern for both men and women, and the relationships between them. Nevertheless, specific attention to women's needs and contributions is typically required in order to address the array of gender gaps, unequal policies and discrimination that historically have disadvantaged women and distorted development in all societies. The GES therefore focuses on UNDP's responsibility to support the empowerment of women to achieve the gender equality that will benefit society as a whole. However, this does not preclude activities that address men's specific needs, where doing so will contribute to gender equality. Moreover, to identify gender inequality is being experienced mainly by women is not to argue that this is always the case, nor that this is only women who suffer the consequences. Gender inequality is a societal problem that has negative effects on institutions, communities and families as well as on individuals. In addition, this strategy is firmly based on the premise that the sex of an individual is no indicator of their support or otherwise for gender equality. Men can be strong advocates for it, and women can be deeply opposed to it.

9. Throughout the R/GES the terms "man" and "woman" are used inclusively to encompass male and female infants, children and youth, as well as adults. While this strategy addresses mainly at the disadvantaged situation of women in the region and the negative impact that this has on overall regional development, there is need to involve all actors, male and female, government and civil society, in expanded dialogue on solutions.

A. Context

10. RBEC understands gender equality to be an irreducible condition for inclusive, democratic, violence-free and sustainable development, and a pre-condition for the attainment of all of the MDGs. Its actions to advance gender equality are shaped by several international agreements and commitments, as summarized below.

11. Like the GES, the R/GES is grounded on the premise that the development objective of equality between men and women, or gender equality, is absolutely indivisible from the UNDP human development goal of real improvements in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to

³ UNDP Gender Equality Strategy. Paragraph 44, sets out the following priorities across all Focus Areas:

- Strengthened and more gender-sensitive government policy and planning systems and financial frameworks, including social service delivery;
- Strengthened capacities of women to participate in policy planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of programmes; and Greater availability and use of gender relevant data to achieve the above.

⁴ Including both government (national and local) and civil society institutions.

them. By empowering women to claim their internationally-agreed rights in every development sphere, and supporting governments, as duty-bearers, to be both pro-active and responsive in advancing the realization of these rights, UNDP will leverage the broadest possible expansion of choice and opportunity for all, while contributing in more meaningful ways to inclusive growth, democratic governance, human security and environmental sustainability.

12. Given the diverse cultural, political and socio-economic characteristics of the various sub-regions and countries in the region, the critical factor for RBEC is to enable governments to implement the global mandate summarized briefly below in a manner that is responsive to and consistent with local realities and specificities, even while adhering unambiguously to the foundation principal that gender equality is indivisible from human well-being and social advancement.

The Human Development Paradigm

13. In all its operational activities UNDP is guided by the Human Development paradigm. This provides a framework for action that embraces all human beings and is based on the perception that people are the real wealth of nations. The HD paradigm is about creating an environment in which both men and women can enlarge their choices, develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests⁵.

14. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is the notion of building human “capabilities”⁶. UNDP’s responsibility is to develop the capacity of governments to establish a national context in which men’s and women’s capabilities can flourish and their specific needs be met, including explicit attention to the enlargement of women’s capabilities on an equal basis with men’s. This requires the identification and removal of the barriers and discrimination that have constrained, in various ways across the region, women’s full realization of their capabilities.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

15. The MDGs consolidated previous agreements, including those on women’s rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality (see below), into a single set of core goals, targets and benchmarks for the development community. The Millennium Declaration in which they were first set out took a clear position, which has since been elaborated and confirmed in multiple documents⁷, that gender equality is both a goal in itself (MDG-3), and a condition for the achievement of the other goals.

16. The explicit commitment by UNDP to support governments in understanding and addressing women’s needs and contributions in their specific contexts, as an essential dimension of MDG achievement, underlies this strategy.

⁵ The Human Development Concept. www.undp.org/hd

⁶ This term is central to the human development paradigm, and refers to the range of things that men and women can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible.

⁷ Including, for example, the Millennium Project report on Education and Gender (2005), and in the UK Department for International Development (DFID) *Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-2009*.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979)

17. This legally-binding treaty, to which all countries in the region are States Party, provides a comprehensive rights-based framework to guide all action for gender equality, including that of UNDP⁸. Under this treaty gender inequality is understood to be the result of discrimination against women. This discrimination must be removed by legal and other means if women's rights are to be realized and full national potential released.

18. CEDAW calls for equality of *outcome* rather than simply equality of opportunity. Thus it is not sufficient that anti-discrimination laws are put in place: the state has the obligation to take all necessary steps to ensure that women enjoy equality in their daily lives. CEDAW defines discrimination and the range of steps that states must take toward its elimination. It provides for women's rights in specific areas⁹, and makes provision for ratification, monitoring, reporting and other procedural matters.

19. It is the responsibility of States Party to CEDAW to apply its provisions in ways that are meaningful to their own local context, always ensuring, whatever that context, that women are in full enjoyment of their rights and freedoms. RBEC is committed to assisting governments in identifying the ways in which CEDAW can contribute positively to specific national development priorities.

The Beijing Platform for Action

20. The Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) (1995) remains a relevant guideline for development programming. It provides "an agenda for women's empowerment"¹⁰ signed by all governments that is seen as "a necessary and fundamental pre-requisite for equality, development and peace."¹¹

21. The Beijing PFA provides a blue-print for women's empowerment that is exceptionally clear, straightforward and actionable. The document includes gender analysis of problems and opportunities in twelve critical areas of concern, and clear and specific standards for action to be implemented by governments, the United Nations (UN) system and civil society, including where appropriate by the private sector. Several of these critical areas of concern clarify the potential for each of UNDP's Focus Areas to contribute to women's empowerment.¹²

22. In addition, the PFA provides the first global commitment to gender mainstreaming as the methodology by which women's empowerment will be achieved. In implementing the suggested actions "an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes should be promoted, so that before decisions are taken an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."¹³

⁸ Also important here is the Declaration on the ending of violence against Women (DEVAW) (1993). CEDAW did not explicitly include GBV, a gap that was rectified by DEVAW, which clearly defined GBV as a form of discrimination, thus bringing it unambiguously within the purview of CEDAW.

