



Evaluation Report 1/2003

Forward Looking Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT



**Forward-Looking Evaluation of Gender
Mainstreaming in UN-HABITAT based on
Lessons Learned from the WHP
and the Gender Unit**

Report

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This evaluation was undertaken by an external consultant, Sarah Forti of COWI A/S. The findings were shared with staff of UN-HABITAT in a short seminar. The conclusions remain those of the consultant, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of UN-HABITAT.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CMP	Community Management Programme
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
FEMUM	Federación de Mujeres Municipalistas de America Latina y El Caribe
GAD	Gender and Development
HIC-WAS	Habitat International Coalition: Women and Shelter Network
HIC/LAC	Habitat International Coalition for Latin America and the Caribbean region
IULA	International Union of Local Authorities
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
ROLAC	UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
UMP	Urban Management Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WAT	Women Advancement Trust
WID	Women in Development
WHP	Women and Habitat Programme
WHSDP	Women in Human Settlements Development Programme

0 Executive Summary

This Chapter summarises the Forward-Looking Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming as carried out by UN-HABITAT, based on Lessons Learned from the Women and Habitat Programme (WHP) and the Gender Unit. The Executive Summary includes an introduction, Lessons Learned from the WHP and the Gender Unit, Gender Mainstreaming in selected UN-HABITAT programmes and Country case-studies, Co-operation between the WHP, the Gender Unit and partner organisations and ends with a preview of the recommendations made in Chapter 6.

0.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 outlines the purpose and scope of the Evaluation, its methodology and the limitations that have restricted its scope in a number of ways.

The purpose of this Evaluation is to assess what the UN-HABITAT Women and Habitat Programme (WHP) and Gender Unit have achieved so far regarding women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming. The lessons learned will be a crucial and integral part of any further efforts to entrench gender mainstreaming across the length and breadth of UN-HABITAT programmes and output.

The Evaluation therefore focuses on the capacity and knowledge WHP has brought to UN-HABITAT. Lessons learned will enable the Gender Mainstreaming Unit, and ultimately UN-HABITAT as a whole, to improve gender mainstreaming in general, and more specifically to define tangible objectives and goals for gender mainstreaming, together with success criteria and practical gender-related outputs.

The Evaluation was carried out through desk studies, e-mailed questionnaires, interviews and field visits to Ecuador and Tanzania. The list of stakeholders interviewed includes UN-HABITAT staff at headquarters and field offices, former Project officers, beneficiaries of UN-HABITAT projects and UN-HABITAT partner organisations. The Evaluation team comprised Sarah Forti as main Consultant and Dr. Briitha Mikkelsen as Quality Assurance expert from COWI A/S.

The limitations of this Evaluation are highlighted in terms of the documentary and budgetary evidence that was made available, the timeframe and the geographical scope. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the sample of programmes and countries retained for the purposes of this evaluation seem to be fairly representative in view of the findings.

0.2 The WHP and the Gender Unit

Chapter 2 outlines the origins of the WHP and the Gender Unit and then goes on to analyse their strategic choices and related organisational aspects and finally identifies the Lessons Learned.

The major contribution of the WHP at international and regional level can be understood in the light of its origins and evolution over the years. WHP networking and advocacy efforts have been closely associated with women's networks and have partly contributed to the increased attention to women's issues in human settlements, as a number of resolutions by the UN General Assembly and the UN Commission on Human Settlements can testify. This was a crucial first step towards raising awareness of women's issues in human settlements at international and regional level.

With this strategic choice by the WHP and subsequently the Gender Unit, UN-HABITAT effectively opened its doors to women's networks with a view to giving more political clout to gender mainstreaming in human settlements¹. This strategic choice was also meant to strengthen the capacity of NGO networks working on women's issues in human settlements, by extending their scope from the local to the global level.

With this strategic choice, UN-HABITAT opened up a fertile conceptual background for itself. The Organisation certainly can continue to base its programmes and operations on the three key concepts or approaches so far developed by the WHP and the Gender Unit, i.e. respectively WID, GAD and Women's Human Rights². However, there is a need to clarify and better define the gender-related concepts and approaches that have been selected, and the relevant methodology being used, as well as highlighting any linkages and points of convergence between the three approaches.

Whereas it is recognised that in their early, pioneering role, the WHP and the Gender Unit needed to focus on high-profile political lobbying, networking and advocacy, the present Gender Mainstreaming Unit needs to link the advocacy efforts so far undertaken to activities with tangible impact at the local level. This includes:

- Support to programmes projects and activities with specific impact on the living conditions of women and men, with relevant indicators and means of verification to facilitate the assessment of any progress made.
- The development of gender-related objectives, activities, indicators, outputs and means of verification in the various programme areas of UN-HABITAT.

Although a general consensus seems to exist around the need to improve impact on the ground, opinions within UN-HABITAT are split over *how* exactly to proceed. Whereas there is no real dichotomy between the advocacy work at international level and programme implementation, or between the normative and the operational levels, there is a need to link the two levels, so that advocacy is firmly rooted in programme and project implementation. Consensus on this issue must be found once the clarifications called for above have been carried out and entrenched, through amendments to the current Gender Policy 2002 and in the drafting of the new Gender Action Plan.

If the present Gender Mainstreaming Unit is to mainstream gender *comprehensively* across the whole range of UN-HABITAT programmes, then commensurate co-ordinating and monitoring powers as well as adequate human and financial resources will need to be allocated, as called for in the current UN-HABITAT Gender Policy 2002.

¹ *Unequal Rights, Women and Property*, by Diana Lee-Smith and Catalina Trujillo, Draft Paper 2002.

² WID stands for Women in Development, and GAD for Gender and Development. (The definitions are further elaborated on in Annex 4).

0.3 Gender Mainstreaming in selected UN-HABITAT programmes

Chapter 3 assesses the *effectiveness* and *added value* of the WHP to selected UN-HABITAT programmes based on the literature reviewed and interviews carried out at UN-HABITAT Headquarters, in Nairobi, Kenya. The Chapter also identifies relevant Lessons Learned related to WHP and the Gender Unit' input into UN-HABITAT selected programmes.

The recruitment of committed gender experts to build a dynamic team within the WHP and subsequently the Gender Unit has contributed to building gender awareness among the staff of various UN-HABITAT programmes, who have expressed a general positive appreciation of the issue. The opening-up of institutional fora for debate and discussion of gender issues, such as the Gender Task Force, has proved to be a pro-active way to stimulate awareness, and therefore it should be continued. Moreover, the scope of the Gender Task Force should be expanded to all programme areas and it should be encouraged to adopt a monitoring role in order to ensure that gender mainstreaming is *effectively* and *systematically* carried out in all UN-HABITAT programme areas.

In order to further ensure that all key programme documentation is *systematically* and *consistently* mainstreamed from a gender perspective, screening procedures for new programme and project documents as well as all publications need to be put in place. There is also a need to facilitate the assessment of the impact that publications have on external stakeholders and beneficiaries. To this end, follow-up procedures must be put in place to track the distribution process of all UN-HABITAT publications. Short of this, the risk is that important documents are not followed up beyond the production stage and therefore impact on the group of stakeholders being targeted remains unachieved and/or unknown.

If pro-active participation of staff in mainstreaming gender into their respective programmes is to be entrenched, then gender-specific training courses related to each programme area must be developed and become mandatory. Such training courses should provide relevant methodologies in four areas: practical gender analysis, formulating objectives and outputs from a gender perspective, developing sex-disaggregated indicators and designing gender budgets in each specific programme area.

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