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# INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE OCCASIONAL PAPER

## **Fast-Forwarding Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment?**

Reflections on Measuring Change for UNDP's Thematic Evaluation  
on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality 2008-2013



These occasional papers from UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office are a series of ad hoc publications presenting in edited form, papers on evaluation topics. Occasional papers cover one or more of the main themes of the Office's work, such as assessment of development results, thematic evaluations, global or regional programme evaluations, decentralized evaluations, impact evaluations, evaluations commissioned by programme units, evaluation methods and guidance, and national evaluation capacities development. They are intended primarily for international organizations, government, civil society and the academic community.

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# I. ABSTRACT

This background paper was commissioned by UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office as a thought piece designed to spark reflection and debate on the design of the Thematic Evaluation on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. First shared in a scoping workshop in December 2013, the paper has three sections:

- i. an historical overview of the emergence of gender considerations in international development;
- ii. an outline of gender mainstreaming in UNDP as a tool to fast-forward gender equality and women's empowerment; and
- iii. key challenges, tools, and methods to measure complex changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.

Taken together, the aim is to stimulate brainstorming on diverse possibilities for measuring components of gender equality, women's rights, and women's empowerment, grounded in feminist analysis. A wide range of tools and methods are shared that could be used to capture more nuanced social and structural changes in women's and men's lives.

## II. INTRODUCTION

This background paper was commissioned by UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) as a thought piece to spark reflection and debate at a workshop, held in December 2013, on the design of the Thematic Evaluation on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2008-2013). The participatory workshop was the first of its kind in IEO. It gathered multiple stakeholders across country, regional and headquarters offices to collectively reflect on the design of an evaluation. The paper aimed to highlight the broader international commitments related to gender and gender equality and associated institutional arrangements. It sought to highlight critical issues the institution may face in measuring gender mainstreaming and gender equality and women's empowerment, and to present diverse possibilities for capturing deeper and more nuanced social and structural changes in women's and men's lives drawing from feminist principles to evaluation.

The key guiding questions include:

- How have gender and gender mainstreaming debates evolved in the international development sector?
- What have been the core findings of previous assessments and evaluations on gender mainstreaming in the development sector?
- What key issues will be important for UNDP to reflect on and address as it embarks on its Thematic Evaluation of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment?
- What sort of research and evaluation methods could be used to address the key issues raised on the evaluation of women's empowerment and gender equality?

Data collection methods included interviews with 11 UNDP staff at the country, regional and headquarters offices; reviews of over 58 UNDP documents, including the Gender Equality Strategy, past UNDP evaluations and reviews of the Strategic Plan and gender mainstreaming, corporate speeches on gender equality and women's empowerment, and a sample of country programme evaluations and reviews; plus secondary research of academic and professional articles related to gender mainstreaming and evaluation methodology.

The paper is organized into three main sections:

- an historical overview of the emergence of gender considerations in international development;
- an outline of gender mainstreaming in UNDP as a tool to fast-forward gender equality and women's empowerment; and
- key challenges, tools, and methods to measure complex changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.

### III. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

#### A. Gender and gender mainstreaming in international development

##### *Normative underpinnings*

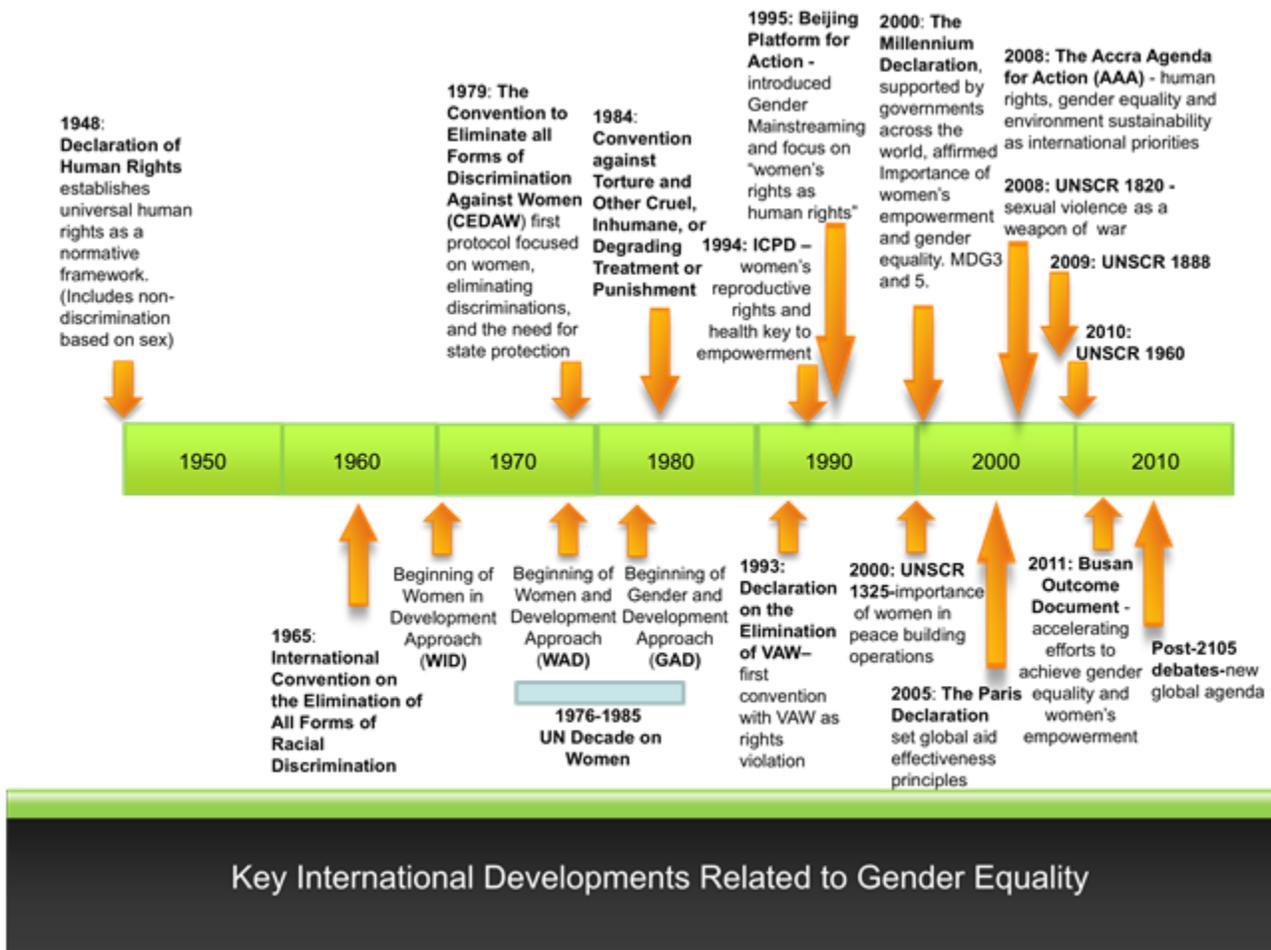
This section offers a brief overview of important international normative developments focused on gender, and explores the evolution of gender interventions in international development work.

With the emergence of the human rights agenda post-World War II, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set out the fundamental bases of universal freedoms, equality, and rights in 1948. Article 2 of the Declaration focuses on non-discrimination based on **sex** (meaning the biological and physiological characteristics defining males and females,<sup>1</sup> not gender), race, language, politics, religion, and other social categories. Although the Declaration is non-binding, it is referenced as the principle document that creates a global normative framework, enshrining the protection and promotion of universal human rights. A diverse set of legally binding treaties and optional protocols<sup>2</sup> further delineates specific human rights protections, creating a comprehensive normative human rights legal framework.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, discussions in civil society, governments, and United Nations agencies focused on increasing attention, protection mechanisms, and resources towards women to advance women's equity<sup>3</sup> and social justice, e.g., during the 1975 World Conference of the International Women's Year in Mexico City, the United Nations Decade on Women (1976-1985), and debates on international norm standards, such as the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>4</sup> In 1979, CEDAW established a critical reference point underscoring the importance of **gender equality**<sup>5</sup> in development with an explicit focus on reducing discrimination against women. CEDAW outlined a specific definition of discrimination against women<sup>6</sup> and called for states to protect against gender discrimination and rights violations.

The attention on women as a particular target group emerged, because international development aid directed at women was not having its expected positive impact; and in some cases, reversals of progress in women's status and income were observed globally.<sup>7</sup> See Graphic 1 for a timeline of key international developments related to gender presented in this section.

**Graphic 1: Timeline of some key international developments related to gender equality**



**Focusing the Lens—From WID, WAD, to GAD and gender mainstreaming**

The **Women in Development (WID)** approach arose in the 1970s and drew on Western, liberal feminist theorizing. The aim of this development discourse and policy approach was to influence international donor agencies’ agendas and to increase the amount of development aid directed towards women. Advocates of WID used and promoted equity and economic efficiency arguments, aiming to show the value of investing greater resources in women. The WID approach analysed women’s – and, particularly, poor women’s – lower contributions to, and status in, formal and productive economic development spheres. Policy solutions and interventions thus focused on strategies such as increasing women’s access to employment, markets, education, and other material resources. The assumption was that if women’s economic inequalities were eliminated, then their status and power would also increase in other spheres.<sup>8</sup> This approach was criticized by many feminists, both in the global North and South, as it instrumentalized women and made invisible the structural factors that created the inequalities that interventions were trying to address in the first place. This includes issues such as limiting social norms around men’s and women’s work and gender roles or community expectations of ‘appropriate’ behaviour and roles; discrimination and rights violations, often codified into law; differential access to power and influence, and unequal participation; inequities in accessing and controlling resources (both material and non-material); and the devaluation of women’s labour in the marketplace, plus labour discrimination. The WID approach also was met with resistance in the development community, although for reasons other than feminist concerns. In particular, many officials did not consider it necessary to redistribute power and to channel relatively scarce resources to women.<sup>9</sup>

Moving on from economic efficiency arguments, the **Women and Development (WAD)** approach emerged in the late 1970s, emphasizing equitable participation. The WAD approach analysed the structure of public and private participation in developing countries and how that marginalized women and maintained existing inequalities. The WAD approach broadened analysis to men, recognizing some intersections of gender, privilege, race, class, and social location, such as the fact that in developing countries men who do not enjoy privileged status also experience the negative impacts of social inequalities. In this way, development interventions focused largely on getting more women to participate and be represented in social, economic, political, and legal structures. However, WAD did not focus on shifting underlying gender roles or the norms that sustain those inequalities and discriminations.<sup>10</sup> As Rathgeber (1990:10) notes, “WAD offers a more critical view of women's position than does WID, but it fails to undertake a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production and women's subordination and oppression.”

The **Gender and Development (GAD) approach** marked a distinct leap forward. It arose from calls from women's rights scholars and activists, as well as women's and feminist movements, to address the power and patriarchy that lie at the root of discrimination and inequality. This introduced a need to broaden and deepen the development focus beyond women, to address gender roles and relations, differential access and control to resources, and ultimately to address the power between men and women. Giving attention to **gender**, and to the **socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women**, it opened up space to interrogate the ways in which traditional social roles, norms, and expectations formed the bases for inequality in the private and public sphere, as ensconced in unequal institutions—whether in the family, community, schools, professional sphere, politics, or beyond. Notions such as *women's triple roles*, in terms of women taking on productive, reproductive, and community roles,<sup>11</sup> the *double burden*,<sup>12</sup> power and *empowerment*,<sup>13</sup> were all introduced.<sup>14</sup> These were important advances in development discourse and practice in the promotion of gender equality and women's rights.

In the early to mid-1990s, multiple international commitments were also agreed that further advanced the women's human rights agenda. Women's rights and feminist activists were central to the development of these international agreements and the promotion of new norms for equality and women's rights globally. In 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women became the first global declaration to address violence against women (VAW) explicitly and highlight it as a violation of human rights. In the following year, the International Conference on Population and Development further contributed to the women's rights agenda, when delegates affirmed that women's equality and empowerment was a global priority and critical to eradicating poverty and curbing population growth. Importantly, women's reproductive rights and health was seen as a key component of women's empowerment. In 1995, governments took an important step in promoting an 'agenda for women's empowerment' by signing the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).<sup>15</sup> The BPfA provides concrete areas of action for government, the United Nations system, civil society and the private sector to take forward and promote the women's empowerment, rights, and equality agenda. The BPfA frames the advancement of women and gender equality as a human rights issue and a necessary condition for social justice. It affirms that, “*empowerment of women and equality between women and men are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples.*” It also promoted the principle of **gender mainstreaming**, which prioritized women's empowerment and gender equality as a cross-cutting development objective. In 1997, a concrete definition of gender mainstreaming was adopted, building on the BPfA:

*“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in 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.”<sup>16</sup>*

Global women's movements lobbied extensively to ensure global recognition and prioritization of women's rights and that the 'women's rights as human rights' frame was integrated into the Platform for Action, culminating over 20 years of activism to end discriminatory treatment of women.<sup>17</sup> The frame has become a major discursive tool for feminist and women's rights activists arguing for transnational policy and practice changes across the globe.

### ***Gender, the MDGs and beyond***

Since the dawn of this millennium, international development discourse and formal agreements have increasingly emphasized the importance of gender equality.

