



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



Gender Equality Progress Report - 2016

UNDP Somalia

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that we publish the 2016 gender progress report.

Much has changed in the country since the country office operationalized the second Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) strategy 2015-2017. Following implementation of the GEWE Strategy, the CO achieved commendable results including a record increase in women's political representation in the current parliament and passage of a Sexual Offences Law in Puntland. Tremendous effort has been put in challenging negative social norms, building the capacities of women to actively participate in national and local governance systems as well as in peacebuilding and state formation processes.

In the face of these developments, significant challenges in the achievement of GEWE still exist. Women continue to be marginalized in almost all spheres of society despite their contributions to maintaining everyday life. According to the Social Institutions and Gender Index, Somalia remains on the 6th lowest position in the world, with 'very high' discriminatory family codes, 'very high' levels of restricted physical integrity, and a 'very high' level of restricted resources and assets. Nonetheless, the 2016 political developments present opportunities for engagement and renewed efforts to address gender imbalances in Somalia.

At the Country Office (CO) level, investing in gender equality and women's empowerment as a channel to unlock human potential towards transformative and sustainable peace and development is important. In addition, the institutional framework is being strengthened from a gender perspective to ensure that all CO programmes and operations are gender responsive. However, financial resources remain a big challenge especially for targeted interventions towards GEWE. Efforts are being made to strengthen fund mobilization to sustain these efforts.

I would like to thank the Gender Unit for the instrumental role it has played in not only developing this report, but also supporting the advancement of GEWE at UNDP Somalia.

I would also like to thank all Heads of Programmes and Projects who showed exemplary leadership in ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment is at the core of UNDP's support to the people of Somalia as they build a more stable, peaceful and developed society.

George Conway
Country Director,
UNDP Somalia

Success Stories

Dawn of a New Era: Somali Women Secure Unprecedented Representation in 2016 elections

24% women MPs in the lower house **25%** women MPs in the upper house

In a historic achievement during the 2016 electoral process, Somali women secured 25% representation in the 10th Federal Parliament: 24% (63/262) MPs in the Lower House and 25% (13/52) Senators in the Upper House. This marked a 71% increase from the previous 13% representation following the 2012 'selection'. The achievement was the result of sustained efforts by women's rights advocates over a period of two years; starting with consultations towards the National Consultative Forum in 2015 and ending with the inauguration of the new Parliament in February 2017.

Given the nascent state of political and democratic institutions in Somalia, the 2016 electoral process was driven by the prevailing 4.5 clan power-sharing mechanism. However, extensive national consultations to determine the best electoral model (pending when the country would be ready for a one-person-one-vote system), recognized the importance of inclusive political processes and provided commitments for equitable participation and representation of women, youth and other minority groups. Through a political decision by a National Leadership Forum (NLF) consisting of the Federal President, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament and presidents from the different federating states/regions, a unique electoral college system was developed, based on a mix of the clan power-sharing structures and regional constituencies. Per the arrangement, members of the Lower House of Parliament would be elected by a 'college' of 51 delegates per seat to be nominated by

clan elders; whilst the Upper House would be elected by the states/regional assemblies. The NLF meeting of 06-14 September 2016¹ decided that a minimum 30% of seats in both houses of parliament will be reserved for women and committed that, "if a clan has three (3) seats in the House of the People, one of the seats should be contested exclusively by the women of that clan."²

The NLF commitment was a landmark decision and a watershed moment in the efforts to enhance women's representation in politics and decision-making in Somalia. However, it also revealed the challenge of engaging and convincing the different political institutions/actors to adhere to the commitment.

The Federal Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, a Committee of Goodwill Ambassadors (GwAs) inaugurated by the President, regional ministries for women affairs, women MPs and women civil society leaders created a surge in advocacy for the 30% quota through dialogues with key political actors (the national and state leaders, state parliaments, the federal and states independent electoral implementation teams (the FIEIT and SIEIT³), the electoral delegates, clan elders, religious leaders, women and youth); and built momentum to bolster women's mobilization as candidates in the elections. Their actions sustained the 30% goal on the political agenda and successfully influenced key decisions in the electoral process. These efforts were amplified and sustained in public consciousness through media stories on the progress of the electoral process and visibility of efforts to achieve the 30% goal.

The UN and international community also consistently advocated for a minimum 30% reserved seats for women as part of conditions for making the 2016 electoral process truly inclusive, representative and credible. By supporting the mobilization of

1 <http://www.garoweonline.com/en/news/somalia/somalias-leadership-forum-agree-on-the-electoral-process>

2 NLF Communique, clause 5.2

3 Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team; State Indirect Electoral Implementation Team



First Somali Women's Parliamentarians Conference 2016

women's groups; advocacy and awareness raising by civil society, and Goodwill Ambassadors; and integrating gender considerations into technical support and capacity building for the FIEIT and SIEITs and establishment of a women's situation room under the Federal Ministry for Women and Human Rights Development, UNDP contributed significantly to translating the 30% commitment into tangible results on increased women's political representation.

