Institutional Transformation

Dimensions of gender mainstreaming in institutions: The SPO model

The goal of implementing gender mainstreaming is to ensure an output and outcome that contributes to gender equality. To achieve this, the internal mechanisms of an institution will have to be adjusted within a process of organisational development. This means there is an internal dimension of gender mainstreaming (organisational and personnel development) as well an external dimension (service provision).

It is therefore useful to distinguish between three different but related dimensions of organisational change, namely the a) structural and the b) personnel dimension of change as well as c) an output that contributes to gender equality (Frey/Kuhl 2003: 3). Changes within the structural and personnel dimensions are a precondition for achieving working results that correspond to the objective of gender equality.

Processes of organisational development (with high level executives as responsible actors) are the starting point; organisational learning processes are planned, coordinated and monitored within this dimension. Personnel development (with human resources units as responsible actors) will accordingly follow a policy of human resources management which is in line with the gender equality objectives of the organisation – for example giving incentives in performance assessment or staff competency development. A second aspect of human resources management is achieving equal opportunities for female and male staff within an institution.

If the process of institutional transformation within these two areas is successful, the output of an organisation will reflect the gender equality objectives of an institution.

Structural dimension

Personnel dimension

Structural dimension

This dimension refers to the visible and invisible objectives, rules and procedures that an organisation follows. Some organisations express their goals in a mission statement. Tackling the structural aspect of an institution means gender equality is mainstreamed into the management and the procedures of an institution.

This dimension also addresses the organisational culture, including underlying, tacit beliefs and rules. The **executive staff** of an institution are the most relevant stakeholder group in terms of the structural dimension of change.

Guiding questions for dealing with the structural dimension of gender equality:

- Are there gender equality objectives as well as indicators in regard to the working results?

- Are gender mainstreaming methods and tools employed as an integral part of the institution's working routines?

- Is there a gender action plan showing how the institution contributes to gender equality objectives?

The following steps of "Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide to Organisational Change" focus on the output dimension:

Gender equality in the output – and eventually outcome – of an institution is the main objective of gender mainstreaming.
Setting gender equality objectivesaddresses the results of an institution.
Equally, the development, introduction and application of gender mainstreaming methods and tools targets an institution's output. Finally, gender action plans also are directed at the working results of an organisation.

Gender mainstreaming with a on focus on institutional

Gender mainstreaming with a on focus on institutional transformation - examples

- Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), a network of Gender Focal Points in United Nations offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes chaired by UN Women:
  http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/index.html

- Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in a statement decided on a UN wide strategy on mainstreaming gender.
  http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/gm/UN_system_wide_P_S_CEB_Statement_2006.

- The Economic and Social Council in 2010 published a Resolution on "Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system".
  http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2010/res%202010-29.pdf

- The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a specialised agency of the UN, has put strong efforts in mainstreaming gender equality
  http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/gender-equality/lang--en/index.htm

- A Council's conclusions on the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women and gender equality of December 2013
  http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139978.pdf