- The Millennium Declaration in 2000, supported by governments across the world, affirmed that women's empowerment and gender equality is one of the most useful mechanisms to "*combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.*" Specifically, Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 3 and 5 integrated women's empowerment,<sup>18</sup> reduction of maternal mortality and enhanced women's reproductive health.<sup>19</sup>
- Importantly, at the United Nations World Summit in 2005, gender equality was reaffirmed as a development goal in itself (MDG3). It was also highlighted as a means to fastforward achievement of all the other MDGs.<sup>20</sup>
- A variety of other international resolutions and commitments were established in the 2000s, including United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) and UNSCR 1889 (2009). That underscored the importance of women's representation and voices in peacebuilding processes. It also identified indicators to assess progress – UNSCR 1820 (2008), which states that sexual violence is an explicit weapon of war and a war crime and requires immediate protection and disciplinary mechanisms, linking to UNSCR 1325; and UNSCR 1888 (2009) and UNSCR 1960 (2010) – and followed that up by implementing security measures and deepening the women, peace, and security agendas.
- Debates on the global aid effectiveness (AE) architecture, from the Paris Declaration (2005) to the Busan Outcome Document (2011) focused increasingly on gender equality as an important dimension for achieving sustainable development. AE debates were critical, as the outcome documents set the overarching framework and principles through which international aid is to be delivered and established global priorities and standards with which to assess progress. Many women's rights advocates criticized the Paris Declaration as gender-blind.<sup>21</sup> Advocates demanded that greater attention be given to gender and women's rights at the Accra High Level Forum (HLF-3). Progress was made in integrating gender equality,<sup>22</sup> and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) (AAA) significantly raised the focus on gender. However, many of the women's rights advocates' demands remained unmet, particularly those that ensured that gender equality and women's rights were a priority through dedicated resources, strong accountability and results-based tracking mechanisms. To continue lobbying, feminist and women's organizations and advocates around the world met to outline their key demands on the road to, and at, Busan, and to engage in collective advocacy with key officials.<sup>23</sup> Advocacy efforts were largely successful (additional analysis appears in the next section), and the Busan Outcome document deepened the foundation for governments and donors to prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment with adequate dedicated resources and specific targets and tracking mechanisms. See [§ 20] Paragraph 20 in Busan.<sup>24</sup>

The gender equality focus as set out in BPfA has been mostly integrated into the language of high-level aid and development effectiveness architectures and agreements. Much of this is connected to the concentrated advocacy efforts of feminist and women's rights advocates and work with key allies, such as OECD-GenderNet, United Nations agencies, and other civil society actors.<sup>25</sup> While high-level commitments clearly prioritize a mainstreamed and dedicated focus on gender equality, to what extent have these commitments actually been translated into increased resources and concrete results?

## ***The politics of gender in international development***

The focus on gender equality, women's rights, and women's empowerment has become more prominent since its peripheral role in the early 1970s. It is now one of the top development issues. Yet rhetoric around prioritizing gender equality does not necessarily translate into dedicated resources. In terms of investments, for example:<sup>26</sup>

- Data from the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker (based on the 2011–2012 average) show that of the \$86.1 billion screened, \$23.5 billion went to gender equality (or 27.3 percent of total aid). Mainstreamed aid is still relatively low, but dedicated funding for gender equality is even smaller. Only \$3.5 billion of screened aid (or 4 percent of total aid) was allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment projects as a principal objective.<sup>27</sup>
- The OECD DAC gender marker shows a 20 percent fall in total resources (to \$406 million) going to women's organizations and institutions from 2008 to 2011 (including governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as national machineries). But although funding has decreased, funding directed to non-governmental women's organizations nearly doubled between 2008 and 2011, reflecting a positive trend. Indeed, funding to these women's organizations rose from 25 percent (\$130 million) in 2008 to over 64 percent (\$263 million) in 2011.<sup>28</sup>

Recent years have seen much public and international attention and campaigns on women and girls— such as the Nike and Novo Foundation's 'Girl effect', the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report (WDR) on Gender Equality, Girls Not Brides, Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean in', and Kristoff and WuDunn's 'Half the Sky', to name a few. The increased profile of gender equality and women's empowerment over recent years is important and has created a swell of new actors interested in gender issues, opening up possibilities for greater resources. Exploring the women's rights funding landscape, AWID's *Where is the Money for Women's Rights* research in 2013 cited three major trends in the gender equality and women's rights arena. 1. The attention on women and girls as a priority in donor and mainstream spaces (at least discursively); 2. The increasing role of the private sector in development, and engagement in interventions related to gender equality; and 3. Corporatization's impact on development agendas and resources.<sup>29</sup> The question is, to what extent these new resources are connected to interventions that address the roots of gender inequalities, rather than surface manifestations?<sup>30</sup> Discursively, in some cases, we are also seeing a resurgence of instrumentalist discourses reminiscent of the WID approach from the 1970s, highlighting the power of investing in women and girls, with economic efficiency arguments and a deepened focus on economic empowerment as the natural strategy and pathway for achieving women's rights and equality.

Additionally, the international development sector is seeing the increasing influence of conservatism, often religious, and the incursion of the private sector into high-level policy spaces, such as Rio + 20, the High-Level Forum (HLF-4) in Busan, and United Nations post-2015 debates. To some extent, this has resulted in backtracking on pre-existing development agreements. The outcome of these debates has been mixed, with some advances or gains being held, and some degradation of previous women's rights commitments occurring.

- For example, Rio+20 represented a defining moment in which conservative religious states bonded in opposition, e.g., the Holy See with conservative religious governments, such as Iran. The alliance prevented the affirmation of the centrality of women's sexual and reproductive rights in the environment and climate change agenda. While the final text of Rio+20 reaffirms the BPfA and Cairo International Conference on Population and Development agreements, it does not assert that women's reproductive rights are key to sustainable development.<sup>31</sup> The Brazilian minister mentioned that if consensus is to be achieved consensus between all states, women's reproductive rights had to be removed.<sup>32</sup> Zonibel Woods reflected, "*If a woman cannot decide if and when to have children and if she is not provided with the reproductive health care that is her human right, it is challenging to contribute to sustainable solutions for the planet.*" This strategy of putting women's rights on the negotiating block can be all too common, belying actual

prioritization of women's rights.<sup>33</sup>

- During the Busan HLF-4 on aid effectiveness in 2011, the role of the private sector emerged as a strong influence, which feminist activists believed constrained a rights agenda. In terms of policy, the Busan Outcome Document (BOD) was not the outcome document that feminist and gender advocates were hoping for. Paragraph 20 noted that gender equality and women's empowerment were important for making progress on development; however women's rights were not included in the text. As a feminist involved in the HLF-4 debates reflected, *"While the language of gender equality has received attention, within the broader context of the outcome document which focuses on stimulating economic growth and private development using neoliberal models, women's equal rights have become instrumentalized in the sense that women are used for increasing market growth and for introducing new labor (often cheap due to existing discriminations in the labour market)."*<sup>34</sup> The [Women's Key Demands \(2011\)](#) document reflected that, *"If the private sector is to play a role in development, it must commit to human rights legal standards, including those relevant for women's rights, decent work, and environmental sustainability."* As Azra Sayyed, of Roots for Equity in Pakistan, reflected on the Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development, *"What this plan fails to recognize is that there should be 'power' in empowerment. We all know that increasing the number of women available in the labour market can be very profitable. But does it result in better development outcomes or rights for women? Not from our experience."*<sup>35</sup>
- Feminist critiques of the post-2015 development agenda have similarly underlined the regressive role of neoliberal policies and the private sector on development.<sup>36</sup> Feminist networks, such as the [Post-2015 Women's Coalition](#) and [Women's Major Group](#), underscored the importance of the standalone *Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*, which has dedicated targets focused on ending child marriage and harmful practices against women and girls and all forms of violence and discrimination, guaranteeing universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, reducing maternal mortality, ensuring women's full participation in decision making positions, and ensuring equal inheritance rights, rights to land and economic resources. Both groups critiqued the proposals for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for not going far enough in fully committing to the transformational foundation that was envisioned. The [Post-2015 Women's Coalition](#) stated in response to the 2013 United Nations High-level Panel Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: *"To uphold human rights obligations and realize the "transformational shifts" envisaged in current development discussions, business as usual is no longer an option. The red line for policymaking must be the realization of gender equality and human rights, rather than growth and profit as ends in themselves. This means moving power away from corporate interests and toward marginalized peoples, women and communities... We reiterate the need for Member States to develop goals, targets and indicators that lead to structural changes in relations of power, consumption patterns, and the distribution of resources."*

In the July 2014 draft of the SDGs that the General Assembly's (GA) Open Working Group (OWG) produced, human rights was not used as the fundamental frame for the goals or used as a base for state accountability principles, exhibiting a concerning trend away from rights-based framing. The [Women's Major Group](#), a group of over 500 NGOs, in their July 2014 policy statement on the SDG proposals reflect on women's rights wins and losses, raising several red flags:<sup>37</sup>

*"... the Women's Major Group has continuously called for stronger rights-based targets and a deeper transformation of our economic and financial systems, which we regret are not reflected in the outcome document: the proposed SDGs are still not sufficiently ambitious, transformative or rights-based, and we present our 'red flags'.*

- *Absence of human rights.*
- *Sexual and reproductive health targets do not go far enough.*
- *Concentration of power and wealth imbalances that deepen poverty and inequalities within and between countries are not sufficiently addressed, and the agenda lacks targets to reverse this trend.*

- *The burden of unpaid domestic and care work still rely on women.*
- *Lack of recognition of women as farmers, fishers, indigenous peoples and key for sustainable natural resource management.*
- *Insufficient attention to women’s role in peace and justice.*
- *Concern around ‘partnership(s)’. The myriad green lights given to private sector financing and partnerships for sustainable development, without any specific language on evaluations, accountability, transparency and overall governance, is deeply worrying.*
- *Technology focus remains on trade and private access.”*

Given increased interest in the catalytic role that gender equality can play, why have development investments, commitments, and action remained modest? Beyond politics, some answers might be gleaned from reviewing international development agencies’ experiences with gender mainstreaming.

## **B. Gender mainstreaming strategy and implementation: a deeper examination**

This section reviews the broad evidence of gender equality on achieving development goals, then explores the results of agencies applying gender mainstreaming within their institutions. There were high hopes that gender mainstreaming would revolutionize the way that gender was addressed, would transform institutions to become more gender equitable, and would radically reduce gender inequalities and discriminations around the world. However, evaluators of gender mainstreaming practices have found that the transformative effect on institutions, practices, and politics on the ground has not necessarily occurred and that its application, in some cases, has led to contradictory results.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Research on gender equality and development goal progress***

Evidence clearly supports the claim that focusing on gender equality fast-forwards achievement of other development objectives. The following studies offer examples of how different dimensions of gender equality can catalyse progress in development outcomes.

- A meta-analysis of 40 international development projects that addressed women’s reproductive health outcomes (including reduction of maternal deaths, improved knowledge and use of contraceptives, ability to negotiate safe sex, knowledge of transmission of HIV/AIDS, increase in youth knowledge of reproductive health, and greater use of pre- and post-natal services, among many others) by Population Reference Bureau and USAID (2011) found that those that integrated gender empowerment and equality strategies achieved stronger results.<sup>39</sup> Strategies that had the most potential to strengthen health outcomes included those that challenge and directly address limiting or harmful gender norms; those that increase communication between couples; and those that strengthen community discussions and awareness around gender and reproductive health. Recommendations also highlighted positive results of integrated programmes that work at multiple levels, such as the individual, family, community, and political levels—reflecting the importance of addressing limiting gender norms at different levels. It also discussed the types of mobilization or community organizing strategies that may help to transform normative barriers.
- Findings from the 2010 SIDA gender mainstreaming evaluation by Byron and Örnemark revealed the importance of integrating layered strategies that address power relations. It compared an Ethiopian programme (SIDA–Amhara Rural Development Programme) with a Kenyan country programme (Productive Safety Net Programme [PSNP] – and the Nyazanza road project). The results showed that the Kenyan programme, which focused on increasing women’s income and access to employment, had less impact, little effect on power relations at the household or community level, and even some negative results.<sup>40</sup> However, ‘empowerment’ in its deepest sense, ripe with greater agency and power, including the transformation of power relations, was more evident in the Ethiopian programme, which included a

constellation of strategies and target groups to improve women's economic status (namely, enhancing women's share of land titles, increasing their access to credit, strengthening their capacities through training and education, reducing their household workloads, and implementing trainings to change men's and boys' behaviours). Extrapolating from these results by integrating a multilayered gender equality and transformative approach, poverty reduction may be more sustainable, particularly since the root causes of discrimination are addressed. More research is needed on this to explore the catalytic potential of integrating gender transformative strategies in development projects.<sup>41</sup>

- Findings from AWID's and Srilatha Batliwala's (2014) analysis of the collective impact of 45 projects and €70 million funded by the historic Dutch MDG3 Fund highlighted the importance of channeling resources to women's rights and feminist organizations to challenge power inequalities and build movements. Results were diverse. For example, women's rights organizations transformed gender norms and built collective power to change laws and policies to be gender-equitable, built new awareness of rights in diverse communities, increased women's political participation, and strengthened the capacity of small women's organizations locally and regionally.<sup>42</sup>
- Finally, research by Htun and Weldon in 2012 underscored the key role of feminist movements globally in keeping gender agendas on the table and influencing policy (particularly on gender based violence).<sup>43</sup> The research found that feminist movements are a key factor in mobilizing progressive change globally, and specifically in making progress towards eliminating violence against women after controlling for other factors, such as left wing party strength, a strong economy, and the number of women in government, over time.

### ***Findings from selected evaluations on gender mainstreaming***

Evaluations of gender mainstreaming from bilateral, multilateral, and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) typically show mixed results, with some progress made.

One of the most comprehensive assessments to date by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) in 2012 synthesizes results from 26 gender mainstreaming evaluations of donor agencies from 1990 to 2010.<sup>44</sup> The study found that while policies and practices for implementing gender mainstreaming tools almost universally existed, such as conducting gender analysis in programmes and projects, its actual implementation was rare (e.g., only 22 of 26 evaluations had gender analysis sufficiently integrated throughout the project cycle, not just in the project design phases). Some organizations felt that doing this type of analysis was a "luxury", "add-on" a "burden" or a "problem to address." The synthesis suggests that integrating gender analysis throughout the project cycle would contribute to stronger gender results. Particularly critical is the lack of leadership implementation of gender mainstreaming policy, which amounts to 'policy evaporation'. In many cases, new practices or tools would be introduced, and use would be high at first before tapering off. Financial as well as human resources have also not been sufficient to ensure the success of gender integration. The review found that leaders fail to prioritize gender mainstreaming, because of multiple competing realities, such as the MDGs. The lack of performance benchmarks, clear accountability standards, and links to clear incentive structures all constrain sustainable commitment to gender mainstreaming. Senior managers are more responsive to priorities when incentives and rewards are attached, such as international visibility and resources, particular when they affect opportunities for career advancement.

The Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG)<sup>45</sup> also conducted a comprehensive evaluation of 11 bilateral and multilateral development agencies' gender policies in 2012, deepening the evidence base. The assessment underscored the importance of linking gender policies to explicit results frameworks for the most effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. Moreover the review found that most agencies had weak and ineffective evaluation frameworks, which were weakened further by a lack of understanding of gender mainstreaming concepts, no explicit theory of change, and a lack of indicators and comparable rating scales.<sup>46</sup>



The result of not having a common results structure and assessment framework resulted in siloizations across important issues and inattention to the confluence of factors that affect change in a particular issue. For example, intersectional analyses of how gender, poverty, violence, and other types of marginalizations affect HIV/AIDS status often went undeveloped. As such, agencies often failed to develop inter-sectoral approaches to comprehensively address such issues, constraining effective and sustainable work on key gender results.

Reflecting on Dutch INGOs' implementation of gender mainstreaming, a study found that while the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies initially, and to some degree sustainably, increased the legitimacy of focusing on gender and improving policy and practice within the institutions, over time the opposite effect began surfacing in terms of civil society empowerment. For example, women's organizations were less likely to be funded, having gender experts on staff was not a priority (because it was thought that everyone should have gender knowledge) and feminist networks were increasingly fragmented as a result of reduced funding trends.<sup>47</sup>

In terms of individual agency assessments, evaluation of SIDA's gender mainstreaming strategy in 2010 underscored the necessity of creating incentives both internally within the organization and externally with its partners and allies in order to fully promote the integration of gender and to achieve gender equality results. The assessment found that SIDA did attend to gender in all country office programmes, but not in all projects. Moreover, while the front-end integration of gender analysis into country office programmes occurred, integration of accountability and learning mechanisms through monitoring and evaluation was not sufficient.<sup>48</sup> This constrained the ability to understand intended priorities and the actual results of projects and programming. Many of the gender-related results thus remained anecdotal or hidden. On the positive side, SIDA had prioritized its role as an influencer and thought leader, promoting gender equality and women's rights in the international development community. For example, SIDA works in donor consortiums and collaborations, such as basket funds, aiming to influence others to prioritize gender equality more highly. The evaluation found that while this was promising and an important role for the agency, outcomes were constrained by a lack of well-trained, full-time gender specialists, as well as a lack of funding to implement the type of research needed to strengthen the evidence base on the importance and results of funding gender equality and women's rights.

UNDP's evaluation of its gender mainstreaming strategy undertaken in 2005 showed patchy integration and institutionalization.

*"While there are many committed individuals and some "islands of success," the organization lacks a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming. UNDP has not adopted clearly defined goals, nor dedicated the resources necessary to set and achieve them. There is a lack of systemic approaches, leadership and commitment at the highest levels and of capacity at all levels." (UNDP 2006:iii)<sup>49</sup>*

The evaluation results highlighted that staff were generally unclear on gender mainstreaming as a concept or how to implement it in practice, including confusion about who should be implementing the strategy – UNDP or UNIFEM (now UN Women). Findings revealed a lack of full political will and leadership, an overarching framework with accountability mechanisms and incentives for change, and dedicated resource commitments necessary to bring the strategy to life. Recommendations highlighted the need to develop a comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy with accountability mechanisms, specific results, targets, and resources, tools to deepen staff awareness of gender equality and empowerment, strengthen gender expertise and leadership, and senior management commitment. UNDP strategies to address gender mainstreaming shortfalls are presented in the following section.

A common theme in the evaluation findings was that there are often deeper cultural issues connected to staff and leadership resistance to gender mainstreaming practices or concepts, which is often ignored. Committing

to a gender mainstreaming approach, at the personal, institutional, and cultural levels, requires internal change processes that not all are ready to take on. In fact, many might be actively opposed to the change, because of the power and resource redistributions inherent in the change process. Reflecting on experiences with both UNDP's and other international development agencies' gender mainstreaming work, a source reflects,<sup>50</sup>

*"Gender is still deeply rooted in personal attitudes and behaviour. Although many country programs do address gender in an open and positive way, there are still many occasions where the issue of gender is met by defensiveness, resistance or other emotional behaviour not found in other programmatic areas. It can be very difficult... to unpack the reasons for resistance or reticence. Sometimes it is clear that the persons responsible are just frustrated and insecure because they have not had the resources, support or clear guidance to 'do gender', but at other times, there may be deeper personal attitudes. This may point to a need to address attitudes and values in training along with more technical issues."*

Unspoken resistance can infiltrate all levels of operational and programmatic practice, yet dialogue rarely occurs, cutting off possibilities for deeper cultural transformation to occur.<sup>51</sup> This results in 'business as usual', with time-constrained staff doing the bare minimum to fulfill the bureaucratic requirements of the gender mainstreaming strategy.<sup>52</sup>

### **A feminist perspective on gender mainstreaming**

Feminist activists across the global North and South have reflected on why gender mainstreaming has not been as transformative as originally envisioned. Many women's rights advocates have become concerned that the political and transformative elements inherent in the origins of the BPfA and gender mainstreaming agenda are being lost or degraded through bureaucratic institutionalization processes. In addition, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) human rights issues are not well integrated into institutional gender mainstreaming policies and agendas. The processes through which gender mainstreaming knowledge is generated, understood, and implemented in most development agencies is through brief, replicable, and often, de-politicized gender trainings.<sup>53</sup> These technocratic approaches stress the passing down of expert knowledge, typically concentrated in the North, without drawing from diverse feminist literatures and knowledge bases.<sup>54</sup> Mukhopadhyay (2013:7) reflects,<sup>55</sup>

*"Gender knowledge as a set of technical skills to be delivered in sound bites in short training workshops is thus constitutive of the development mainstream...Gender training, it was explained, seeks political consciousness, real and substantial transformation and highlights the significance of learning processes. But working within 'development' involves submitting at least notionally to its contrary requirements — such as for technical interventions. It is here that gender knowledge has been most visibly instrumentalised, stripped of its radical political content and put to the service of often very contradictory national and global projects which, for example, may pay scant regard to equality issues in general."*

This often translates into bureaucratic strategies of accountability, which some have likened to policing models of motivation,<sup>56</sup> through attendance at required gender trainings or courses, gender checklists, and making visible resource allocations. The extent to which these actions have actually translated into deeper changes in staff attitudes, and indeed the culture of the organization, has been questioned. It can often be challenging to discern attitude change around gender awareness, because the impact of gender training on staff and leadership is rarely measured.<sup>57</sup> Any tensions in implementation are essentially erased.<sup>58</sup> This has been referred to as 'away-streaming' where women and girls within the development agenda are instrumentalized.<sup>59</sup>

In the implementation of gender awareness trainings, the connection between gender and feminism has been



nearly 'invisibilized' from gender mainstreaming discussions and from mainstream development conversations in general. At its heart, feminism is about challenging and transforming the discriminatory, limiting power structures and relations that limit opportunities based on gender. As Srilatha Batliwala reflects,

*“As an ideology, feminism today stands not only for gender equality, but for the transformation of all social relations of power that oppress, exploit, or marginalize any set of people, on the basis of their gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, race, religion, nationality, location, class, caste, or ethnicity... As an analytical framework, feminism developed/transformed the concepts of patriarchy (the social order of male rights and privilege) and gender (the socially-constructed relations of power between men and women). It has created a range of analytical tools and methods for unpacking the hidden and normalized power imbalances between men and women in various social institutions and structures (e.g., gendered division of labor in the household and in production, control of women’s sexuality and reproductive life)...As a social change strategy, feminism prioritizes the empowerment of women, the transformation of gender power relations, and the advancement of gender equality within all change interventions. Feminism believes that change that does not advance the status and rights of women is not real change at all.”<sup>60</sup>*

Feminist contributions to the gender theoretical framework are too often left out of gender training for fear of being viewed as polemic. Gender has essentially been sanitized and homogenized, and stripped of its political power. The failure to address power and the need to transform unequal gender and power relations has essentially de-politicized the gender mainstreaming agenda.<sup>61</sup> So programmes with the aim of transforming the structural roots of gender discriminations along with empowerment outcomes underpinned by equitable power redistribution are often left underfunded.<sup>62</sup>

## IV. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNDP

### A. Strategizing for a transformative gender mainstreaming agenda

This section describes UNDP actions taken after the 2005 gender mainstreaming evaluation results were published, and explores results from a mid-term assessment of UNDP's gender mainstreaming efforts in 2011.

#### *Institutional strategies*

On the heels of the poor rating it received in the 2006 gender mainstreaming evaluation, UNDP as an institution responded swiftly. To address key gaps that the gender mainstreaming evaluations highlighted, a series of strategies was designed, including:

- elaborating an interim Gender Action Plan 2006-2007 to fill the gaps until the complete Gender Equality Strategy (GES) was finalized for 2008-2011;
- establishing a gender steering and implementation committee to oversee all offices and act as the main decision-making body on policy and issues related to gender mainstreaming;
- developing and implementing gender equality scorecards to track gender mainstreaming throughout the institution (using the gender marker and gender seal);
- creating compact agreements, which show how regional managers are contributing to UNDP gender equality commitments;
- increasing the amount of funding available and disbursed for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- setting out to deepen staff capacity development around gender equality and gender mainstreaming concepts; and
- developing an eight-point plan for integrating [Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality into Conflict and Crisis Prevention and Recovery](#) (8PA) work (GES 2008:7-9).<sup>63</sup>

To further catalyse change, UNDP elaborated the **Gender Equality Strategy (GES)**, originally for 2008-2011 and then extended until 2013, in alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plan. The GES flows out of the mission and values in the UNDP Strategic Plan and mission statement on gender equality,<sup>64</sup> grounded in a human development approach.<sup>65</sup> The GES draws strategic direction from international aid effectiveness agreements, which underscores gender equality and human rights as the cornerstone of development. The GES outlines four main focus areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and the environment and sustainable development. The aim is to strengthen the capacities of its partners to push forward change in terms of:

*"i. More accurate and meaningful macro-policy analysis and planning in all relevant sectors that fully recognizes the role of gender relations in economic life, and the contribution of both paid and unpaid ('women's') work to economic growth...*

*ii. Vigorous action to ensure women's expanded participation in all branches of government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, at all levels...especially in decision-making positions.*

*iii. The maximum availability of high quality information on gender relations, women's rights and gender equality to decision-makers, including through expanded collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated, and gender-relevant data and statistics."<sup>66</sup>*

Strategies to internalize attention to gender and gender equality throughout the institution were also outlined. They included strengthening senior management in leadership and advocacy around gender equality, enhancing communication and knowledge management strategies and tactics, deepening human resources capacity on gender, especially at the management level, elaborating a clear accountability and reporting

framework to track gender equality results, committing dedicated core and project resources at the administrative and operational levels, and developing a clear monitoring and evaluation framework.<sup>67</sup> UNDP also elaborated a Gender Parity Strategy, aiming to balance gender distribution at all work grade levels, including leadership.

To tackle elements of the internal culture's attention to gender equality, UNDP implemented the Atlas Gender Marker and the Gender Equality Seal certification process. The **Atlas Gender Marker** was implemented in 2009. The Gender Marker is an accountability tool to track projected financial allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment as well the presence of gender in projects. The Gender Marker can be used to analyse country and regional trends and can be linked to the UNDP Strategic Plan/GES thematic areas. Within each project, staff identify the extent to which gender is addressed on a 0 to 3 point scale (Table 1).<sup>68</sup>

**Table 1: UNDP projects' contributions to gender equality (%) 2011-2012\***

Rating	2011	2012
GEN0: No noticeable contribution to gender equality	24	21
GEN1: Some contributions to gender equality	47	49
GEN2: Significant contributions to gender equality	23	24
GEN3: Gender equality is a principal objective	6	6

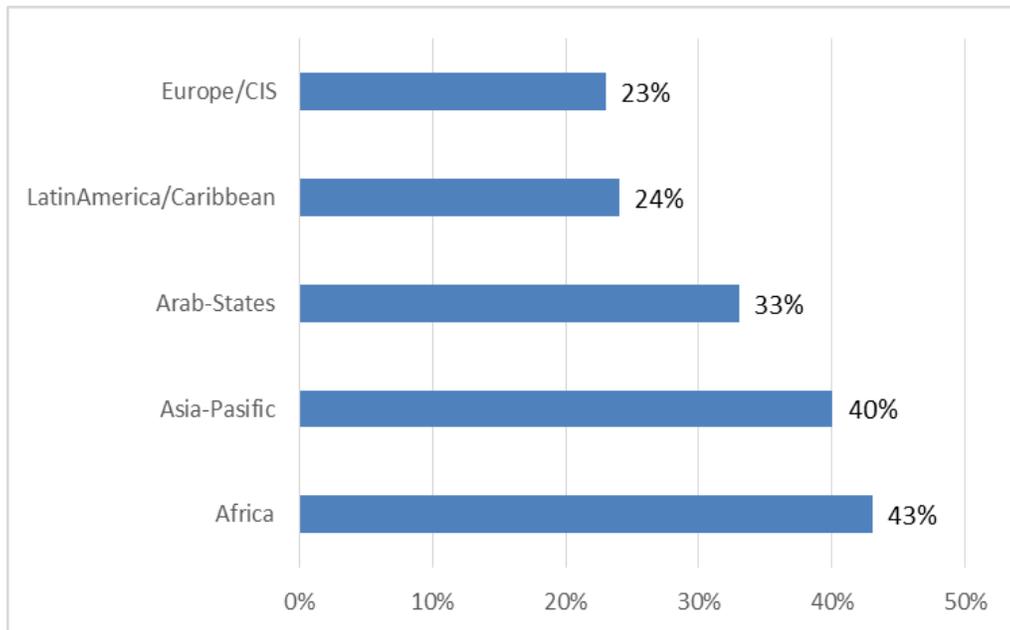
\*Excludes projects that have not been rated. Figures subject to rounding errors.

Source: UNDP Atlas Financial System, January 2013.

Results show that less than a quarter of UNDP projects had gender equality as a significant objective, and only 6 percent as a principal objective. The extent to which that met UNDP targets is unclear, as targets have not been clearly articulated.

