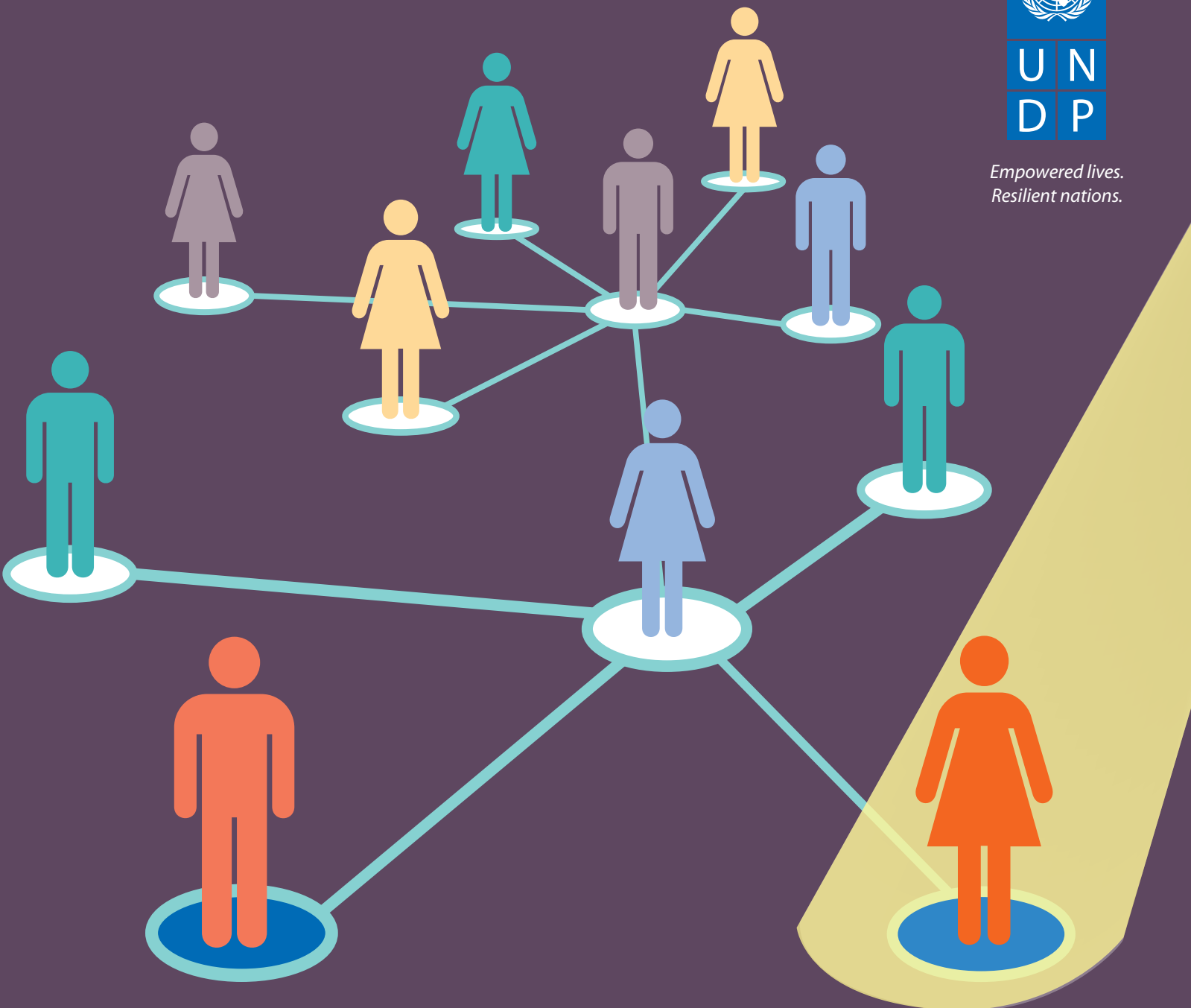




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United Nations Development Programme



GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEPA	Gender Equality in Public Administration (UNDP Initiative)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEESAC	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women



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The report was co-authored by Suki Beavers and Noëlla Richard. Research coordination and contributions were provided by Soma Chakrabarti Fezzardi (consultant). The report builds on findings from thirteen case studies also prepared as part of this initiative, and on consultations, interviews, literature and desk reviews. Substantive comments and inputs were received from UNDP colleagues in regional bureaus, country offices and regional service centres. In addition, the publication benefited from the valuable insights, advice and support provided by representatives of national and subnational governments, academia, members of non-governmental organizations and women's networks and caucuses who have been contacted in relation to the GEPA case studies and report.

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FOREWORD

Gender equality is both an essential development goal in its own right and a driver of human development. International law recognizes that everyone has a right to participate in public life, but it remains an ongoing challenge to achieve women's *equal* participation, especially in decision-making. The importance of advancing women's leadership in politics has continued to gain traction. Although much remains to be done, advances are being made slowly but surely. Unfortunately, less attention and support has been given to promoting women's leadership in public administration.

In response, UNDP developed a joint research and policy development initiative titled Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) to help fill this gap. This global report reflects extensive research based on available national data, and provides analysis of the obstacles in the way of women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration. It highlights examples of approaches which can work, and offers recommendations for further action.

A critical mass of women in public administration, in particular in senior decision-making positions, is important for equity reasons and because it brings more women's perspectives to policy and other discussions. Positions in public administration may also be among the few available or 'acceptable' employment opportunities for women, making it all the more important that women have a fair chance of competing for them.

This report will be an important resource for governments, public administrations, United Nations agencies, development partners, academic institutions, civil society and women's organizations. We hope that it be a catalyst for policy and programming designed to accelerate women's equal participation and leadership in public administration and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Helen Clark
UNDP Administrator



INTRODUCTION

Public administration is the bedrock of government and the central instrument through which national policies and programmes are implemented. In an ideal world, public administration is guided by principles of fairness, accountability, justice, equality and non-discrimination, and serves as a model of governance for society which includes the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in the civil service workforce.

However, globally, this is not yet the reality. Instead of being a driving force behind the implementation of internationally-agreed goals on gender equality and human rights standards and principles, in many developed and developing countries, public administration often remains a patriarchal institution, perpetuating gender-biased traditions, attitudes and practices. Women do not yet participate equally in public administration, especially in leadership and decision-making roles.

The target of a minimum of 30 percent of women in leadership positions, originally endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1990 and reaffirmed in the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995,¹ is being approached in many public administrations and even surpassed in some. Nevertheless, while progress is being made in terms of total numbers of women in public administration, both glass ceilings and glass walls continue to present challenges to women's equal participation in decision-making positions.

A fundamental argument for increased representation of women in public service is that when the composition of the public sector reflects the composition of the society it serves, government will be more responsive and effective. Thus, closing gender gaps in public administration is important to ensuring truly inclusive development and democratic governance and helps to restore trust and confidence in public institutions and enhance the sustainability and responsiveness of public policies.² It is a critical policy issue in both developing and developed countries.³

Women's equal participation in public administration and decision-making and can also be viewed as a necessary condition for women's interests to be fully taken into account and properly addressed. According to the *2011 Human Development Report*,⁴ analysis shows how power imbalances and gender inequalities at the national level are linked to unequal access to clean water and better sanitation, impacts on land degradation, etc.

“
(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

- Article 21, Universal Declaration of Human Rights
”

Without a critical mass of women, public administration is not tapping into the full potential of a country's workforce, capacity and creativity. Women generally represent more than half of the population. As public administration is an important employer in many countries (and in certain cases may be the only available or 'acceptable' employment opportunity for women) equal participation in public administration can have a significant impact on women's economic empowerment.

1. ECOSOC Report E/1990/90.
2. Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters, *Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance*, UNDP (2007).
3. OECD, "Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth" (2014).
4. UNDP, *Human Development Report 2011, Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All*.



Compelling cases have been made that greater equality and gender parity in managerial and leadership positions in politics as well as the private sector leads to superior competitiveness due to higher performance and productivity. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2013 explains how crucial it is for the competitiveness of countries and companies to develop, attract and retain the best talents, both male and female.⁵

To date, governance reform programmes most often have prioritized other important gender equality issues

- notably women's participation in the political arena - and have tracked the status of women in political leadership positions and encouraged policies and practices that promote women's access to services. As far back as 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women urged the international community to improve knowledge gathering on women in politics and to make better use of databases and methodologies to follow women's involvement in decision-making. The same level of attention has not been paid to women in public administration; and unlike women's political participation, no global tracking mechanism exists for women's participation and leadership in public administration. The qualitative and quantitative data that does exist suggests there remains ample room for progress in gender equality in public administration.

Barriers to women's advancement in public administration undermine the fundamental principles of equal opportunity and social justice in society as a whole. Multiple strategies must be developed to break these barriers down, and garner ongoing support and commitment from all stakeholders. Changing institutional and societal cultures, including attitudes of men and women that hamper progress in gender parity, is a difficult but essential task.

“
It is very important...for women's political participation at all levels and representation in public administrations to be strengthened so that they can have a strong voice in the setting of development policy and priorities
 - Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, opening remarks at the Democracy and Gender Equality Roundtable, 4 May 2011⁷
 ”

“
Increasing evidence shows that gender inequality is bad economics. It has been shown that businesses benefit from the promotion of women in leadership, as well as a gender balanced staff. Investment in gender equality, women's empowerment and decent work for women is vital for improving economic, social and political conditions.
 - Facts on Investing in Decent Work for Women, International Labour Organization, February 2008
 ”

UNDP has extensive knowledge and experience with mainstreaming gender equality, women's empowerment in governance, supporting the design and delivery of gender-sensitive public services and advancing women's equal participation in policymaking and politics. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is central to the mandate of UNDP, which includes advocating for women's equal rights, combating discriminatory practices and challenging the roles and stereotypes that generate inequality and exclusion. Gender equality issues are intrinsic to UNDP's development approach, as illustrated in the organization's Strategic Plan⁶ and the Gender Equality Strategy⁷ that accompanies it.

5. www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2013.

6. "Changing with the World," UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017).

7. "The Future We Want: Rights and Empowerment," UNDP Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017).



In particular, UNDP has long recognized the importance of a healthy public administration for national development and continues to implement an impressive number of projects and programmes in this field, including providing technical assistance and strengthening public service capacities,⁸ training for women public servants and managers,⁹ research in support of reform and innovation, human resource practices, inter-ministerial coordination, etc. However, gender equality dimensions have not always been systematically integrated into UNDP support for public administration reform and there has not been sufficient analysis of the impact, results and lessons learned of these reforms on advancing gender equality within public administration.¹⁰

To respond to these ongoing gaps and challenges, UNDP launched a Global Initiative on Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA). The GEPA initiative has two key priorities: (i) supporting women's empowerment and expanded participation and leadership in the executive branch of the state; and (ii) contributing to the availability of up-to-date information on gender equality in public administration and of evidence and analysis to facilitate informed policy and decision-making.

Methodology and structure of the report

Thirteen country case studies were conducted to reflect a variety of development contexts in all five regions where UNDP is operating and to provide evidence for identifying constraints to and enabling factors of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in public administration. The methodology for analysing the subject was developed and refined through extensive consultations with UNDP practitioners in the field, regional practice leaders, global policy advisors and external experts. Further consultations with UNDP country offices were carried out during the research on the case studies and follow-up reviews to identify relevant national policies, programmes and initiatives.

In addition to the 13 in-depth country case studies, the global report was informed by a desk-based literature review, semi-structured interviews and consultations with United Nations colleagues and external experts. Although developing country contexts are highlighted in this publication, some examples are also drawn from

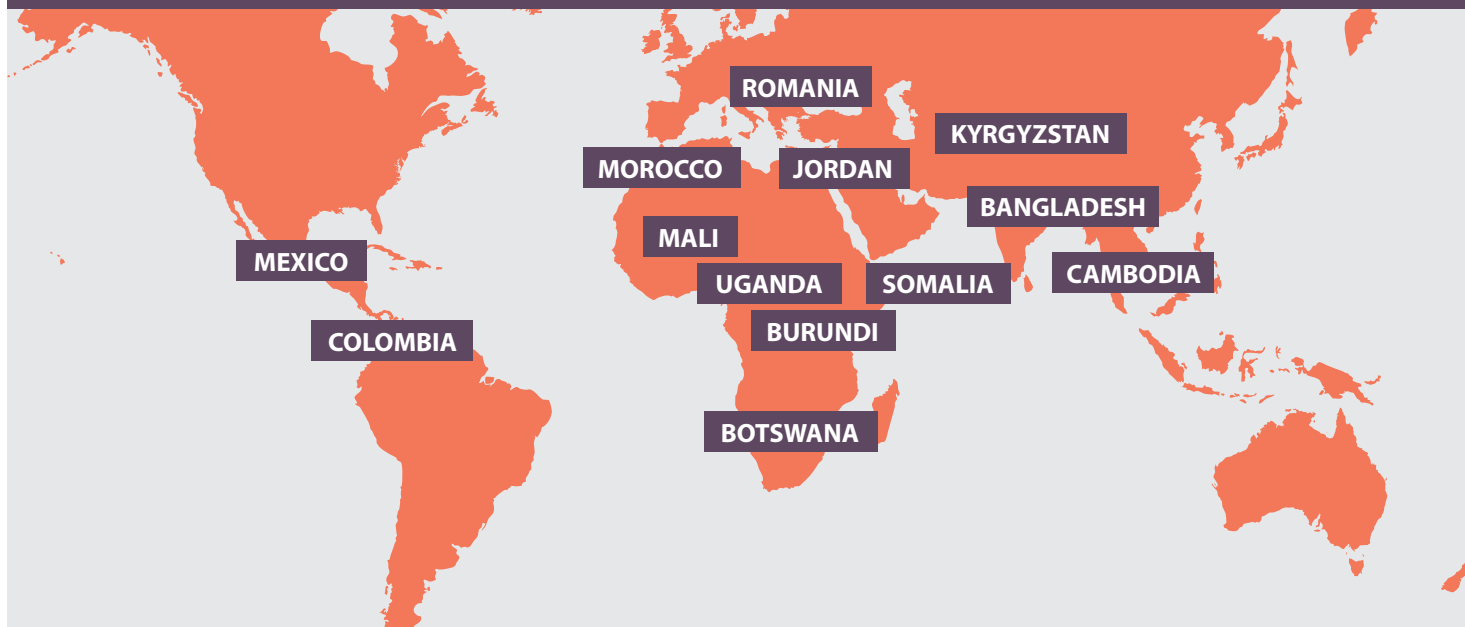
8. In 2012, the total value of UNDP public administration support was US\$ 384 million.

9. E.g., Somalia's Civil Service Institute was set up in 2005 with UNDP's assistance and provided targeted support to women through short courses in women's empowerment.

10. This gap was reflected in UNDP's stocktaking exercise in 2010, which identified a lack of greater analysis of and attention to gender equality and parity issues in public administration programming. www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/local_governance/overview-of-trends-and-developments-in-public-administration--local-governance.



UNDP GEPA Initiative Case Study Countries



developed countries where similar challenges are faced or where innovative practices have been promoted. Similarly, while the focus is on public administration, examples and good practices from others sectors are featured when relevant.

The working definition of **women in decision-making positions in public administration** adopted by UNDP for the report includes those women identified as being in non-elected decision-making or leadership positions in:

- recent reports of national governments (including reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and in responses to questionnaires for the review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action after 15 years);
- public administration reform strategies;
- gender equality strategies and similar documents;
- civil service censuses; and
- human resource databases in ministries.

Where this information was not available, the report uses the participation of women at the level of Permanent Secretary, Director General or nearest equivalent level as a proxy indicator.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Part One** presents an analysis of the trends, barriers and challenges to women's participation in decision-making positions.
- **Part Two** examines frameworks, policies and initiatives that can increase women's presence in public administration decision-making in various contexts.
- **Part Three** provides policy and programming recommendations to achieve gender equality and gender parity in public administration, with a particular lens on decision-making levels.



PART ONE: MAIN TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

1 KEY TRENDS IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

A. *Where are the women in public administration?*

As noted in the introduction, no comprehensive global baseline exists on women's presence in public administration. However, from the information that is available, it appears that, despite the diversity of countries studied, women remain underrepresented overall in the top levels of public administration.

The picture created is of a mixed bag, with many hidden complexities. Some encouraging absolute numbers of women in public service can be found, but not necessarily in the positions of greatest influence or across all sectors uniformly. Women represent at least 30 percent of public administration in many countries, but as Table 1 below illustrates, their participation appears to be highly variable, ranging from over 70 percent in some countries (e.g., Ukraine with 75 percent) and as low as 12 percent in others (e.g., India).¹¹ In addition, the 30 percent minimum target of women in *decision-making positions* lags sorely behind in most countries (see column 3 in Table 1 below).

As the table reflects, some developing countries have made great strides in women's participation in decision-making positions in public administration. For instance, Costa Rica has reached 46 percent women in decision-making positions, Botswana 45 percent and Colombia 40 percent. Progress can and is thus being made in many countries; hence gender equality and gender parity can be a realistic goal for countries currently lagging behind.

According to the Worldwide Index of Women as Public Sector Leaders recently developed by Ernst & Young,¹² across the G20 major economies, women account now for around 48 percent of the overall public sector workforce, but they still represent less than 20 percent of public sector leadership. Conversely, across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, women hold 65 percent of all administrative and secretariat positions in central public administrations.¹³

It is important to dig further into what the numbers reflect about women's actual participation in public administration. In many national contexts where numbers of women equal those of men in public administration as a whole, women tend to be clustered in junior, less prestigious and lower paying positions and in those traditionally considered to be 'soft' or feminized sectors, such as culture, education, health and tourism. In most countries, women are underrepresented, if present at all, in sectors such as security, finance and planning, which remain dominated by men. Such sectoral segregations, known as 'glass walls,' were also identified at the decision-making level across all thirteen of the GEPA case studies.