Around the world, women in electoral politics are forced to compete in hostile public spaces where they experience discrimination, violence and harassment to such great degrees that they often disengage altogether. Despite making up close to 50% of the world's total population, women are severely underrepresented in political processes with a world average of 23.3%. In the few countries where gender parity has been achieved (Bolivia: 50.2%; Rwanda 49.9%)⁴ it is attributed to the introduction of special measures such as quotas and other strategies which create an enabling environment for women to compete. No wonder that the achievement of women in the 2016 electoral process in Somalia, presents such a significant milestone. Indeed, the figures on women's representation place Somalia ahead of Kenya, its neighbour with 22.9% women MPs.⁵ The figures also place Somalia ahead of the Arab States' average of 18.0%⁶ and the global average of 22%.

4 Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

5 Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

6 Ibid

However, the journey has just begun. Of the average 25% women in the 10th Federal Parliament 83% of the women MPs are new to Politics, so they will need support and capacity building to understand and contribute effectively to parliamentary processes; including influencing law making in a gender responsive way. As Somalia builds on the recent political gains made through the 2016 electoral process, other important peace and state building priorities are unfolding. These include: ensuring inclusive implementation of the national development plan, fostering long term and lasting reconciliation, legalizing and clarifying the federal governance structure among other issues through a revision and adoption of the Provisional Federal Constitution, addressing widespread insecurity; including internal conflicts and addressing persistent droughts. The next four year present opportunities to strengthen women's leadership and participation in decision-making at all levels. UNDP will continue to support sensitization and awareness raising; capacity building of key stakeholders including women MPs; lobbying and advocacy and creating enabling legal and policy environment for women's increased representation.

Puntland Says No to GBV, Passes Sexual Offences Legislation

On 21st August 2016, the Puntland Parliament made a bold statement against gender based violence (GBV) by passing the Sexual Offences Bill into law. The first of its kind in Somalia, the legislation presents a major milestone as it criminalizes various sexual offences including gang rape; sexual harassment; cyber violence; and sexual exploitation and abuse. Significantly, the law broadens the definition of consent, paying due attention to situations where survivors lack the capacity and choice to freely give consent. It also provides for strong enforcement mechanisms and referral pathways by outlining the role of enforcement agencies; provision of psycho-social support and arrangements for witness and victim protection. UNDP supported the Ministry of Justice, Religious Affairs and Rehabilitation to sensitize communities; build the capacity of change agents and opinion shapers; and conduct advocacy with religious leaders and members of parliament.

“The most comprehensive Bill on sexual crimes, seen anywhere”

**President Judge Vagn Joensen
of the International Criminal Tribunal**

Before enactment of the law, Puntland was governed by its archaic penal and criminal procedure codes which failed to recognize GBV, in its various forms and manifestations, as a crime. Nonetheless, despite the existence of a specific law addressing GBV, deference to Xeer (customary law) is still very much rampant and continues to override formal judicial processes. A gang-rape case in Galdogob town is illustrative of this: a 16-year-old girl was gang-raped and tortured by 5 boys aged between 14 and 17 years and despite the existence of the Sexual Offences legislation which stipulates punishment of between 15 years' imprisonment and life imprisonment, clan elders resolved the case through customary law. The case highlights the tensions between Xeer, which allows perpetrators to avoid imprisonment by paying compensation to the survivor's family, and the formal justice system. Capacity building for duty bearers - both in terms of training and expansion of courts for greater access - and sensitization for community leaders and communities are required to ensure effective enforcement of the legislation.

Elsewhere in Somalia, GBV continues to constitute a significant concern for women and girls in Somalia. In 2016, 7,293 cases of GBV were reported in the GBV-IMS- 99% were reports of violence against women with 73% being women from IDP communities. The real number of GBV incidents is likely to be considerably higher as many cases go unreported.⁷ Justice systems are largely ill-equipped to respond to cases of GBV in the absence of a specific laws outlawing sexual and other forms of violence. The federal Penal Code defines rape as a moral crime rather than a crime against the person, such that survivors risk being stigmatized if they disclose incidents of rape or other forms of sexual violence.

7 Somalia Protection Cluster, Annual Report 2016, Available at: http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/field_protection_clusters/Somalia/files/somalia-protection-cluster-annual-report-2016.pdf

However, a draft sexual offences bill has been developed by the Federal Ministry for Women and Human Rights Development (MoWHRD) and awaits gazettment. Similarly, a sexual offences bill has been developed in Somaliland and requires lobbying to ensure it is passed into law.

Community Conversations on FGM: aiming for Abandonment

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) continues to persist in Somalia - especially affecting girls between the age of four to eleven years - with a last recorded prevalence of 98%.⁸ Being a deeply embedded cultural practice means that any meaningful attempt to address it must tackle belief systems and traditional norms passed on from generation to generation. As such, Community Capacity Enhancement through Community Conversations (CCE-CC) has been adopted as a strategy to address FGM. CCE-CC recognizes the inherent abilities that communities have in preventing harmful practices and challenging stereotypes by drawing on their historical strengths and internal resources. Through its methodological frameworks and facilitation skills CCE-CC works with existing social dynamics and concerns of local communities, and generates authentic community responses.