⁹ These are: trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution; public and political life; international affairs; nationality; education; employment; health care; economic and social life; rural women; equality before the law; equality in marriage and family life.

¹⁰ UNDP Mission Statement. *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. United Nations 1995. p. 17.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² For example, the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women; ending gender-based violence (GBV); the effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women; inequality in economic structures and policies in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources; inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels; lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women; and gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment.

¹³ Beijing PFA, paragraphs 79 education; 105 health; 123 violence against women; 141 conflict; 189 power and decision-making; 202 institutional mechanisms; 229 human rights; 238 media; 252 management of natural resources; 273 children and youth. . The methodology for gender mainstreaming was elaborated and defined by ECOSOC shortly afterwards. The full definition is provided in Annex I.

23. As articulated by ECOSOC in 1997, the goal of gender mainstreaming is gender equality, for which women's empowerment is usually required. In light of this and the foregoing discussion, the gender mainstreaming task in UNDP is a dual one: to support the empowerment of women to expand their capabilities, opportunities and choices, claim their rights and move into full substantive equality with men; and the capacity development of governments to respond positively to women's interests and concerns.

The Treaty of Lisbon (2007)

24. The principle of equal treatment of men and women (or gender equality) has been enshrined in European Community (EC) and European Union (EU) Treaties since the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957, and is endorsed by the Treaty of Lisbon which reaffirmed the EU commitment to democracy, transparency, efficiency and to the protection and advancement of fundamental rights and freedoms, including those of women. As outlined in the *EU Roadmap for Equality between Men and Women*, EU member states must fully embrace the principle of equal treatment of men and women. They must ensure strict enforcement of legislation and put in place adequate administrative and judicial systems so that women enjoy equal rights with men.

25. The application of gender equality requirements is among the preconditions for future EU enlargement processes. EU monitors states seeking accession with regard to their progress towards gender equality, and in addressing gender gaps. UNDP provides support to acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries, including in the programming of pre-accession aid and accession negotiations, in contribution to systematic progress towards the establishment of these requirements.

TCPR Mandate and New Aid Modalities

26. Both the shift in focus to MDG-based planning in all countries and the Paris Declaration, which introduced new aid modalities to ensure that resources meet nationally-defined needs, imply the need for even more vigorous action by donors and the UN system to engage in the needed advocacy for gender equality, and for gender-sensitive follow-up and accountability mechanisms to ensure that the planned disbursements of funds contribute to gender equality.

27. The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) 2007 calls upon all organizations, "within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality and the empowerment of women in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies."¹⁴ UNDP's assigned roles in UN-system coordination and national capacity development give it an unassailable opportunity to make a real difference in development trends and results, based on removal of the discrimination against women which acts as such a profound brake on the attainment of human development goals.

B. Overview of Gender Equality in the Region

28. Despite the above commitments by all countries in the region, significant barriers to gender equality are evident, derived essentially from widespread and deeply entrenched discriminatory attitudes and consequent practices towards women¹⁵. The need to change these exclusionary attitudes and practices is the principal challenge addressed by this strategy. Although the reform process sparked by increased contact with market forces since 1989 provides opportunities to remove these barriers, the on-going

¹⁴ TCPR 2007, paragraph 41.

¹⁵ World Economic Forum. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2007*.

turmoil of the recent past, together with limitations in the will and capacity of leadership in all spheres to take the necessary steps, have generated a situation in which the many long-standing obstacles to women's advancement that derive from these attitudes and practices are in fact sustained, have been intensified or have become increasingly apparent, even while improvements can be identified in certain countries (notably EU access countries), or among certain socio-economic groups.

29. The barriers to gender equality vary across sub-regional, national and local contexts, and together comprise a major brake on the region's potential to fully achieve the MDGs. Moreover, gender equality is generally neglected in public discourse and policy making. Unless there is a good faith effort to reverse current trends, this long-standing negligence will continue to generate many missed opportunities for national and regional progress.

30. Thus, overall reforms during the post-socialist transition process have enhanced economic dynamism across the region, at the cost, *inter alia*, of a general intensification of gender inequalities¹⁶. In general, with sub-regional, national and sub-national variations, these inequalities are demonstrated in: low political participation of women; low participation of women relative to men in socio-economic life, including employment and participation in the labour market; growing gender inequalities in human development resources, including in education; revival of many discriminatory stereotypes and attitudes towards women; deterioration of men's health in some of the CIS countries, with lower life expectancy; dramatic decline in fertility rate; increase in the migration and forced labor of both men and women; increased vulnerability of women (and some men and boys) to trafficking for sexual exploitation; growing violence against women and challenges posed by the increase of the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the region. In several areas these gender inequalities are intensified by the impact of racial and ethnic tensions, conflict and social upheaval.

31. Gender-based violence — in various forms — exacts a heavy toll on physical and mental health of women in the region. Extreme forms of violence happen during and in the aftermath of conflicts, as illustrated by the various conflicts in the region. Increasingly, gender-based violence is recognized as a major public health concern, a serious violation of basic human rights and also impedes the achievement of all the other MDGs. A legal framework with enforcement mechanisms and a mix of social and economic interventions are required to eliminate gender-based violence¹⁷.

32. An increase in women's poverty, accompanied by often disruptive changes in women's involvement in the labour market, and declines in their political engagement and participation, are particularly evident.¹⁸ The gender gap in life expectancy across the region indicates not only serious health risks to men, but also greater exposure of older women to isolation and social service dependency.¹⁹ When combined with the increased incidence of male out-migration, this is a major indicator of gender-related social stress. In Central Asia women's welfare has declined compared to that of men even while their representation in the informal labour market has been increasing, as elsewhere in the region. On the other hand, women as well as men, are increasingly engaged in labour migration, both within and outside the region, which also places great stress on community well-being.

¹⁶ This general point is proven by the exception of the EU accession countries, in which women's situation has generally improved.