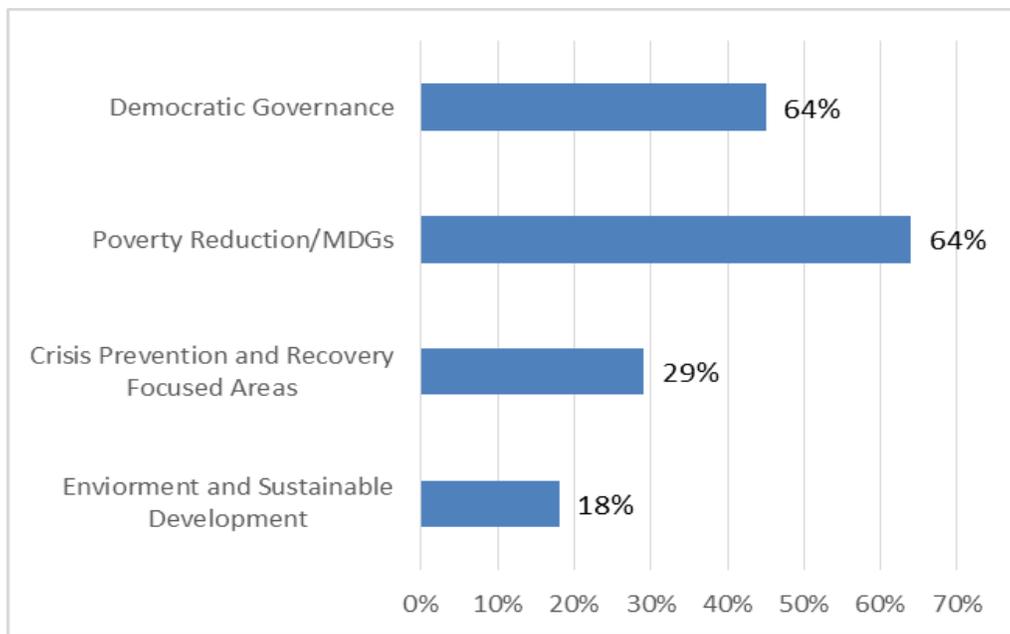
According to an internal review of the Strategic Plan and Annual Report (2012), Africa has the highest percentage of programmes regionally with gender ratings of GEN 2 and 3, followed by Asia-Pacific, Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Regions with Gender Marker ratings as a significant or principal objective**



Interestingly, programmes with gender more significantly integrated were higher in non-least developed countries (non-LDCs) (43 percent) than in LDCs (26 percent) for 2011-2012. The lowest integration of gender equality was in environment and sustainable development and crisis prevention and recovery focus, while the highest integration of gender in projects was in poverty reduction and the MDGs, followed by democratic governance (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Issues with Gender Marker ratings as a significant or principal objective**





For the UNDP Gender Marker, the data is constrained by a variety of factors, such as the lack of specific targets, inability to track actual expenditures for each project, and lack of data reliability due misapplication of the marker by staff. While an important tool and a critical commitment to transparency, recommendations from a 2012 assessment of the Gender Marker highlights the need for deeper quality control of markers, manager oversight, and deeper skills building and trainings.<sup>69</sup>

The **Gender Equality Seal** is currently being piloted. It is a corporate certification process to recognize strong performance in promoting gender equality in country offices, regional centres, and headquarters units.<sup>70</sup> To be certified, country offices/units must engage in longer-term (at least six months') reflection, assessment, dialogue, and targeted action processes. At the end of the Gender Equality Seal implementation process, and depending on the results, the country office/unit receives a bronze, silver, or gold seal. The Gender Equality Seal provides a broad picture of competence, credibility, and contributions to furthering gender equality. Three levels of change are tracked: organizational, the interventions the organization implements, and the broader national context. Specific outcomes exist in management systems for gender mainstreaming, capacities, enabling environment, knowledge management, programmes and projects, partnerships, and results/impacts. The aim is not only to spark new interest in gender mainstreaming and to deepen learning, but also to collect and share country innovations in implementing and promoting gender equality to spur on collaborative learning and sharing across the institution.

UNDP also promotes deeper knowledge development and data collection on gender through a range of means, including annual **Human Development Reports** (HDR), which have a dedicated section on gender, the UNDP-developed **Gender Inequality Index** (GII), which ranks countries according to three dimensions of gender inequality (labour market, reproductive health, and empowerment), and specialized reports and evaluations that have gender dimensions. These reports are framed within broader research and evaluation guidelines, which prioritize analysis of the root causes of gender discrimination.

*“The promotion and protection of HR & GE are central principles to the mandate of the UN and all UN agencies must work to fundamentally enhance and contribute to their realization by addressing underlying causes of human rights violations, including discrimination against women and girls, and utilizing processes that are in line with and support these principles. Those UN interventions that do not consider these principles risk reinforcing patterns of discrimination and exclusion or leaving them unchanged.” (UNEG:4).<sup>71</sup>*

In terms of collaboration among United Nations agencies, there are efforts to create unified action and implementation for monitoring gender empowerment and equality across the institution. The SWAP is one such and was agreed by the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination in 2012. It includes a standard set of 15 indicators. The SWAP, which is coordinated by UN Women and will be implemented by 2017-2019, aims to create a common level of awareness of gender equality and women's empowerment, set forth a unified method for reaching the goal of gender equality, and identify common processes and indicators to monitor progress. In terms of collaboration at the country office level, some staff in different regions have reflected on a tendency for UNDP to defer to UN Women if they are in-country, and be less engaged in collective ownership, collaboration, and co-implementation of gender equality, working from each agency's unique value added.<sup>72</sup> In the future, there is a need for both UN Women and UNDP to work closely together to strategize on how to create a win-win approach at the local, regional, and global levels to reach gender equality.<sup>73</sup>

At the corporate level, a high level of commitment and interest in gender equality and women's empowerment has shaped institutional discourse and conversations. UNDP has promoted public messaging. That underscores the centrality of support to, and investment in, in women and girls to fast-forward development, because it has a multiplier effect on development effectiveness and the achievement of the MDG goals.

In particular, UNDP Administrator, Helen Clark, has emphasized the links within the mutually reinforcing areas of women's economic opportunities, strengthening the legal status and rights of women, and ensuring women's voice, inclusion, and participation in decision-making.<sup>74</sup>

*"...achieving gender equality and promoting women's empowerment is not only a human right and a worthy goal in itself, but also that it makes economic sense, strengthens democracy, and enables long-term sustainable progress. This was clearly recognized by Member States at the recent MDG Summit, with the Outcome Document stating that "Investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency, and sustained economic growth."<sup>75</sup>*

Similarly, UNDP Associate Administrator, Rebeca Grynspan, stated: *"We know that investing in women and girls and supporting their economic and political empowerment, as highlighted in UNDP's International Assessment of what it will take to reach the MDGs, has a multiplying effect across all of the eight Goals."* The multiplier effect discourse is integrated into diverse statements, e.g., when addressing governments on international occasions, such as World Democracy Day,<sup>76</sup> statements to specific governments regarding progress on the MDGs, or focusing on different thematic goals from the environment, democracy, and governance to post-conflict settings, as well as in an organizational governance framework, such as Executive Board meetings.

### ***Findings from the mid-term assessment of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy***

To assess mid-term progress in implementing the GES, in 2011 a team of researchers conducted an analysis of achievements and core areas for deeper development in the future. The findings from this assessment reflect that UNDP: *"responded forcefully to the findings of the 2005 Gender Equality Evaluation, systematically putting in place the approaches and leadership noted then as being lacking."* UNDP was also considered to be a *"gender aware institution."* At the same time, the assessment found that the implementation of the GES was uneven.<sup>77</sup>

## **GES mid-term assessment – main achievements**

- Organizational capacity to advance gender equality has been methodically developed, including implementation of: a framework (the GES), technical expertise (e.g., from five to 23 GT staff; one Gender Practice Leader for each Regional Centre, GFPs etc.), an accountability framework with tracking mechanisms (GSIC, Gender Marker), and dedicated resources to facilitate GES implementation.
- UNDP developed a range of innovative gender mainstreaming tools and methodologies for gender integration in economic planning processes, to address the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDs.
- UNDP has led and influenced global climate change negotiations, new climate funds, and national climate strategies, as well as into UNDP's own policies and programmes on adaptation, mitigation, water and energy.
- UNDP is now a recognized leader in promoting women's political participation – through its electoral, parliamentary and post conflict governance work (e.g., GPPS, GPECS or IKNOWP).
- High level of engagement across all regions to address gender based violence: about one third of country offices engaged in a range of initiatives on prevention of, and response to, GBV.
- Greater awareness of the specific needs of women and girls in post - conflict countries and critical importance for women to participate in recovery and reconstruction processes. Country offices increased support to post-crisis situations. Nine SGAs advisors fielded.

### **Key recommendations**

1. Develop comprehensive programmes in areas such as economic policy management or GBV to consolidate the gains made.
2. Strengthen the integration of gender in key areas such as public administration, local governance, DDR and SSR.
3. Leadership of senior managers in implementing the GES should improve giving them support and holding them accountable for delivery of results.
4. Allocate adequate financial resources for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment: increase or at least maintain UNDP's total core investment in gender mainstreaming.
5. Systematically strengthen staff capacities through inter-alia, encouraging better on-job learning, rewarding personnel and updating the existing learning materials.
6. Maintain and build upon investments made in the Gender Team, to ensure that its dual development policy and institutional mandates are effectively executed (see EB Decision, 2011).

Source: Reproduced from UNDP, *Midterm Review of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2013*. PPT.



While positive progress has clearly been made due to UNDP's institutional commitments and implementations, challenges still remain. In particular, Ana Rosa Soares<sup>78</sup> questioned the overwhelmingly positive assessment in the mid-term review, highlighting the following issues:

- The assessment did not actually assess gender equality outcomes, only the implementation of gender mainstreaming activities. The findings assumed that if gender mainstreaming strategies were implemented, then changes in gender equality would naturally occur. The logic of, and evidence for, the way that UNDP became a gender-aware institution was unclear. More specifically, the assessment did not address whether changes (either positive or negative) occurred in men's or women's lives as a result of gender mainstreaming.
- Challenges that could create significant barriers to the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming strategy were briefly referenced, but not given adequate space and exploration, e.g., a lack of political will and staff knowledge of gender concepts, conflation of gender with women, and the difficulty of measuring gender equality outcomes.
- The assessment did not measure UNDP's role in the change process or specify the value it added or contributions to changes in gender equality and women's empowerment in an efficient, effective, and sustainable way.

The conflation of strategy and results needs to be disentangled in the future, and a full theory elaborated on how effective implementation of gender mainstreaming strategy can yield gender equality and women's empowerment gains. It will also be important to understand if the agency has been active in promoting gender equality from a transformative and responsive perspective as it purports to do.

## V. KEY CHALLENGES, TOOLS, AND METHODS FOR EVALUATING COMPLEX CHANGES IN GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

### A. Needs and challenges associated with evaluating gender mainstreaming in UNDP

This section offers areas for deeper reflection, along with key questions that could be explored in the thematic evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes. Preliminary document review and conversations with a limited sample of 11 UNDP staff in the Evaluation Office and in country offices<sup>79</sup> have highlighted issues in gender mainstreaming implementation, evaluation methodology, and women's empowerment and gender equality outcomes.

#### *Gender mainstreaming implementation needs*

- **Articulate theories of change (TOC)** to explore implicit and explicit theories about how and why change should happen through UNDP programming to test underlying assumptions and steps along the change process. It would also be useful to specify and understand UNDP's role and value added in contribution to changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.
- **Assess the extent to which gender awareness is consistent across and within the organization.** Ultimately, awareness affects the quality of gender mainstreaming implementation. To what extent does a common understanding of gender, gender mainstreaming, and gender equality and women's empowerment exist across staff and leadership? To what extent is gender analysis integrated into projects—standalone and mainstreamed? If gender analysis is not integrated, then what are the implications in terms of project implementation and its potential relevance and effectiveness on stakeholders?
- **Explore if there is common understanding between staff on how to use and rate gender mainstreaming accountability and reporting tools.** How relevant, efficient and effective have tools, such as the Gender Marker and ROAR, been in increasing attention to gender and gender equality? How do staff make decisions on the degrees of distinction in the Gender Marker, and how do they rate the levels of progress toward results on the ROAR? To what extent are staff ratings reliable across country, regional and headquarter offices?
- **Dig deeper to understand the extent to which resistance and pushback to gender mainstreaming exists, particularly if a project does not have gender as primary objective.** In initial conversations, some gender team leaders from country offices and regional centres reflected that gender mainstreaming has been treated like a burden or ignored by some staff. In what ways can the evaluation capture this resistance if and where it exists, and offer recommendations for addressing barriers?
- **Explore the issue of leadership,** and particularly the extent to which strong management and leadership commitment makes a difference in the attention and prioritization given to gender equality and women's empowerment internally and externally. What factors contribute to stronger leadership prioritization of gender equality and women's empowerment across UNDP?
- **Explore the extent to which gender siloization within the institution exists, and if so, the extent to which this has limited the transformative potential of the gender mainstreaming agenda.** Does gender analysis and integration of gender primarily rest in the hands of staff with specific gender roles, such as gender focal points or gender teams? Are intersectional analyses looking at how gender and with other factors affect development results in programmes and projects? To what extent do intersectoral programmes exist and

what are their results? How large are budgets for standalone and mainstreamed work, and are these budgets sufficient to fully integrate gender into programming and policies? How are gender teams' roles, and the value they add, perceived in the institution?

- **Analyse the strength and functionality of collaboration both within UNDP between teams and the gender focal points and team leaders, and between UNDP and other institutions, such as UN Women.** How well do teams work together internally to integrate gender into non-gender specific projects, such as infrastructure and climate change, as well as in standalone projects? How is collaboration and contribution to change determined when working across teams and United Nations agencies? How is UNDP working with partners on the ground in communities?
- **Analyse the extent to which, over time, there has been a match between strong corporate statements on the importance of investing in gender equality and the actual practices that provide evidence of that prioritization, e.g., distribution of resources, staff capacities and gender expertise, type of group that are being supported financially and politically.** How can the evaluation capture the extent to which UNDP's corporate discourse has been able to influence others in the international development community to more deeply focus on and fund gender equality and women's rights, given its emphasis on multiplier-effects? To what extent has UNDP been an ally in the support of progressive movements and networks of change in the field of gender, such as feminist and women's rights movements and organizations?
- **Explore the role of both civil society and the private sector in UNDP work and how it affects UNDP programming prioritizations and results.** To what extent are UNDP's chosen partners helping to advance gender transformative and responsive results?
- **Identify any missed opportunities for pushing forward gender equality and women's empowerment at the local, country, regional, and global levels, e.g., lack of gender analysis in programmes and projects, lack of integration of gender indicators and tracking mechanisms, low resource allocation.** This could provide a more holistic picture of gender mainstreaming institutionally, not just of what is being done, but what could be achieved with deeper gender mainstreaming/analysis, and could highlight key areas for deepened focus in the future.
- **Explore the extent to which UNDP funds (type of support, partners selected, level of support for mainstreamed and standalone programmes) is useful in deepening changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.** Is UNDP's funding strategy effective in leveraging and progressing towards desired outcomes?
- **Assess if institutional incentives and accountability mechanisms, such as gender-specific indicators and the Gender Marker, has strengthened gender mainstreaming.** To what extent has the presence or lack of gender indicators made a difference in degrees of effective gender mainstreaming?