11. The comparability of the data can pose challenges and disaggregated data is not always readily available.

12. [www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY_-_Worldwide_Index_of_Women_as_Public_Sector_Leaders/\\$FILE/EY-Worldwide-Index-of-Women.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY_-_Worldwide_Index_of_Women_as_Public_Sector_Leaders/$FILE/EY-Worldwide-Index-of-Women.pdf).

13. OECD (2014), *Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth*. www.oecd.org/gov/women-government-and-policy-making.htm.

14. *All references to Kosovo in this report are made in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).



Table 1: Women's Participation in Public Administration

	Overall (percentage)	Decision-making levels (percentage)
AFRICA		
Benin	19 (2011)	22 (2012)
Botswana	52 (2012)	45 (2009)
Burundi	-	12 (2010)
Cameroon	25 (2010)	N/A
The Gambia	25 (2007)	20 (2007)
Mali	28 (2009)	15 (2009)
Nigeria	24 (2006)	22 (2006)
South Africa	56 (2011)	35 (2011)
Uganda	33 (2011)	22 (2011)
ARAB STATES		
Jordan	46 (2010)	10 (2010)
Morocco	34 (2009)	15 (2009)
Oman	34 (2007)	8 (2007)
Somalia:		
Somaliland	30 (2006)	0 (2012)
Puntland	23 (2011)	6 (2011)
Tunisia	41 (2011)	27 (2011)
ASIA PACIFIC		
Afghanistan	20 (2009-10)	10 (2004-10)
Bangladesh	21 (2008-9)	14 (2010)
Cambodia	34 (2011)	18 (2011)
India	12 (2006)	10 (2009)
Indonesia	47 (2011)	8 (2011)
Nepal	15 (undated)	5 (2007)
Timor-Leste	28 (2010)	16 (2010)
Vanuatu	40 (2011)	18 (2003)
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN		
Chile	41 (2007-2009)	29 (2009)
Colombia	49 (2011)	40 (2011)
Costa Rica	42 (2012)	46 (2009)
Mexico	50 (2010)	29 (2011)
EUROPE AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES		
Albania	46 (2011)	24 (2011)
Azerbaijan	28 (2011)	23 (2011)
Croatia	45 (2011)	30 (2009)
Kazakhstan	58 (2009)	9 (2009)
Kosovo* ¹⁴	36 (2011)	17 (2011)
Kyrgyzstan	42 (2010)	27 (2010)
Romania	64 (2011)	12 (2011)
Ukraine	75 (2008)	13 (2010)
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentages have been rounded. • Countries highlighted in bold are GEPA case study countries. • See Annex 2 for sources. 		



The UNDP GEPA Jordan case study found that “the number of women seems to decrease at the ministries that are considered male ministries, such as the Ministry of Interior, where women represent only 13 percent of the total number of the employees.”¹⁵ The situation is the same in Argentina, where ministries with the highest proportion of female staff are education (65.5 percent) and social development (63.5 percent).¹⁶ In Kyrgyzstan, over 40 percent of public administration posts were occupied by women, but those were concentrated in lower and administrative positions and in the traditionally feminized sectors of health, education and social services. In Colombia, the ministries with the highest ratio of women in upper management decision-making positions were typically perceived as feminine spaces: education, culture, social protection and communications.¹⁷

Although exceptions do exist, globally women’s segregation by sector is a persistent pattern.¹⁸ Occupational segregation is not limited to public administration in developing contexts. According to a 2006 paper, in the United States, the “gender typing of women not only affects the types of occupations they pursue but also the types of agencies they work for. The stereotype of ‘caring’ women results in women working in agencies that provide services such as education and social services.”¹⁹ Likewise, in the European Union, women ministers and top government employees are generally occupying functions in ministries with socio-cultural functions. In contrast, the economic sector has the lowest participation of women in the top two levels of civil servants.²⁰ An International Labour Organization (ILO) paper, *Time for Equality at Work* (2003), states, “while an anti-discrimination legal model based on prohibiting discriminatory practices has proven successful in eliminating the most blatant forms of discrimination, such as direct pay discrimination, it has encountered less success with the more subtle forms, such as occupational segregation.”

Data collected at the national level also exposes gender bias in job and contract types. In terms of job type, women generally occupy more administrative and support positions than professional positions (e.g., Timor-Leste²¹). After women have joined administrative streams it can be hard for them to move into professional streams, further reducing the likelihood that women will make it to and remain in decision-making positions. In addition, women are also typically overrepresented among temporary and short-term contractual staff and less represented in permanent positions.²² As permanent staff generally receives priority over short-term and contract staff, women are again often detrimentally impacted and further disadvantaged, when it comes to training and development for higher level positions. Across OECD countries, for instance, less than one percent of women employed part-time are in top management jobs.²³

15. GEPA Jordan Case Study, UNDP (2012).

16. Report on gender and human rights in Argentina (2005 – 2008): Participation of women in public management, *Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Genero* (2009).

17. GEPA Colombia Case Study, UNDP (2012).

18. Exceptions are: in Europe, Bulgaria has achieved parity or over parity with women’s representation in the economy, infrastructure and social sectors. Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden also have the minimum recommended level of women’s participation (30 percent) at the top two levels of public administration in all sectors. Source: *More Women in Senior Positions - Key To Economic Stability and Growth 2009*, European Commission (2010), p. 30.

19. “Unequal Pay: The Role of Gender,” Alkadry and Towers, *Public Administration Review*, November/December 2006, referring to Newman (1994) and Stivers (1993), www.library.eiu.edu/ersvdocs/4371.pdf.

20. *More women in senior positions - Key to economic stability and growth*, European Commission (2010), pp. 61-62.

21. *Women’s Participation in the Timor-Leste Civil Service in 2010*, United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (2010).

22. For example, in Mali in 2009 female contract employees outnumber men. 38 percent of contract staff are female against 28 percent for men. 70 percent of men in the civil service are ‘absorbed’ full civil servants compared with just 60 percent for women. Source: National Public Service and Personnel Directorate (August 2010).

23. OECD, *Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth* (2014), Executive Summary, p. 12.



B. Women's participation and decision-making in local governments

Although this report pays particular attention to gender in decision-making positions at the national level, recent data and analysis that reflect variations in patterns of women's participation in local public administration is worth highlighting. A recent UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre publication shows that "for most people (...) local governments are far more important arenas for matters having a direct impact on their livelihoods than national parliaments, especially when local governments are responsible for the delivery of key services."²⁴ In some countries the rate of women's participation is higher at the subnational level than in the central public administration.

Another UNDP publication on the presence of women in decision-making at the local level in Latin America and the Caribbean²⁵ shows that while there have been important gains in legislative subnational bodies (councils), progress has been mixed in the executive subnational branch (mayors and governors). In 1998, five percent of executive leaders at subnational levels in the region were women; by 2012, the proportion increased to 11 percent. If the same rate of increase is maintained, it would take approximately three decades to achieve a critical mass (30 percent) of women in these posts. Likewise, the report found that the 30 percent minimum threshold has not been achieved in decision-making positions in legislative branches of subnational governments.

More research would be required to determine whether or not current trends of decentralization in countries leads to greater representation of women in subnational public administration (as distinct from elected positions).

C. Lessons learned from women's participation and decision-making in other areas of public life and the private sector

Decades of pushing for women's greater participation in decision-making positions in public life has borne some fruit. Advances in women's leadership in politics have benefitted from global attention, development assistance, donor support, national advocacy and other efforts. The *Women in Politics 2012* report²⁶ mapped the progress of women's political participation around the world and showed that the number of elected women heads of state and government had increased from eight in 2005 to 17 in 2012, with the number of women ministers increasing from 14.2 percent in 2005 to 16.7 percent in 2012. Scandinavian countries have the highest percentage of women ministers at 48.4 percent, followed by the Americas at 21.4 percent and sub-Saharan Africa at 20.4 percent. Nonetheless, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), even if the improved 2013 rate of increase of the global average of women



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24. *Women's Representation in Local Government in Asia-Pacific: Status Report 2010*, UNDP, p. 2.

25. www.regionalcentreac-undp.org/images/stories/DESCENTRALIZACION/herramientas/Estudio%20Participacion%20Politica%20de%20Mujeres%20en%20el%20Ambito%20Subnacional.pdf.

26. *Women in Politics 2012*, report produced by UN Women in conjunction with the Inter-Parliamentary Union.



“As a matter of principle, embracing gender equality is the right thing to do. That should be reason enough. But there is also plenty of research that shows that gender balance is critical for the effectiveness of our work and our economies.

No matter what aspect the research focuses on—women’s economic engagement, risk taking in business, management and leadership—the findings amount to the same thing. By not fully engaging half of the population, we all lose out.

- Christine Lagarde, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director, “Dare the Difference,” *Finance & Development*, June 2013, Vol. 50, No. 2

”

members of parliament (1.5 percent) continues, it will take at least 20 more years before gender parity would be reached.²⁷

Gender gaps also continue to exist at decision-making levels in the private sector in both developed and developing countries. Despite gains in education and labour force participation, considerable inequality remains in terms of career progression. Women account for less than a third of senior managers in OECD countries, and only one woman for every 10 men gets to the boardroom.

Recently, compelling arguments have been put forward on the importance of promoting the presence of women in corporate boards and leadership positions in the private sector. The issue of women’s leadership in the private sector is gaining momentum, fueled in large part by the burgeoning field of research examining the relationship between

gender balance and financial performance. A key argument is that on average, across OECD countries, if female labour force participation rates converged with those of men by 2030, there would be an overall increase of 12 percent in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Research also reflects that gender-balanced boards have better corporate governance.²⁸ The European Commission has published data showing that companies with the highest share of women on their boards have had a 41 percent higher return on equity compared to companies with no women on their boards.²⁹ The global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company found that between 2005 and 2007 companies with the most gender-diverse management teams had 17 percentage point higher stock price growth compared to the industry average. Their average operating profit was almost double the industry average between 2003 and 2005.³⁰ In short, it appears that the participation of women on corporate boards is good for business.

The same type of global positioning, development support and research must be dedicated to advancing women’s presence and leadership in public administration in order to reduce female underrepresentation.

Many synergies and lessons learned can be shared between public administration and the private sector. In some countries, private sector initiatives are inspiring public administration to take action to advance women. In others, public administration is leading the way. In Malaysia, for example, a 2004 government policy³¹ required at

27. IPU News Release (4 March 2014).
 28. European Commission (November 2012). *Impact Assessment on Costs and Benefits of Improving the Gender Balance in the Boards of Companies Listed on Stock Exchanges* (Staff Working Document 348 Final), p. 41.
 29. European Commission (November 2012). *Impact Assessment on Costs and Benefits of Improving the Gender Balance in the Boards of Companies Listed on Stock Exchanges* (Staff Working Document 348 Final), p. 41.
 30. European Commission (2013). *Women on Boards- Factsheet 1: The Economic Arguments*, p. 2.
 31. This effort was supported by UNDP, among others.



“
Regulatory pressure works. The cracks are starting to show on the glass ceiling. More and more companies are competing to attract the best female talent. They know that if they want to remain competitive in a globalised economy they cannot afford to ignore the skills and talent of women.
 - Viviane Reding, European Union Justice Commissioner, European Union Press Release, Brussels, 14 October 2013
 ”

least 30 percent participation of women at decision-making levels in the public sector. In 2004, women represented 18.8 percent of decision makers at the premier grade level in the civil service. By 2010, this number reached 32.2 percent. In 2011, the focus was expanded to the private sector, supported by the adoption of a cabinet policy that requires at least 30 percent of board seats in Malaysian publically listed companies be held by women by 2016. Evidence is growing that - similar to the benefits women bring to the political arena and private sector - increasing the numbers of women public service providers

not only improves services for women, but improves service delivery for all, including men.³² More research is required to gather data and experiences on the benefits that women’s equal participation in decision-making, as well as the frontlines, brings to public administration.

2 MAIN BARRIERS TO WOMEN’S EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

It is clear that public administrations around the world have not yet tapped the full talents and potential of women. If public administration is to be representative of society and inclusive of women, viable pathways must exist for women to enter and advance to leadership positions at all levels and in all sectors on an equal basis with men.

A growing number of women aspire to leadership on the same terms as men and have made the same choices as their male counterparts, but they continue to confront obstacles.³³ Even in countries where women have equal access to education, increased representation in public administration, and in particular in decision-making positions, is not always ensured.

Explanations for why women are under-represented in decision-making positions are often based on assumptions about women’s career choices or lack of expertise. These common assumptions fail to take into account the impact of systemic gender-based discrimination. There is no doubt that work-life balance considerations play an important role in women’s career decisions, and are also increasingly becoming a concern for some men. Similarly, individual capacities, competencies and choices do play a part in the career paths of both women and men and their willingness and ability to take on responsibilities in both the private sphere and in professional life, but for women, these are also influenced by broader, systemic socio-cultural gender-based constraints and constructs.

In Mexico, for example, more women than men complete their Bachelor Degrees, yet women’s participation in Mexico’s Federal Public Administration leadership scheme has still not reached 30 percent.³⁴ The situation is similar in other parts of the world. A study on women’s representation in Asia’s private sector notes that a “lack of education does not explain the scarcity of women in top jobs”.³⁵ In Timor-Leste, an analysis of qualifications

32. *Women as the Frontline of Service Delivery*, Anuraha Josi, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, expert paper prepared for UNIFEM (2010).

33. *Women and Leadership – The State of Play and Strategies for Change*, Barbara Kellerman and Deborah L. Rhode eds, Jossey-Bass (2007).

34. GEPA Mexico Case Study, UNDP (2012).

35. *Women Matter - An Asian Perspective*, McKinsey & Company (2012), p. 3.



suggests that women may need higher academic qualifications than men to reach the same top management positions.³⁶

Although findings on women’s and men’s career aspirations and expectations are mixed, gender differences emerge; a survey of some 1,200 executives in various regions of the world found that substantially more women than men reported lowering their career aspirations to accommodate personal and family concerns.³⁷ In addition, female executives were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to delay marriage or child rearing to establish a career, and 12 percent of women, compared with only one percent of men, decided not to have children.

Although continued efforts to improve women’s and girls’ access to education are obviously an important foundational measure to advance women’s equal participation and decision-making, including in public administration, other factors must also be taken into consideration. Although barriers and challenges vary across regional, national, socio-cultural and political contexts, some common obstacles to women’s equal presence in decision-making positions have been identified. Discussed below, these barriers and challenges exist both inside and outside public administration, and are interlinked.

A. Gaps in adoption and implementation of enabling legal and policy frameworks

Comprehensive legislative and policy foundations are the first step toward gender equality and gender parity. These need to be in line with international and regional frameworks and contain direct references to gender equality in public administration, including in decision-making positions.

« Commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, *inter alia*, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions.

- Recommendations for governments, the Beijing Platform for Action, 1995, paragraph 190, (a)

»

Legislation and policies must be grounded in international norms and standards. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),³⁸ in particular, which is binding on all state parties, calls for the systematic removal of any forms of overt discrimination and for the implementation of special measures to correct historical imbalances.

Article 1 of CEDAW defines discrimination 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.”³⁹

36. *Women’s Participation in the Timor-Leste Civil Service in 2010*, United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (2010).

37. ILO, *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling*, p.47.

38. At the time of writing, only seven (7) United Nations Member States have not ratified CEDAW.

39. CEDAW article 2.



The Beijing Platform for Action, agreed on by 189 countries, includes specific commitments by governments to advance women's full participation in public life, including in public administration.

Various regional agreements and protocols also incorporate equal participation in public decision-making. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Protocol, adopted in 2008, provides that member states shall "endeavor to ensure that at least 50 percent of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors are held by women including the use of affirmative action measures."⁴⁰ The Brasilia Consensus⁴¹ document, adopted by 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries upon the conclusion of the 11th Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in July 2010, urged regional governments to safeguard women's rights and called for the broadening of the participation of women in decision-making and the exercise of power in all spheres of public authority (see the box below).



The Brasilia Consensus commitments (2010) include:

- increase and enhance opportunities for the equal participation of women in making and implementing policies in all spheres of public authority;
- adopt all necessary measures, including amending legislation and adopting affirmative policies, to ensure parity, inclusion and alternation of power, in the three branches of government, in special and autonomous regimes, at the national and local levels and in private institutions, in order to reinforce the democracies of Latin America and the Caribbean from an ethnic and racial point of view;
- contribute to the empowerment of indigenous women's leaderships in order to eliminate existing gaps and ensure their participation in decision-making, and respect the principle of free, prior and informed consent in the design and implementation of national and regional public policies;
- encourage measures to ensure women's access to decision-making and strengthen their unionization, among others, in both urban and rural areas, in order to make further progress towards equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women in the workplace;
- encourage also the creation and strengthening of government machineries for policies on women at the national and subnational level, endowing them with the necessary resources and highest hierarchical status within the Government, in keeping with national contexts; and
- promote measures to increase women's presence on corporate boards.



Despite these frameworks, often national legislation and policy continue to be discriminatory and have differential impacts on women. In some cases, discrimination against women remains overt and direct. For example, public administration statutes that use gender-insensitive language exist, with officials and employees referred to in the masculine only. Numerous studies point out the use of gender-insensitive language in a number of codes.

40. www.sadc.int/files/8713/5292/8364/Protocol_on_Gender_and_Development_2008.pdf (Article 12 (1)).

41. www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/6/40236/ConsensoBrasilia_ING.pdf.



In other cases, seemingly gender-neutral laws, regulations, policies or programmes disadvantage women because they do not take into account either women's biological differences (such as pregnancy, breast feeding, etc.) or, more commonly, differences that exist because of gender stereotypes, expectations, attitudes and historical discrimination. As several of the case studies illustrate, while indirect discrimination is less obvious, many gender-neutral laws or policies nonetheless end up discriminating against women in public administration.

While various countries now have national anti-discrimination or equal opportunity provisions in place, these safeguards are not always implemented in public administration. For example, despite the provisions of CEDAW calling for temporary special measures, and the evidence of their effectiveness in advancing women's participation and decision-making, few public administrations actively utilize temporary special measures. In some jurisdictions, the use of temporary special measures continues to be actively opposed.