1,975 number of women reached by anti-FGM community conversations
614 number of men reached by anti-FGM community conversations

8 United Nations Development Programme (2007), Millennium Development Goals Report for Somalia, p.26. Available from <http://www.so.undp.org/MDG%20Report%20for%20Somalia%20English%20Version.pdf>

UNDP's continued commitment to addressing the root causes of gender inequality saw 2,589 men and women in 2016 participate in community conversations to address cultural norms responsible for the high rates of FGM. As a result, CCE-CC has increased community awareness and knowledge towards FGM leading to attitudinal and behavior change thus promoting discussions on abandonment. A significant number of female circumcisers stopped the practice in the target villages and districts. In one of the sessions, Ms. Shamsa Mohamed, a reformed FGM practitioner had this to say:

"One day a group of women invited me to attend an open community discussion regarding FGM and domestic violence. After attending a few sessions that highlighted the magnitude of the problems that young girls face after undergoing circumcision and throughout their lives, I decided to stop this work and participate in the social change process. Now I am vocal in stopping FGM practice in our village. I want to make peace with girls and promise not to start the practice of FGM again. The community conversations helped me understand the pressing issues and the growing position of my community in halting FGM. I also understood the potential implications that FGM can have to women in their lifetime"

Reports indicate that men and women who participate in the community conversations acknowledged the role that deep-rooted norms and cultural practices play in subordinating women in the society.⁹ Moreover, Third Party Monitoring missions revealed that 73% of the women respondents and 65% of the male respondents believe that their respective villages would stop FGM in the near future.

⁹ Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Through the Community Conversation Approach, UNDP Newsletter, 2016



International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict 2016 in Mogadishu

Gender Responsive Peacebuilding; placing Women at the Peace Table

"Before today, we believed that women's rights are ignored in the role of governance, but today we see many leaders... who are struggling to make sure that women's rights are addressed in any section of the governance system. From today, ...we pledged to show team work in any level of gender issues."

This phrase echoes the sentiments of many Somali women who have been relegated to the side lines in peace building and conflict management efforts in Somalia because of a deeply patriarchal clan system that fails to consider the gendered dimensions of conflict and post-conflict processes. UNDP's Support to Emerging Federal States programme has sought to address this by adopting a gender responsive approach to peacebuilding and conflict management. To prepare women for effective engagement in peace and reconciliation efforts of the state

26 number of women from ISWA Ministry of Women Affairs trained **31** number of women from ISWA civil society and universities trained

formation process, the project trained 57 women (26 from the Interim South West Administration's (ISWA) Ministry of Women Affairs; and 31 women from civil society and universities) on the role of women in peacebuilding processes. Additionally, 36 women (55% of participants) benefitted from a workshop on federalism, peacebuilding and conflict management in Kismayo. Out of 244 District Peace-building and Safety Committees members, 14% (31) are women.

Engendering Local Governance: Improving Service Delivery for All

Women and minority groups are most likely to live in poverty and tend to suffer disproportionately when basic services are not available. Indeed, women and girls bear the brunt of poor health, education, food, housing, human security and infrastructure. In full recognition of this UNDP Somalia, through its Joint Programme on Local Governance, supported the development of district specific action plans and minimum standards for gender responsive local governance. By facilitating dialogue and community engagement, UNDP successfully supported the mayors of Berbera and Sheikh to establish a mechanism through which women can voice their concerns to the executive committee. In Sheikh District women have representation in the executive committee which serves as an entry point for women's participation.

Enhancing Rule of Law Capacities for Increased Gender Justice

UNDP's Rule of Law (RoL) programme focuses on building capacities for human security as well as supporting the strengthening of governance and rule of law institutions, systems, practices and services in Somalia. Specifically, it seeks to improve access to justice for women and marginalized groups by ensuring gender responsive legal and judicial systems. As far as Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) is concerned, UNDP supported prevention interventions: in Puntland for example, 121 women and 79 men benefitted from legal awareness sessions which sensitized communities on SGBV and the availability of legal aid services at various legal aid clinics. Significantly, UNDP also supported response services enabling 66 SGBV survivors receive access

W:121; M: 79 number of women and men benefitting from SGBV awareness raising
66 Number of SGBV survivors receiving access to free legal aid clinics, medical treatment and psychosocial support

to free legal aid clinics, medical treatment as well as psychosocial support. Consequently, perpetrators have been charged with 23 of the SGBV cases currently in the judicial system whilst 14 cases have been successfully concluded and 21 are still under police investigation.

In Somaliland, the RoL programme supports 50 law students (W: 22, M: 28) with scholarships to study at the University of Hargeisa and Amoud University. 25 law graduates (W: 7, M: 18) are currently undertaking the judicial internship programme under the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial Commission. Through UNDP's RoL programme, Puntland reactivated its Bar Association. Hassan Aden Ahmed, and Maymun Mohamud, who graduated from UNDP's programme, were elected as the chair and deputy chair of the Association. 11 board members were elected in 2016 – five of whom are women.

Climate Change and Gender Equality: Increasing Women's Adaptive Capacity and Resilience

"My husband is unemployed and I am the sole family bread winner" said Mrs. Saynab Baruud Adan, a 38-year-old mother of 4 daughters and 3 sons. In a society where farming has traditionally been a male dominated enterprise, Saynab has proved that women can do farming just as well as men. With half a hectare of land bought with support from relatives 10 years ago, she has set herself as a role model for the fodder production farmers in Togdheer region

100 women farmers at Qoyta village of Burao district were trained on integrative farming techniques and small scale business management thereby improving their farming productivity enhancing their livelihoods, purchasing power formed small scale business cooperatives

60 women of Balidhiig village of Burao district have been trained on integrated water management and small scale business enterprises.