¹⁷ UNDP Gender Equality Strategy. Paragraph 45. "Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation ... are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be eliminated. This can be achieved by legal measures and through national action and international cooperation in such fields as economic and social development, education, safe maternity and health care, and social support." Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 12 July 1993 . A/CONF.157/23. Paragraph 17.

¹⁸ World Economic Forum. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2007*

¹⁹ World Development Indicators Online, <http://www.worldbank.org/data/onlinebases/onlinebases.html>

33. Women's domestic burdens have been increasing. Several countries across the region have witnessed the abandonment of many economic safety nets and reduction in state provision of social services. These supports must therefore be provided within the community, principally in the form of increased family care: the so-called "care economy" of domestic tasks which are typically undertaken by women. While these tasks are not monetized and therefore do not appear in national accounts and hence in national development plans, they contribute value to the national economy by creating or supporting the productivity of the current and future workforce. At the same time, they detract from the productivity of women. Even while this method of social service delivery is low-cost to the state, the costs born by families and particularly by women make it a socially and economically inefficient means of social service delivery, slowing development.

34. In addition, the major migration flows across the region place added stress on the care economy. The movements of male workers is more evident in the region, but the out-migration of both men and women leads to intensification of the domestic burdens of mainly female family members (wives, aunts, grandmothers), even while they become even more clearly the backbone of the labour force in sending communities.

35. A key challenge is to ensure that policy agendas at all levels are gender sensitive and hence they take into account gender-based social and economic realities. A priority for UNDP is to ensure that organizations advocating for gender equality are able to contribute meaningfully in policy dialogue, policy development and to the implementation and monitoring of policies. Active steps should be taken to develop the ability of policy-makers at all levels to identify and respond to gender-related concerns, and to support the inclusion of women in decision-making processes.

36. A strategic entry point for RBEC as a whole is to develop and implement a comprehensive and relevant capacity development programme on gender equality focused at a national and local level. For Country Offices, the corresponding priority is to implement this over-arching concern in a manner consistent with local context and culture.

C. Charting the Direction

Vision

37. RBEC shares the development vision provided in the GES, which was originally articulated by the United Nations Task Force on MDG3 in 2005.

*"The vision is of a world in which men and women work together as equal partners to secure better lives for themselves and their families. In this world women and men share equally in the enjoyment of basic capabilities, economic assets, voice, and freedom from fear and violence. They share the care of children, the elderly and the sick, the responsibility for paid employment and the joys of leisure. In this world the resources now used for war and destruction are invested in human development and well-being, institutions and decision-making processes are open and democratic and all human beings treat each other with respect and dignity"*²⁰

Progress to date

38. The operational activities of the RBEC Regional Gender Unit focused on two specific areas during the previous planning period :

²⁰ Millennium Project. Report on Education and Gender Equality. p.29.

- a. **An internal capacity development programme**²¹ has involved extensive collaboration with the practice areas at regional level to develop their understanding of women's situation in the region, and their potential role in advancing gender equality. This programme has led to the development of three specific outputs:
 - Various training and capacity development events, principally involving UNDP staff;:
 - A regional Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit (2007)²²; and
 - Knowledge products on improving gender equality in the region.²³.
- b. **Country Office support** has been provided by the Regional Office primarily through the Community of Practice (CoP) modality. The CoP comprises of Gender Focal Points and other staff in the region working on gender projects and programmes. The CoP is currently coordinated through a number of ad hoc channels, including the above-mentioned training and capacity development events, acting as a knowledge management hub for the region, and through on-demand response to enquiries.

39. Country Office achievements in this area, as set out in the annual Country Office Notes, are as diverse as the countries themselves in the region. They range from zero to the development of significant and meaningful strategies and tools that have genuinely assisted programming and had an impact on national policy. Thematically they are also highly varied, ranging from social inclusion activities, the political empowerment and participation of women, promotion of gender equality legislation, production of National Human Development Reports, employment and work-related empowerment issues, domestic violence, anti-trafficking and support to female entrepreneurs, among other themes. While this richness and diversity is a response to local specificities, it is also indicative of past limitations, which this strategy seeks to address.

Lessons learned

40. **Limited political commitment to gender equality:** However, the actual impact of these activities on gender equality programming, and hence on women's situation in the region, has been sub-optimal. There are general limitations in funding for gender specific initiatives at the country office level, and limited engagement to work on gender specific concerns on the part of both UNDP CO management and partner governments. Progress towards gender equality seems to be perceived as donor-driven agenda rather than as an integral dimension of and pre-condition for sustainable development in the region.

41. **Gender mainstreaming tools and instruments are not used:** The tools and documents produced under the above activities are in general of high quality. The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit is based on local experience and provides many good examples of how gender is integrated into development. However, it also shows that such an approach is still an exception rather than a rule and that gender is not properly integrated into development programmes either by local partners or by the UNDP itself. In general the use and implementation of the Toolkit is lacking, in large part due to the above-referenced lack of political will to advance gender equality, but also placing in some question the relevance of the methodology used to introduce it²⁴.

²¹ Capacity Building for more Effective Gender Mainstreaming 2005-07

²² *Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Toolkit*. UNDP/RBEC 2006

²³ Including: *Gender Responsive Budgeting: a manual for trainers* (2004); *Gender Mainstreaming Handbook* (2005) ; *Trafficking and Human Development in the CIS* (forthcoming 2008).

²⁴ This general point of shortcomings in the integration of gender equality considerations into all of UNDP programmes and projects remains true despite individual cases in which good work has been done in some countries of the region. These are exceptions that indicate the potential, and thus tend to sharpen the overall point.

42. **Limitations in internal and external coordination capacity:** The recently-completed assessment of the Gender Equality Legislation (GEL) initiative, jointly coordinated by ILO, UNDP and UNIFEM, indicated that the impulse to collaborate for more coherent results represented a major step forward, underlining also the need of an enabling environment for joint programming on gender equality, especially in the form of active support from senior management. However, the report also indicated many serious challenges to joint programming that led to disillusionment among the partners and the untimely collapse of the programme. The study makes a set of recommendations for future programmes and enhanced coordination capacity.