Another recurring problem is failure to harmonize various pieces of law and policy relevant to gender equality and gender parity. In some countries, the national labour law might have provisions for a certain level of continued salary during maternity leave or prohibition of sexual harassment, for example, but the laws for civil servants do not include the same guarantee. The application of dual legal systems can also pose challenges when amendments made in Common Law that are in line with international instruments and conventions are not in sync with the administration of justice under Customary Law. Consequently, while certain discriminatory practices have been abolished under Common Law, their application continues under Customary Law. Such dual legal systems continue to disadvantage women.⁴²

In some cases, laws and regulations fail to define gender balance. For example, without a clear statement - such as '50:50' or 'minimum representation of females at 40 percent' - the implementation of gender balance in public administration risks falling short of real progress.⁴³



Once the required legislative and policy frameworks are in place, focus should shift to implementation. Unfortunately, these internationally-agreed and regional standards and commitments are often not acted upon in practice.⁴⁴

B. Discriminatory and unsupportive organizational cultures within public administration

Organizational cultures are influenced by gendered norms, which are usually unarticulated, unwritten, and sometimes unconscious, and therefore hard to identify and address. Socio-cultural norms can positively or negatively shape gender roles and relationships, and either feed or deconstruct negative gender-based stereotypes.

42. GEPA Botswana Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 14.

43. GEPA Uganda Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 16.

44. United Nations, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, 27 October 1995. Strategic Objective G.1. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/decision.htm.



In some countries, there is a common assumption that people willing to commit and take on increasing responsibilities will have a continuous career of full-time employment. The concept of a ‘career woman’ is often synonymous with either a woman who has chosen not to have a family, is a ‘bad mother’, or is ‘too aggressive and manly.’ This can lead to part-time work being seen as the only viable option for ‘non-career-oriented women.’ Opportunities for training and advancement are usually fairly limited in most part-time jobs. The same family constraints and concepts do not apply to men.⁴⁵



Evidence shows how predominantly male bureaucracies often exhibit ingrained biases (intentional or unintentional) against women with negative developmental impacts. The single most important strategy that can counteract this bias is by increasing the number of women.

- Anuradha Joshi, Women at the Frontline of Service Delivery, Paper for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), 2010



Recruitment practices can reinforce discrimination. For example, when recruiting civil service employees, women are not always targeted by national campaigns and initiatives. Women may also be deterred by gender-neutral or gender-discriminatory advertising and job descriptions⁴⁶ or be screened out by male-dominated recruitment panels with no or little gender training.

Systemic discrimination in regulations and policies continues to exist in pay and benefits, such as retirement pensions and allowances. Gaps exist even despite the fact that many public administration statutes and labour legislation support the principle of equal pay.⁴⁷

Gender stereotypes about leaders present a (sometimes) hidden form of discrimination and they are often cited as a key barrier to women being considered for senior roles in public administration. Specifically referring to high level position holders as ‘men’ in important documents or speeches reinforces stereotypes.⁴⁸

One gender study led by the World Bank found that “female leaders are labeled with (...) characteristics like obedience, emotion, dedication, and restraint which are considered inappropriate for leadership.⁴⁹ Such views have a deterring effect on women’s willingness to persevere in their careers. Those that do are frequently viewed negatively as ambitious, power-hungry women rather than as women with courage and determination.”⁵⁰

Both women and girls and men and boys alike internalize stereotypes and the perception that power remains fundamentally masculine still exists in most, if not all, contexts. Without exception, those interviewed for the country case studies mentioned that both men and women in public administration had internalized the perception that power was fundamentally masculine.⁵¹ Respondents also noted that women who do prove

45. Gill Kirton and Anne-marie Greene, *The Dynamics of Managing Diversity – A Critical Approach*, Third edition, 2010.

46. The duration of the professional experience as a criteria for human resources decisions also discriminates against women: “Almost all policies and guidelines for promotion, recruitment, etc. are not gender sensitive (...) For example, when they are looking for a Permanent Secretary, the advert may state in order for one to qualify she/he must have been a deputy permanent secretary for 15 years. How many women fall in that category? Almost none”. GEPA Botswana Case Study, UNDP (2012).

47. For example, a 2012 study in Albania revealed a gender pay gap of 6.7 percent in the public sector, even though this was smaller than the private sector. Jordan’s Civil Service Bylaw (2007, Article 25) grants a family allowance only to men, unless women are widowed or married to a person with a physical disability.

48. In Botswana, the wording of the ‘General Orders Governing the Conditions of Service of the Public Service’ refers to Permanent Secretaries as men, reflecting the gender-biased assumption. General Orders Governing the Conditions of Service of the Public Service, Government of the Republic of Botswana (1996), Subsection 8.4.1. (p. 13).

49. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha, 2008.

50. Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment, World Bank (2011), pp. 82-83.

51. GEPA Morocco Case study, UNDP (2012), p. 24.



competent at their jobs may be given male nicknames. The life-long belief that power and leadership is in the hands of men can lead to women not imagining themselves in decision-making positions and to their being overlooked in favour of male candidates. Women may see themselves as less deserving than men for rewards for the same performance and less qualified for key leadership positions.⁵²

The situation may be even more challenging for young women. “People in our society look at a woman leader as a woman first (...) age is another factor that influences the way people see a woman leader. Young female leaders are sometimes undermined just because of age.”⁵³

It is not unusual for a decision to be made to not invest in women’s capacities based on the perception that it would be a waste of public resources because a woman is likely to leave for family reasons.⁵⁴

A serious concern raised by women respondents was that many male colleagues did not take them seriously. Women stated that male colleagues make jokes about their work, and usually think that women are in jobs because they have extra time to spend, not because they are real partners and equal colleagues. It was noted that women working in male-dominated departments may tend to minimize their responsibilities.⁵⁵

Institutional cultures that do not penalize sexism and harassment are major barriers to women’s confidence and advancement in public administration. Women can be vulnerable to harassment in any context, but those who enter traditionally male-dominated occupations, where their presence challenges masculine culture, may be at higher risk. Existing literature and this study’s fieldwork found that sexual harassment persists in public administration and there is an absence of comprehensive information on its incidence.⁵⁶ Sexism and sexual harassment can be taboo in many contexts. Many victims are either not aware of how to report it or are unwilling to do so, partly because of fear of victimization and the difficulty of proving sexual harassment.⁵⁷

It is difficult to obtain precise global statistics to demonstrate the magnitude of sexual harassment in public administration, but most respondents referred to it as a well-known issue that needs to be urgently addressed.⁵⁸ Despite the fact that many countries and public administrations now have provisions specifically prohibiting workplace harassment generally and sexual harassment, gaps remain. Specific provisions to eliminate and punish harassment and, where they exist, to implement them are inconsistent.⁵⁹

52. A study released in 2011 by Europe’s Institute of Leadership and Management revealed that women report having lower confidence in regard to their careers. Men were more confident across all age groups, with 70 percent of males having high or very high levels of self-confidence, compared to 50 percent of the women surveyed. Half of women managers admitted to feelings of self-doubt about their performance and career, but only 31 percent of men reported the same. The study also found that this lack of confidence extends to a more cautious approach to applying for jobs and promotions: 20 percent of men said they would apply for a role despite only partially meeting its job description, compared to 14 percent of women. Other studies referred to in “The Confidence Gap” article by Katty Kay and Claire Shipman on 14 April 2014, in *The Atlantic*, highlight that men overestimate their abilities and performance, and women underestimate both.

53. GEPA Botswana Case Study, UNDP (2012).

54. GEPA Jordan Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 27.

55. GEPA Jordan Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 41.

56. GEPA Uganda Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 16.

57. GEPA Botswana Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 24.

58. In 2010, the District Secretariat of Bogota’s Municipal Government in Colombia carried out a survey of workplace harassment and found that 60 percent of respondents had witnessed sexual insinuations against women and that 84 percent believed women victims did not file complaints against their aggressors: GEPA Colombia Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 45.

59. For example, in Jordan, there is a regulation in the public administration disciplinary procedures relating to “the respect for females”, but there is no explicit policy addressing sexual harassment in the workplace and it is not mentioned in the Civil Service Bylaw (2007).



Insufficient capacity building and on-the-job professional development is frequently identified by women as a barrier to equal participation and empowerment, particularly regarding promotion. In addition to the immediate learning benefits, other benefits include visibility, networking and new opportunities. In some public administrations, participation in certain courses is a prerequisite for promotion. Furthermore, training is not necessarily organized in ways that women can access it (e.g., appropriate times and venues).

If participation in training is through nomination by department heads, gender stereotypes may result in women being sent out on courses on 'women's issues' and possibly empowerment courses, but they run the risk of being sidelined from other sorts of training, including leadership training. Women may also be disadvantaged by pregnancy; in some situations pregnant women have been discouraged from attending courses, including those which are mandatory for appointments to be finalized and official.⁶⁰

Although a growing number of organizations are attempting to respond by establishing formal mentoring programs and women's networks, the playing field is still far from level. Many people still want to believe that in the absence of special treatment, individuals generally get what they deserve and deserve what they get. Perceptions of performance are frequently adjusted to match observed outcomes. If women are underrepresented in positions of greatest prominence, the most psychologically convenient explanation is that they lack the necessary qualifications or commitment. These perceptions can, in turn, prevent women from getting assignments that would demonstrate their capabilities, and a cycle of self-fulfilling prophesy is established.

As discussed earlier, perceptions of what is 'women's work,' both by colleagues and women themselves, affects the types of jobs women occupy. In management contexts, decision makers generally see women as more suited for jobs in the realm of human relations.

The difficulty of balancing work and personal lives was cited in the case studies as a key barrier to women's equal participation in public administration, including at decision-making levels. The so-called 'long-hours culture,' an unwritten (or sometimes explicit) requirement to demonstrate commitment to the organization by working beyond contractual hours – is widely held to be a masculine model of work.⁶¹ Working long hours is seen as symbolic of full commitment to the organization and the pressure to do so is entrenched.⁶² A culture of long working hours, not necessarily matched by an emphasis on results and efficiency, is a feature of many bureaucracies. The long-hours culture is particularly problematic for women who typically assume responsibilities for the family, bringing time pressures to bear on them to a far greater degree than on men. This may deter women from aiming high and even cause them to resign if they have children.

“Studies have shown that “(f)lexibility in the organization and length of working time, which enables greater reconciliation of work, private and family life, can play an important role in increasing employment rates, particularly among women, who retain the bulk of the responsibility for child and dependent care.

- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, *Reconciliation of work, private and family life in the European Union*, 2011, p. 2

”

60. GEPA Bangladesh Case Study, UNDP (2012), focus group discussions in September 2011.

61. Collinson and Hearn, *Naming Men as Men: Implications for Work, Organization and Management* (1994).

62. Hicks-Clarke and Iles, *Chapter 10. Gender Diversity and Organizational Performance*, in Davidson and Fielden, *Individual Diversity and Psychology in Organizations* (2003).



Gendered family ideologies influence the way women manage their careers, the jobs they take, the professions they choose and the decisions they make to balance paid and unpaid (family/household) work.⁶³ Changing family patterns, including more single-parent households, as well as austerity measures in response to economic downturns, mean that the tension between paid work and family duties is even greater for some women.⁶⁴

A lack of quality childcare and social infrastructure can exacerbate this imbalance. Where these do exist, public administration can offer better benefits than the private sector (for example, in the area of maternity, paternity and parental benefits, as in Djibouti and Tunisia, where they are covered by separate public administration regulations⁶⁵). However, even when provisions are in place, the institutional culture in public administration (including long working hours, seeing work-life balance as largely a women's issue) can lead to such measures being underutilized, especially by men and at senior levels.⁶⁶ Some studies highlight that in certain contexts, flexible working options for senior levels is not an option.⁶⁷ Flexible working models and other work-life balance arrangements need to be promoted for both men and women, and greater co-responsibility promoted in the home alongside equal participation at work. If not, there is a risk that women will become even more overburdened, or sidelined in terms of career advancement.⁶⁸

Dynamics of organizational social life can also be said to be gendered. The lack of free time for women outside of official working hours can mean that women miss out on opportunities to network and build social capital. This has especially negative consequences for middle and senior women managers and is partly responsible for the construction of the so-called 'glass ceiling'. Many work-related social activities do not formally exclude women, but because of broader gendered social divisions in society, women can feel less comfortable in such settings⁶⁹ or have less time to participate. These out-of-work events, however, are vital for access to information and afford opportunities to form strategic alliances, both of which are essential for managers and professionals.

As noted in a UNDP/UNIFEM paper, *Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections*,⁷⁰ unaccountable, corrupt and predominantly male networks shape decisions around recruitment and promotion within bureaucracies. According to Wangnerud: "Corruption along the route to power reinforces the dominance of those already in power - and in most contexts where corruption is prevalent, those in power are men."⁷¹ Corruption in recruitment processes for public service positions may also take the form of sexual extortion where women candidates are promised jobs in return for sexual favours. Where corrupt practices are embedded within bureaucracies, women public officials may find promotions or job security elusive.⁷² The influence of politics on recruitment and related decisions is another dimension of corruption. Linked to this is a lack of a culture

63. Evetts, "Analysing Change in Women's Careers: Culture, Structure and Action Dimensions," *Gender Work & Organization*, Vol. 7, Issue 1 (2000).

64. Work-life balance, fourth item on the agenda, Governing Body, 312th session, Geneva, ILO (2011).

65. *Maternity at Work: A review of national legislation*, ILO (2010) p. 3.

66. Fagan, Hegewisch and Pillinger, *Out of Time, Why Britain needs a new approach to working-time flexibility*, Research Paper for the Trades Union Congress (2006), p. 8.

67. *Top Public Managers in Europe: Management and Working Conditions of the Senior Civil Servants in European Union Member States*, European Institute of Public Administration (2008), p. 19.

68. Maria J. D'Agostino and Helisse Levine, *Women in Public Administration* (2011).

69. Cianni, M. and Romberger, B. (1997) "Life in the corporation: a multi-method study of the experiences of male and female Asian, Black, Hispanic and white employees." *Gender, Work & Organization*, 4,2, 116-29.

70. www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/corruption-accountability-and-gender-understanding-the-connection.

71. Bjarnegard referred to Wangnerud (2008) in Bjarnegard, E. (2008), "Gender and Corruption - Reversing the Causal Direction". Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Boston, MA, 28-31 August 2008.

www.qog.pol.gu.se/qog_course/readings/Bjarnegard_APSA08.pdf in *Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections*, UNDP and UNIFEM (2010), p. 17.

72. *Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections*, UNDP and UNIFEM, 2010, p. 17.



of accountability in some public administrations.⁷³ This undermines all policy and programming efforts and, together with a weak capacity of key actors, is likely to be a major contributing factor to the gaps between policy and practice mentioned in many of this report's country case studies.

C. Gaps in data and analysis

There is a lack of data and analysis of the existence and impact of measures taken to advance women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration locally, nationally, regionally and globally. In most countries, sex and age disaggregated data is not readily available, and what can be accessed (often raw data) is not regularly analysed. The general lack of adequate and comparable data on gender balance at the organizational level undermines decision-making and makes oversight very difficult.⁷⁴

Although this report is framed to examine the overall situation of women in public administration, it is important to note that women are not a monolithic group and attention needs to be given to ensuring the equal participation and decision-making of all groups of women, particularly women facing intersectional discrimination on the basis of sex and class, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, indigenous status, disability, etc. Therefore, additional research and data on specific groups of women is needed to ensure that women in their full diversity are equally represented in public administration, including in decision-making.

D. Weak gender mainstreaming in public administration reforms

Public administration reform programmes present critical entry points to address gender equality through supportive policies and a modern and appropriate workplace culture. Public administration reform programmes that do not mainstream gender concerns, specifically equal participation and gender in decision-making roles, are missing powerful opportunities to create a truly representative and responsive public administration that is able to meet the needs of a country's population.

3 CONTEXT-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

A. Post-conflict settings

In most post-conflict situations, a country/territory must rebuild physical and social infrastructure and restore core government functions, including civil service management. Simultaneously, to maintain stability and address the underlying causes of conflict, previous inequalities, ineffectiveness and corruption need to be addressed. Capacity is often low, as is trust in government from both citizens and new political leaders.

A United Nations report that reviewed United Nations support to basic public administration functions in the immediate aftermath of conflict highlighted the centrality of the 'political settlement' to peace and state building,

73. Section 2.2.3.2, "Accelerating implementation of public administration reforms," Burundi: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II, IMF (2012).

74. In Kyrgyzstan, the affirmative action policy to recruit qualified female candidates has not been fully implemented because many agencies do not have this data available. GEPA Kyrgyzstan Case Study, UNDP (2012), p. 21.



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notably inclusion and national ownership. Public administration within such environments should be viewed as not just a mechanism for delivering services, but a strategic arena within which the political settlement is negotiated.⁷⁵

In post-conflict environments, the challenge of balancing many priorities can mean that social and gender dimensions are de-prioritized.⁷⁶ Women face particular obstacles to entering public administration in this context. Despite the fact that during conflict women's roles in the public arena are frequently expanded and women in communities often act as effective leaders and mediators, as well as combatants, the post-conflict period commonly witnesses a resurfacing of stereotypical attitudes

about women's place in society and their leadership skills and women are pushed out of public roles. In addition, the burden of ensuring the subsistence of the household in stressful periods means that many women have little time to build skills for employment in public administration.⁷⁷ Case studies revealed that United Nations assistance to public administration during post-conflict in practice has largely been gender blind. Post-conflict United Nations civil service initiatives rarely used sex-disaggregated employment data (which was not always available), or applied gender-responsive recruitment and retention policies.⁷⁸

Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, highlights the importance of gender perspectives and women's full participation in all aspects of peace making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Just as women must have a seat at the table when negotiating peace, women must be on hand for the subsequent rebuilding processes. Promoting the inclusion of women, including women from excluded groups, within the public service is important both because women have the right to be there and also for the impact women's participation can have on sustaining the political settlement and for the potential to make service delivery more responsive to the needs of different groups.

