

**LDCs:
BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR MAINSTREAM
GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

**DRAFT JOINT UNCTAD/UNDP REPORT
FOR REVIEW**

**LAUNCHED ON 15 MAY 2001
AT THE THIRD UNITED CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST
DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, BRUSSELS**

This publication is supported by the Government of Japan and UNDP,
through the Japan/UNDP Women in Development Fund

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FOREWORD

Message to all those who are concerned about poverty reduction in Least Developed Countries

Ministers of gender/women's affairs, governmental representatives, development partners, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector met on 21-23 March 2001 in Cape Town, South Africa, to discuss capacity building to mainstream gender in development strategies with the aim to reduce poverty and increase gender equality in the least developed countries.

The workshop focused on the links between gender equality, poverty reduction and development and the underscored necessity to empower women and mainstream gender in LDCs' national policies and programmes. Obstacles to gender mainstreaming, including lack of capacity and opportunities were discussed. The debates led to the adoption of a declaration and formulation of recommendations to the preparatory committee of the LDC III on gender policy and capacity building, specifically focusing on poverty reduction using entry points such as gender review of national budgets and national statistics.

The contributions made to this pre-LDC-III event by participants, through speeches, background papers, and case studies are consolidated in this report. The variety of inputs is presented according to the six thematic sessions of the workshop: (i) Gender, Poverty Reduction and Economic Development; (ii) Engendering National Budgets and Development Strategies; (iii) Gender Equality and Trade; (iv) Engendering Statistics; (v) Microcredit; and (vi) the Way Forward.

This draft will be launched on 15 May 2001 at a Panel on Gender Equality in LDCs in connection with the United Nations Third Conference for the Least Developed Countries, to be held on 14-20 May in Brussels. The highlights of the report are intended to lead to discussions and inputs that will be used in its finalisation. Any suggestions and remarks are welcome and should be sent to gender@unctad.org. The final report will be published during fall 2001.

Geneva, April 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The UNCTAD secretariat is grateful to the Government of South Africa for hosting the pre-LDC-III event in Cape Town and to the Government of Denmark, Finland, Japan (through its Japan/UNDP Women in Development Fund within UNDP) and Sweden, as well as to the Industrial Corporation of South Africa for their financial contributions to the preparations and realization of this workshop.

Contributions made by all the participants in various forms, background papers, case-studies, input to the discussions and for formulation of recommendations are greatly acknowledged.

OPENING SESSION

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