43. **Need for a strategic approach to national capacity** development and programming at country level, to foster and support locally-identified priorities. Enhanced efforts on strengthening internal capacity should focus not on development of new tools but rather the on the process, use and adaptation to local circumstances, which is often challenging for practitioners in the region. Further, there is a need for targeted capacity development in foundation skills such as strategic planning and facilitation as well as in core issues of gender equality in the four practice areas. Above all, enhanced political will, targeted leadership, enhanced legal framework and participation of women in all the instruments of democratic governance as well as active monitoring by civil society of progress towards defined goals are crucial in achieving gender equality results.

44. Regional cooperation between various international organizations working on gender is of critical importance, although challenging and time-consuming. A recent study indicates the need for continued effort and focus on the development of coordination capacity. ,

Goal

45. Building on the achievements to date and the lessons learned, the RBEC gender equality goal for the period 2008-11 is: to strengthen government and civil society capacity to achieve the MDGs through the advancement of gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights in each country of the region, in accordance with locally-defined priorities.

46. This goal will be achieved at the sub-regional and national levels through systematic advocacy and dialogue with governments, targeted capacity development on issues identified in the dialogue, and through developing the capacity of women's organizations to participate in such dialogue.

47. This will be supported by BRC in the provision of consultations, documents and tools, so that national capacity gaps can be adequately identified by UNDP staff, and appropriate levels of support designed, in collaboration with common system and public and private sector partners.

48. The sub-goals and outputs to achieve this goal are set out below, and elaborated in greater specificity in the Action Plan that accompanies this strategy document (Annex 3) Progress towards this goal will be measured against the provisions of the UNDP Balanced Scorecard, the concrete outputs specified in the Action Plan for the R/GES and through the corporate reporting processes, especially the regional Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (RGSIC – see Section III A below).

Sub-goals and Outputs

Regional and national capacity development

- a. To develop national capacities, knowledge products and gender-sensitive service provision through dialogue and consultation that fosters national will and commitment to advance gender equality and strengthen national policy-making and planning at all levels.

OUTPUT 1: A series of sub-regional consultations with government and civil society, together with UNDP and common-system partner personnel, to identify sub-regional priorities, possible on-going consultation mechanisms and methodologies and tools to support such consultations. The issues identified during these consultations will be incorporated into country office activities, and tracked and supported through the Community of Practice

- b. To foster a broader awareness and understanding of issues related to gender equality in the region.

OUTPUT 2: A major flagship publication on women and leadership in the region.

OUTPUT 3. Further publications and knowledge products as may be identified during Country Office action plans development and the above-referenced sub-regional consultations.

Internal Capacity Development

- a. To foster action-oriented understanding of the regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national gender issues associated with each of UNDP's practice areas.

OUTPUT 4: Capacity development workshops with UNDP Practice Areas, focused on project development

OUTPUT 5: Country Office Gender Equality Plans of Action. The Plans of Action will include elements such as gender audit or self assessment that will enable COs to establish baseline information, identify the gender equality concerns for all their programmes and strategies, and the necessary institutional arrangements to support these.

OUTPUT 6: At least one project in each Country Office fully engendered by the end of 2009, and 50-70 percent of new projects are fully engendered thereafter. These projects/programmes will be the core of the strategy. (Possible themes are discussed in more detail under in Section I.B below - Focus Areas).

- b. To develop core gender mainstreaming capacity, including facilitation, coordination and strategic planning capacity²⁵.

OUTPUT 7: Workshops at which CO staff members will develop gender mainstreaming skills which according to UNDP's definition of gender mainstreaming capacity, specifically include strategy development and facilitation of consultative processes. These workshops will also benefit participants' general professional capacity, and funding will be sought to repeat the workshop regularly.²⁶

OUTPUT 8: A standard methodology for these meetings. The methodology will facilitate the sharing and transfer of knowledge and skills in the most transparent and cost-effective manner, and ensure consistency across the region. There are pockets of strong capacity and

²⁵ In 2001 UNDP identified these as core competencies required by all staff for effective gender mainstreaming (or for the mainstreaming of any theme). Consultative processes lie at the heart of all mainstreaming activity, including gender mainstreaming, and the ability to lead, facilitate and contribute to such processes, whether every-day internal meetings or major conferences, in a results-based manner is central to successful mainstreaming outcomes. See UNDP learning and information packs on gender mainstreaming. [UNDP.org/gender](http://undp.org/gender).

²⁶ UNDP *Learning and Information Pack on Gender Mainstreaming: strategic planning*. (2000) www.undp.org/gender

competence in the region, both within UNDP and in the wider expert community. These will be tapped as a resource pool and consultation reference to validate and consolidate the emerging consensus on approaches to national capacity development.

OUTPUT 9: A Gender Mainstreaming “How-to” Training Materials based on the highly successful regional gender mainstreaming Handbook, augmented by good practices and tools developed by Country Offices in the region.

OUTPUT 10: Strengthened Gender Equality Community of Practice through regular communications processes and annual meetings. an enhanced website and extension to include UNDP GFPs, experts in gender in development from the region, CSOs and representatives of national gender machineries.

Operational Activities:

49. UNDP has two mandated operational responsibilities, each of which has gender equality implications. These are responsibility for coordination of the UN system at global, regional and country levels, and capacity development of national partners in UNDP’s four designated focus areas of poverty reduction and MDG achievement (including addressing HIV & AIDS), democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery and environment and sustainable development. Each of these is addressed in turn.

A. Coordination and Partnerships

50. The strengthening of national capacity to advance gender equality will largely be achieved through coordinated dialogue among governments, experts and civil society, supported by UN-system partners, and consistent policy advice and advocacy by UNDP and other UN agencies about the necessity of integrating gender equality into successful achievement of other sustainable development and Millennium Development Goals. UNDP’s responsibility for UN-system coordination gives it a mandate to initiate and facilitate such dialogue. Appropriate modalities will be discussed in the consultations that are the core of this strategy.

51. Strong and vigorous partnerships with common-system colleagues, especially ILO, UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNICEF will be critical to the coherence of the overall support provided to governments. RBEC will be pro-active in fostering this collaboration at regional and country levels, and will discuss with partners the possibility of capturing this relationship in memoranda of understanding.