7 women graduates from Somaliland, Puntland, Jubaland, South West states and Hiraan region have participated in Climate Change Adaption curriculum training thus have enhanced capacities at the universities with in-depth understanding of climate systems and adaption strategies in the context of Somalia

255 women accessed short term jobs through the construction of the water harvesting and environment protection substructures (Burao-140 women, Burtinle-55 women, and Garowe-60 women).

3 women interns were recruited to work in the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (MoERD) in Somaliland.

5 women-led cooperatives were established in Gardo, Wabaran, Waciiya, Godajiraan and Galdogob and will receive training in adaptation technologies and be supported for starting their businesses around these technologies.

of Somaliland. Saynab attributes the increase in her yield to support from Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (MoERD) and UNDP. Only 4 months after the training, Saynab attracted 10 more women farmers into the fodder business and this gave rise to a women's cooperative of 50 members.

Climate change magnifies existing patterns of inequality, making women and girls more vulnerable to its adverse effects. Women play an important role in supporting households and communities to mitigate

and adapt to climate change including in natural resource management. Women have demonstrated their skills in water management, forest management and the management of biodiversity, among others. Through these experiences, women have acquired valuable knowledge that will allow them to contribute their perspectives to the identification of appropriate adaptation and mitigation techniques. In cognizance of this, UNDP Somalia, through its Global Environment Facility (GEF) has supported several capacity building and livelihoods initiatives to empower women to better prepare for and respond to climate change:

Embracing Innovative Solutions: E- Consultation on the National Development Plan

The FGS' Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation (MOPIC) spearheaded the development of the National Development Plan (NDP). The NDP aims at articulating the Federal Government's development priorities, providing a structure for resource allocation and management and guiding development aid in the coming three years. In an effort to encourage public participation and ownership of the Plan as well as strengthen citizen-state relations, MOPIC and UNDP collaborated to implement an internet based survey to capture feedback from Somali women and men. The internet based survey was identified as an innovative solution given the fact that the security situation in Somalia limits travel and restricts the ability to conduct traditional large-scale surveys. The main objective of the survey was to gather information on citizens' preferences in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Somalia National Development Plan for 2017-2019. Key findings as far as GEWE is concerned include:

- Cultural barriers, lack of a normative framework on GEWE, limited resources and opportunities and lack of awareness of women's rights are considered as main factors preventing women's equal participation in development
- Somali men are more aware of SDGs than women, while both men and women show similar preferences on SDG prioritization.

- Women perceive better progress in SDG implementation than men, have a lower perception of existence of limitations in public participation in politics and to a greater extent consider they have the capacity to lead development in the country when given equal opportunities as men
- A majority of respondents perceive that public participation in politics is insufficient and believe that, when equally represented in decision making, women can bring leadership and value to development
- Urban, diaspora, highly educated, young and middle-aged men were found to have better access to internet and general ability or initiative to participate in e-surveys as opposed to women especially those who are, in rural areas or displaced
- Respondents majorly prioritized SDGs which refer to human dignity (1- Poverty reduction; 2 - Elimination of hunger, nutrition and sustainable agriculture), basic social services (3 - Health and well-being; 4 - Education) and good governance, peace and justice (SDG 16), but interestingly, felt that SDG 5 on GEWE was not so much of a priority in their context
- Women respondents considered inequality and women's access to resources and opportunities as a more important factor affecting development than men, while more men than women perceived political will as an important factor influencing women's participation

Although the survey sample was not representative, the e-consultation brought to the fore important data on the perception of the NDP which will guide its implementation and critically, programming on GEWE.

Institutional Effectiveness for Gender Equality

The Gender Focal Team; Leadership, Ownership and Accountability for Gender Equality

Organizational culture is imperative for effective GEWE programming with senior management buy-in especially, being key in ensuring sustainable and effective results. The UNDP Somalia's Gender Focal Team (GFT) is constituted of all senior managers and unit heads in all the office locations. The GFT plays the salient role of ensuring promotion of GEWE internally by influencing the institutional culture and creating an enabling environment; and externally by ensuring programme design implementation, monitoring and evaluation is gender responsive. Additionally, the GFT also coordinates the office gender initiatives; provides strategic leadership and management; supports advocacy initiatives, capacity development, resource mobilization, programming and gender budgeting.

In 2016, the GFT approved 10% of the CO's learning budget for gender related learning especially on substantive areas of organizational work. Through the CO learning budget, four gender focal points received training on engendering human security peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The gender focal points are currently facilitating the same training to all staff across the regions. Moreover, the GFT supported resource mobilization engaging potential donors as well as allocating TRAC funds for gender programming. To complement this, the GFT ensured management accountability for gender mainstreaming, as part of UNDP's twin approach to GEWE, by facilitating performance evaluation, screening of agreements, annual work plans, project document and strategic documents for gender responsiveness. Besides, the GFT supported the Gender Unit in establishing the gender focal point system with focal points in each project to serve as resource persons tasked with the responsibility of raising awareness and understanding of gender-related issues, and ensuring gender is mainstreamed in all project activities.