The United Nations Secretary-General's 2010 *Report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding*⁷⁹ delineated a Seven-Point Action Plan on Women and Peacebuilding. The report noted that the United Nations must facilitate gender-responsive peacebuilding by ensuring that United Nations civilian capacity when rebuilding state institutions encompasses the expertise required to make them more accessible to women and girls and that women's participation as decision makers in public institutions (appointed or elected) is promoted. This can be

75. *Restore or Reform: UN Support to Core Government Functions in the Aftermath of Conflict*, UNDP (March 2014). www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/Executive_Summary_Public_Administration/.

76. *The Price of Peace: Financing for Gender Equality in Post Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction*, UNDP (2010). Contributed by UN Women, New York, May 2012.

77. Contributed by UN Women, New York, May 2012.

78. *Restore or Reform: UN Support to Core Government Functions in the Aftermath of Conflict*, UNDP (2014). www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/Executive_Summary_Public_Administration/.

79. United Nations Secretary-General's Report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding (A/65/354-S/2010/466).



achieved through the use of special measures, such as affirmative action, preferential treatment and quota-based systems, as enshrined in international human rights law.

The GEPA case studies undertaken for this report reinforce these findings. It was indeed noted that decisions reached on institutional structures and priorities determined during negotiations set the parameters for women's participation in public decision-making in the future, and these transitional processes represent key moments for representing women's substantive rights, needs and priorities. If this opportunity is missed, it becomes all the more difficult to address after a political settlement and the distribution of political power has been completed.

B. Economic crisis and shrinking public administration

Economic downturns, shrinking public expenditure and the downsizing of public administration have a differential impact on commitments to gender equality, including women's equal participation and decision-making.

Austerity measures often mean cutbacks in areas such as state social welfare and benefit schemes, including maternity leave, as governments start "tightening their fiscal policies and (...) reprioritizing spending away from social safety nets (...) and areas of public service provision critical to women who are primarily responsible for family care." Consequently, women's already heavy time burdens are further increased, which in turn makes it even more challenging for them to focus on advancing in their careers.

Resource-intensive initiatives, such as training and advocacy, are also likely to be cut back when faced with spending and budget cuts within public administration. Concentrating on gender equality in public administration during hard times is not prioritized as attention is turned to what are considered more pressing issues.⁸¹ The implementation of temporary special measures in recruitment, in particular, can be challenging in periods of recruitment freezes.⁸² In short, a freeze on hiring renders affirmative action in hiring completely ineffective. Lowering job levels as part of the saving measures may also have a differentially negative impact on promotion opportunities for women. And as previously discussed, women are more likely to be in temporary and contractual positions which are more vulnerable to redundancy.⁸³

“*The employment of female decision makers in the civil service is more likely to ensure that planning and budgeting processes are gender responsive, and that the needs and priorities of women and girls are seriously addressed. Also, with the increased post-conflict incidence of female headed households, a policy that actively pursues the inclusion of women in the civil service has additional benefits, given the fact that the security of stable employment (such as in the civil service) has been proven to have multiplier effects on not only individual households, but also on community welfare.*

- Adapted from *Restore or Reform: UN Support to Core Government Functions in the Aftermath of Conflict*, UNDP, 20 March 2014⁸⁰

”

80. www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/Executive_Summary_Public_Administration/.

81. Turner, Thomas and O'Connor, Pat. "Women in the Zambian Civil Service: A Case of Equal Opportunities?" *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 14, 79-92 (1994).

82. GEPA Cambodia Case Study, UNDP (2012).

83. In Romania, individual performance appraisals are carried out annually and a general evaluation of professional competencies required for high-ranking civil service positions is done every two years. A civil servant must have scored "very good" in the last two years in their annual evaluations, which is normally done in January for the previous year. Key respondent interviews confirm that the Statute of Civil Servants (Law 1888193/199) provides that work relations are suspended during parental leave, and because individual performance evaluations are only possible when officials are in post, they cannot be evaluated if on parental leave. The concern is that the restructuring of the public administration looks at performance evaluations in order to determine redundancies. Key respondents emphasized that most victims of gender-based discrimination are pregnant women.



C. Subnational levels

It has been observed that approaches that work on a national level are not necessarily appropriate to or successful at the subnational level.



Women have the equal right to employment in local government and equality in recruitment procedures. As employees in local government women and men have the right to equal pay, equal access to benefits, promotion and training, as well as the right to equal working conditions and treatment in the evaluation of their work (...) Women's often heavy workload of paid and unpaid work is a barrier to their ability to take part in decision making (...) Men have the equal right and responsibility to care for their children and relatives and should be encouraged to do so.

- Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government, International Union of Local Authorities, 1998



Women's access to education often deteriorates in areas further away from capitals and urban centres and there may be an even greater scarcity of qualified women to take up positions in local administrations. Also, traditional gender roles tend to be more ingrained in less urbanized areas, and thus women may not aim for senior positions, or even be able to engage in paid employment.

If terms and general conditions at the subnational level of public administration are not attractive - for example, if there is no support for children, lack of good schools, absence of appropriate work facilities, unsatisfactory housing and concerns for basic safety - women not originating from the area may not be willing or able to fill local posts.

Therefore, particular programmes and additional measures suitable to the subnational level may be required.



PART TWO: POLICY AND PROGRAMMING APPROACHES

Gender norms *can* change over time, aided by appropriate policies and programmes. In fact, available evidence shows that progress has been made in a range of contexts, in both developing and developed countries.

The many and complex barriers to gender equality and gender parity, specifically in public administration, highlighted in Part One, demand comprehensive, multi-pronged, multi-stakeholder and long-term approaches to maintain gains made in equal participation and sustainable development. Changing entrenched systems and practices requires a combination of policy interventions, enhancing gender equality capacities and strong political will, as well as the necessary human, financial and institutional resources for implementation. Part Two of this report presents approaches, options and examples for advancing gender equality in public administration.

“ We won’t just get up in the morning to find we are in a gender equal society; we have to acknowledge that there is still work to be done. ”

- Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, former Managing Director of the World Bank Group, *Citizen Today*, April 2013, Ernst & Young, p. 11

There is no one ‘silver bullet’ that can be introduced that will immediately deliver gender equality and gender parity and rectify systemic discrimination and gender bias in public administration. Given the many factors impeding women’s equal participation and decision-making, it is important that a comprehensive approach is taken. This necessarily means employing a range of short, medium and long-term initiatives, depending on national and local contexts.

1 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS THAT ENSURE WOMEN’S EQUAL PARTICIPATION

Enacting, strengthening, harmonizing and implementing relevant constitutional provisions, legislation and policy frameworks can provide a strong foundation for the promotion of gender equality policies and the advancement of women. Proactive methods are required to overcome women’s historical disadvantages.

As discussed in Part One, laying down the necessary legal framework is an important first step. A growing number of countries have moved away from a legal approach that only specifies prohibition of discrimination towards one that makes it an active duty to uphold equality.⁸⁴ Many countries now have some form of anti-discrimination legislation in place to redress the fact that women and men do not start from a level playing field, and therefore women are often unable to equally benefit from opportunities.

The use of gender-specific or gender-sensitive language across laws and policies is one aspect of combating this systemic discrimination. Several countries have revised their public administration statutes to use more gender-sensitive language, referring to men and women explicitly (e.g., Timor-Leste’s Civil Service Act⁸⁵). Uganda’s gender mainstreaming guidelines include a section on gender-sensitive language, providing examples of what is gender-sensitive and what is not.⁸⁶

84. *Time for Equality at Work*, ILO (2003), p. 60.

85. Timor-Leste, Statute of the Civil Service, Law 8/2004 (amended by Law 5/2009, 15 July).

86. Annex 2, Circular Standing Instructions No. 2, “Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Human Resource Management, Ministry of Public Service,” Government of the Republic of Uganda (2011)



A. National constitutions

National constitutions that enshrine basic provisions, such as that all men and women are equal, prohibiting sex-based discrimination and supporting the advancement of women generally, are cornerstones of equality.⁸⁷

“
This absence of one gender from positions of power is often said to be culturally determined. But culture is not static. Societies advance by selecting and perpetuating positive, human aspects of their culture while leaving behind discriminatory and constraining elements.
 - Combined initial, second and third periodic reports to CEDAW Committee (CEDAW/C/VUT/1-3), Government of Vanuatu, 2005, p. 23

National constitutions, laws and policies can prioritize women’s leadership with temporary special measures. A discussion of the rationale for temporary special measures and the ways in which they can and have been used follows below. Some countries have begun enshrining gender quotas in constitutions (such as Rwanda).⁸⁸ The constitution of South Sudan broadens the scope of equal participation to employees, as well as top elected and appointed posts (see the box below).

Colombia provides a good example of how a supportive national constitution can lead to concrete national legislation. Women’s movements advocated

for several key provisions in Colombia’s 1991 Constitution. Article 13 protects against discrimination,⁸⁹ and Article 40 provides that “authorities must guarantee the adequate and effective participation of women in decision-making level positions of public management.”⁹⁰ This paved the way for the enactment of the quota law that followed (discussed further in the section below on temporary special measures).



Good Practice: South Sudan’s constitution makes women’s participation a national priority

- (1) Women shall be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men.
- (2) Women shall have the right to equal pay for equal work and other related benefits with men.
- (3) Women shall have the right to participate equally with men in public life.
- (4) All levels of government shall: (a) promote women’s participation in public life and their representation in the legislative and executive organs by at least twenty-five percent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs, and traditions; (b) enact laws to combat harmful customs and traditions which undermine the dignity and status of women; and (c) provide maternity and child care and medical care for pregnant and lactating women.

- Article 16, Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011

87. For a comprehensive discussion see: *Good Practice Approaches to Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Constitutions* (UNDP, forthcoming 2014).

88. “The State of Rwanda commits itself that women are granted at least 30 percent of posts in decision making organs,” Constitution, Article 9 [4].

89. Moreno Z., *The Quota Law in Colombia, A Political Achievement of Women?* Master’s Thesis in Gender Studies. National University of Colombia. School of Gender Studies (2004).

90. Political Constitution of Colombia (1991).



South Africa's Constitution (1996) aims to have a representative public service, which implicitly includes gender balance. The constitution states, "public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation."⁹¹ It further stipulates the importance of "good human resource management and career-development practices to maximize human potential."⁹²

More recently, South Sudan's Transitional Constitution (2011) sets out the equal right of men and women to participate in public life and measures to achieve this, including for public administration. While the constitutional requirement is below the internationally-agreed 30 percent minimum, the provisions are notable for their obligations on all levels of public administration. This is promising as it gives attention to gender balance at all ranks and should help create a pool of experienced and qualified women, who would later be eligible for senior positions.

B. National laws and policies

Gender equality laws and policies are important entry points.⁹³ However, there is considerable variation in how policies are worded. In addition, they often focus on getting women into elected or appointed positions and do not explicitly apply across all positions and levels in public administration.

Specific national policy statements calling for equal participation in public administration and decision-making takes the commitment one step farther. And, while it is essential that gender equality issues be integrated into all legislation, also having a single gender equality law can provide clarity and visibility for gender equality and stress that it is a national priority. Comprehensive gender equality laws can help avoid gaps, contradictions, confusion, and lack of accountability that sometimes occur.⁹⁴ Many of the national gender equality laws enacted to date focus on equal participation in decision-making generally or in politics specifically, and they often provide for temporary special measures. However, not all gender equality laws explicitly address women's equal participation in public administration and only some include strong implementation mechanisms.⁹⁵

There are several examples of good practices of laws and policies that embrace women's equal participation in public administration. For example, the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2003)⁹⁶ and the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality in Mongolia (2011)⁹⁷ refer explicitly to public administration. Mongolia's law is notable for its comprehensive coverage of equal participation in public administration and detailed implementation measures, thereby laying a real foundation for substantive gender equality. Good practice features of the law include: clear definitions of term and indicators, monitoring and accountability mechanisms, clarification of the responsibilities of key agencies, coordination mechanisms and protection of women during public administration reform.

The Mongolian law also specifies that the proportion of women and men leaving public administration as a result of cuts should be monitored and it prohibits length of service as a dismissal criterion. This is important to

91. Article 195: 1(i), Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996).

92. Article 195: 1(h), Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996).

93. The majority of national bodies of legislation and policy on gender equality are post-CEDAW (post-1979).

94. For example, the United Kingdom's Equality Act (2011) brought together and simplified the complicated legislation that had built up in order to make it easier for employers and individuals to understand rights and responsibilities. See www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/.

95. For example, the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2003), and Law of Mongolia on Promotion of Gender Equality (2011) refer explicitly to the public administration.

96. www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/documents/GE_Bosnia_Herzegovina.doc.

97. http://legislationline.org/download/action/download/id/4518/file/Mongolia_law_gender_equality_2011_en.pdf.



highlight because length of service disadvantages women, including in times of economic downturns. This is because women’s careers are often subject to more interruptions than that of men, particularly given their family care responsibilities in many contexts.

In the Philippines, the country’s active engagement in the CEDAW reporting process led to the Magna Carta of Women or Republic Act 9710 (2009).⁹⁸ This comprehensive gender equality law was enacted to advance the country’s compliance with CEDAW. Section 11 of the Act provides for the acceleration of women’s participation and equitable representation in decision-making and policy-making processes in government and private entities to fully realize their role as agents and beneficiaries of development. Section 11(a) has a specific provision on ‘Empowerment within the Civil Service’ that sets a 50:50 gender balance target for third level positions of government (those belonging to career executive service or appointed by the President of the Philippines), to be achieved incrementally within a five-year time frame. The country’s Civil Service Commission followed up this legal provision and set a target of 50:50 representation of each sex across government, requesting government agencies to report regularly on the number of women nominated to third level positions, the total number of

positions held by women and the total number of women appointees versus men appointees.⁹⁹ This law has effectively consolidated the country’s progress on CEDAW, set numerical and time-bound targets for equal representation and recognized the role of women in national development as well as their right to benefit from it.

Article 12 of the Croatian Act on Gender Equality (2008)¹⁰⁰ provides for equal participation of women and men in legislative, judiciary and executive bodies and explicitly includes public administration. The Act calls for special measures to ensure that participation of the under-represented gender increases to reflect the gender ratio of the country’s population, supporting the idea of a fully representative public administration.

The existing good practices in national law and policy described above can be considered for contexts and countries where systematic and explicit approaches to addressing this issue are required.



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C. Laws and policies providing for temporary special measures

Article 4 of CEDAW defines temporary special measures as measures “to accelerate de facto equality between men and women.” Temporary special measures (which are sometimes also known as affirmative action) are required because the guarantee of formal equality is often not enough for women to actually achieve substantive equality

98. www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2009/ra_9710_2009.html.

99. Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports for CEDAW, Government of the Philippines (2004), p. 24.

100. <http://www.ured-ravnopravnost.hr/site/the-act-on-gender-equality-nn-8208.html>



with men. Temporary special measures are part of a necessary strategy to overcome the effect of historical discrimination and accelerate the attainment of substantive equality for women.¹⁰¹

CEDAW makes it clear that temporary special measures do not discriminate against men and are not a form of discrimination if they are being implemented as a means to speed up the achievement of gender equality. Temporary special measures can include a wide range of legal instruments, policies and practices, such as outreach or support programmes, reallocation of resources, preferential treatment, targeted recruitment, hiring and promotion, numerical goals connected with timeframes and quota systems.

Although they are both effective and overtly recommended by CEDAW, quotas continue to arouse strong reactions among some men and women. While quotas for women's political participation have been controversial in some contexts, the evidence is clear that they remain the single most effective means of advancing women's political participation. For example, the Women in Politics 2012 report¹⁰² reveals that quotas have had a positive effect on increasing women's involvement in politics. Out of the 59 countries that held elections in 2011, 17 of them had legislated quotas. In those 17 countries, women gained 27 percent of parliamentary seats compared to 16 percent in countries without quotas.

While there are differences between advancing women in politics as compared to public administration, it is still informative to consider the challenges, successful strategies and lessons learned from measures supporting women's political participation.

Quotas are underutilized in public administration in many countries. Arguments continue to be made that quotas are not appropriate to work environments based on the assumption that they undermine merit-based appointments. However, the CEDAW Committee, in General Recommendation 5, further defined temporary special measures and made it clear that they should also be applied to employment contexts.¹⁰³ The CEDAW Committee defined temporary special measures as: "positive action, preferential treatment or quota systems to advance women's integration into education, into the economy, politics and employment."

The principle of merit-based recruitment and promotion is fundamental to public administration, and attention to gender equality should not be interpreted as compromising this principle. South Africa offers a case in point. There, commitments to gender equality and women's equal participation and merit-based appointments can be viewed as complementary, not contradictory. The South African Public Service Act (1994/2007) makes equal participation in decision-making a priority and stipulates that when making appointments and filling posts in the public service, "the evaluation of persons shall be based on training, skills, competence, knowledge and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve a public service broadly representative of the South African people, including representation according to (...) gender."¹⁰⁴

Progress is being made, and there are now examples of quotas being introduced in a number of public administrations. In Colombia for example, in addition to constitutional provisions, there is also a quota law that specifically applies a 30 percent quota to decision-making positions in all branches of the state (including in

101. Concluding comments of the CEDAW committee: Nepal (2011) 49th Session: para [15] (UN Doc CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/4-5). See also Albania (2011) 49th Session: para [22] (UN Doc CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/3); Kyrgyzstan (2008) 42nd Session: para [31] (UN Doc CEDAW/C/KGZ/CO/3 CEDAW/C/SWE/CO/7); Belize (2007) 39th Session: para [39] (UN Doc CEDAW/C/BLZ/CO/4).

102. www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnmap12_en.pdf

103. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm.