52. Strong partnerships and joint programming for the empowerment of women and gender equality, coordinated by the UN Country Teams, whether through a Gender Theme Group or by other mechanisms where a GTG has not been established, are mandated activities, and will be actively promoted and supported by regional and country level management, under this strategy.

53. Moreover, much of the progress on gender equality in the region has to date been brought about by the activity of civil society organizations. This strategy envisages continuing and expanded collaboration with CSOs, including through the public-private partnership (PPP) modality.

54. In accordance with the corporate GES (paragraph 38) and with system-wide commitments, especially the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities (TCPR) (2007)²⁷, Resident Coordinators in the region will focus on:

- a. the development and implementation of a gender equality strategy for the RC office, which will ensure that the UN Country Teams take into account gender equality considerations in the context of its general activities with joint programming where appropriate.²⁸
- b. the effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups and other actors, , by establishing clear mandates, organizing adequate training, providing access to information and to adequate and stable resources, and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff. The latter is a central obligation of Resident Coordinators, with the potential for strong multiplier effects in programme outcomes.
- c. on-going improvement in accountability mechanisms and to include inter-governmentally agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their strategic frameworks.
- d. further improvement in qualitative and quantitative reporting on gender equality, including the use of sex-disaggregated and gender statistics.
- e. being pro-active in the prevention of sexual harassment in the entire County Team.
- f. ensuring that the annual report of the Resident Coordinator includes adequate and concise information on progress on each of the above
- g. ensuring that the Joint UN Teams on AIDS implement gender-competent AIDS responses.

55. In addition, the “One-UN” initiative provides opportunities for collaboration on gender equality issues, and especially to pool resources and direct focused attention to priorities defined at the country level. RBEC will be active in expanding relationships and joint programmes with all common-system partners committed to the advancement of gender equality goals, especially UNIFEM and UNFPA, and in robust collaboration on this issue at country level, under the guidance of UN Country Teams, as well as at the regional level.

B. Focus Areas

56. The heart of the RBEC strategy is the development of national capacity to advance gender equality as an essential path to the achievement of the MDGs, including but not only MDG3 on gender equality, in the context of UNDP’s four focus areas of: poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs; democratic governance; conflict prevention and recovery; and environment and sustainable development.

57. While this strategy indicates broad areas of intervention with regard to the focus areas, the detailed definition of project activities is undertaken by country offices in the context of their own analysis of national needs. Many relevant activities are already ongoing, and several countries in the region have developed good practices which have been elaborated as tools and guideline. The overall intention is to build on these successful applied approaches to develop strong implementation mechanisms for gender equality across the region.

²⁷ Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB). *System-wide Policy and Strategy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*. May 2006 and Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System A/C.2/62/L.4. December 2007. Paragraphs 41-43

²⁸ In particular, the Resident Coordinator will ensure that all strategy documents include clear statements of support for gender equality in their introductory sections, and between one third and one half of the results statements integrate the promotion of gender equality, in accordance with the System-wide Policy and Strategy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

58. In accordance with both the GES and its own lessons learned and identified programme priorities, RBEC will focus on the development of national capacity in three specific “arenas” of action, across each of its four Focus Areas. Thus, RBEC will support national capacity to achieve the following three broad outcomes for each Focus Area:

- a. **Participation of Women in Governance and Leadership:** Develop the capacity of women and women’s organizations to participate meaningfully in governance processes across all sectors, including policy planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies and programmes, and especially in economic policy advocacy.
- b. **Enhanced national policy-making and planning:** provide support for strengthened and more coherent government systems, plans and financial frameworks that advance women’s rights and gender equality, including national plans, social service delivery and legal and security frameworks.
- c. **Strengthened knowledge base on gender equality:** Develop and further use of gender-relevant expertise and data to achieve the above two points. This would involve strengthening national statistical offices, academic institutions, civil society organisations and various national and local communications channels to generate stronger understanding of the rationale strengthening gender equality

Democratic governance;

59. Many countries of the region have undergone profound governance transformations since 1990. But despite the modernization of public institutions and the establishment of market economies, two formidable governance challenges remain across the region: (i) weak political interest in further reform, including weak, and in many countries still decreasing participation of women in public/political life which is a reflection of inadequate efforts to promote inclusive citizenship and empower the excluded; and (ii) inadequate state capacity to implement reforms, and deliver public services²⁹.

60. In light of this, country offices will support action to develop national capacity in the following areas, making selection among them according to local and national priorities:

- a. Participation of women in electoral processes, as commissioners, voters and candidates;
- b. Gender parity in all branches of government, especially the executive branch;
- c. Support for civil society organizations engaged in promoting and supporting gender equality. Building a platform for local expertise, dialogue and social/political change;
- d. Social service delivery to women, with particular emphasis on strengthening local governments for effective *local delivery of services to poor women* as a primary indicator of adequate safety nets and change in social relations; and
- e. Implementation of gender equality legislation. Compliance with international commitments and reporting obligations;
- f. Strengthen national, sub-regional and local level capacity to mainstream gender equality in government policies and institutions; and
- g. Support the integration of inclusive principles into mainstream government policy as well as the increased participation of excluded groups, especially women, in policymaking.

²⁹ Based on the RBEC Strategy, para. 30.

Poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs

61. The strong economic growth reported across the region since 1999 is reducing absolute poverty, even in the poorest CIS countries. Relatively large numbers of poor people are in fact found in middle- (as well as low-) income countries.³⁰ This underscores the importance of addressing relative poverty, gender and other inequalities, social exclusion, and regional disparities, even in the region's wealthier countries. Poverty rates are generally higher for women than for men; and children face greater risks of poverty than do their parents. On the other hand there is considerable regional and class-based variation: women in the new member states or in households with above-average incomes in the Western CIS or Kazakhstan are in a much better position than women in the Western Balkans or the CIS-7 countries. Rapid economic growth and falling national poverty rates are therefore no guarantee of sustainable, broad-based human development, economic security, or access to quality social services³¹. Rather, attention must be paid to the specifics of sub-populations within a given community

62. In light of this, Country Offices will develop national capacity within the following framework of intervention possibilities, in accordance with locally-defined priorities:

- a. Development and implementation of national plans, strategic frameworks and budgetary allocations that fully reflect women's role in the national economy, including at local government levels;
- b. Enhancement of women's access to economic assets and resources of all kinds (particularly land and credit) and development of their capacity to participate in policy dialogue at all levels of government;
- c. Assessment of the contribution of men's and women's unpaid labour to economic growth as a basis for stronger and more accurate national and local planning that reflects the actual situation more closely;
- d. Support to women's entrepreneurship and assessment of the impact of privatization on women;
- e. The impact of trade agreements on women;
- f. The impact of migration and trafficking on women and men; and
- g. Implementation of policies and programmes through increased participation of women's organizations to mitigate gender related vulnerability and address the impact of HIV/AIDS on women.
- h. The gender dimensions of HIV, especially as they related to sex work and labour migration.
- i. The gender dimensions of social exclusion, especially as they are related to women from vulnerable populations, such as ethnic minorities or people with HIV/AIDS;
- j. Supporting the production and analysis of poverty data that are disaggregated by vulnerability criteria (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, health status, sub-national location) to help governments design and implement pro-poor policies.

Conflict prevention and recovery;

63. The above-referenced socio-economic and governance challenges have generated significant tensions in several parts of the region. In many cases these have combined with long-standing nationalist and ethnic rivalries that have been released by the removal of communist controls. Together these have generated volatile conflict and pre-conflict situations in some countries. There are also several zones that

³⁰ World Bank data indicate that two MICs—the Russian Federation and Turkey—accounted for some 42% of all those living below PPP\$2.15/day in the region in 2003.

³¹ Based on the RBEC Strategy, para. 19.

are susceptible to flood, drought, earthquake and other natural disaster, while infrastructural and administrative weaknesses give risk of crisis derived from shortfalls in the supply of energy, water or other resources. These tensions threaten human development, including progress towards gender equality, and tend to exacerbate gender-based violence.

64. Many countries in the region face risks and conditions associated with crisis prevention and recovery such as the potential for resource-based conflicts, especially related to water, a number of active conflict zones, as well as disputed territories and independence movements, political instability, ethnic tensions, etc³².

65. The R/GES will support country offices to implement UNDP's 8-Point Agenda for Gender Equality, with a focus on:

- a. The rapid post-conflict gender justice;
- b. Women's citizenship, participation and leadership;
- c. Transforming post-crisis governance to work for women; and
- d. Strengthening of capacity of women including the participation of women to prevent, reduce, mitigate and cope with the impact of crisis and post-crisis situations
- e. Initiatives at local levels to reduce violence including gender based violence and provide support to affected women

Environment and sustainable development

66. The countries of Europe and the CIS face significant environmental challenges. These directly affect prospects for achieving a number of MDGs, and can have particularly severe effects on household incomes and public health, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups, including women³³.

67. The R/GES will support country offices to develop national capacity to integrate gender equality considerations into all national environmental and climate-related plans, including finance mechanisms, with particular attention to:

- a. Enhancing women's access to and control over natural resources such as water, energy and land title
- b. Maximizing women's participation in environmental dialogue and debate.

³² Based on the draft framework of Cooperation between RBEC and BCPR, p.2.

³³ Based on the RBEC Strategy, para. 36.

II. Institutional arrangements

68. The following institutional arrangements are necessary to support and ensure gender equality outcomes in RBEC activities. As with the operational activities, they follow closely the corporate structures described in the global Gender Equality Strategy, with specific adjustments drawn from regional lessons learned.

C. Accountability

69. RBEC has established a bureau-wide Gender Steering Committee (RBEC GSC) with the overall objective of project oversight for increasing gender equality. Chaired by the Regional Director, and meeting approximately once per year. The RBEC GSC will be responsible for the implementation of the R/GES and its translation into concrete action at the regional and country-level. The committee will comprise the RBEC Director, RRs, Chief of PSPD and the Regional Gender Advisor from the Regional Centre in Bratislava.

70. The RBEC GSC, having a mandate derived from that of the global GSIC, of which the Regional Director is a member, will receive regular reports from Resident Representatives and Practice Directors on their progress in implementing the R/GES.

71. The GSC will monitor the R/GES against its own Action Plan and the UNDP Balanced Scorecard, while Country Office activities will be monitored against the global Gender Results Framework.

Community of Practice and Knowledge Management

72. RBEC will streamline the coordination of the Gender CoP, and give greater definition of products and services that will be offered, in the context of the recently-released clarification of a standardized role for Regional Centres.

73. The CoP will be expanded to include external partners (see attachment: 10-point CoP Architecture)

74. Face to face meeting for CoP members are critical as a supplement to electronic forms of communication. Following the successful results of the last RBEC Gender Equality CoP (Yerevan October 2007), which gave rise to several initiatives, and had a strong capacity development impact on the participants, the new strategy envisages annual meetings, the first to be convened in the first six months of the planning period.

75. At annual CoP meetings participants will develop standard systems for the management of the CoP, including:

- a. electronic and telephone communication mechanisms;
- b. the above-referenced set of core gender mainstreaming tools;
- c. other defined knowledge products with a clear focus on *use* as well as generation or adaptation of tools;
- d. an enhanced web-site with work spaces for specific CoP initiatives and sub-regional interests;
- e. standard methodologies for regular meetings;

- f. enhanced mechanisms to ensure that UNDP is tapping the best available gender expertise in the region and strengthening east-east co-operation;
- g. Regular updates on global and other regional developments, for bench-marking and comparison of regional strategy and implementation.

D. Communication and Advocacy

76. Clear communication and advocacy are key means by which to achieve ownership by Governments of gender equality as a development objective. It is also critically important as a means to address stereotypes, and it provides a solid rationale for attention to women's right. Through sound communication, as an element of capacity development, gender equality considerations can be placed more securely on national policy agendas.

