

## Mandates on Gender Mainstreaming at the Global Level

The implementation of the strategy of gender mainstreaming is specifically called for and guided by mandates elaborated by Member States through negotiations in United Nations inter-governmental bodies. Since the strategy was globally endorsed in 1995, Member States have consistently made clear their commitment to the full implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy, including in 2015 in the context of the new development agenda - the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>i</sup> States continue to call for accelerated action and provide practical guidance through mandates on implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy.

Strong mandates provide important levers for ensuring enhanced focus on gender equality and women's rights and empowerment, particularly if these mandates are systematically and effectively followed up - by Member States in intergovernmental processes, and through Governing Bodies and organizational leadership in development organizations. The mandates for gender mainstreaming must also be systematically and effectively utilized in development policy and practice.

Member States have elaborated mandates for gender mainstreaming in all three pillars of the work of the United Nations - development, human rights, and peace and security.<sup>ii</sup> Mandates in all areas have been reaffirmed, strengthened, and expanded over the past twenty-five years.

### **Key mandates on gender mainstreaming:**

**1995: Beijing Platform for Action 1995.** At the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, Member States recognized the potential of the gender mainstreaming strategy and called for its full implementation in all policy areas. Under each of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern identified in the Platform for Action as requiring priority action,<sup>iii</sup> there is a specific paragraph calling for the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into work at both policy and programme levels.<sup>iv</sup>

**1997: ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions on gender mainstreaming.** At the meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1997 - as well as establishing the definition of gender mainstreaming - Member States also provided further guidance on the full implementation of the strategy in the work of the United Nations to support global, regional, and national efforts.<sup>v</sup>

**2000: Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly.** Member States reinforced the importance of gender mainstreaming for work on gender equality and women's rights and empowerment at the first five-year review and follow-up on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in June 2000.

**2006: United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women: focusing on results and impact ([CEB/2006/2](#))** calls for accelerating gender mainstreaming in all policies and programs in the UN system.

**2015: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States made a clear commitment to the goals of gender equality and women's rights and empowerment through gender mainstreaming in all areas of sustainable development - i.e. in political, social, economic and environmental development. Member States also explicitly recognized that, without the achievement of gender equality and women's human rights and empowerment, sustainable development cannot be attained in any of these areas.

**2015: Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.** Member States gave their full support to the gender mainstreaming strategy.<sup>vi</sup> This mandate emphasized the fact that gender mainstreaming is not only important in the planning and implementation of programmes but also in the formulation and design of policies in all areas. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda reiterated “*the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.*”<sup>vii</sup>

**2020: 2020: ECOSOC Political Declaration on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/2020/27)** calls on the UN system to support accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including through systematic gender mainstreaming.

**2022: ECOSOC - Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/RES/2022/18)** calls upon the UN system to continue to work collaboratively to accelerate the full and effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the UN system at the global, regional and country levels, in accordance with previous ECOSOC resolutions and General Assembly resolutions [64/289](#) and [75/233](#).

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<sup>i</sup> United Nations (2015b) *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. (General Assembly resolution 70/1). Political Declaration.

<sup>ii</sup> See, for example: United Nations (1996) *op.cit.* See: para 229 (human rights); 141 (peace and security); 58(b) (poverty); 79 (education); 105 (health); 164 (economy including employment); 189 (political development); and 251 (environment); and United Nations (1997) ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 - *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system*. II.A. The intergovernmental process of the United Nations, p. 29. In: Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No 3. (A/52/3/rev1), chap. IV.

<sup>iii</sup> These are the 'Critical Areas of Concern' which included poverty, economic development, human rights, health, education and training, power and decision-making, environment, media, violence against women, armed conflict, and the girl child and institutional mechanisms for gender equality. From: United Nations (1996) *op. cit.*

<sup>iv</sup> United Nations (1996) *op. cit.* See: paras 57 and 58b poverty; 79 education; 105 health; 123 violence; 141 armed conflict; 164 economy; 189 power and decision-making; 202 institutional mechanisms; 229; human rights; 238 media; 252 environment; and 273 the girl child.

<sup>v</sup> United Nations (1997) *op cit.*

<sup>vi</sup> United Nations (2015a) *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (July 2015), New York. para 6.

<sup>vii</sup> *ibid.* Emphasis added.