The Women of Purpose Empowerment Network; Unleashing Women's Super Powers

Women cannot be blamed for not being informed, not running for political positions, not speaking up or not asserting their rights, if they are hampered from communicating among themselves.¹⁰

UNDP Somalia operates in a challenging context which necessitates the existence of four offices (one head office in Mogadishu, two area offices in Hargeisa and Garowe and one Liaison office in Nairobi). The CO has enhanced efforts to mainstream gender into all its programmes and operations. These efforts include striving to achieve gender parity in staffing numbers but also empowering women staff members to achieve their full professional potential and career advancement. Concerns specific to women in the various country office location locations have periodically been sourced and operational responses developed. However, there was still need to create safe spaces for women especially where they could discuss pertinent issues affecting them as women in their day to do professional and personal lives; network; and grow as leaders and professionals.

39 Women staff at women's only night-out - a night of fun, bonding and empowerment.
28 empowering and motivating discussions

¹⁰ Communicating Gender for Rural Development: Integrating Gender in Communication For Development, FAO

Hence the need to build a strong support and empowerment mechanism by and for women. On the side-lines of the 2016 annual retreat on 4th April a 'Girls night out' was scheduled that brought together 39 women from across the various offices. The Women of purpose Empowerment Network (WOPN) was born.

We huddled together to the ladies' night rendezvous with bated breath not knowing what the night held in store for us. The invitation was alluring, so in anticipation we hurried to put our curiosity to rest. The room was beautifully adorned with impressive Masaai artwork - the theme of Enashipai Resort. The room had the perfect ambiance for the night. We cosily sat on the couches – relaxed and ready to take in what would be soul food, each picking what was best for them.

At the event, Ms. Victoria Nwogu (Gender Specialist and Head of Cross Cutting Unit), facilitated an empowerment session using the video *The African Dream: Mary M'kundia*. In the video, Mary M'kundia, a renowned Oil and Gas professional, shared the unique story of her rise to prominence in a male-dominated professional setting. She expounded the work-life balance challenges she faced and overcame; well as advice and tips for women for advancing in their professional careers. Against this backdrop, the women held a 'heart-to-heart' discussion session in which they discussed some of the challenges they faced as women within the CO's. These included a generic work-life balance policy which was thought to be ineffective for specific needs; gender stereotypes and perceptions at individual, family and societal levels limiting women's advancement; individual and professional shortcomings which could be addressed through the support of a mentor; and the limited opportunities for career growth of women within the organization.

Since its establishment, the WOPN has been driving results not only in the country office but also at women's individual levels. Women have been sharing information, best practices and experiences with the aim of transforming their lives, encouraging one



Girls Night Out - UNDP Somalia Retreat 2016

another to live a purpose and make a difference in the community.

Flexible working arrangement a catalyst to business delivery

Prescribing to work-life policy provisions involving flexi-time, telecommuting and breastfeeding policy encourages a sense among staff that they have discretion to fit job -related responsibilities into their broader lives contributing to less stress and burnout. UNDP is increasingly becoming aware of how advancing flexible working arrangement for employees increases job satisfaction with a positive impact on overall delivery. Every so often, staff get flexi-time or telecommuting approval to attend to their daily work requirements as they tend to family and personal issues. The human resources policy offers and enforces flexible working arrangements as a way of avoiding the pitfalls of imbalanced work-life dynamics. The advancement of technology has made flexible working arrangement implementable. CO staff now arrange for flexible working with their supervisors while at the same time delivering on the

7 email alerts on work/
personal life enhancement
disseminated

specified outputs. While such access does not allow them to spend more time at home, it has blurred the lines between work and life. The nursing mothers enjoy flexible arrangements reporting at 9 a.m. and leaving the office at 3 p.m. In some instances, especially in the area offices, women colleagues are often driven home to breast-feed and nurse their young ones thus allowing for bonding with infants. In 2016 3 women (1 SL; 2PL) benefited.

To further sensitize staff on the importance of work-life balance, the Gender Unit developed and disseminated emails every week, reminding staff to take advantage of the policy to enable them meet both in job and family demands. The weekly email alerts on work-life balance have been received positively as they provide information on practical ways of balancing life with work- including on exercise as a source of stress relief, dieting, positive thinking and mental wellness and how being optimistic can prevent depression, increase social connections.

Gender Induction for New Staff: Embracing Gender Transformative Organizational Culture

In the context of UNDP Somalia, gender is no longer highlighted as a separate area of concentration but as a cross-cutting theme that is integrated or mainstreamed into all areas of UNDP's work. An explicit UNDP mandate for gender mainstreaming was reaffirmed by the CO adopting a two-pronged approach to promoting GEWE -Gender mainstreaming in core programming areas and gender specific initiatives in line with the corporate gender strategy 2014-2017. The CO endeavours to enhance staff capacities for gender mainstreaming and to mainstream gender issues into all its operations and management policies, systems and procedures as well as its corporate instruments. For the last 4 years of the strategy implementation, gender mainstreaming continued to pose a major challenge especially regarding documenting and reporting on mainstreaming results. This is despite continuous staff capacity building on gender mainstreaming thus exposing the need for explicit articulation of goals and expectations for gender mainstreaming to both new and old staff. In 2016, the CO therefore incorporated gender induction into the

staff orientation package and a mandatory briefing by the Gender Unit. All new staff and consultants are taken through the office gender strategy, gender policy, available tools for gender mainstreaming and expectations for them to deliver on their outputs from a gender perspective. In 2016 18 staff (5 PL; 6N; 6 Mog; 1 SL) were taken through the orientation process.

