

Institutional Transformation

Example 12: Promoting gender equality within an organisation

Gender Equality Strategies including a balance of staff

For the UN system there is one paragraph in the policy statement of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) on gender balance of staff: “We also undertake to accelerate our efforts to achieve the goal of gender balance among all categories of United Nations employees, in particular at decision-making levels.”

In accordance to this there is a performance indicator on the “Gender Architecture” of the UN-system. This covers internal capacities on gender expertise (like focal points) at the one hand and an equal representation of women for staff, also at certain levels in the UN hierarchy at the other hand. In line with this UNDPs gender equality strategy is accompanied by a gender parity strategy (2013 to 2017). The goal of this strategy is: “Gender parity at all levels and all UNDP offices throughout the world”

Questions and answers

- **What does the example show?**

Equal opportunities of staff can or should be one of several objectives when implementing gender mainstreaming – but not all organisations focus on this dimension.

- **Why is the example suitable for promoting institutional transformation?**

The example shows that there are two separate but interlinked dimensions of institutional transformation for gender equality: at the one hand there is a broader gender equality strategy encompassing gender equality in the delivery of service and outcomes. At the other hand there is the aim of achieving gender equity internally. This aim is regulated within the broader gender mainstreaming strategy but has its own aims, responsibilities and documents.

- **Which lesson can be learned in terms of success factors?**

Creating coherence in regard to the internal and the external dimension in mainstreaming gender equality in an organisation is a matter of credibility: an organisation should practice what it preaches. However in cases when there is already a strong legislation and independent mechanisms of ensuring equal opportunities of staff it can be wise to not stress on the issue because sometimes the process can be overburdened.

Resources

UN CEB policy statement (2006):



Read more UN CEB

UNDP Gender Parity Strategy (2013):



Read more on UNDP

UN Women (2012):



Read more on UN Women