### ***Methodology needs***

- **Find ways to reach beyond the 'usual suspects' and the 'usual methods' to support deeper analysis of the change that UNDP makes.** How could this evaluation broaden its reach to represent a diverse range of voices, including communities in different countries and regions? What data collection methods and tools might be useful to this end? Could alternative methods of comparison be useful beyond the standard regional comparisons – rankings, for instance, such as the Human Development Index (HDI) or Gender Inequality Index (GII) – to compare outcome patterns?
- **Explore the use of mixed methods to capture the complexity of change at multiple institutional, country and programme levels.** What methodologies would be appropriate to acquire data both at an institutional level, in terms of staff awareness, capacity and gender expertise on key gender concepts, and actual results from people in communities where UNDP is supporting gender equality and women's empowerment work?

- **Explore shifts in relationships not only between different individuals, but also in the extended household.** Where feasible, analysing gender equality results at the household level as well as in individual relationships could be useful.
- **Decide if evaluators should set a basic minimum standard for gender analysis and integration of gender mainstreaming practices.** This is based on the fact that some evaluators have seen some staff fail to fully integrate gender into their programmes or projects. So, for example, should the programme be assessed only on what it proposes to do (and does) or also on what it fails to do? How should evaluators assess hierarchies of rights/priorities, e.g., do children’s rights trump women’s rights in conflict situations?
- **Make clearer links to UNDP’s contributions to change.** Often agencies in an aim to speak to the impact level report on macro-level that are way beyond the scope of change to which they are contributing. There is also a tendency to use attribution language. A common example of this is measuring decreases in domestic violence rates in a country and linking that to a domestic violence programme in the capital city. How can UNDP more closely identify the boundaries and contributions of its work? What methods and frameworks might help?

### ***Gender equality and women’s empowerment outcomes needs***

- **There is a need to clearly define the expected outcomes of implementing gender mainstreaming strategy, gender equality and women’s empowerment results, and the link between strategy and results.** How effective has UNDP been in terms of contributing to substantive gender equality outcomes? How effective has UNDP been as an institution (in terms of institutional capacity, funding, human resources, knowledge products and capacity, infrastructure, and support mechanisms) in generating gender equality results? Has gender mainstreaming been an effective strategy for deepening gender equality and women’s empowerment results?
- **Explore diverse ways to measure change in the gender arena.** The results based management (RBM) system that UNDP uses makes it difficult to assess more complex and non-linear change processes with pushbacks and reversals that are common to many gender equality initiatives. The system in practice focuses heavily on basic output level and quantitative data, while missing links to short-, medium-, or longer-term outcomes. A pressure to demonstrate results in the short-term often excludes measurement of issues that are harder to measure, such as shifts in norms, behaviour, and attitudes. How does UNDP plan to address the measurement of deeper conceptual and normative dimensions of changes in power relations, transformation, perception, knowledge, and behaviour change in the evaluation?
- **Emphasize ways to operationalize important concepts related to capturing change in women’s empowerment and gender equality, such as transformation.** How can UNDP ensure that commitments to a transformative approach do not remain theoretical and are, in fact, operationalized?
- **Assess whether, and the extent to which, lack of data, including baselines and sex-disaggregated data in many regions and countries, has constrained decision-making and advocacy on gender.** Will the evaluation assess the availability and quality of sex-disaggregated data and provide targeted recommendations to address potential data gaps comprehensively? To what extent will it explore methods through which UNDP can create common access to a comprehensive and accurate snapshot of all programmes and projects that UNDP is implementing on monitoring and evaluation?

## B. Measuring changes in gender equality and women's empowerment

### *Feminist principles to evaluation*

Are current UNDP monitoring and evaluation practices sufficient to capture if and how complex changes are happening in women's and men's lives? UNDP interviews conducted for this scoping paper, plus critical analyses of past documentation, indicate that the answer is a resounding no. The following principles to implementing a feminist approach to evaluation, which has drawn from diverse feminist scholars and activists from the global North and South, may provide UNDP with some reflection points as it approaches the forthcoming evaluation.

### **Feminist principles to evaluation**

Reproduced from Batliwala and Pittman (2010:20-21)

- Feminist monitoring and evaluation means choosing and using tools that are designed to unpack the nature of gender inequalities and the social inequalities through which these are mediated. Not all tools are designed to do this since they may not disaggregate issues by gender at all. Our tools of choice will treat gender and social inequalities as systemic and embedded in social structures and will be able to examine the way the interventions being assessed are addressing the structures.
- No single assessment framework can adequately capture all dimensions of gendered social change processes; consequently, we must seek to create monitoring and evaluation systems that combine different approaches and tools in the most appropriate manner for our specific needs. Similarly, no single tool can assess all the components of a feminist change process.
- Changes in gender power do not go unchallenged – our tools will enable the tracking and appropriate interpretation of backlashes and resistance to change (i.e., not as failures of the strategy, but as evidence of its impact and possibly, effectiveness).
- Our tools will not seek to attribute change to particular actors, but to assess who and what contributed to change.
- Our approaches will challenge and transcend the traditional hierarchies within assessment techniques – e.g., between the evaluator and the 'evaluated', 'subjective-objective', 'quantitative – qualitative' – and will combine the best of all existing tools to create better evidence and knowledge for all.
- Women's voices and experiences will inform and transform our frameworks and approaches. Experience shows that women are often the best sources for sensitive indicators of hard-to-assess dimensions of changes in gender relations; so rather than reduce these to 'anecdotal' evidence, our tools will find ways of privileging these perspectives in our assessments.
- Recognizing that change must occur in both the formal realm of law, policy, and resources, as well as in culture, beliefs, and practices, our tools will track changes in both of these domains at the individual and systemic levels.
- Acknowledging that while changing gender power structures is complex, our assessment tools must combine simplicity and accessibility. We will attempt to create approaches that can bridge this paradox. We recognize the cultural biases of many existing frameworks and tools and will attempt to modify them to the diverse settings in which we work.
- We will undertake monitoring and evaluation primarily for our own learning and accountability and not

### ***Digging deeper into contribution vs. attribution***

Often a causal logic is used to demonstrate results and impact. Different methodological approaches, to greater or lesser degrees, can help parse out attribution and causality. Monitoring and evaluation approaches that fall under a causal framework typology include: log frames, RBM, theory of change, experimental, such as randomized control trials (RCTs), and quasi-experimental designs. Causal frameworks assume that by effectively implementing programme activities, expected results should logically flow with achievement of outputs, outcomes, and eventually leading to impact. The aim in monitoring and evaluation approaches that draw from a causal approach is that the organization can attribute their activities' success and impact along the causal chain. Within causal frameworks, the gold standard has been RCTs, or designs where an experimental condition or quasi-experimental (of control and test groups) is created so that counterfactuals – that is, what would have happened in the absence of the initiative – are tested.<sup>80</sup>

However, the causal logic is not appropriate for many interventions. Change processes can be messy, especially complex changes such as those related to gender equality that require focus on multiple factors and stakeholders (e.g., existing institutional discriminations, access to power and resources, equitable legal frameworks, family and community pressures, and social expectations, to name but a few). Moreover, women's empowerment, rights, and gender equality are so deeply ingrained in socio-political and cultural structures, and often involve such long-term change trajectories, that one actor alone is rarely able to cause a change. Given the diversity of factors and actors involved in the change process, we focus on a group's contribution to change.<sup>81</sup>

As women and marginalized groups gain power, they often experience backlash, threats, and reversals of progress.<sup>82</sup> When people work collectively to challenge existing power structures that maintain gender inequalities, whether in the family, in the legal system, or in market, they can experience significant backlashes and threats for speaking up and organizing; along with physical, psychological, or sexual intimidation recursions through violence. We only need to watch the news to see evidence of the types of threats that occur when shifts in power begin to manifest, e.g., the organized sexual assaults of women in Tahrir Square, Cairo; or the attack on Malala Yousafzai in Pakistan, and on Afghan girls going to school. This is why, in women's rights work, we often think of success as a one step forward, two steps back phenomenon:

*“When you work for women's interests, it's two steps forward - and at least one step back. And those steps back are...often evidence of your effectiveness; they represent the threat you have posed to the power structure, and its attempt to push you back. Sadly, even our 'success stories' are sometimes nothing more than ways the power structure is trying to accommodate and contain the threat of more fundamental change by making small concessions to us” (Sheela Patel, as seen in Batliwala and Pittman 2010:7).*

Indeed, at times even reversals can be seen as signs of progress. As such, contribution frameworks reflect on the ecosystem of change, identifying the multiple and variable forces, actors, and factors involved in contributing to social change. Attention is given to identifying the organization's role in the change process and on exploring other factors involved in helping that change come about. Monitoring and evaluation approaches that fall under a contribution framework typology include: outcome mapping and outcome harvesting, participatory research and evaluation, complexity science, and most significant change.

### ***Methodological possibilities for capturing change***

We stand at an exciting moment of diverse methodological innovation in research and evaluation, spurred on by rising interest in measuring complex concepts, as well as an explosion of new technologies that make closer to real-time data collection, data analysis, and data visualization possible.<sup>83</sup> For most evaluations in international development, there is rarely a single methodology that will fully capture the nuances and

interactions of various contextual, individual, relational, and programmatic factors at play. For this reason, a mixed method approach, combining different qualitative and quantitative methods, will help to capture more fully the nuances and dynamics of women's empowerment and gender equality work, enhancing the reliability and validity of findings and recommendations.<sup>84</sup> Ultimately, the selection of evaluation approaches, methodologies, and tools is a creative decision that should be suited to the evaluation questions of interest, as well as the aims of the evaluation.

Of course, there has been a general trend in the sector towards more quantitative approaches, which can be partially explained by the reliance on testable logic models. For that reason, this section presents a few alternative options, many qualitative and many that have been embraced by women's rights and human rights experts. The aim is to stimulate creative thinking and conversations on ways of measuring components of gender equality, women's rights, and women's empowerment beyond traditional interview, case study and survey approaches.<sup>85</sup> Approaches, methods, and tools presented include: theory of change, complexity science methods, outcome mapping and outcome harvesting, gender analysis, gender audits, the Gender@Work framework, participatory indicator development, most significant change, and real-time data collection methods.<sup>86</sup>

### *Monitoring and evaluation approaches and tools*

#### ○ *Theory of change*

Theory of change is a popular evaluation approach, which focuses on articulating how and why change should happen through an organization's intervention. Originally developed by Carol Weiss in 1972 for policy analysis,<sup>87</sup> the model has more recently been embraced in the international development sector and has been adapted by [Keystone Accountability](#) and [Act Knowledge](#), and adopted by [DFID](#), [HIVOS](#), among many others. Theory of change begins with an institution identifying the particular problem they are encountering and their unique contribution to solving that issue. From there, an organization highlights its intended outcomes and impact and the associated activities it aims to implement to address the problem. The group then works backwards, naming implementation steps and shifts that must occur in their stakeholders and allies of interest to reach their outcomes and impact. This is all mapped in a model that links activities, implementation strategies, and short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes and impact, essentially painting a picture of what a 'successful' implementation looks like. There is also attention on context and unexpected outcomes. While at its heart, the approach is embedded within a logical and causal flow, it can be adapted to house feedback loops and even outline multiple potential pathways instead of just one. A particular strength of the theory of change lies in interrogating underlying staff and stakeholders' assumptions about how a programme should work, so that one can surface and then test these hypotheses. From these hypotheses and intended outcomes, one can then formulate the evaluation design.<sup>88</sup>

In the international development context, theory of change models have been used to understand change strategies and pathways at the organizational, programme or policy, project, and theoretical levels.

- Organizational theories of change describe a high-level, institutional overview of the change process. For a strong non-linear example at the organizational level, see [Just Associates](#) or see [diverse examples](#) in the humanitarian NGO world.<sup>89</sup>
- At the programmatic or policy level, theories of change describe changes in the sector and particular programme areas, e.g., [DFID's evidence-based theory of change on ending gender-based violence](#).<sup>90</sup>
- For specific programme or project-level theories, see [UN Women's safe cities programme](#).
- Theories of change have also been articulated in terms of broad-based theoretical contributions. For example, see the updated analysis by [Center for Evaluation Innovation and ORS Impact](#), which highlights the foundational theories that underlie advocacy campaigns, e.g., power politics or elite power, policy

windows, large leaps or equilibrium, messaging, media influence, and grassroots organizing theories to name a few.<sup>91</sup>

#### ○ **Complexity science methods**

An emerging area of evaluation interest well-suited for measuring gender equality and women's empowerment comes from complexity science. Gender-related social change is bounded within and shaped by social, economic, and political contexts and norms, outside the control of the programme, making it more difficult to track and appropriately identify outcomes, and where an organization's influence begins and ends. Key concepts from complexity science theories can help. Systems are adaptive, evolve and sustain themselves. As such, order is emergent and self-organizing. Relationships and patterns of change within complex systems are interconnected and interdependent, history and context dependent, often nonlinear, and actions or reactions can be unpredictable. For a full list of system science attributes and applications to social change and development, see Virginia Lacayo and Ben Ramalingam.<sup>92</sup>

In contrast to traditional ways that evaluators tend to address complexity, by trying to control evaluation design and implementation and by using models that inhere logical and causal links, complexity-sensitive evaluation techniques assume uncertainty and unpredictability in complex development situations and aim to stay closely attuned to the realities and shifts on the ground and in the programme itself, adaptively responding to what needs to be measured. This frame has been utilized as basic precepts in developmental evaluation, which highlights the importance of emergent evaluation designs.<sup>93</sup> Complexity-sensitive techniques are ideal for better understanding and disentangling the web of factors involved in an intervention and different outcomes, feedback loops, the one-step forward, one step back phenomenon, and the role of contextual trends, relations, and networks in influencing change.<sup>94</sup> Methods to monitor and evaluate complexity vary diversely and are growing in popularity, but a considerable amount of experimentation is happening.