Internal empowerment Networks enhancing professional growth and inclusive staff engagement.

The tenacity of inequalities between men and women have proved to be a great hindrance to women's full participation in all spheres of life especially in decision making. The country office empowerment network launched in 2015 with the aim of empowering women and men to participate fully not only as professionals along their career lines but also to take part in socio-economic development across all sectors as a way of building strong economies, achieving sustainable development goals and improving the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. The peer to peer sessions, mentorship initiatives has improved organizational culture towards environment of openness, calling for respect and valuing differences, promoting equal opportunity and treatment for all, enhanced career growth and job satisfaction and result delivery.

23 peer to peer sessions
held **35** mentors & protégés
in place

International Women's day's commemoration, a time for UNDP to reflect on achievements and existing gaps

The theme for the International Women's Day 2016 was "Planet 50-50 by 2030; Step It Up for Gender Equality"



Somalia joins the world in marking International women's day

and signalled a call for governments and institutions (private and public) to increase and accelerate their efforts towards achieving parity in all spheres of life. As has always been the norm, UNDP Somalia commemorated the event across all its office locations. The day was an opportunity for all staff to probe: the progress made in promoting gender equality within the office environment, and the prevailing gaps in mainstreaming and how this can be done better especially regarding mainstreaming gender into our institutional culture for improved results. Staff were curious to understand what a gender perspective was in relation to their work and how the organization could contribute to its achievement by 2030. The CO affirmed its commitment to challenge the underlying structural inequalities and discrimination against women. IWD was equally celebrated in other area offices and Nairobi support office. In Garowe, UNDP invited all UN agencies to discuss progress and posing gaps to achieving gender equality. Posters on historical timeline in promoting GEWE and on work-life balance policy was distributed. Staff had an opportunity to discuss possible entry points including establishing a breastfeeding area with a care taker to enable breastfeeding women tend to children as well as meet their office obligations. In Nairobi, it was a time to recognize the important role women play not only in the society but also in their areas of work within the organization. Women were caught on the hop when fellow men colleagues ushered them in with roses. It was indeed a gratifying moment for women as the head of the office Mr. Sukhrob Kojimatov highlighted the critical role women play. In Hargeisa, the head of the office, Mr. Sergej, led

men colleagues in appreciating women as important half of humanity. In both Nairobi and Hargeisa, the challenges facing women-prayer room, breastfeeding room staff were discussed and mitigation measures put in place through GSS committee.

Validating Dreams: UNDP's Young Women Graduates Initiative

Like several women in Somalia, 24-year-old Irfah Abdullahi struggled to get work after completing her undergraduate studies. In a job market that is predominantly male, Somali women face major hurdles in securing jobs both in the private and public sectors. Socio-cultural norms have historically seen women relegated to more reproductive and traditional roles. Indeed, a UNDP study found that women in Somalia experience higher unemployment rates than men (74% for women and 61% for men)¹¹ and additionally that the proportion of youth who were neither working nor in school is more pronounced among young women at 27% than among young men at 15%.¹² In cognizance of this, UNDP supports young women secure work placement and professional work experience through its Young Women Graduates Initiative (YWGI). The YWGI aims to create a pool of employable women in the public and private sector. Going by the YWGI guidelines, each UNDP project allocates a budget in all its implementing agreements for the YWGI.

52 Young women graduates benefit from internship programme

This flagship initiative of the CO has seen UNDP support 52 young women graduates to access internship opportunities in diverse institutions – government and CSOs. Following the internship

11 United Nations Development Programme (2014), Gender in Somalia, brief II

12 Ibid

programme, Irfah, who was attached to the Strengthening Institutional Performance programme at UNDP, successfully competed for the Head of Finance position at the Puntland Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

" Somali women are very much aware of the roadblocks ahead, but I am determined to make a meaningful change for myself and the society that I am coming from." Participation of the recruitment interview and exam for the Head of Finance Section position in a competitive process led by the Puntland Civil Service Commission and International HR firm, was career milestone for me," Irfah Abdullahi

Gender Focal Points: Oversight and coordination for Gender Transformative results in UNDP Programmes and Operations

The GFPs serve as the contact and resource persons within their organizations tasked to help raise awareness and understanding of gender-related issues, and promote the application of the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist or the concept in the daily work of their staff. The GFPs act as change catalysts -initiating change, motivating everyone and supporting gender mainstreaming. Across the offices, GFPs developed gender action plans for the year with quarterly reviews to ensure they were on track in coordinating gender mainstreaming and ensuring partners implement and report from a gender perspective. In 2016 two gender focal points, Abdi Nassir Hussein and Hamza Abbas were recognized recognised and awarded as outstanding

23 (13W; 10M) Gender focal points change catalysts in the office

office gender champions; being in the frontline in raising awareness and understanding of the importance of gender mainstreaming within the organization through blogs and articles; and bringing to colleagues' attention emerging gender issues or events (e.g. Trainings, seminars, talks other advocacy initiatives) that are of relevance to them, generate discussion and interest in the subject.