77. A principal outcome of COP activities will be the development of consistent advocacy messages for the region, and a defined set of priorities for internal and external communication.

E. Human Resource Management

Gender Parity

78. RBEC will support the implementation of the UNDP Gender Parity Action Plan

Internal Capacity Development

79. Gender mainstreaming is the chosen system-wide methodology to achieve women's rights and gender equality, as mandated by all governments, including those of Europe and the CIS, at the Beijing Conference in September 1995. However, internal UNDP capacity to adopt and implement this approach, accepting a shared responsibility to achieve organization wide gender equality goals, remains weak in the region.

80. Thus the R/GES envisages internal capacity development through a series of inter-related and cumulative capacity development meetings, including:

- a. Capacity development in the facilitation of gender equality strategy development, including gender audit techniques (Training of Trainers).
- b. Substantive technical training in each of the four practice areas.

81. Effective KM and CoP functioning are all critical dimensions of UNDP functional capacity for gender mainstreaming, and are central resources for all capacity development. Capacity development will be undertaken in conjunction with activities in these two areas.

82. In view of resource constraints, internal capacity development opportunities must be developed in an integrated manner. It is likely the internal capacity development will be combined with the consultative meetings envisaged as part of the operational activities of this strategy to build national capacity, and will also take place in the context of the annual CoP meetings.

The Results and Competency Assessment

83. In accordance with corporate commitments, RBEC will ensure that at least one gender-related Key Result Area is included in the RCAs of Resident Representatives.

F. Financial Resources

84. The strategy is largely funded for its first two years. The results of activities during this period will be documented carefully, including all baseline information, so that results and success stories are codified for resource mobilization purposes, as well as for internal tracking and reporting requirements.
85. In view of these factors, a resource mobilization strategy will be developed, based on
- a. a thorough review and mapping of internal resources, including the MDG Achievement Fund, the GTTF, JWID, Practice resources, regional resources, country office resources.
 - b. Identification of external resources at global, regional and national levels.
 - c. A clear mapping of baseline information, with clear measurement of progress and results built into all project activities, including the piloting and adoption by county offices of improvements to ATLAS that relate to the tracking of gender-equality disbursements and results.
 - d. Strong collegial relationships with funding partners, with vigorous flows of dialogue and information, including active consultation with current, past and potential donors on specific areas of intersecting interest. These consultations will draw on the enhanced CoP modality for enriched information-sharing.
 - e. Active engagement to establish an expanded partnership base.

G. M&E framework

86. Review of progress in implementing the R/GES will be a regular item on the agenda of the annual CoP meeting, with agreement on adjustments as necessary. Structured collective analysis and codification of learning from experience is to be developed as a skill for all members of the CoP in the course of these discussions,.
87. BRC undertakes an annual mapping of all gender-related projects underway in Country Offices, so that the overall regional baseline is known³⁴. This document will be adapted into a monitoring instrument.
88. A gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation plan will be prepared for each project in country office programmes, including all gender specific and gender mainstreaming projects. These plans will include the collection of gender –related baseline data, so that progress and results can be accurately tracked and measured. Issues arising in COs in connection with the preparation of these evaluation plans will be regularly discussed at CoP meetings.
89. A full outcome evaluation will be undertaken in early 2010, in conjunction with the global evaluation which will take place during the same period.

³⁴ Mapping of Gender Projects in the RBEC Region, January 2008

Definition of Terms Used

GENDER – “Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age”

* [“Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document”](#) - August 2001 – Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

GENDER EQUALITY – “Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration – recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a “women’s issue” but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men are seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development”

[“Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document”](#) - August 2001 – Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING – “Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of 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”

[Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 \(A/52/3, 18 September 1997 – Chapter IV. Special session on Gender Mainstreaming](#)

WOMEN’S RIGHTS – “The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community.”

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 12 July 1993. A/CONF.157/23. Paragraph 17
[http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/A.CONF.157.23.En](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.CONF.157.23.En)

WOMEN'S RIGHTS - "As defined in article 1, "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

"Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" 18 December 1979.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm#article2>

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT – "Women's empowerment has five components: Women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally"

[Guidelines on Women's Empowerment](http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html)". Document prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations. Inter-agency task force on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.
<http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html>

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT - "The concept of empowerment is related to gender equality but distinct from it. The core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to control her own destiny. This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), they must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as are provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions. And to exercise agency, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence."

Task Force on Education and Gender Equality. 2005. *Taking Action: achieving gender equality and empowering women*. The Millennium Project. UNDG

GENDER PARITY - "Equal numbers of men and women at all levels of the organization. It must include significant participation of both men and women, particularly at senior levels. Gender parity is one of several integrated mechanisms for improving organizational effectiveness."

UNDP Gender Parity Action Plan 2007.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) – "Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men". ... "Gender-based violence, which impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination within the meaning of article 1 of the Convention (CEDAW).

Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – General Recommendation 19 (11th session, 1992).
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) - : “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993. – Article 1.

[http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/A.RES.48.104.En](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.RES.48.104.En)

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) “any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on *socially associated differences* between males and females’. As such violence is based on socially ascribed differences, gender-based violence includes, but it is not limited to sexual violence. While women and girls of all ages make up the majority of the victims, men and boys are also both direct and indirect victims. It is clear that the effects of such violence are both physical and psychological, and have long term detrimental consequences for both the survivors and their communities”

ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2006. “Addressing Gender-based violence in Humanitarian Emergencies” “Gender –based violence and the role of the UN and its Member States”
www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/docs/Presentation%20Mr.%20Michel.pdf

UNDP 8-Point Agenda for Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery

1. Strengthen Women's Security in Crisis.

Work to end personal and institutional **violence against women**. Strengthen the **rule of law**. Increase the gender responsiveness of **security institutions**, disarmament, demobilization and **reintegration**, and small arms reduction initiatives.

2. Advance Gender Justice.

Increase women's **access to justice**. Ensure the protection of women's **economic, social, political and cultural rights**. Bring a gender perspective into transitional justice, constitutional, electoral, legislative, judicial, institutional and **security sector reforms**.