- For example, [Fundo Centroamericano de Mujeres \(FCAM\)](#) implemented complexity methods in their analysis of 10 years of grantmaking to feminist and women's rights movements in Central America.<sup>95</sup>
- A [collaborative action research project](#) with 10 NGOs in the Netherlands has been experimenting with alternative methods to planning, monitoring and evaluation by addressing complexity, and has focused on many tools presented here, including outcome mapping and most significant change.<sup>96</sup>
- Other complexity-based analysis tools include social network analysis, process monitoring of impacts, and causal loop diagrams. For a comprehensive presentation of multiple tools, see Bob Williams and Richard Hummelbrunner's 2009 book, *Systems Concepts in Action*.<sup>97</sup>

#### ○ **Outcome mapping and outcome harvesting**

Outcome mapping is a planning and monitoring tool that helps groups identify the changes in a variety of actors (referred to as boundary partners) that a project, programme, or organization works directly with to track progress made. The aim is to move away from an emphasis on what the intervention has done to make a difference in terms of outputs, and to shift to an outcome focus and on identifying the changes in boundary partners' behaviours, relationships, and actions.<sup>98</sup>

A core tool of the outcome mapping approach is called outcome harvesting. Outcomes are defined as: "A. An observable and significant change in a social actor's behaviour, relationships, activities, actions, policies or practice that has been achieved. B... and that has been influenced by the change agent."<sup>99</sup> The harvesting process draws from a utilization-focused approach and does not measure against pre-set outcomes; rather it asks an organization to look at what it has achieved and to work in reverse, exploring what happened, who contributed to the change, how we know the organization created change (in terms of supporting evidence), why it matters, and what to do with the findings.

To start, key external (e.g., evaluators) or internal staff review documentation and identify the core outcomes they have achieved over a set time period. After outcomes have been identified, for reasons of credibility and enhanced understanding, they select a set of outcomes for substantiation with key boundary partners who then refute or support the outcome claims. Fact-checking lends some empirical rigour to the process. Other information about what led to the outcome can also be gathered, further parsing out the organization's role and other stakeholders' contributions to change. The evaluators then analyse all the data and prepare final outcome statements with substantiating evidence and reflections. For more information, see Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Heather Britt's Outcome Harvesting brief<sup>100</sup> as well as many other outcome mapping tools and adaptations in the online [Outcome Mapping Learning Community](#). Given that outcome mapping and harvesting is one of the leading contribution-focused methods, it is increasingly used in bilateral and multilateral institutions, as well as in NGOs, for example, the World Bank, UN Trust Fund to End VAW, Open Society Institute, Ford Foundation, and AWID.

- **Gender analysis**

Gender analysis frameworks are used to assess the design and implementation of gender in mainstreamed and stand-alone projects. There are a range of different gender analysis tools that can be used at different stages in a project or program, e.g., design, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation.

- The [Harvard Analytical Framework](#) was one of the first analytical approaches to disaggregate data by gender and capture differences in terms of the time spent on men's and women's productive and reproductive roles, to differentiate men's and women's varying control and access over resources, and to explore influencing factors that shape how a project was implemented.
- [Moser Gender Planning Framework](#) builds on elements of the Harvard Analytical Framework, introducing the notion of women's triple roles (productive, reproductive, and community roles) and mapping them over a 24-hour period. It also forwards the analysis by distinguishing between strategic and practical needs<sup>101</sup> and underscoring the importance of identifying the underlying policy approaches embedded in projects.<sup>102</sup>
- [Gender Analysis Matrix](#) is a participatory analysis tool that helps to forecast how a project will differentially affect a community. The analysis takes the programme/project objectives and breaks them down, analysing separate impacts for different stakeholder groups (such as men, women, households, different groups in the community, e.g., ethnicity, class) in interaction with, for instance, time, resources, labour practices, and socio-cultural factors (e.g., gender roles and status).<sup>103</sup>
- [Women's Empowerment Framework](#) examines a programme/project and assesses the extent to which it involves five levels of empowerment. The five levels are framed in hierarchal and ascending order, moving from:<sup>104</sup>
  - *Welfare, meaning improvement in socioeconomic status, such as income, better nutrition. This level produces nothing to empower women.*
  - *Access, meaning increased access to resources. This is the first step in empowerment, as women increase their access relative to men.*
  - *Conscientization, involving the recognition of structural forces that disadvantage and discriminate against women coupled with the collective aim to address these discriminations.*
  - *Mobilization, implementing actions related to the conscientisation of women.*
  - *Control, involving the level of access reached and control of resources that have shifted as a result of collective claim-making and action.*

The model is political, linking poverty and inequality to structural oppression. Thus, by identifying the levels of empowerment, the roots of inequalities are made more explicit in a programme.

- [Social Relations Framework](#) is an analytical tool that explores how gender discrimination, oppressions, and inequalities are created, maintained, and reproduced in a variety of institutional contexts (e.g., the household, community, market, and states).<sup>105</sup> There are five key concepts at the heart of the analysis, which are applied to the different institutional contexts:

1. Development as increasing human well-being;
2. Social relations;
3. Institutional analysis;
4. Institutional gender policies; and
5. Immediate, underlying, and structural causes.

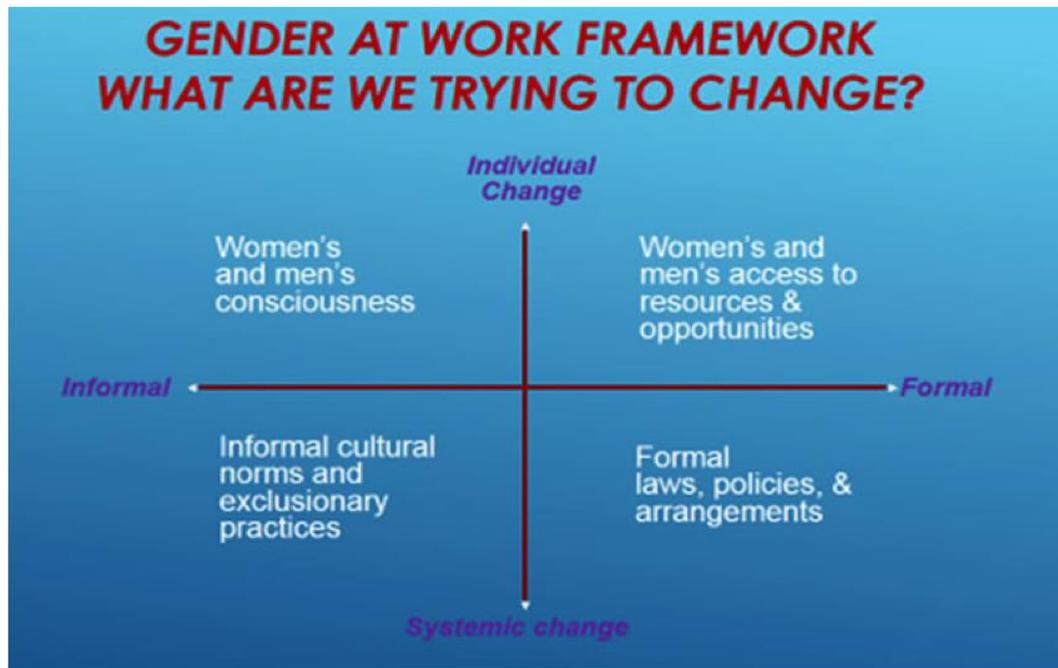
- **Gender audits**

Gender audits are institutional gender analysis and assessment tools that help to scan the extent to which gender equality has been integrated into institutions, policies, or programmes. There are a wide variety of gender auditing tools that address different issues, including financial audits, general organizational assessments, and international policy analysis. The overarching aim of most auditing tools is to hold institutions and governments to account on gender integration.

- For example, gender budgeting has been used as a key accountability tool for holding governments to account for their rhetorical commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment by assessing resource allocations. Gender expenditures are tracked in national budgets, highlighting the extent to which they are actually prioritizing gender through explicit gender objectives and by directing adequate resources to realize that priority. See [UN Women's resource site on gender budgeting](#).
- [Interaction's Gender Audit](#) offers a comprehensive and participatory institutional scan reflecting on the integration of gender. The tool consists of an organizational survey to collect information on how well the organization is doing in integrating gender, assessing political will, organizational culture, technical capacity, and accountability. After the survey stage, data is processed and focus groups are held to better understand the survey results and generate new insights. The final stage involves collectively developing an action plan to better integrate gender in the institution.<sup>106</sup>
- In terms of monitoring international financial institutions (IFIs), Gender Action has developed specific monitoring tools to track IFIs' public commitments to gender equality: see [Gender Toolkit for International Financial Institution Watchers](#). Topic areas for monitoring are vast, ranging from international gas and pipeline projects, to taxes, reproductive health allocations, etc.

- **Gender@Work framework**

The Gender@Work framework is a gender analysis tool that helps institutions reflect on the types of changes that it should be making when it is trying to achieve gender transformation and awareness. Originally designed for project planning, the model has also been adapted as a tool for evaluation and mapping outcomes.<sup>107</sup> The tool has four quadrants: 1. Changes in women's and men's consciousness; 2. Access to resources; 3. Formal rules and policies; and 4. Internal culture and deep structure (see graphic, below). The framework proposes that for deep and transformative changes in gender equality to occur, changes must occur in women's and men's consciousness, capacities, and behaviour, for example, in the way that they understand, communicate, and prioritize gender. Changes must occur in terms of access to resources and services. Adequate and gender equitable policies and laws must be in place to protect against gender discriminations. Of particular importance is the fourth quadrant, which focuses on changes in deep structure and the implicit norms, which undergird the way institutions operate, often in invisible ways. This may be in terms of whose voice matters in meetings, who is rewarded in the institution, who has power and influence, and in what ways.



- **Participatory indicators**

Developing indicators with communities allows for the translation of gender concepts into local vernacular, examples, and experiences. Questions involved in participatory evaluation include: Whose voices count? How are these voices represented? Do the beneficiaries 'speak' in evaluation reports, or are only numbers presented as impact? Who defines indicators and who has been part of that process? Who interprets the data? What limitations and benefits does the interpretive process involve? Reflecting on standard research and evaluation process, Ansley and Gaventa assert that:

*"... a knowledge system that discredits and devalues common, everyday knowledge serves to disempower common people as well. Such a system represents a contradiction for any vision of democracy that values the participation of people themselves in key deliberations and decisions that affect their lives."<sup>108</sup>*

Engaging communities as experts and creating participatory processes for them to engage in their own analysis and evaluation creates systemic changes in power relations not only among their communities, but also has the potential to shift North-South and developed-developing country paradigms. As Robert Chambers underscores:

*"...for many contexts and purposes there are alternatives which are more pro-poor, more accurate, more insightful, and more cost-effective...they can generate better statistics closer to the ground realities to inform, influence, and improve policy and practice; and they can empower local people through their own analysis, learning, and data for use in action and advocacy."<sup>109</sup>*

There is a variety of tools that support participatory indicator creation, including drama, pictures, focus groups, timelines, and mapping.

- In 2010, SIDA documented an example where communities in Bangladesh designed participatory indicators through dramatic skits and the indicators fed into an RBM system.<sup>110</sup> After taping groups acting out community life before, during, and after an intervention on community mobilization and women's empowerment, researchers inductively coded indicator statements from each skit. They fact-checked the indicators with communities and, once agreed, held an annual community meeting to discuss outcome achievement. Participants had conversations about each indicator and had to decide whether the indicator

had been achieved – a smiley face if achieved (1) and a sad face if not achieved (0). Researchers then fed the binary data into the RBM system.

- A participative ranking methodology was used to create comparable indicators across 10 communities in Sierra Leone.<sup>111</sup> The method entailed holding focus groups with girls aged 16 to 25, who had been involved or implicated in fighting forces in the civil war. In focus group discussions, the girls were asked to share how they knew if a girl who had returned to the community was ‘doing well’ in terms of reintegration. They were then asked to select from a set of local objects that they felt best represented the indicators of ‘doing well’ and to describe the significance of the connection with the local object. Evaluators then asked the girls to order the objects in terms of what most significantly contributed to a girl’s ability to reintegrate—creating a continuum, ranging from poor to good reintegration. The median ranking of the ‘good’ to ‘poor’ reintegration indicators became the final indicators that were included in an evaluation of girls’ community reintegration after involvement in the armed forces in Sierra Leone.

Other interesting resources on the development of participatory indicators include [Just Associates](#), which has some guidelines and tools for activists measuring advocacy indicators.<sup>112</sup> See [Who Counts? The Power of Participatory Statistics](#), edited by Jeremy Holland, for other examples of participatory indicators used in international development.

- ***Most significant change***

The most significant change (MSC) method is used to gather stories of change from programme participants or a community of interest. Groups are selected to participate in the story collection process (a systematic sampling method can be used to select participants). To collect data, a time-limited question is asked, such as, what has been the most significant change you have experienced in your community in the last year? In the method’s most traditional form, once stories are collected, a group (which could be the participants themselves or the organization’s programme officers and staff) engage in a story-selection process. This process involves narrowing the number of stories, until there is one or only a few stories left that communicate and embody the programme’s most significant changes. The method is unique, because there are no predefined outcomes, but rather the outcomes emerge from the participants themselves. These stories can reflect and speak to both intended and unexpected outcomes at the organizational level. The method offers opportunities for programme staff or participants to reflect on factors affecting and influencing the programme, which can help refine implementation. It also offers a data collection method for gathering compelling narratives. The method can be used at any stage of assessment or evaluation, in a scoping study, at baseline, or mid-term or final term, to understand the types of changes that are significant to a participant group.