Strengthening Capacity of staff to deliver on gender

Four gender focal persons selected from all the CO locations received training on Engendering Human Security, Conflict Management and Peacebuilding offered by the NGO, Coalition for Peace in Africa. The training helped the gender focal points to understand gender and violence in conflict and post conflict transition and the importance of enhancing women's involvement in peacebuilding processes.

4W Trained on Engendering Human security, conflict management and peace transformation

The participants explored various international Human rights Instruments that supports engendering Human security, conflict management and transformation. The four gender focal persons are currently, stepping down the training to other staff to amplify the knowledge and skills to a larger number of staff in the office.

Communicating Effectively, Communicating Equality: challenging gender stereotypes through communication

UNDP Somalia has for the last 4 years, enhanced efforts to ensure not only gender responsiveness but also

A gender responsive communication handbook & poster developed and disseminated to all staff

gender transformative potential of its interventions. The Gender Responsive Communication Handbook was developed to guide staff to be aware of their thoughts and actions as development workers so that they rely less on assumptions about traditional and outdated views on the roles of men and women and more on the present realities for women, men, boys and girls in all their communications. Indeed, when we are gender responsive, we improve chances that everyone can participate and contribute to make better decisions that will have a transformative impact on social relations and our development work overall. The Gender Responsive Communication handbook is a step towards ensuring the beliefs and commitments in promoting gender are reflected in both internal and external communications. The country office strategic documents, promotion materials and reporting guidelines are intended to communicate empowerment and this remains a core requirement before approval by appraisal committees or management.

Gender-responsive Public Procurement: Leveraging the Potential of Women-owned Businesses and Advocating for Increased Representation of Women in the Private Sector

Following a blog on gender and procurement circulated by Ms. Asha Shidane (Procurement Associate) on Gender Net in May 2015, the International Legal Resource Centre (ILRC) of the American Bar Association approached the CO and offered to conduct a research on "Best Practices in Promoting Gender Equality in Procurement" to guide the CO in its future efforts to mainstream gender into procurement. The outcome of the research was



Young Women Law Students in for tutorials

a comprehensive report analysing best practices in gender and procurement with solid recommendation on making the procurement process more responsive. While UNDP/Somalia addresses gender equality issues with various programmatic activities, the procurement unit is seeking to become more actively engaged in promoting gender equity in the procurement process. From an operational point of view, the above-mentioned report was produced on time and will serve as a launching pad for the organization to suggest tangible policies to support UNDP's gender equity through procurement from the policy office. The comparative analysis, best practices in the selected countries and recommendations were very useful and helped the organization identify how best to incorporate gender equity in day to day procurement activities. Moreover, ILRC support is expected to enable UNDP Somalia to explore the more applicable best practices adaptable to Somalia Country office for tangible achievements around gender equity and procurement.

Tracking Investments and Enhancing Performance of UNDP Programmes towards GEWE

The gender marker tracks and monitors gender-responsiveness of financial allocations and expenditures. UNDP adopted it as a tool for key decision making processes, annual strategic planning and reporting at all levels. Every output/project for both development and management projects are

Marker	% of CO AWP budget 2016
3	3%
2	96%
1	1%

rated against a four-point scale that ranges from 0 to 3 (0-no contribution to gender equality, 1-Insignificant contribution to gender equality, 2- Objective of Promoting Gender equality and 3- Gender equality as the Principle objective). This rating is normally done for all active projects. As a policy, the CO is intolerant to marker zero and therefore upon thorough review of projects and work plans in 2016, all the projects qualified for marker 2 except the GEWE and HIV Projects that were scored marker 3. The Trade and private sector project scored marker 1 because it had no marginal contribution to gender equality. As a policy, the CO is intolerant to marker zero and so strives to ensure that all its projects and programmes contribute to gender equality in significant ways.

Ensuring Gender Compliance of Partner Agreements

UNDP Somalia is committed to mainstreaming gender in all its interventions to ensure positive impact of its programmes on the lives of women

52 Agreements (LOAs/
MCGs) **20** annual workplans

and men and to redress existing inequalities in the development process. To ensure gender responsive project/programme development, and that potential gender issues are sufficiently addressed, the gender unit developed a gender mainstreaming checklist (to complement the Gender Mainstreaming Made Easy Handbook I and II developed in previous years) to sustain staff capacity to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their programmes and projects with a gender lens. The checklist is further used for review of all programmes/projects documents and agreements by the gender and M&E units at the LPAC stage. This acts as a quality assurance mechanism and a requirement for all appraisals by the committee and eventual approval by senior management. Compliance with the checklist has contributed to Somali men and women equally contributing to and benefiting from direct outputs of UNDP projects and overall projects.

Challenges

Despite the gains and successes witness in terms of advancement of GEWE in 2016, there existed a number of challenges which hampered the full achievement of goals and targets. Insecurity, a volatile political environment, lack of adequate resources, capacity gaps and an enduring patriarchal system all posed challenges that required the use of innovative solutions and adjustments in programme plans.