3. Expand Women's Citizenship, Participation and Leadership.

Build women's **skills and confidence**. Support **women's representation** in the social, political, and economic spheres. Develop **women's networks and institutions** for conflict prevention, disaster risk reduction, peacebuilding, and post-conflict/post-disaster reconstruction.

4. Build Peace with and for Women.

Ensure women's meaningful participation in formal and informal **peace processes**. Bring a gender perspective to the design and implementation of **peace missions and peace agreements**.

5. Promote Gender Equality in Disaster Risk Reduction.

Incorporate **gender analysis** in the assessment of disaster risks, impacts and needs. Address **women's unique needs** and value **women's knowledge** in disaster reduction and recovery policies, plans and programmes. Strengthen **women's networks and organizations** to facilitate women's active engagement.

6. Ensure Gender-Responsive Recovery.

Infuse **gender analysis** into all post-conflict and post-disaster **planning tools and processes**. Promote **social protection and sustainable livelihoods**. Prioritize women's needs in **key sectors** such as transportation, shelter and health care.

7. Transform Government to Deliver for Women.

Build capacities and promote accountability within government **institutions and processes**. Engage women and men to foster gender-equitable relations. Ensure gender-sensitive **resource mobilization, aid coordination, budgeting and funds allocation**.

8. Develop Capacities for Social Change.

Build **the skills and the will of men and women** to prevent and respond to **violence**; to reduce **vulnerability** to natural hazards; to achieve equitable **post-crisis reconstruction**; and to build **social cohesion**.

Achievement of this Eight- Point Agenda will require:
*Incorporating gender equality priorities into **advocacy and strategic planning** in the development, humanitarian, peace, and security spheres;*
*Strengthening **human resources, policies and programmes** to ensure responsiveness and accountability on gender issues;*
*Building **partnerships** to maximize impact on gender priorities;*
*Developing gender-responsive **funding mechanisms and resource mobilization strategies**;*
*Supporting **data collection** that counts women, counts what women value, and values what women count; and*
*Advancing **intellectual leadership, knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation** on gender and CPR issue*

RBEC Gender Equality Strategy 2008-11

Action Plan

This action plan details the actions and outputs for the biennium 2008-9. Several will continue into the second half of the planning period, when they will be supplemented by additional activities and outputs, as may be determined through annual review of the strategy.

Concrete Actions	Results/Outputs	Responsible Unit	Deadline
A - Operational Activities			
Sub-regional stakeholder consultation on priorities for advancing gender equality and women's political participation (government and civil society participants, together with UNDP and common-system partner staff members as appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Clear statement of sub-regional action priorities and methods for CO support of women's participation in governance across all sectors. ii. Definition of priorities for national capacity development in the sub-region iii. Identification of knowledge products that would support gender equality in the sub-region iv. Identification of and support to national consultative mechanisms on gender equality, and priorities for UNDP action in support of their development. v. Support to the progress of their implementation. vi. Regional guideline on methodology for such consultation 	BRC Gender Unit	end-2008
1. Preparation of Flagship publication	i. Flagship Publication on Gender Equality theme	BRC Gender Unit	End 2009
2. Projects in each Regional Practice Area	i. At least one project in each practice area fully engendered, including steps in each of the three arenas of national capacity development, and with monitoring and evaluation plans. (following training outlined in point B.3 below)	Practice Directors	2009
3. Development of regionally relevant gender mainstreaming tools and methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Regional Gender Mainstreaming "How To" Training Material ii. Regional Manual on the conduct of consultative meetings to advance gender equality 	BRC Gender Unit with Country Office GFPs	End 2008
4. Development of CO Action Plans based on ECIS Regional Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2011	i. CO Gender Action Plans developed and under implementation in each CO (2009)	Resident Representatives	Gender Audit 2008 Developed CO Gender Action Plan 2009

Concrete Actions	Results/Outputs	Responsible Unit	Deadline
6. Projects in each of the UNDP Practices (supporting national capacity to advance gender equality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. At least one project in each Country Office fully engendered (2009), with monitoring and evaluation plan ii. 50 to 70% of the new national projects engendered thereafter; iii. 3 CCA/UNDAFS from the region engendered (2009) 	Resident Representatives	End 2009, thereafter for engendering 50-70% of new national projects
B- Institutional Arrangements			
1. Semi-annual RBEC GSIC Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. R/GES progress monitored 	Regional Director	April & Oct 2008
2. Annual CoP meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Outline regional Gender Equality KM and Communication Plans agreed ii. Standard methodology and tools for sub-regional and national consultations on gender equality agreed. 	BRC Gender Unit	Annually
3. Capacity development in the facilitation of gender audit and gender equality strategy development (Gender Mainstreaming Training of Trainers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Up to 20 UNDP staff members with basic skills to facilitate CO gender audit and strategy development exercises ii. Regionally specific gender audit and strategy development tools (see A.3.) iii. Materials for manual on the conduct of CO gender audit and gender equality strategies. Gender Equality Toolkit used to develop Regional “How To” Training Material (see A.3) 	BRC Gender Unit	April 2008
4. Substantive training in each of the 4 practices areas (<i>note: there will be need for on-going support to practice areas and COs to ensure the incorporation of capacities into daily work and outputs</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Two trainings in 2008, two in 2009 ii. Two-six page handbook on gender equality in each practice area. iii. Gender-sensitive project outline for the participating practice area 	Practice Directors Gender Unit	2 in 2008 2 in 2009
5. RCAs reflect gender equality commitment of the Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. At least one gender-related Key Result Area in each RR RCA 	Regional Director	End 2008, and annually thereafter
6. Progress towards gender parity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Gender parity targets reached 	HQ, Regional and CO HR units	Parity in senior management by 2010.
7. Resource mobilization plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Resource mobilization plan completed 	BRC Directorate, RBEC HQ & BDP Gender Unit	July 2008
8. Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annual CoP review of GSIC completed ii. GSIC review completed 	GSIC and BDP Gender Unit	

Concrete Actions	Results/Outputs	Responsible Unit	Deadline
	iii. Full evaluation		