A range of adaptations to this methodology have appeared, including capturing MSC stories through participatory video, such as [Insight Share](#), and adapting the methodology for workshop settings through focus group discussions, such as [CARE](#) and [Oxfam Novib](#). There are also options for coding large number of stories, through software programs such as [Sensemaker](#), as well as [ImpactMapper](#), a web-based reporting and narrative analysis tool for tracking progress for donors and NGOs.<sup>113</sup>

- ***Real-time data collection methods***

The number of new technologies available for evaluation has exploded in recent years, offering a range of creative data collection and analysis possibilities. A variety of mobile technology tools to aid real-time data collection are emerging, such as mobile phone survey technology (e.g., [CommCare HQ](#) and [Geopoll](#)).<sup>114</sup> Using real-time monitoring of emerging crises in different contexts has been made possible by crowdsourcing platforms, such as [Ushahidi](#). Crowdsourced data offers some interesting possibilities for monitoring in real-time, and may be particularly useful in unpredictable and chaotic contexts or where official transparency is low. For example, see [Women under Siege](#), which documents women’s rape and sexual violence in Syria; [HarrassMap](#), in which women send the date, time, location, and type of sexual harassment experienced in



Egypt; and [I Paid a Bribe](#), where Indians can report bribes. Some useful compendiums of real-time data collection methods and analyses of visualization apps have recently been established, including [Feedback Store](#) by Keystone Accountability, which highlights apps and services to gather constituent feedback and Grant Craft's [Harnessing Collaboration Technologies](#), which has a section on data collection, analysis, and visualization. Many agencies are also experimenting with the power and potential of big data.<sup>115</sup> [UN Global Pulse](#) has been at the forefront of exploring how real-time big data collection, for example in humanitarian crises, could help the United Nations and partners make better programme and policy decisions.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

UNDP stands at an important moment as it defines an evaluation framework and methodology for its Thematic Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. UNDP has approached the process of defining key evaluation questions and methods in a participatory manner with evaluators and regional and country office gender team leaders and focal points, leading to deeper questioning of underlying assumptions to change. Given this process, UNDP may be well-positioned to contribute to broadening methodological innovations in its evaluations, including addressing the underlying and often hidden dimensions of changes related to transformative women's empowerment and gender equality outcomes.

As UNDP moves forward toward the elaboration of its evaluation it will be important not only to assess the results of the last five years, but also to develop clear recommendations to fast forward and deepen the culture of gender equality internally and across the globe. The agency must be bold, direct and creative as it assesses how it challenges one of the most prevalent forms of rights violations globally in the fight for gender equality and women's rights. It is a time for honest stocktaking and rigorous assessment. Most of all, it is a powerful moment for learning and values alignment.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Current definitions of sex focus on biological and physiological differences, distinguishing males, females, and intersex. Gender on the other hand focuses on socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men or women. Gender identity is the internal sense of being a woman or man, or some other category (transgender).

<sup>2</sup> The nine treaties are: 1) *ICERD* International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965); 2) *ICCPR* International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); 3) *ICESCR* International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); 4) *CEDAW* Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979); 5) *CAT* Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984); 6) *CRC* Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); 7) *ICRMW* International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990); 8) *CPED* International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (2006); and 9) *CRPD* Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

<sup>3</sup> Equity involves the reduction of inequalities between men and women, and focuses on equal access, not necessarily equality in opportunities and participation.

<sup>4</sup> Razavi and Miller. *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> UN [OSAGI](#) notes, “Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys... 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 is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.”

<sup>6</sup> CEDAW defines discrimination of women as “...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.”

<sup>7</sup> Shahrashoub Razavi and Carol Miller. 1995. “From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse.” UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Occasional Paper No. 1. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

<sup>8</sup> There are a variety of iterations of WID that had different emphases over time, e.g., WID approaches varied moving from equity and access to development, to poverty alleviation, and then to economic efficiency models. See Caroline O.N. Moser. 1993. *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*. London and New York: Routledge.

<sup>9</sup> Moser. *Ibid.* Razavi and Miller. *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Eva Rathgeber. 1990. “WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice.” *The Journal of Developing Areas*. 24. Pp. 498-502.

<sup>11</sup> Productive roles are those tasks that are monetarily reimbursed. Reproductive roles are those associated with child rearing/raising and caretaking of the home (i.e., cooking/cleaning). Community involvement highlights those tasks related to collective support and community gain. From Moser. *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Double burden refers to the gendered nature of workloads, where women are often responsible for both paid work and for a large share of unpaid home care work.

<sup>13</sup> According to [UNFPA](#), 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.” Feminists have also highlighted the importance of the collective dimensions of empowerment and power, in addition to individual empowerment. For example, see Srilatha Batliwala. 1994. “The Meaning of Women’s Empowerment: New Concepts from Action.” In G. Sen, A. Germain and L. C. Chen (eds.), *Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment and Rights*, pp. 127-138. Boston: Harvard University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Moser. *Ibid.* Pialek, Nick. “Gender Mainstreaming from Theory to Praxis.” PPT.

<sup>15</sup> Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. New York. Cornell University Press.

<sup>16</sup> [Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4- 15 September 1997](#) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>17</sup> See Cynthia Mellion and Charlotte Bunch (Eds). 2001. [“Holding on to the Promise: Women's Human Rights and the Beijing + 5 Review.”](#) CWGL.

<sup>18</sup> MDG3 aims to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education, no later than 2015. While globally there has been progress in eliminating gender disparity at the primary education level, in 2013 only two of 130 countries have achieved gender equality at every education level. In particular increased rates of poverty, high levels of gender-based violence, economic inequalities, unequal and fragile employment opportunities, significant wage gaps in the labour market, low rates of political participation and of formal and informal leadership, and differential legal frameworks that marginalize women as land owners in addition to unequal inheritance and marriage rights are but a few of the diverse realities that threaten the global achievement of women’s empowerment, rights, and gender equality. See UN Women. 2013. [“The Gender Dimension of the Millennium Development Goals Report.”](#) July 1, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> MDG5 targets aim to: reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio and achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health. There has been progress on the achievement of these goals. Globally the rate of maternal deaths has been cut by nearly half (47 percent), and in Eastern Asia, Northern Africa, and Southern Asia by nearly two-thirds. However, mortality rates could be further reduced through proper nutrition, skilled birth attendants, and proper pre- and antenatal care. In terms of access to reproductive health, data shows that much progress remains to be achieved – over 140 million married women say they would delay or avoid childbearing if they had access to family planning resources. See UN 2013. [“Goal 5. Improve Maternal Health.”](#) Fact Sheet.

<sup>20</sup> Source: UNDP Mission statement as seen in UNDP. 2008. [“Empowered and Equal. Gender Equality Strategy. 2008-2011.”](#)

<sup>21</sup> See AWID. 2010. [“Primer # 8: Development Cooperation and Women’s Rights series. The Accra Agenda for Action: A brief review from a women’s rights perspective.”](#)

<sup>22</sup> For example, the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) (AAA) preamble asserts human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability as *“cornerstones for achieving enduring impact”* [§ 3]. AAA affirmed principles of country ownership along with connections to international normative agreements: *“developing countries and donors will ensure that their respective development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability, and environmental sustainability”* [§ 13c] [and that] *“donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peace and state-building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women”* [§ 21b]. Moreover, AAA highlights the importance of improving the availability of sex-disaggregated data [§ 23a].

<sup>23</sup> Women’s organizations’ key demands for Busan and 2012 DCF. 2011. [“Key Demands from Women’s Rights Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates.”](#) Brussels, Belgium: International Women’s Organizations Consultation on Development Cooperation, Women’s Rights, and Gender Equality.

<sup>24</sup> See [Busan Outcome Document](#) 2011. [§ 20] *“We must accelerate our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programmes grounded in country priorities, recognizing that gender equality and women’s empowerment are critical to achieving development results. Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. As we redouble our efforts to implement existing commitments we will a) Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonize and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men. We must accelerate our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. b) Integrate targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments. c) Address gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peace building and state building.”*

<sup>25</sup> For more on the advocacy wins and losses of feminist groups at and on the road to Busan see Alexandra Pittman. 2012. *“Learning Assessment for the Mobilization of Women’s Rights Organizations and Networks on the Road to Busan and Beyond Project.”* Internal Report.

<sup>26</sup> For deeper overview of the funding context for women’s see Lydia Alpizar Duran. 2012. *“Strengthening Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Organizations.”* in preparation for the 56<sup>th</sup> session of UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). and Arutyunova and Clark. Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> OECD DAC. 2014. [“Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Donor Charts.”](#) Statistics based on DAC Members’ reporting on the Gender Equality Policy Marker, 2011-2012.

<sup>28</sup> Calculated from OECD DAC 15170. As seen in Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark. 2013. [“Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots. The Status of Financing for Women’s Rights Organizing and Gender Equality.”](#) AWID.

<sup>29</sup> Arutyunova and Clark. Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> For an analysis of new actors in the women's rights see Julia Miller, Angelika Arutyunova, and Cindy Clark. 2013. "[New Actors, New Funding, New Conversations. A Mapping of Funding for Women and Girls](#)" AWID.

<sup>31</sup> Zonibel Woods. 2012. "[Rio+20 Agreement Fails Women, and the World.](#)" RH Reality Check.

<sup>32</sup> Woods. Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> There are many examples of this. For example in post-colonial nationalist movements, feminist and women's rights activists were often prominent actors on the frontlines and their demands for equality were integrated into nationalist agendas. Then with independence women's demands for equality were often put aside in the name of national progress and unity. Or for example, in some countries, gender budgets were the first to be cut during the global economic recession, which disproportionately impacted women. See AWID's 2012 analysis, "[Strengthening Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Organizations](#)" in preparation for the 56<sup>th</sup> session of UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) describing how some states facing economic crisis reduced spending on gender equality or women's organizations. Also see WIDE. 2012. "[How the European Crisis is Impacting Women's Lives.](#)"

<sup>34</sup> As seen in Alexandra Pittman 2012. "Learning Assessment for the Mobilisation of Women's Rights Organizations and Networks on the Road to Busan and Beyond Project." Internal Report. p.7.

<sup>35</sup> As seen in Robert Lee. 2011. "[Women Key to Development](#)" *Korea Herald*. November 30, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Post-2015 Women's Coalition 2013. "[Feminist Reflections: UN's High Level Panel Report on Post-2015 Development Agenda](#)" Women's Major Group. 2014.

<sup>37</sup> "[Women's '8 Red Flags' following the conclusion of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)" Final statement.

<sup>38</sup> See Conny Roggeband. 2013. "Gender Mainstreaming in Dutch Development Cooperation: The Dialectics of Progress." *Journal of International Development*. Gabriela Byron and Charlotte Örnemark. 2010. "Gender Equality in Swedish Development Cooperation: Final Report." SIDA. UNDP. 2006. "Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP." UNDP Evaluation Office. Maria Stratigaki. 2005. "Gender Mainstreaming vs. Positive Action: An On-Going Conflict in EU Gender Equality Policy." Panteion University.

<sup>39</sup> Charlotte Feldman-Jacobs, Marissa Yeakey, and Michal Avni. 2011. "[A Summary Report of new evidence that Gender Perspectives improve Reproductive Health Outcomes.](#)" Population Reference Bureau and USAID.

<sup>40</sup> Gabriela Byron and Charlotte Örnemark. 2010. "[Gender Equality in Swedish Development](#)" Final report. SIDA. pp. 12-13

<sup>41</sup> As UNDP embarks on an evaluation agenda for gender mainstreaming, extending this line of inquiry across different issue areas could be a very important addition to the public discourse and evidence base, as could its role in raising the visibility of the idea more broadly.

<sup>42</sup> Srilatha Batliwala. 2014. "[Women Moving Mountains. The Collective Impact of the Dutch MDG3 Fund](#)" AWID.

<sup>43</sup> Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon 2012. "[The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975–2005.](#)" *American Political Science Review*, 106 (3)548-569.

<sup>44</sup> AfDB. 2012. "[Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere?](#)" Synthesis Report. Operations Evaluation Department. AfDB.

<sup>45</sup> ECG. 2012. "[Gender Equality and Development Evaluation Units. Lessons from Evaluations of Development Support of Selected Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies.](#)" ECG Paper #5.

<sup>46</sup> ECG put forth a three-dimensional theory of change in gender equality, which they have termed: *accumulations of endowments*, such as health, land, education, financial assets, freedom from violence (also includes rights), *access to economic opportunities*, and *agency* (voice and political participation). ECG underscores the importance of addressing all three dimensions within agencies in order to achieve gender equality. Other work, such as Gender at Work has additional categories, as described in Section IV.

<sup>47</sup> See Roggeband. *ibid.* p.9.

<sup>48</sup> Gabriela Byron and Charlotte Örnemark. 2010. "[Gender Equality in Swedish Development](#)" Final report. SIDA.

<sup>49</sup> UNDP. 2006. "[Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP](#)" UNDP Evaluation Office.

<sup>50</sup> Personal communication.

<sup>51</sup> See Ellen Sprenger. 2006. "Oxfam Novib's Organisational Assessment: Towards Effective Promotion of Women's Rights and Gender Equality." The Hague: Oxfam Novib, and Anouka van Eerdewijk. 2013. "The Micropolitics of Evaporation: Gender Mainstreaming Instruments in Practice." *Journal of International Development*.

<sup>52</sup> UNDP staff perspectives based on interviews and personal communications.

<sup>53</sup> Insights gathered from three international conferences in 2007, 2008, and 2009. An [international conference on gender and development trainings](#) was held in Amsterdam in 2007. In 2008, [a Sub-Saharan regional conference was convened on](#)

[gender and access to justice](#) in the region. In 2009, a [South Asian conference was held reflecting on the state of gender knowledge](#) in the region.

<sup>54</sup> Lina Abou Habib. 2007. "Changing the Unchangeable: Reflections on Selected Experiences in Gender Training in the Machreq/Maghreb Region." In *Remaking Gender Training. The Making and Remaking of Gender Knowledge. A Global Sourcebook*.

and Carol Bacchi and Joan Eveline. 2010. "Mainstreaming Politics: Gender Practices and Feminist Theory." University of Adelaide Press.

<sup>55</sup> Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay. 2013. "Mainstreaming Gender or Reconstituting the Mainstream? Gender Knowledge in Development." *Journal of International Development*.

<sup>56</sup> UNDP staff perspective from interview.