Insecurity

Heightened security threats, especially in the run-up to the national elections, greatly hampered movement making programme implementation difficult. In January for example, a bomb attack near the AMISOM base, which is also home to several UN staff, claimed 15 lives. The volatile security environment meant that project staff and partners were unable to maintain full presence on the ground. Furthermore, situation necessitated programme criticality which relegated the GEWE programme thereby creating challenges in project implementation and monitoring especially in Mogadishu.

Political Environment

Throughout the year, the country context remained turbulent, unpredictable and very dynamic. Since its establishment, MoWHRD underwent several leadership changes with the Director General (DG) being replaced within the first quarter of the year. This occasioned an initial delay in project delivery. In addition, project implementation was delayed due to shifting priorities on the part of government partners with attention shifting towards elections preparedness. The 2016 electoral process also witnessed a one-month delay which raised alarm and tension, especially over possible manipulation of the 30% reserved seats for women. In Somaliland, it is likely that there will be one or two-year delay for parliamentary elections and this may also affect the efforts of women's participation in elections that has been debated for over two years.

Insufficient Resources

It is well established that for gender mainstreaming to bear tangible, sustainable results, commitments to GEWE must be matched by sufficient resources. The UNDP approach to gender mainstreaming emphasizes the integration of GEWE across the programme portfolio as well as investment in gender-focused and women-specific projects. The CO through its gender strategy and in line with corporate requirements, established a benchmark for resource allocation in support of mainstreaming. Through the Gender Marker, the CO can track and monitor budgetary allocations for GEWE across all programmes. Even though this is a significant step towards the promotion of GEWE, the overall CO resources allocated in 2016 for GEWE programming staggered at 3% of the CO budget, failing to meet the minimum benchmark of 15%. As such, accountability for applying the gender marker during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages will need to be strengthened in 2017 to improve gender responsive project delivery. Additionally, at project level, Output 2 of the GEWE project (focuses on creating an enabling environment for increased economic opportunities for women) was not implemented for the second year in a row because



Somali Women Police officers in a workshop in Mogadishu

of limited funding and prioritization of resource mobilization for women political representation and participation. The joint MPTF Project on Women's Political Participation delayed implementation in the last quarter of 2016 due to a delay in disbursement of funds as well as the fact that the programme started in late 2016 rendering many of the interventions originally planned irrelevant.

Limited capacity of national counterparts

Capacity gaps, both technical and infrastructural, on the part of project partners remains a challenge necessitating the mainstreaming of capacity building support into all project initiatives. Furthermore, political will to ensure commitments to GEWE are translated into sustainable results remains weak with social and cultural barriers playing major obstacle to the advocacy efforts on women's rights and gender equality. Alongside capacity issues and wanting commitment to GEWE, popular ownership and sustained commitment at all levels are yet to be achieved.

Enduring Patriarchal Social Systems

Social and cultural barriers remain a major obstacle to the advocacy efforts on GEWE in Somalia. A case in point is during the parliamentary elections where some clan elders, religious leaders and male candidates challenged women's participation in the electoral process and specifically the introduction of reserved seats. This resulted in humiliation, intimidation, death threats, instigation of fear and corruption all in a bid to discourage and prevent women from vying for elective positions. These actions were detrimental to the security and safety of women aspirants and in some cases resulted in their withdrawal from the electoral process. Deeply rooted cultural norms affect project impact in securing buy-in for promoting GEWE. Community conversations have so far been well received by the communities in which they are implemented. Notably, they have been recognized for providing a platform through which communities can discuss sensitive issues in safe spaces. However, very few men and boys attend the community dialogue sessions.

Lessons Learnt

After what was a year of great successes as well as challenges, it is important to take stock of what worked, what did not and what could be done better. As far as GEWE is concerned, there are a few best practices worth highlighting.

The e-consultation model that was used for the NDP consultation proved successful. With the vast growing technology and the mushrooming of online platforms, e-consultations presented an opportunity for broadening civic engagement. It stimulated reflection and inputs into the NDP from diverse target groups that the traditional approaches may not have reached including the women in the academia, diaspora communities and youth groups, private sector. Globally, e-consultations have gained significant momentum since citizens can contribute to development processes at their convenience. The E-consultation was a civic engagement pilot experience in Somalia, which could mature itself into a primary consultation process over time. Several

parameters were used to determine the level of usability of the e-consultation (engagement of authorities and targeted stakeholder groups, internet accessibility, literacy rates in targeted population, advertisement & dissemination, use of existing networks to improve reach out, etc.) It had captured women's perspectives and inputs to the National Development Plan in Somalia.

Expertise, leadership commitment to GEWE, popular ownership and sustained commitment at all levels are central pillars in successful gender mainstreaming. However, political will to ensure commitments to gender equality are translated into sustainable policies and programmes on the ground remains weak and socio-cultural barriers remain a major obstacle to the advocacy efforts on GEWE. Towards this end, CCE-CC strategy has proved to be particularly effective as a best practice and experience shows that gradual shifts in perceptions and adherence to harmful traditional practices for instance, are beginning to occur.

For further information please contact:

UNDP Country office for Somalia

Gender unit

Email: gender.so@undp.org

www.so.undp.org