104. Public Service Act (1994/2007), Republic of South Africa. Article 11 (b).



public administration) at national and subnational levels. The law also requires that equal numbers of women and men participate in selection processes.¹⁰⁵ Despite challenges in implementation, women's movements and institutions report that the quota law has contributed to the achievement of 40 percent of decision-making roles in public administration being held by women.¹⁰⁶

Belgium has also taken steps to expand women's participation at all levels of government, recognizing their historical disadvantages and the need to address them actively with special measures. Belgium's Royal Order (1990) on measures for the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women in the civil service provides that "their aim shall be carried out by means of equal opportunity schemes, which shall comprise measures to correct the effects of prejudice against women arising from traditional social situations and behavior, as well as measures to promote the presence and participation of women at all levels of employment" (Section 2) and "an equal opportunity scheme shall be established for each sector of the civil service" (Section 3).¹⁰⁷

In February 2012, the French National Assembly voted for a compulsory gender quota to support the gradual establishment by 2018 of 40 percent women among top civil service appointments annually. A list of available positions was to be drawn up and penalties for non-compliance established. France's quota is seen as a significant breakthrough, in particular after a report on gender equality in France in 2010 identified obstacles and good practices in human resources in the French government.¹⁰⁸

In 2006, Nepal's parliament passed a special resolution to its Civil Service Act to ensure that women hold 33 percent of positions in all state structures. A year later (in August 2007), a second amendment was enacted obliging the use of special inclusive measures during recruitment processes.¹⁰⁹

Given the negative reactions that temporary special measures still elicit from many stakeholders, it is important to ensure that technical support is accompanied by strong advocacy and including advocacy and sensitization efforts at all stages, including while temporary special measures are being proposed, debated, drafted and/or implemented.

D. Laws and policies to combat sexual harassment

Policies against sexual and all other forms of harassment are important and they need to be backed up by clear definitions of what constitutes harassment, sensitization programmes, redress mechanisms and sanctions. Women are often reluctant to take action when they are victims of harassment, so appropriate and clear procedures must be in place and women and men must be encouraged not to tolerate harmful practices. Of the range of sexual harassment laws and policies that exist, weaknesses in enforcement remain a common issue that requires further attention. There are, however, good examples of steps taken to ensure implementation. For example, as part of the implementation of the Philippines Anti-Sexual Harassment Act 1995,¹¹⁰ the Civil Service Commission took the lead, instructing government agencies to create a Committee on Decorum and Investigation to address sexual harassment complaints. Guided by the law and Civil Service

105. Law No. 581, 2000.

106. GEPA Colombia Case Study, UNDP (2012).

107. Adapted from *Comparative study of contents of civil service statutes*, ILO (2001).

108. Rapport public au Président de la République, Guégot, F. (2011), www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports-publics/114000123/index.shtml.

109. www.womankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Country-section-Nepal2.pdf.

110. www.hsph.harvard.edu/population/womenrights/philippines.women.95.pdf.



Commission rules, the committee defines the offense, identifies specific acts and forms of sexual harassment and applies penalties depending on the form and gravity of the offense and procedures for the disposition of cases.

2 ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE

Institutional culture, or ‘the way things get done around here’, is an unwritten but important factor in determining women’s access to public administration and senior positions within it. Institutional culture influences to what extent policies are gender-responsive as well as how far they are implemented. The culture can vary widely depending on the national context, within the public administration, and between and even within ministries and departments, as well as at the subnational level.

Institutional and organizational culture is also strongly influenced by leaders and by gender balance itself.¹¹¹ The presence of more women leaders can support gradual changes in stereotypes and encourage younger women to aspire to such positions. For example, when Michelle Bachelet first became President in Chile, this had a symbolic and empowering effect on women in Chile. In response to the question “To what extent do you agree with the following statement: ‘Since President Bachelet began her administration, women in general feel more empowered,’” 76 percent of women completely agreed.¹¹² Conversely, if women are under-represented in public administration, and especially in visible, senior roles and as role models, then the organizational culture is more likely to be ‘masculine’ or determined by male gender roles, priorities and values.¹¹³

A. Research, data and gender analysis

To fully understand the situation of women in public administration and allow for evidence-based analysis, it is necessary to conduct relevant research and collect data regularly. An understanding of the situation in specific national and subnational contexts is also required to form appropriate responses.

More research and analysis is required both on the problems and obstacles to women’s equal participation and decision-making in public administration (including structural) and on potential, promising and successful responses to these challenges. For example, in some countries there is no clarity or agreement on even what constitutes decision-making levels and positions, making determinations about the situation of women in decision-making in public administration difficult. This also hinders comparisons within and across countries.

Rwanda has taken steps in the area of data collection and analysis with support from a United Nations joint initiative on evidence-based policymaking. Capacity building support was provided to the Gender Monitoring Office and National Institute for Statistics and Research to collect sex-disaggregated data when developing analysis to inform policymaking; the first gender statistics report was published in 2011.¹¹⁴ In Malawi, the government

111. Schein, E. H., *Organizational Psychology* (1980).

112. *National Human Development Report: Challenges in Gender Equality*, UNDP (2010), p. 22.

113. ‘Masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are two ends of one of Hofstede’s dimensions’, a seminal work on organizational culture: *Culture’s consequences: International differences in work-related values*, Hofstede, G.H (1980).

114. Gender Statistics Vol, 1, 2011, MDG-3: Gender Equality, The Public Sector in Rwanda.



carried out a gender audit in 2012, which not only showed that women were under-represented, but that there were not enough women in the grades eligible for promotion to decision-making levels.¹¹⁵ As a result, the audit identified a need to increase the stream of women coming into public administration.

Breaking Down Myths: Data analysis in Pakistan



Senior government bureaucrats in Balochistan Province (in southwestern Pakistan), including senior women bureaucrats, argued that women were simply not available for civil service positions being advertised.

However, Balochistan Public Service Commission figures exploded the myth; out of 2,779 posts advertised over the previous six years, 8,613 women had applied - even in this province where women's literacy in rural areas is as low as 11 percent.

The other misconception was that women prefer to be in health and education, where conditions were seen to be favorable for women in terms of postings and holidays, etc.

However, again the Public Service Commission's data clarified the facts. Only three positions out of the total 2,779 positions advertised had openings for women outside education, health and population departments.

- adapted from *Achieving Gender Equality in Public Offices in Pakistan*, UNDP Pakistan, 2007, pp. 37-38

The OECD provides annual country profiles of its member countries covering human resource management and monitors the composition of and trends in their civil service. Similar efforts should be taken in the rest of the world. This includes reporting the number and/or proportion of women in decision-making positions in national public administration where the data is available.¹¹⁶

B. Recruitment, retention and promotion

As discussed in Part One, human resource processes pose barriers if they are gender-neutral or discriminatory. Ensuring that women do not experience gender-based discrimination in entering public administration remains a challenge in some contexts, particularly if women do not know about national initiatives to attract women to the public administration, are deterred by gender-neutral advertising and job descriptions or are screened out by male-dominated recruitment panels with no gender-training or commitment to gender equality and parity. Women may also not meet criteria for minimum years of experience to be recruited in middle and senior management positions.

Therefore, recruitment policies, processes and mechanisms require careful consideration using a gender equality and gender parity perspective. Some countries have taken active measures to overcome the barriers above, including setting recruitment targets, establishing a gender balance on recruitment and promotions panels,

115. Report of the Employment Gender Audit: Women in Decision Making Positions in the Public Service, Government of Malawi (March 2012).

116. www.oecd.org/gov.



providing gender training for hiring managers, conducting recruitment drives including outreach and gender-sensitive advertising and appointing the under-represented sex.

There are many good examples of countries and institutions taking concrete steps to support the recruitment of women.

- In Burundi, for example, the public administration's national recruitment commission has a stipulation that one of the nine members should be a representative of the ministry responsible for gender equality.¹¹⁷ This measure helps ensure greater gender sensitivity on an important decision-making panel.
- Since 2007 in Viet Nam, Da Nang Province piloted open competitive examinations for leadership positions, resulting in a significant increase in the presence of women, including young women, in public administration. According to the Department of Internal Affairs, this focus on transparency and competitive exams enhanced the quality of leadership and provided merit-based opportunities for both sexes.¹¹⁸
- In Uganda, there are specific instructions for public service recruitment, such as: advertisements must encourage both women and men to apply; recruitment teams should have both men and women members and be given gender-sensitization training; interview questions are to be gender-sensitive; and affirmative action is to be applied in the recruitment, selection and promotion of employees.¹¹⁹
- Kyrgyzstan's public administration policy requires the appointment of the qualified applicant of the less-represented sex.¹²⁰
- In 2005, the government of Azerbaijan undertook the operationalization of a new Civil Service Commission. With the support of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Government of Norway, a project was developed to increase women's participation in the civil service. The project aimed to increase the capacity of Civil Service Commission staff and civil servants from main government agencies to address gender issues and to promote gender mainstreaming in national legislation related to the civil service. As a result of the project, the Civil Service Commission began collecting sex-disaggregated data on applicants for vacant posts and recruitments – an important prerequisite for designing and targeting policy interventions. Analysis of the statistics showed that the number of women recruited was proportionate to the number of women applicants, but that the share of women applicants was considerably lower than that of men. As a follow-up action, strengthening outreach activities that would encourage women to apply was recommended via the project. Following the project, the number of women applicants rose from 584 in 2009 (24.7 percent of all applicants) to 1,496 in 2011 (28.32 percent), with the majority of women applicants in 2011 (74.4 percent) applying for higher level vacancies in public offices.

Attention has also been given to recruiting women in specific sectors with significant parity gaps. In both South Sudan and Afghanistan, targeted recruitment drives for women police officers resulted in more women joining that institution. These initiatives included complementary components, including training.¹²¹

117. Law No. 1/28: General Statute of the Public Administration, Republic of Burundi, (2006), Article 13 (h).

118. Topic 11: "Assessing Gender Empowerment in Vietnam's Public Sector," Thi Van Anh, Tran and Soma Chakrabarti Fezzardi, Background working paper for *UNDP Viet Nam National Human Development Report* (2010).

119. Circular Standing Instructions No. 2 of 2011: Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Human Resource Management, Ministry of Public Service, Republic of Uganda (2011).

120. Interview with the State Secretariat for the Civil Service in the GEPA Kyrgyzstan Case Study, UNDP (2012).

121. UNDP consolidated reply, DGP-NET, query about South Sudan/Gender-Sensitive Police Training Reform, 31 May 2011.



Good Practice: Gender-sensitive recruitment guidelines

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) supports national authorities in South Eastern Europe in their efforts to advance gender equality in security sector reform through regional cooperation. As part of this work, guidelines have been adopted for gender-sensitive policing that emphasize recruitment, selection and professional development of women in police services.

This simple and low-cost measure is helping police services in South Eastern Europe attract and retain more qualified women and advance gender equality. The guidelines were developed by the Women Police Officers Network in a unique regional process based on data provided by nine participating national police services, with the support of UNDP/SEESAC.

To see the guidelines, click here: <http://www.seesac.org/publication.php?l1=72>

Many of the same types of obstacles that women face in entering public administration are also at play in rising through the ranks. For example, while performance appraisals are critical to both retention and promotion of male and female staff alike, gender bias in performance appraisals has a differential impact on women. Care needs to be taken to ensure that both interviews and performance appraisals are transparent, merit based, and gender bias is not intentionally or unintentionally used in performance appraisals or promotional decision-making. Therefore, gender analysis and gender equality training for all staff, particularly managers, is important. Information sessions and coaching can be provided to women both to prepare for interviews and also for performance evaluations.

C. Capacity building and professional development

The educational barriers that many women face in entering public administration have already been discussed. However, educational and capacity challenges persist even for many women who have managed to join the public administration. The strategic importance of access to training for women has been recognized in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), which recommends governments to “restructure recruitment and career-development programmes to ensure that all women, especially young women, have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training, including on-the-job training” and “develop career advancement programmes for women of all ages that include career planning tracking, mentoring, coaching, training and retraining.”¹²²

In Jordan, management skills workshops and seminars have been regularly conducted in the last few years for almost all employees at management level. In addition, Jordanian civil servants receive training at a number of private training institutions inside the country, and many are sent for training abroad through donor agencies.

Many other models and good practices exist in this area. Talent management and fast-track schemes are aimed at attracting high potential candidates and accelerating talented staff up the career ladder. This often also involves additional training and rotation or postings to accelerate the breadth of experience. These schemes require active management in line with organizational goals, and for this reason they can be relatively resource intensive.

122. Strategic objective G.1.: Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision making, Beijing Platform for Action (1995).



Schemes can be designed exclusively for women or women can be prioritized in general schemes. Schemes for women have the advantage of directing resources and attention to addressing the specific needs and concerns of women and are a good way to tackle the lack of women at senior levels relatively quickly. However, such schemes need to be carefully positioned and communicated so that they are genuinely perceived as “fast-track” and do not perpetuate backlash.



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Fast-track programmes to accelerate women into decision-making positions have been adopted in a range of contexts, both in developing and developed countries. The Swedish *Women to Top Positions* is one such example. This three-year programme was initiated to promote the career development of women in the central administration. Three lessons learned were: 1) that to increase the number of women in top positions, top management needs to be involved to make gender equality part of the daily business; 2) strategies, structures and work conditions must be designed to attract the right person for the job (merit); and 3) there is a need to link gender equality to innovation and growth.

D. Work-life policies

Work-life balance policies (or the lack of thereof) can impact greatly on the retention and promotion of women. A culture of long working hours in the office compounds many women’s difficulties in balancing their home and work responsibilities, which is frequently cited as a barrier for women. Women may feel pressure to work long hours and emulate men in order to be accepted and to advance in their careers. This undermines possibilities for transforming the culture of senior management into a gender inclusive one, which is one of the potential benefits of balanced participation in decision-making.

One study found that “the atmosphere in strategic policy sections is not conducive to appointing, retaining and promoting women into senior positions. In such areas, the perceived preference is for a single male with no family commitments, highly educated and married to the job. This in turn frames the social atmosphere in which male camaraderie or ‘buddyism’ flourishes and where women can be made to feel ‘out of it’. There is also the perception that for women to succeed they must emulate these qualities.”¹²³

Globally, women continue to have more difficulty than men in balancing their roles and responsibilities at home and work. Work place policies designed to help redress this challenge can have a significant impact on women’s career opportunities and choices.

The Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (no. 156), and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (no. 165) are the main international standards addressing reconciliation of work and family

123. “Gender Imbalance in the Irish Civil Service Grades at Higher Executive Officer Level and Above,” (undated), section 5.4.1.



life. They provide considerable guidance on policies and measures that help workers with family responsibilities and reduce work-family conflict. The foundation of the Convention and Recommendation are based on the principle of creating equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation between men and women workers with and without family responsibilities.¹²⁴

In the United Arab Emirates, Dubai's Human Resources Decree 9 (2011) on federal human resources is an example of an interesting practice as it addresses work-life balance, career development opportunities and aims to support women's leadership opportunities. A decision of the Council of Ministers (No. 19, Article 1, 2006) also provides for daycare centres in ministries, public institutions and government offices and agencies, and allows for joint facilities for those institutions with fewer than the required minimum number of children to establish these facilities at a location.

Failure to address work-family conflicts negatively affects not only the employment opportunities and job quality, health and productivity of the workers concerned, but also their families, children and adults alike, both in developed and developing countries. The reconciliation of work and family is to be viewed as integral to social protection strategies and programmes aimed at enhancing the social and economic security and well-being of families and, in particular, of working mothers. If properly designed, work-family reconciliation measures can also contribute to gender equality both in the labour market and in personal life.

States have a key role in establishing enabling legislative and policy frameworks in collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations. Policies and practices at the workplace level can go far in making workplaces more responsive to the family and household obligations of workers and should include measures related to leave entitlements, working time and care arrangements at workplace or community levels. Collective bargaining can help workers and employers collaboratively determine a 'regulated flexibility', which enables staff to balance their paid work with their domestic obligations.

In Malaysia in 2007, subsidies for childcare were provided to public servants having low household incomes, and in 2009 the income threshold was raised.¹²⁵

Ireland has also introduced a range of work-life policy measures following a government-supported review of gender imbalance in the civil service, which found that flexible working arrangements were among the top recommended changes.¹²⁶ Other measures include the possibility of unpaid leave and career breaks, flexible working hours and teleworking.¹²⁷

Another example is Sweden, where the parliament has fixed sitting times, childcare facilities and does not usually meet during major school holidays.¹²⁸ This benefits both men and women parliamentarians, and goes beyond the notion of flexible daily or weekly working hours.

E. Parental leave

Until recently, in Botswana, officers on probation were not entitled to full pay while on maternity leave, but at the time of conducting the study a directive had been issued by the Director of Public Service Management to the

124. *Work and Family: Towards New forms of Reconciliation with Social Co-Responsibility*, ILO and UNDP (2009).

125. NGO shadow report to CEDAW Committee (2012).

<http://wao.org.my/file/file/Malaysian%20NGO%20CEDAW%20Alternative%20Report%202012%206MB.pdf>.

126. "Gender imbalance in Irish Civil Service Grades at Higher Executive Officer Level and Above, (undated)," section 4. 8. 4.

127. Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Ireland <http://hr.per.gov.ie/family-friendly-policies/>; accessed May 2012.

128. Response to a European Parliament survey, Swedish Parliament (Riksdag) (2009).



effect that officers on probation are entitled to full maternity leave with full pay. Article 21 of 'On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women' (2008) provides that a public servant who is on maternity or childcare leave has priority rights to education. This provision recognizes that women who start a family often fall behind male counterparts in terms of accessing career development options, which are useful, not only in terms of content, but also because they offer much-needed visibility.

Norway introduced a four-week paternity quota in 1993 for both the public and private sectors. This provision aimed to encourage more fathers to take an active role in the care of children during the child's first year. Very few fathers took advantage of this parental benefit between 1978 and 1994. However, the Gender Equality Ombudsman's office reported in 1997 that over 70 percent of fathers with the right to the paid leave took it that year (as opposed to 2.4 percent in 1992). As well as the provision itself, the oversight function of the Gender Equality Ombudsman is a positive feature.