<sup>57</sup> Abou Habib. Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Yvonne Benschop and Mieke Verloo. 2006. "Sisyphus' Sisters: Can Gender Mainstreaming Escape the Genderedness of Organizations?" *Journal of Gender Studies*.

<sup>59</sup> Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay. 2007. *Revisiting Gender Training: The Making and Re-making of Gender Knowledge. A Global Sourcebook*. Royal Tropical Institute.

<sup>60</sup> Srilatha Batliwala, "[Changing Their World. Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements](#)" 2nd Edition. (AWID, 2012), p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Abou Habib. Ibid. and Mukhopadhyay. Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Andrea Cornwall. 2007. "[Pathways of Women's Empowerment](#)" 50/50 Democracy. July 30, 2007.

<sup>63</sup> For more detailed information see overview in the GES. UNDP. 2008. "[Empowered and Equal. Gender Equality Strategy. 2008-2011.](#)"

<sup>64</sup> "The UN Development Programme (UNDP) is committed to supporting the 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 guides all policymaking and approaches to development, UNDP supports an approach to 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 the environment and sustainable development. With strong operations and institutional arrangements for gender equality, UNDP will sets out to extend continued support to the improvement of nationally relevant and sustainable gender equality results, and the identification and removal of internal barriers to women's advancement into its own senior management, including for women from developing countries. UNDP will aims to ensure the implementation of this strategy by dedicating sufficient internal human and financial resources and actively mobilizing complementary external resources where needed. It will continue and expand its partnerships with UN agencies, including by scaling up innovative models developed and tested by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)." Kemal Derviş's Statement on Gender at the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, 24 January 2006. As seen in GES 2008-2011.

<sup>65</sup> UNDP. 2008. "[UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011 Accelerating global progress on human development](#)" Annual session 2008. 16 to 27 June 2008, Geneva. p.6. "Central to the human development approach is the concept of human empowerment, which, in addition to income, treats access to education and health care, freedom of expression, the rule of law, respect for diversity, protection from violence, and the preservation of the environment as essential dimensions of human development and well-being."

<sup>66</sup> UNDP. 2008. "[Empowered and Equal. Gender Equality Strategy. 2008-2011](#)" p.11.

<sup>67</sup> UNDP. Ibid. p.11

<sup>68</sup> Derived from UNDP. Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). Gender Team.

2013. "Implementation of UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2008-2013 Background Paper for the Annual Report to the Executive Board." January 2013.

<sup>69</sup> See UNDP, 2012. "Assessment of the UNDP Gender Marker. Successes, Challenges and the Way Forward." UNDP.

<sup>70</sup> UNDP. "UNDP Gender Equality Seal. A Guide for Country Offices/Regional Service Centres/Regional Bureaus." Internal Document.

<sup>71</sup> The UNEG (2012) handbook on "[Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#)" has set forth useful guidelines for integrating gender equality and human rights into evaluation, which may be helpful in charting out the evaluability of different interventions, stakeholder analysis, key evaluation question and indicator definition, as well as different methodological considerations, among other issues.

<sup>72</sup> UNDP staff perspectives based on interviews.

<sup>73</sup> UNDP staff perspective based on interview.

<sup>74</sup> Helen Clark. 2010. "[Speech at the 'Women Deliver' Conference](#)" 8 June 2010.

<sup>75</sup> Helen Clark. 2011. "[Remarks, Gender in UNDP](#)" Comments to the Executive Board.

<sup>76</sup> Rebeca Grynspan. 2010. "Debate on Democracy and the Millennium Development Goals" 15 September 2010. Remarks by UNDP Associate Administrator.

<sup>77</sup> UNDP. 2011. "[United Nations Development Programme. 2008–2013 Gender Equality Strategy](#)" Mid-Term Review Report."

<sup>78</sup> Ana Rosa Soares. 2013. "Evaluating contributions to change in gender equality and its influence in poverty reduction and human development." *Panel Gender Equity and Development Evaluations*. IDEA. pp. 5-7.

<sup>79</sup> Challenges and needs were gathered through conversations with 11 individuals, including those in gender- and evaluation related roles in the country and regional offices and headquarters, along with an external expert. Many thanks to Nato Alhazishvili, Gabriela Bryon, Carmen De La Cruz, Nicola Harrington, Kim Henderson, Armine Hovhannisyanyan, Chandi Kadrigamar, Koh Miyao, Maya Morsi, and Ana Maria Rosa Soares, and Chelsey Wickmark. Information from research and evaluations are also included.

<sup>80</sup> The trend toward RCTs rapidly expanded with the work of economists interested in randomization as the 'gold standard' and the associated rise of evaluation institutions that specialize in impact evaluations. The emergence has been further entrenched by donor demand and organizations such as the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab \(J-PAL\)](#), [Innovations for Poverty Action \(IPA\)](#), and [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation](#) (3ie Impact). While useful under certain conditions, RCTs are not appropriate across the board. As Ravillion (2009) explains, social experiments answer a very limited set of questions about the average impact of a simple intervention on those who have the opportunity but do not receive an intervention, and the average impact on those who actually receive the intervention. However, typically policy makers care about issues that cannot be answered by these questions, such as how did the intervention create change, can the intervention be scaled up, how could scale up be done most effectively, what sorts of contextual factors might have affected outcomes, etc. See, for example, Martin Ravillion. 2009. "[Should the Randomistas Rule?](#)" *Economists Voice*, 6(2): 1-5.

<sup>81</sup> Of course, not using an attribution framework places limits on how far UNDP can go in claiming full ownership over the impact and outcome-level changes achieved. Generally, given the way that UNDP operates, for example working with government officials and bodies or programming through partners, a contribution approach makes most sense. In some circumstances attribution may be beneficial if there is a direct intervention that UNDP makes, which can be causally traced, although given the subject matter and primary mode of operandi, it will be rarer. Even within contribution frameworks however creative approaches can be used to more concretely identify UNDP's role, value added, and impact in the change process; for example, asking participants to rate the weight of UNDP's role in making a change happen or using a theory of change and aiming to estimate outcome or impact level indicators.

<sup>82</sup> Srilatha Batliwala and Alexandra Pittman. 2010. "[Capturing Change in Women's Realities: The Challenges of Monitoring and Evaluating our Work](#)" AWID.

<sup>83</sup> See also recent UNDP paper on evaluation innovations UNDP. Knowledge, Innovation, and Capacity group. 2013. "[Discussion Paper. Innovations in Monitoring and Evaluation](#)"

<sup>84</sup> See Michael Bamberger 2013, "[Introduction to Mixed Methods in Impact Evaluations](#)", Interaction and Rockefeller Foundation, Impact Notes, No. 3 August 2013 for an useful guide on how to integrate mixed methods into evaluations effectively. Case examples illustrate key principles and possibilities.

<sup>85</sup> Of course, this is not to say that new innovations and implementations in traditional data collection methods, such as case-based methods, are not also occurring. For example, an interesting study using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), a case based method which allows for the qualitative comparison of causal paths with medium n cases (n=30-50) and process tracing (case method, often using interviews to assess if explanatory conditions (independent variables) lead to dependent variables (or outcomes, impact) has been implemented by Michaela Raab and Wolfgang Stuppert. See Michaela Raab and Wolfgang Stuppert. 2014. "[Review of evaluation approaches and methods for interventions related to violence against women and girls \(VAWG\)](#)" DFID. The report assesses the approaches and methods in interventions designed to end violence against women and girls and draws inspiration from a research paper on combining the two approaches by Carsten Schneider and Ingo Rohlfing. 2013. "[Combining QCA and Process Tracing in Set-Theoretic Multi-Method Research.](#)" *Sociological Methods & Research*, November 2013; vol. 42, 4: pp. 559-597. Documenting all of these innovations is not within the scope of this paper. But for more information on recent innovations, see [UNDP \(2013\) paper](#) previously referenced. For more on case based methods, see Robert K. Yin. 2013. *Case Study Research. Design and Methods*. Applied Social Research Methods. 5th edition. Sage Publishing.

<sup>86</sup> For an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of many of these methods and tools, see [AWID's M&E wiki by Alexandra Pittman](#).

<sup>87</sup> Carol Weiss, [Evaluation 1972 \(1997\)](#), Prentice Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

<sup>88</sup> Realist evaluation is a type of theory based evaluation perspective that engages with the context and accounts for a complexity approach more explicitly. It asks *'What works for whom in what circumstances and in what respects, and how?'* This type of evaluation focuses on uncovering and understanding context, mechanism, outcome pattern, and the context, mechanism, outcome pattern configuration (CMOCs). The aim is to identify the specific configurations that work together (like a recipe, a specific combination of factors create results) that contribute to sustainable changes in a given intervention. For deeper understanding of the realist evaluation approach, see Ray Pawson and Nick Tilley. 2004. ["Realist Evaluation"](#).

<sup>89</sup> Ronnie Saha Soubhik and Sherine Jayawickrama. 2010. ["Approaches to Development and Humanitarian Action: NGO Profiles and Synthesis"](#) Harvard Humanitarian Initiative.

<sup>90</sup> Kathryn Lockett and Kate Bishop. 2012. ["A Theory of Change for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls."](#) Chase Guidance Note Series. DFID.

<sup>91</sup> Also see Sarah Stachowiak. 2013. ["Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts."](#) Center for Evaluation Innovation and ORS Impact.

<sup>92</sup> Virginia Lacayo, Virginia. 2007. ["What complexity science teaches us about social change?"](#)

For an overview of complexity science and its applications to development and humanitarian aid, see Ben Ramalingam et al. (2008) and more recently, Ramalingam's book, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*. Ben Ramalingam and Harry Jones with Toussaint Reba and John Young. 2008. ["Exploring the science of complexity: Ideas and implications for development and humanitarian efforts."](#) ODI. Ben Ramalingam. 2013. *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*. Oxford, UK: Oxford Press.

<sup>93</sup> See Michael Quinn Patton's 2010 book, *Developmental Evaluation. Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*. Guilford Press.

<sup>94</sup> See USAID 2013. ["Complexity-aware monitoring."](#) Discussion note. December 2013.

<sup>95</sup> See [Carla Lopez, ED of FCAM speak](#) on the use of complexity methods at the International Human Rights Funder Group (IHRFG) meeting in San Francisco in January 2014.

<sup>96</sup> See 2012. Jan Van Ongevalle, Anneke Maarse, Cristien Temmink, Eugenia Boutylkova and Huib Huyse. ["Dealing with complexity through Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation \(PME\) Mid-term results of a collective action research process."](#) INTRAC. The 10 NGOs are Cordaid, Light for the World, ETC COMPAS, ICCO, MCNV, Oxfam Novib, STRO, Vredeseilanden, War Child Holland and Woord en Daad.

<sup>97</sup> Bob Williams and Richard Hummelbrunner. 2009. *Systems Concepts in Action. A Practitioner's Toolkit*. Stanford: CA: Stanford University Press.

<sup>98</sup> Sarah Earl, Fred Carden, and Terry Smutylo. 2001. ["Outcome Mapping. Building Learning and Reflection Into Development Programs."](#) IDRC.

<sup>99</sup> Ricardo Wilson-Grau. 2012. ["Outcome Harvesting."](#) PPT Presentation in Beirut, Lebanon.

<sup>100</sup> Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Heather Britt. 2012. ["Outcome Harvesting."](#) Ford Foundation.

<sup>101</sup> *Practical needs* are immediate needs necessary to ensure safety, health, and basic needs, such as water, sanitation, health care, etc. These do not fundamentally transform gender discriminatory power structures. *Strategic needs*, on the other hand, forward women's equality and empowerment by challenging those power structures, such as having equitable laws, living free from domestic violence, etc.

<sup>102</sup> Caroline Moser. 1993. *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice, and Training*. London: Routledge.

<sup>103</sup> Rani Parker. 1993. "Another Point of View: A Manual on Gender Analysis Training for Grassroots Workers." New York: UNIFEM.

<sup>104</sup> Reproduced from Sara Longwe. 2002. ["Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation."](#)

<sup>105</sup> Naila Kabeer. 1994. *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. London, UK: Verso.

<sup>106</sup> InterAction. 2009. ["Gender Audit. A Tool for Organizational Transformation."](#)

<sup>107</sup> Pittman has also adapted the framework for feminist movement building, and has developed a hybrid method using the Framework to map the frequency of programme outcomes, particularly using most significant change method. See Alexandra Pittman, 2013. ["Exploring Women's Rights and Feminist Movement Building in Armenia: Learning from the Past and Strategizing for the Future."](#) OSF Armenia. 2013. and Alexandra Pittman. 2013. "Democracy and Women's Leadership: Assessing Transformative Changes from the Individual to the Collective Levels in the Women's Learning Partnership." WLP.

<sup>108</sup> Fran Ansley and John Gaventa. 1997. "Researching for Democracy & Democratizing Research." *Change*, 29, 1, 46-53. P.46.

<sup>109</sup> Robert Chambers. 2013. "Afterward." In *Who Counts? The Power of Participatory Statistics*. Ed. Jeremy Holland (pp. 197-206). Practical Action. P.197.

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<sup>110</sup> Dee Jupp, Sohel Ibn Ali, and Carlos Barahona. 2010. "[Measuring Empowerment? Ask Them Quantifying qualitative outcomes from people's own analysis. Insights for results-based management from the experience of a social movement in Bangladesh.](#)" SIDA.

<sup>111</sup> See Lindsay Stark, Alastair Ager, Mike Wessells, and Neil Boothby. 2009. "[Developing Culturally Relevant Indicators of reintegration of girls, formerly associated with armed groups, in Sierra Leone using a participative ranking methodology.](#)" *Intervention*, 7, 1:4-16.

<sup>112</sup> Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller. 2007. "[A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation.](#)" JASS.

<sup>113</sup> Impact Mapper has been developed by Alexandra Pittman and Kellea Miller. It is expected to launch Fall 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Recently, Mhealth Alliance published a resource on using mobile technology in women's health and empowerment projects. See Madhu Deshmukh and Patricia Mechael. 2013. "[Addressing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Mhealth for MNCH. An Analytical Framework.](#)" MHealth Alliance.

<sup>115</sup> Of course challenges also are raised with big data including privacy issues, accuracy of the picture presented, and sampling and access issues to name a few. For a fuller stocktaking of the opportunities and challenges of big data, see UN Global Pulse. 2012. "[Big Data for Development: Challenges and Opportunities.](#)"



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