Good Practice: Gender Equality Seal in Latin American countries



Mexico's 'Certification programme for national gender equality management systems' is a public policy initiative that promotes organizational change to mainstream gender into human resources in public and private companies. Organizations are awarded a Gender Equality Seal if they meet certain criteria.

The initiative began when the UNDP Uruguay Office and its partners working together on a project on quality management and gender equality requested information about similar schemes. An experience-sharing process was started; it was managed through a UNDP-supported gender equality portal (www.americalatinagenera.org). Now, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay are all participating in the scheme.

The first regional forum of a dedicated Community of Practice was held in July 2012. A manual has been produced to support national governments in setting up similar schemes. In Mexico, the scheme has proved popular, and between 2003 and 2010, over 500 organizations were awarded certification. Certified organizations also qualify for extra points when bidding for tenders under the Mexican Norm for Employment Equality between Men and Women (2009), which is an attractive marketing proposition.

Chile's national Management Improvement Programme to modernize the state and improve the performance of government institutions includes efforts to improve the working conditions for public servants as well as the quality of the services they provide. The programme is innovative in that it provides institutions with incentives (increased budget for the institution and higher salaries for staff) as well as disincentives (reduction in organizational budget) to introduce improvements. One of the improvements relates to gender. The National Service for Women, in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, has developed a dedicated Gender Equity Programme within the framework of the programme. Those government departments that develop workplans to improve gender equality are rewarded (or not) based on results achieved. The most common action areas of the ministries include staff training on gender concepts and their implications and the improvement of sex-disaggregated data.



F. Incentives for institutional change and accountability mechanisms

Even when the necessary legal and policy frameworks are in place for gender equality and parity in public administration, implementation remains a challenge in many contexts. One important way to accelerate implementation of concrete measures is the adoption of incentives. And incentives, to be successful, should be accompanied by robust accountability frameworks. The box below provides good examples of incentive-based programmes.

G. Networking and mentoring

Formal and informal networking is recognized as important, and in some contexts indispensable, to boost career progression opportunities.¹²⁹ The concept of social capital arises from the assumption that relationships matter, and that social capital provides a framework for pursuing individual goals, supports the flow of information and sets norms for behavior that enhance social interaction.¹³⁰ ‘Old boys networks’ are still seen to be an obstacle to career progression by many women. In addition to gender bias that is common in these networks, many women are not able to network informally during and after work because of social norms, family obligations and other considerations. Lack of access to professional development and the networking opportunities these bring also undermines women’s social capital. The career choices of women are often influenced by gender stereotypes. Young women in particular may be impacted by the lack of female role models and mentors. There are many ways to support formal and informal networking between women and men, such as mentoring and facilitating networking opportunities.

Austria’s civil service has developed a cross-mentoring programme to bolster women’s careers and bring greater numbers of women into senior management. Female mentees are matched with female or male mentors from another ministry. The scheme makes the potential and skills of women more visible and provides a mechanism for mutual support and an advocacy platform to assert women’s interests.¹³¹ Matching women with mentors from different ministries also gives them access to expertise, perspectives and visibility beyond their immediate environment. Involving male as well as female mentors fosters cross-gender engagement throughout public

Good practice: Women Police Officers Network in South Eastern Europe



UNDP and SEESAC support the South East Europe Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA) to increase women’s participation in police services and in decision-making positions. Called ‘Support for Gender Mainstreaming in Policing Practice in South East Europe’, this regional project provides for the establishment and capacity development of the Women Police Officers Network in South East Europe.

The Women Police Officers Network used in-house expertise and seconded these experienced police officers to the Working Group. This approach was taken to solidify buy-in and ownership of such an important tool. Guidelines created were based on existing policies and procedures so that they would be relevant. All nine participating police services completed a comprehensive questionnaire to further solidify buy-in and relevance.

Source: Bojana Balon, Women Police Officers Network in South East Europe Project Manager, UNDP/SEESAC.

129. Informal networks were the main source of finding out about job openings. Source: “Personnel practices in careers of women at the top in government and business in Nicaragua and Costa Rica,” *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 15, 397-416 (1995).

130. *The Ties that Bind: Social Capital in Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Human Development Report*, UNDP (2009).

131. Website of the Austrian Federal Chancellery www.bka.gv.at/site/6826/default.aspx.



administration. For the men involved, it helps them understand the importance of and types of issues faced by aspiring women leaders.

It is also important to involve men as mentors and champions of women's equal decision-making. For example, in Australia in 2010, influential male CEOs and Chairpersons were brought together to form the Male Champions of Change group.¹³² The Male Champions of Change partnered with the women's network, Chief Executive Women¹³³ to assist top managers to understand why promoting women's leadership is important and what they can do to support this agenda.

Some countries have promoted networking among female civil servants. For example, Rwanda's Women Leaders Network brings together women leaders from different sectors to share experiences, celebrate their achievements and inspire young women leaders.¹³⁴ Bringing together women from different sectors is helpful, as at senior levels of decision-making in public administration there is often greater mobility across sectors, such as from business, academia and civil society into public administration. These networks are especially useful in ministries and local governments, where women are particularly under-represented, as they provide mutual support and a collective voice on a broader sectoral and geographical scale. A number of women's networks in public administration have begun to promote networking between countries.

3 POSITIVE SYNERGIES WITH THE BROADER GENDER EQUALITY AGENDA

International frameworks such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, relevant ILO conventions and regional commitments (SADC Protocol, Brasilia Consensus) are important foundations for mainstreaming gender into legislation and policy. National policy and plans, in particular development and gender equality strategies, are important entry points, as they can carry resources and create an enabling environment for new initiatives and change in public administration.

The National Gender Policy of Mali (2011-2021) specifies equal participation in decision-making. A three-year action plan (2011-2013) was designed to correct the underrepresentation of women and diminish the challenges women face when accessing employment in public administration and the private sector.¹³⁵ The policy also provides for budgets and implementing bodies in priority ministries, which is important for implementation and institutionalization of legal provisions.¹³⁶

The National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (2008-2018) contains explicit and detailed policy directives on equal participation. The action plan calls for attainment of at least 30 percent women in high-level positions in key government institutions and goes beyond simply requiring special measures in public administration by even delineating the programmes, setting timelines and designating responsible institutions.¹³⁷

Cambodia's updated National Strategic Development Plan (2009-2013) prioritizes women's equal participation in public administration to support good governance and development goals.¹³⁸ The plan sets out detailed provisions relating to how equal participation should be achieved. For instance, it states that stakeholders will

132. Male Champions of Change: www.humanrights.gov.au/male-champions-change.

133. Chief Executive Women: <http://www.cew.org.au>

134. Website of Rwanda Women Leaders Network: www.facebook.com/pages/Rwanda-Women-Leaders-Network/302498926457685.

135. National Gender Policy of Mali, Ministry of Advancement of Women, Children and the Family, Government of Mali (2011) and National Gender Policy of Mali Action Plan (2011-2013), Ministry of Advancement of Women, Children and the Family, Government of Mali (2011).

136. GEPA Mali Case Study, UNDP (2012).

137. National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (2008-2018), Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (undated) <http://mowa.gov.af/en/page/6686>

138. National Strategic Development Plan update (2009-2013), Royal Government of Cambodia (2010).



act to promote women's participation in decision-making in the public sector at all levels "by pushing for the implementation of policies and procedures for promotion and recruitment of government officials in response to gender equality (...) cooperating with the Royal School of Administration in setting up gender responsive curriculum and increasing the number of female students (...); cooperating with the women civil servants association and relevant players in improving the effectiveness of performance and rights protection, and the well-being of women civil servants; capacity building and skills in Leadership and Management as well as other related skills for women leaders."¹³⁹ Ministries are required to produce gender mainstreaming action plans with a particular emphasis on equal representation and on the empowerment of women in the ministries, as well as on mainstreaming gender equality issues in programming.¹⁴⁰

Sectoral policies, particularly education and labour policies, are also critical to advancing women in public administration. Educational factors that affect whether women are able to access decision-making positions include access to education, choices of study and career path. A key factor in some contexts is ensuring women have the minimum educational requirements to enter the civil service. If there is a limited pool of eligible women in a society, or if the pool is not visible, then the chances for improvement of gender balance in public administration and at decision-making levels are slim. Some countries have made progress in addressing the education gender gap using special measures.

“
Girls and women remain deprived of full and equal opportunities for education. There has been progress towards parity at the primary level, but this tapers off at the secondary level in developing regions. The global economic crisis is deepening inequalities, made worse by cuts in education budgets and stagnating development support. (...)
Only 39% of countries have equal proportions of boys and girls enrolled in secondary education.
 - World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education, leaflet, UNESCO, 2012
 ”

Uganda's measures to increase women's participation in higher education have seen success, as evidenced by the fact that in January 2010, for the first time, more women than men graduated from Uganda's Makerere University.¹⁴¹ Gender-sensitive educational curricula, protection of girls against violence and gender balance in school teachers (especially in higher education) have been shown to help keep girls in school, including in Uganda.¹⁴² Albania has established a quota to encourage girls to enter non-traditional branches of study.¹⁴³ Austria implements active labour market policies to diversify education and career choices, which is a specific objective of that country's National Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Labor Market (2008-2013). Mandatory career guidance is another part of the 11 measures to dismantle gender stereotypes specified in the plan.¹⁴⁴

Advocacy and sensitization are required to attain buy in and commitment and to minimize backlash when tackling challenges in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, including gender parity, in public administration.

139. National Strategic Development Plan update (2009-2013), Royal Government of Cambodia (2010), p. 138.
 140. For an example of a ministry action plan, see the one developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2006) at www2.adb.org/documents/periodicals/gnn/june2008-Cambodia-Gender-Agriculture.pdf Accessed November 2012.
 141. For instance, see: Muggaga, R. (2010), Makerere: Will Female Dominance Last Long? The Observer (28 February 2010) www.observer.ug/index.php/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7426%3Amakerere-will-female-dominance-last-long&Itemid=96.
 142. *Progress in Gender Equality in Uganda Primary Education*, Albert Byamugisha, Office of the Prime Minister at Forum « Gender Equality in Education : Looking beyond Parity », UNESCO (2011).
 143. National Strategy on Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender Based Violence (2011-2015) (Draft for validation, unofficial English translation), Government of Albania (2011), p. 60.
 144. National Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Labour Market, Ministry for Gender Equality and the Civil Service (2008-2013), p. 49.



Efforts to advance women's decision-making in public administration need to build interest, commitment and support from both male and female leaders, civil servants in the rank and file and the general public.

Governments and stakeholders can partner with the media to influence broader public opinion and address stereotypes. In Ukraine, gender sensitization of the media was undertaken as part of the UNDP and European Community-supported 'Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights Programme'.¹⁴⁵ Standards of non-discriminatory advertising were drafted as part of this programme.

Recognition of role models has also been a successful advocacy strategy. The United Kingdom's Women in Public Life Awards celebrate women leaders and recognize and promote the work of outstanding women role models in politics, business, the civil service and communities.¹⁴⁶

In certain contexts, cross-party women's caucuses have proven to be an important vehicle for increasing women's impact on decision-making and advancing gender equality issues. They also provide women leaders with networks, role models and mentors. Developing and strengthening networks of women leaders in public administration can reap similar benefits. For example, Kosovo's Women's Caucus protested vigorously and successfully that the absence of women candidates for ambassadors submitted to the commission on Foreign Policy constituted a 'flagrant violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (Article 24 (2)) and the Law on Gender Equality (Article 3)...which provides that "Competent authorities while appointing...members of representative bodies within and outside of Kosovo should take into consideration equal representation of women and men."'¹⁴⁷ Three women were then included in the list of proposed ambassadors.

In the Arab States a regional research and awareness initiative was developed. A national database of skilled women in several Arab States was created. A Jordanian-Danish bilateral project, the "Who is She" database¹⁴⁸ in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine drew on the Danish model which aimed to make women's competences and profiles visible to a wider public. Expert females in journalism, ministries, local government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector were chosen by a committee through a rigorous selection process. These women were identified as having the potential to be appointed to decision-making positions in private and public office. This type of initiative could be replicated at various levels, and might specifically target women for public administration.

4 CONTEXT-SPECIFIC APPROACHES

A. Post-conflict settings

Post-conflict environments and the challenge of balancing numerous urgent priorities can result in lack of attention to and prioritization of gender equality issues. This often remains the case despite the recognition that "focusing on disparities is not ancillary, or optional, but should be a priority and an integral component within strategies for building peace, participation and prosperity."¹⁴⁹

145. Final report of UNDP's Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights Programme, 2010.

146. Website of Women in Public Life Awards, UK: www.womeninpubliclifeawards.co.uk.

147. Bulletin nr. 1 Women's Caucus Group (GGD), Kosovo (January 2012), shared with participants of UNDP regional meeting on 'Equal participation in decision making', Istanbul, November 2011.

148. www.womendialogue.org.

149. The Governance and Social Development Resource Centre www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3584; referring to *The Gender Dimensions of Post-conflict Reconstruction: The Challenges in Development Aid*, Greenberg, M. E. and Zuckerman, E. (2009).



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In addition, political commitments have been made by the United Nations and Member States to prioritize gender equality issues in post-conflict policies and programmes. The United Nations Secretary-General’s Seven Point Action Plan on Women and Peacebuilding¹⁵⁰ sets out United Nations system-wide commitments on women and public administration in post-conflict settings. It calls on the United Nations to ensure that technical assistance for conflict resolution processes furthers women’s participation as appointed decision makers in public institutions, including through the use of temporary special measures such as positive action, preferential treatment and quota-based systems.¹⁵¹ UNDP’s Eight-Point Agenda also prioritizes increased participation of women in crisis and post-crisis contexts.¹⁵²

The 2010 *World Public Sector Report* further highlights that, “excluding women may significantly slow down reconstruction activities, jeopardize

democratic inclusiveness and lasting peace, and further erode women’s power within fragile and divided societies” and negatively impact economic growth and development.¹⁵³

It is increasingly recognized that the reconstruction process and the will to ‘build back better’ provides important opportunities to make gains in equal participation in public administration. These gains do not come easily, however, and require special effort, political commitment and resources. Any peace or political settlement will be more fragile if half the population is excluded from reconciliation and the process of rebuilding.

The good practices below show how some countries have made gains in tackling gender balance and equal participation in post-conflict environments.

- The national development plans of both Somaliland and Puntland have set targets for women’s participation in the civil service of 25 percent¹⁵⁴ and 30 percent,¹⁵⁵ respectively. Both governments are currently working on

150. A/65/354 – S/2010/466.

151. A/65/354 – S/2010/466.

152. Point three under “Expand Women’s Citizenship, Participation and Leadership”, Eight-Point Agenda, UNDP (undated), p.1.

153. *World Public Sector Report: Reconstructing Public Administration after Conflict – Challenges, Practices and Lessons Learned*, UNDESA (2010), p. 96.

154. National Development Plan (2012-2016), Ministry of National Planning and Development, Somaliland (2011).

155. National Development Plan (2007-2011), Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Puntland (2007).



a complete reform of public administration, which includes increasing women's participation as an essential element of national development.

- The constitutions of Colombia, Rwanda and South Sudan have been mentioned previously, with their various notable provisions on gender equality.

B. Economic crisis and shrinking public administration

Efforts to keep women's equal participation on the agenda can be vulnerable in times of crises, such as economic downturns and shrinking public administration. Nonetheless, there are examples of good practices in protecting women during economic crisis and downsizing.

In Cambodia, recruitment targets of 30 percent women proved challenging during hiring freezes brought on by the recent global economic downturn. In response, a decision by the Prime Minister required all vacant positions to be filled by women or remain empty. This resulted in a two percent increase in the number of women leaders.

In response to the potential negative impacts of the recent economic crisis, Austria stepped up national efforts to support gender equality. The Federal Minister for Women and the Civil Service, Gabriele Heinisch-Hosel, explained why: "As we are struggling to safeguard jobs, revive the economy and cope with the financial crisis, some people believe that this is not the time to talk about equal opportunities for women and gender politics in general. In fact, the opposite is true (...) I think that active labour market policies are currently the best means of supporting women. Moreover, we need further offers to help them reconcile job and family."¹⁵⁶

When Liberia embarked on its recent civil service reform strategy, titled "Smaller Government: Better Services" (2008-2011), despite downsizing, the reform prioritized gender equity as one of the six main focus areas.¹⁵⁷ The government's strategy upheld the importance of equal representation, including in decision-making, within its drive to make public administration more effective.

In April 2008, in Kosovo, a major functional review of all ministries was undertaken as part of a public administration reform process. The review contained a section on 'gender impact of recommendations,' which examined the impact of proposed reforms on gender balance, including at senior levels.¹⁵⁸

The Gender Equality Law in Mongolia (2009) specifies that the proportion of women and men leaving public administration as a result of cuts should be monitored.

A review of the gender implications of public sector downsizing programmes in Viet Nam noted that that "the public sector usually offers benefits that are highly valued by women, such as maternity leave, flexibility in the hours of work, and daycare facilities. These benefits are less common in the private sector, and generally unavailable in the informal sector, where most of the new jobs taken by separated workers are. The loss in total compensation experienced by women is thus potentially larger than the more easily observable loss in earnings."¹⁵⁹ Financial and non-financial benefits, therefore, should both be taken into account when designing severance packages.

156. www.bka.gv.at/site/6811/default.aspx.

157. Civil Service Reform Strategy 2008-2011: "Smaller Government, Better Services", Government of the Republic of Liberia (2008).

158. Website of the Ministry of Public Administration, Kosovo <http://map.rks-gov.net/en/page.aspx?id=656>.

159. *The Gender Implications of Public Sector Downsizing: The Reform Program of Viet Nam*, World Bank (2001).



The practice of undertaking a gender analysis before launching public sector downsizing initiatives to identify the potential implications on women and gender equality before decisions are made is a good example of a measure to be taken in any economy, including a developing or a transitional economy.

C. Subnational levels



Some efforts at subnational level illustrate a positive trend toward promotion and protection of women's equality.

As a result of collaboration between the city government and women's groups, the municipality of Buenos Aires, Argentina, mainstreamed gender considerations throughout its 1996 founding constitution and incorporated a specific chapter on upholding equality between women and men. Specific measures introduced were gender quotas for electoral lists and the drafting of a municipal gender equality plan, which could also include local government staff.¹⁶⁰

In Nicaragua, the United Nations and the government worked together to create a gender-responsive budgeting programme that supports gender equality in public sector staffing in 22 municipalities.¹⁶¹

In Cambodia, gender balance is being increasingly considered at subnational level in public administration decentralization processes. The Ministry for Women's Affairs has been providing extensive inputs to these processes.

160. Arboleda (2005) quoted in *Technical Notes on Gender Equality in Municipal Development*, IADB (2007).

161. MDG Achievement Fund website, "From Rhetoric to Reality: Promoting Women's Participation and Gender Responsive Budgeting Programme" (2012). www.mdgfund.org/program/rhetoricrealitypromotingwomensparticipationandgenderresponsivebudgeting.



PART THREE: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The range of systemic and other barriers that continue to impede women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration were reviewed in Part One. Part Two provided examples of policy and programming approaches to begin rectifying the gaps in gender equality and gender parity in public administration.

This section is designed to highlight necessary steps and concrete measures that can be taken to tackle barriers to gender parity within public administration and beyond. These recommendations span short, medium and long-term measures.

While the recommendations are universal in nature, understanding and tailoring approaches to national and subnational contexts will be critical to achieving success.

However, in all contexts, a strategy that includes a mix of the following is required:

- supportive constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks;
- concrete measures, programmes and initiatives that create an enabling environment and supportive institutional and organizational cultures within public administration and its ministries and agencies; and
- identification and enhancement of synergies between advancing gender equality and gender parity in public administration and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in general.

Finally, this section illustrates the UNDP mandate as it relates to the advancement of gender equality and gender parity in public administration.

The recommendations are organized using the three broad categories outlined in Part Two: 1) constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks; 2) institutional, organizational and cultural change; and 3) linkages with broader gender equality endeavors. It is important to note, however, that there are obvious overlaps, with some action points spanning more than one category. For instance, improved and expanded research, data and gender analysis is critical to all areas of action. Likewise, capacity building is fundamental to all. Accountability measures are essential to the implementation of any activity, and advocacy and sensitization are required to garner understanding of and commitment to women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration and beyond. Governments cannot always act alone. Stronger international cooperation to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in public administration is necessary, and UNDP is well-positioned to support and facilitate those efforts globally. Multi-stakeholder partnerships need to be strengthened.



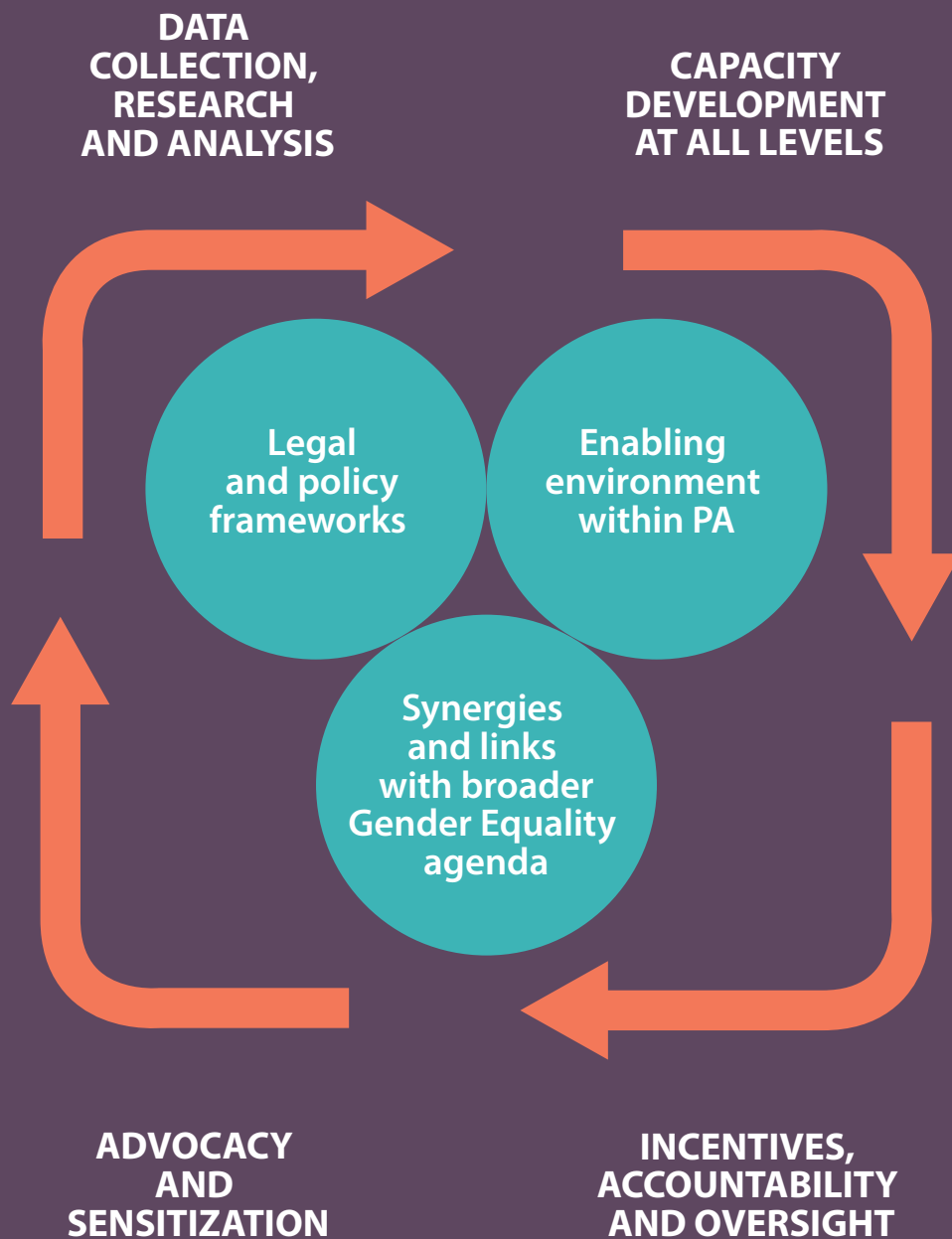
Advancing women in the ranks of public administration is important as a gender equality goal, and because gender balance in public administration ensures that a wider range of perspectives is brought to bear on policy-making and service delivery.

- Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, "Inclusion and Equality: Why Women's Leadership Matters," National Assembly of Wales, Pierhead Session series of lectures, 11 April 2012





UNDP Key Recommendations





1

STRENGTHEN CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

- When there is an opportunity for the review of constitutional provisions or the possibility of a comprehensive constitutional reform/drafting process, include in the constitution explicit provisions that promote equality between women and men and for equality in decision-making, specifically in public administration, including through the use of temporary special measures, such as gender quotas.¹⁶²
- Undertake a systematic and comprehensive review of existing laws, policies and regulations related to public administration. These reviews should be informed by sex disaggregated data, gender indicators and gender analysis to identify gaps between de jure and de facto status of gender equality, particularly in relation to women's equal participation in decision-making.
- Promote the idea of a general gender equality law. Although it is essential to systematically integrate gender equality issues into all legislation, a single gender equality law supports clarity and visibility for gender equality and stresses it as a national priority.
- Remove all discriminatory provisions from legislative frameworks. If any provisions or aspects in existing laws are gender-insensitive or gender-blind, and therefore impact negatively on equal participation, they need to be reviewed and changed.
- Enact new laws or provisions in existing laws to proactively advance gender equality and women's empowerment, including women's equal participation in decision-making.
- Harmonize laws governing public administration in accordance with international normative frameworks (CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, etc.).
- Include specific requirements to advance women's equal participation in decision-making in all instruments, and provide necessary budgetary allocations to implement the actions.
- Review public administration internal statutes and regulations, particularly with regard to recruitment, appointment, promotion and physical amenities, to be sure they do not discriminate directly or indirectly against women.
- Undertake gendered analyses of restructuring plans and severance packages before any major redundancy programmes are begun.
- Identify gender disparities in pay and benefits and enact relevant laws to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value in public administration.
- Customize appropriate and effective temporary special measures in constitutions and/or relevant laws and policies. Affirmative action commitments should be considered in constitutions, laws, public administration regulation, policies, etc. to speed up the achievement of women's equality (Article 4 CEDAW).



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162. *Global Good Practices in Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Constitutions*, UNDP (forthcoming 2014).



- Establish principles, guidelines, time bound targets and indicators for advancing women’s equal participation in decision-making.
- Develop concrete implementation processes.
- Proactively enforce laws, regulations and policies on temporary special measures.
- To bolster implementation and enforcement of temporary special measures and other measures, strengthen the role of the entity in charge of monitoring compliance with these laws and policies.
- Penalties for non-compliance must be defined and enforced in order for quotas to be effective, which means that staff of key oversight institutions, such as the Civil Service Commission, Ombudsman Office and the Human Rights Commission, need regular training on gender equality and women’s empowerment and the necessary tools to carry out their work.
- Include women’s participation in public administration in national development plans.
- Produce public annual reporting to parliament on the development and implementation of laws and policies designed to advance women’s equal participation and decision-making in public administration.
- Develop and/or strengthen and enforce sexual harassment laws and policies.
- Use gender-sensitive language in all laws and policies.
- Build national gender equality capacities to draft laws and policies relevant to public administration.
- Allocate specific resources and funds for assessment of the situation of women’s participation in decision-making in public administration.

2 PROMOTE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE WITHIN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Concrete steps should be taken within public administration to attract, retain and promote women into leadership and decision-making positions and to transform the organizational culture of public administration in general, as well as in the different ministries and agencies. Ministries and public administration agencies must therefore build concrete gender action plans that not only change policies and processes, such as staffing and human resources, but also alter mindsets and institutional cultures.

Below are recommended steps in a range of areas that can help make this transformation.



Developing a culture of performance and good governance is not just about rules and regulations; it also involves nurturing a culture and leadership that leads by example.

- National Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030, Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, p. 185



A. Challenge and reform the overall workplace culture in public administration

- Systematically incorporate gender equality and women’s empowerment within public administration in the curriculum for in-service training at all levels, even management. Include modules on regulatory frameworks and acts, gender-sensitive strategic planning and the importance of women’s representation in public administration.



- Introduce brief courses for senior appointed and elected officials and other senior civil servants on their responsibilities and accountability with regard to gender equality generally and women's participation and leadership in public administration in particular.
- Develop an institutional communication strategy on women's participation and leadership in public administration.
- Sensitize all staff to sexual and other harassment through mandatory training and enforce disciplinary measures.
- Remove sexism in language and develop and circulate guidelines about gender-sensitive language.
- Create awards and incentives for departments that promote gender equality in innovative ways (i.e., the Gender Equality Seal).
- Emphasize that women's equal participation and leadership in public administration is similarly important to their participation in politics and the private sector.
- Support implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General's Action Plan on Women and Peacebuilding, which includes United Nations system-wide commitments on women and public administration in post-conflict settings.
- Prioritize women's equal participation and decision-making in times of crisis, transition and downsizing.
- Take specific measures to defend the equal participation and decision-making of under-represented groups of women (minorities, youth, elderly, disabled, indigenous, etc.).
- Ensure that political commitment to women's equal participation and decision-making is taken by the political as well as the public administration leadership at national and sub-national levels. Both the rights of women and the benefits to public administration (and more broadly to society) that flow from women's equal participation and leadership should be stressed.
- Consider setting up a network of ministerial focal points for professional equality in each ministry, appointing staff senior enough to have real authority within the agencies concerned.
- Strengthen technical expertise and mobilize senior support via institutional mechanisms, particularly the national women's machinery.
- Ensure that the national women's machinery is adequately resourced and visible.
- Improve institutional coordination between the ministry or agency in charge of public administration and the one in charge of gender affairs, including the establishment of a senior level inter-ministerial coordination and implementation committee.
- Improve institutional coordination between the ministries or agencies in charge of public administration and gender and the parliamentary commissions in charge of similar portfolios.
- Strengthen the role of gender focal points in various areas and sectors of government, setting them up where they do not exist and supporting knowledge sharing among them.
- Research and discuss, in internal and external participatory consultations, issues that impact women's ability to access decision-making positions.
- Apply gender analysis to all policies and practices within public administration.
- Engage male civil servants in gender equality initiatives to widen the critical mass promoting greater gender equality and women's participation and decision-making in public administration.
- Include in all manager's performance evaluations an assessment of measures taken and progress made to secure women's equal participation and decision-making.
- Offer gender equality capacity building to public administration staff, including the leadership.



B. Implement supportive human resources policies

- Monitor recruitment patterns and identify gender gaps, including for specific groups of women.
- Use gender-sensitive language in vacancy announcements and explicitly encourage women to apply.
- Develop and launch regular recruitment drives targeting women.
- Adjust gender-neutral criteria that disadvantage women, e.g. requirements for a number of years of service before attaining higher level positions.
- Establish transparent recruitment and promotion procedures.
- Provide training courses and build the capacities of women from diverse educational and other backgrounds to help them pass public service entrance examinations to generate a continuous pool of young women entering public administration.
- Establish databases of qualified women within public administration.
- Make promotion, transfer and mobility opportunities more attractive to women.
- Consider establishing targets and quotas and support measures that accelerate progress in achieving parity.
- Design innovative measures to advance gender parity. For example, until parity gaps are closed, both new recruitments and promotions can be given to the under-represented sex or remain vacant. Another method may be to require any vacated decision-making position held by a woman to be filled by another woman.
- Introduce mandatory gender training for hiring managers.
- Ensure that recruitment, promotion and appointment panels in public administration are gender balanced and trained in gender equality issues.
- Address low retention and high turnover rates of women, particularly within strategic ministries and other public administration entities. Patterns should be analysed and possible solutions piloted. This can include exit interviews with women who leave the public service to find out what the main reasons were that influenced their decision, which could point to obstacles that need to be addressed.
- Review length of service criteria and align differential retirement ages for women and men.



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C. Reform performance evaluation processes

- Review and update appraisal and performance evaluation systems to verify there is no direct or indirect discrimination against women.
- Adjust criteria linked with age and length of service that disadvantage women.
- Open up promotion criteria to enable otherwise qualified women to apply, including from non-standard staff categories (e.g., contract staff).



D. Promote a work-life balance for women and men

- Regulate and enforce “reasonable working hours” for women and men.
- Ensure that meetings are only exceptionally scheduled outside of regular working hours.
- Offer flexible maternity and paternity leave.
- Adopt flexible working options and advocate for their use by both men and women and at all levels.
- Provide day care or assist with access to affordable and quality facilities.
- Allow the use of uncertified sick leave to cover family emergencies.

E. Support capacity building, training and professional development for women

- Undertake a capacity assessment of women in public administration.
- Prioritize women for training and professional development programmes.
- Organize training that is safe and accessible to both women and men (e.g., pay attention to place and time).
- Ensure that training and professional development programmes do not discriminate against women and specific groups of women.
- Establish minimum gender quotas for national and international training opportunities. Encourage women to apply for training and monitor the proportion of women selected for training.
- Restructure recruitment and leadership/career development programmes so that all women (and especially young women) have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training opportunities.
- Support individual strategies, such as career development and formal leadership training for women civil servants, including career planning, tracking, mentoring, coaching, training and retraining.
- Establish fast-track programmes to accelerate the progression of women to senior positions. Such programmes should ensure that as wide a range of women as possible are considered. This can be facilitated by mechanisms that allow women to be nominated by managers, peers and to also directly indicate their interest.
- Fast-track programmes may also include study grants for women.
- Provide women graduates of leadership and similar training with opportunities to practice their new skills.
- Apply gender analysis to civil service training curriculum and processes and specifically include gender equality issues and other human rights issues in the curriculum; be sure that gender experts are included in delivery of training.
- Provide training and capacity building initiatives during work hours.
- Cultivate male leaders who champion women’s participation and decision-making within public administration and beyond.
- In contexts where public administration institutions and capacities have been weakened, including post-conflict contexts, develop and offer coaching for women in the civil service at all levels.

F. Establish and support women’s civil servants networks and mentoring

- Promote gender-sensitive trade unions and networks.
- Establish and strengthen women’s civil servants networks.
- Encourage women leaders to mentor other women, including young women and women from marginalized or under-represented groups.



G. Strengthen available data and improve research to inform evidence-based programming, policy and advocacy

- Collect and analyse comprehensive and reliable quantitative and qualitative information about the range of factors, including systemic issues, affecting women's participation and leadership in public administration.
- Disaggregate data for different groups of women, including by age.
- Develop a comprehensive global mechanism that regularly collects and analyses data across countries.
- Encourage the use of surveys of current and former civil servants (female and male) to gather valuable information on gender equality-related issues.
- Promote research that examines the situation of specific groups of marginalized or vulnerable women within public administration.
- In the context of shrinking public administration, collect and analyse sex-disaggregated statistics to understand differential impacts on women. These data could be publicly available and examined by civil society and anti-discrimination councils to monitor whether, for instance, women or parents recently back from maternity and paternity leave comprise a disproportionate number of redundancies.
- Senior management must demand, analyse and act on information gathered to achieve gender quotas and improve the gender balance. Countries may even publish an annual ranking of ministries according to women's participation in decision-making positions.
- Conduct research and evaluations to assess the impact of various interventions on women's equality and empowerment in public administration.
- Ensure that national and subnational monitoring systems feed into regional and global tracking mechanisms, which have yet to be established.
- Projects should support the introduction of consistent mechanisms for gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data at all stages in the formulation and implementation of relevant national civil service policy.



3

MAKE BETTER LINKAGES BETWEEN WOMEN'S EQUAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WITH THE BROADER GENDER EQUALITY AGENDA

Important synergies can be leveraged by linking gender equality and women's empowerment in public administration with broader efforts toward gender equality in society. To realize and sustain results within public administration and beyond, there is a need to raise awareness of the importance of women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration among a wide range of stakeholders outside of public administration, including legislators, the judiciary, civil society organizations, women's groups, faith-based organizations, the private sector, youth (female and male) and society in general. Comprehensive approaches and greater coordination of efforts are essential.

A. Support women's education and preparedness for civil service careers, with a focus on young women

- Promote equal education of girls and boys, young women and men, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, and provide incentives to schools and families to keep girls in school.
- Support universities, professional and public policy schools and institutes to promote gender equality.
- Take concrete steps, including the introduction of scholarships, fellowships, and leadership and internship programmes for young women.
- Address gender equality in educational choices and integrate gender equality issues, such as women's participation in public life and leadership roles, in primary and high school curriculum.
- Support secondary schools and universities to build the capacity of young female students as future women civil servants, decision makers and leaders.

B. Develop national gender equality plans with concrete strategies and implementation mechanisms

- As comprehensive approaches to gender equality are more effective, support countries in the development of clear vision and strategies for gender equality reforms and embed gender equality in public administration issues in national action plans and national strategies.
- Leverage synergies between efforts to advance women's political participation with women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration.
- Identify potential synergies between initiatives for women parliamentarians and women leaders in public administrations and share lessons learned.
- Regularly track budget allocations for gender equality, including in public administration.



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C. Strengthen national oversight, monitoring, evaluation and accountability

- Incorporate women's equality and role in decision-making in public administration in the mandate of gender equality commissions, Ombuds offices, equality boards, human rights and/or other commissions or institutions with oversight mandates.
- A lack of adequate oversight capacity is a barrier in many contexts to bridging the gap between policy and practice. Gender equality institutions need to be resourced, functional and visible.
- Strengthen the capacities and roles of civil society, including academia and the media, to participate in monitoring and accountability mechanisms and processes.
- Support parliamentary committees on, or relevant to, gender equality to advocate for and regularly monitor gender mainstreaming in public administration, including women's participation in decision-making in public administration.

D. Support networks and multi-stakeholder platforms to exchange knowledge and experience

- Strengthen women's networks within and between public administration and civil society.
- Craft advocacy campaigns, knowledge sharing platforms and multi-stakeholder partnerships that advance gender equality in public administration and ensure the issue is presented at fora and conferences with experts and policymakers. This can enable a more profound understanding of the obstacles and issues at hand and lead to an exchange of experiences. These actions may help generate momentum and demand for change from within public administration leaders, as well as from within other relevant arenas.
- Engage in South-South and triangular cooperation on good practices, lessons learned and promising innovations.
- Promote the inclusion of data and good practices on women's participation and leadership in public administration in global and regional reports on gender equality and women's empowerment, such as the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report.
- Encourage the mainstreaming of women's participation and leadership in public administration in the work of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration and other relevant organs.

E. Promote women's visibility and gender equality in traditional and social media

- Publicize examples of successful and inspiring women in public administration, government and the corporate sector.
- Create and support awards that give visibility to the issue and to successful women and their experiences.
- Participate in United Nations Public Service Awards for gender-sensitive public service delivery, and consider the possibility of creating a new award for achievements in women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration.



- Develop multi-stakeholder partnerships with media and create media (including social media) campaigns that put issues of gender equality in public administration on the public agenda and encourage more women to join the civil service.
- Support national gender machineries to work with the media to challenge gender-based stereotypes in the workplace.
- Create informal networks of women and men journalists supportive of gender equality in public administration.
- Identify and work with high profile public and private-sector leaders (male and female) to champion gender equality in the media (including state-owned media).

4 UNDP'S ROLE AND ADDED VALUE: KEY STRATEGIC ENTRY POINTS

Many national, regional and international actors, including UNDP, have vital roles to play in supporting the equal participation and decision-making of women in public administration. Given its mandate, the importance of this issue and the need for increased attention and support to it, UNDP has specifically prioritized women's participation in decision-making, including in the executive branch, in its Strategic Plan (2014-17)¹⁶³ and corresponding Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017) "The Future We Want: Rights and Empowerment."

UNDP's Youth Strategy (2014-17) also stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming in relation to the economic, civic and political engagement and empowerment of youth. Pivotal to this task is the leveraging of synergies with UNDP's existing support for public administration reform, the broader gender equality agenda, women's empowerment and women's political participation. UNDP has extensive programmatic coverage and the geographical presence to be able to support national and regional stakeholders in implementing recommendations. UNDP also brings significant added value to the areas listed below.

A. *Support data collection and analysis to inform policy, programming and advocacy*

- ➔ UNDP will identify partners to work with in developing a methodology to collect worldwide data on women in decision-making positions in public administration. This new tracking mechanism would provide comparable data at national, regional and global levels.
- ➔ At the national level, UNDP can support the creation of a platform (i.e. database) that would be a central repository for relevant constitutional provisions, laws, regulations, policies, concrete measures undertaken and good practices related to advancing women's equal participation and leadership in public administration.
- ➔ UNDP can support innovative research, data and knowledge production, and information dissemination and exchange on this important but neglected area.

163. In particular Outcome 4 of the UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-17).



B. Leverage UNDP's convening power to build strong global, regional and national partnerships

- ➔ UNDP can support work aimed at changing organizational cultures, mechanisms within public administration and social norms in order to advance gender equality and gender parity, particularly at decision-making levels.
- ➔ UNDP can establish a global community/network of practitioners, decision-makers, experts, civil servants and champions to advocate for this emerging issue, facilitate knowledge and the sharing of good practices and promote positive images of women leaders.
- ➔ Leveraging its role as a trusted, impartial and leading development partner, UNDP can support and facilitate global, regional, national and subnational dialogue, forums, debate and consultations involving a range of stakeholders, including public administrations, youth-based organizations and networks, women's civil servant networks, public service ministers, the United Nations system and civil society (including women's groups, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector and the media) to promote greater understanding of and commitment to women's equal participation and decision-making in public administration.
- ➔ UNDP can also facilitate the creation of and support for strategic partnerships at global, regional and national levels. UNDP can focus on developing South-South and triangular cooperation in this emerging area of work to maximize benefits and broker knowledge, including about innovative capacity development and leadership initiatives being piloted and implemented, and can facilitate exchanges across developing countries.

C. Use UNDP's expertise and extensive global presence to promote policy and programming at the country level

- ➔ Phase 2 of UNDP's GEPA initiative calls for additional GEPA country case studies to be undertaken and for supporting the piloting of the recommendations that emanate from the country case studies and this global report.
- ➔ UNDP can provide technical assistance for law reform, policy development, design and implementation of temporary special measures, coordination mechanisms within public administration, development of gender parity plans and support for institutional and cultural change in public administration and targeted ministries.
- ➔ UNDP can support capacity building at all levels, including assisting with the formation of and implementation of training, e-capacity building and fast-track schemes for women in public administration, particularly those in decision-making roles, and including young women.
- ➔ UNDP can support the strengthening of gender equality capacity building in public administration and the mainstreaming of gender equality and gender parity issues in civil service training.
- ➔ UNDP will develop practical policy guidance on how to promote women's leadership and preparedness in public service.
- ➔ UNDP will encourage and support the integration of women's participation and leadership in public administration and beyond in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), Country Programme Documents, national policies (e.g. on youth) and UNDP programmes and strategies.
- ➔ UNDP will facilitate a better and nuanced understanding of temporary special measures appropriate for specific contexts.



D. Support greater organizational readiness

- ➔ To lead by example, UNDP must intensify in-house progress on women's empowerment and gender parity. UNDP has begun implementing a new Gender Parity Strategy and is working to ensure that all staff commit and contribute to an organizational culture that is supportive of gender equality.¹⁶⁴
- ➔ UNDP will further develop internal capacities by offering dedicated training on the subject of women's participation in decision-making. It can also leverage synergies across various UNDP programmatic areas to deepen the understanding of advancing women's participation in decision-making.
- ➔ UNDP will identify in-house male and female champions and develop a roster of experts on women's participation and leadership in public administration and gender-sensitive civil service reforms for support to policy and programming in country offices and for partners at national, regional and global levels.
- ➔ UNDP will dedicate concrete resources (human and financial) to implement components related to the advancement of women's participation and decision-making in UNDP's Strategic Plan (2014-17). The most direct contributions of the GEPA initiative will be to Outcome 4 of the Strategic Plan, which calls upon the organization to speed up progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (in particular, in decision-making positions in all branches of the state and decision-making positions for women in peace building processes). This work will also contribute to UNDP's implementation of Outcome 2 (citizens' expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance) and Outcome 3 (countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services).

¹⁶⁴ Overall, 50 percent of UNDP's staff members are women. However, while women are well represented within general level staff, including at entry-level, there are gender gaps in the middle and senior levels. UNDP's refreshed Gender Parity Strategy (2014-2017) proposes several actions to attract, retain and promote female staff. They include: flexibility in 'time of post' policies to provide women opportunities to apply for P4/P5 positions after only two years in a duty station; special hiring measures for Bureaus that fall below 45 percent of women, including opening candidate pools only to women; a requirement that all Bureaus address gender parity through retirement options for men and report on this issue as they work on the realignment of their capability during fiscal constraints; a requirement that all managers cultivate an inclusive work culture.



CONCLUSION

As has been stressed throughout this report, to achieve systematic and lasting results in advancing gender equality in public administration, efforts need to be prioritized, scaled up, coordinated and made more visible.

Given the complexities of and inter-linkages between the barriers faced by women and governments in addressing this issue, there is a corresponding need for comprehensive, multi-stakeholder and long-term approaches to sustainably attain women's equality in public administration and, in particular, their participation in decision-making. Any endeavors to bring about change must also address underlying systemic discrimination against women, gender bias (conscious or unconscious) and stereotypes that influence mindsets within public administration, in public life and in society generally.



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It is understood that gender equality and women's empowerment benefits not only women but also their families, communities and countries/territories. Gender empowerment within public administration likewise not only benefits women, but the entire civil service and society as a whole. Highlighting the rights of women alongside the benefits that women's equal participation and leadership brings to public administration is therefore an important course to be taken.

As the majority of current decision makers are male, men must be encouraged and capacitated to become more involved in equal representation issues, forming a cadre of advocates for gender equality and gender parity in public administration from both sexes. It is critical that advocacy and awareness-raising efforts specifically include and target male staff and leaders within public administration and beyond.



Globally, much progress has been made in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment as enshrined in CEDAW. However, much remains to be done, including within public administration. Sustained political will and prioritization on national, regional and global scales is required. This work calls upon the active support and collaboration of a range of stakeholders, including public administrations, civil servants, women's movements, legislators, donors, relevant United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and other partners.

With persistent efforts and investments over time, realizing women's equal participation and leadership in public administration can become a global reality. Individual women, their families and communities, as well as public administration and their countries will all reap the benefits.



ANNEX 1: WORKING DEFINITIONS

The below working definitions were adopted for the report.

Gender: The social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.¹⁶⁵

Gender equality: The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. 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.¹⁶⁶

Gender mainstreaming: 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.¹⁶⁷

Gender parity: Equal numbers of men and women at all grade levels.

Glass ceiling: Invisible artificial barriers, created by attitudinal and organizational prejudices, which block women from senior executive positions.¹⁶⁸

Glass wall: Invisible artificial barriers that reflect women's occupational segregation. "Women managers tend to be concentrated in certain sectors. In large organizations where women have managed to reach high-level managerial positions, they are often restricted to areas less central or strategic to the organization, such as human resources and administration. It is still extremely difficult for women to move laterally into strategic areas such as product development or finance, and then upwards through the central pathways to key executive positions in the pyramidal structure that is characteristic of large organizations. Sometimes these barriers are called "glass walls."¹⁶⁹

165. OSAGI, Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document, (2001) <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>.

166. Ibid.

167. ECOSOC, Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997; A/52/3, Chapter IV, "Special Session on Gender Mainstreaming" 18 September 1997.

168. Linda Wirth, (ILO), 2001, "Breaking through the glass ceiling: Women in management." <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/21576/1/Breaking%20through%20the%20glass%20ceiling%20Women%20in%20management.pdf?1>.

169. Ibid. pg.45.



Public administration: Agencies and actions of the executive branch of the state at the central/national, regional and local levels. The report looks primarily at national level.

Women in decision-making positions in public administration: Those women identified as being in non-elected decision-making or leadership positions in:

- recent reports of national governments (including reports to CEDAW and in responses to questionnaires for the review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action after 15 years;
- public administration reform strategies;
- gender equality strategies and similar documents;
- civil service censuses; and
- human resource databases in ministries.

When this information was not available, the report used the participation of women at the level of Permanent Secretary, Director General or nearest equivalent level as a proxy indicator.

Workplace harassment and sexual harassment: Workplace harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct by a staff member or non-staff personnel against another staff member or non-staff personnel or a group thereof that has or that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request of sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that has or that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.¹⁷⁰

170. UNDP, 2010, HR User Guide, "Workplace Harassment & Abuse of Authority," www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/documents/about/transparencydocs/UNDP_Policy_on_Workplace_Harassment_and_Abuse_of_Authority.May_2012.pdf.

ANNEX 2: SOURCES FOR TABLE 1

<i>Women's Participation in Public Administration</i>				
Country	Overall or senior	Year	Name of study/report	Conducted by
AFRICA				
Benin	Overall	2011	Civil Servants Census	Ministry of Labour and Civil Service
	Senior	2012	Civil Servants Census	Ministry of Labour and Civil Service
Botswana	Overall	2012	Employees by Job Grade and Gender	Infinium HR
	Senior	2009	Botswana Millennium Development Goals Status Report	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, UN
Burundi	Senior	2010	Faible representation de la femme dans les organes de prise de decision	Observatoire de l'Action Gouvernementale
Cameroon	Senior	2010	Statistical Portrait of Women and Men in Cameroon	Government of Cameroon
Gambia	Both	2007	Women's Bureau Survey (2007)	Women's Bureau of the Gambia
Mali	Both	2009	Assessment of Employment	National Public Service and Personnel Directorate
Nigeria	Both	2006	Sixth Periodic Report to CEDAW	Government of Nigeria
South Africa	Both	2011	Businesswomen's Association of South Africa Women in Leadership Census	Businesswomen's Association of South Africa
Uganda	Both	2011	Circular No 2	Ministry of Public Service Payroll Monitoring Unit
ARAB STATES				
Jordan	Both	2010	Annual Report	Civil Service Bureau
Morocco	Both	2009	Statistics of Civil Servants by Ministry Department	Ministry for the Modernization of the Public Sector
Oman	Both	2007	Initial Period Report to CEDAW	Government of Oman
Somalia: Somaliland	Overall	2006	Civil Service Survey	
	Senior	2011	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Interview	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Somalia: Puntland	Overall	2012	Strengthening Institutional Development Programme	UNDP Country Office
	Senior	2011	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Interview	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Tunisia	Both	2011	Women in Government: Engendering Public Policies in the Middle East and North Africa: Conference	Khaoula Labidi
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC				
Afghanistan	Overall	2009-10	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	Civil Service Management Department, Gender Directorate
	Senior	2004-10	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	Civil Service Management Department, Gender Directorate
Bangladesh	Overall	2008-09		Ministry of Public Administration
	Senior	2010	Ministry of Establishment in Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
Cambodia	Both	2011		State Secretariat of Civil Service
India	Overall	2006	Statistics on Women and Men in India (2010)	Women and Men in India
	Senior	2009	Representation of Women in the Central Council of Ministers	Statistics on Women in India, 2010



Country	Overall or senior	Year	Name of study/report	Conducted by
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC				
Indonesia	Both	2011	Women in the Civil Service by Echelon	National Civil Service Agency
Nepal	Overall	n/a		Personnel Information System of Nepal Civil Service
	Senior	2007	Inclusion and Participation of Women in Nepalese Civil Service	N. Kitabakhana, Ministry of General Administration
Timor-Leste	Overall	2010	Women's Participation in the Timor-Leste Civil Service in 2010	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
	Senior	2010	National Strategic Development Plan (2010-2030)	Government of Timor-Leste
Vanuatu	Overall	2011	HRMIS Report	Office of the Public Service Commissioner
	Senior	2003	Combined Initial, Second and Third Period Reports to CEDAW	Government of Vanuatu
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN				
Chile	Overall	2007-09	Employees by economic sector (public administration and defense, compulsory social security)	Institute of Statistics
	Senior	2009	Human Development in Chile: Gender Inequalities	UNDP
Colombia	Both	2011		Calculations by UNDP National Consultant. Based on Data from Department of Public Administration
Costa Rica	Overall	2012	Table: Gender balance in Costa Rican public administration 2010 - 2012	National Institute of Statistics of Costa Rica
	Senior	2009	Participation of Women in Public Sector Management *Unclear definition of decision-making positions	Sistema De Indicadores Estadisticos De Genero (SIEG)
Mexico	Overall	2010	Statistics on the Public Administration	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
	Senior	2011		Provided to UNDP National Consultant by the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES)
EUROPE AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES				
Albania	Both	2011	National Strategy on Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender Based Violence 2011-2015	Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination
Azerbaijan	Both	2011	Distribution of employees holding civil service positions	Women and Men in Azerbaijan
Croatia	Overall	2011	Women and Men in Croatia	Croatian Bureau of Statistics
	Senior	2009		Office for Gender Equality
Kazakhstan	Both	2009	Women and Men in Kazakhstan	Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Statistics
Kosovo	Both	2011		Ministry of Public Administration and UNDP Country Office
Kyrgyzstan	Both	2010	Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic	National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic
Romania	Both	2011		Provided on request to UNDP national consultant by the National Agency of Public Servants
Ukraine	Both	2011	Women's Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine, Ukrainian Women's Fund	State Statistics Committee of Ukraine
Note: Countries highlighted in bold are GEPA case study countries.				



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