



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

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GENDER COORDINATION REPORT 2008

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I. FOLLOW-UP TO THE GENDER EVALUATION

1. This year, a great deal of time has been invested in following up on the evaluation of IOM's gender policy. Many recommendations are already being implemented such as the adoption of new Terms of Reference (ToR) for Gender Focal Points (GFPs), the reintroduction of yearly gender work plans, the improvement of gender data in staffing and the development of new Gender Policy Objectives.

Revision of the policy objectives

2. One key recommendation was to revise the policy objectives in order to better reflect current migration challenges as well as IOM's mandate and activities. In order to make this a collective and inclusive exercise, the Gender Issues Coordination (GIC) designed a questionnaire supplemented by a set of non-exhaustive guiding questions, and sent it to Field Missions. GIC analysed the raw material extracted from the completed questionnaires (47 were received) and is currently working on a set of different documents: digest, plan of action, brochure and fact-sheets.

Gender Focal Points Network

3. The main objective of the activities carried out for and with the network is to build the capacity of the group in order to make it more efficient and reactive.

A. New ToR, induction kit and virtual group for the Gender Focal Points

4. New ToR for GFPs were prepared early this year to give more clarity on what is expected of them. These reinforce the catalyst role of GFPs, putting the emphasis on planning, liaison and networking, interaction with and capacity-building of colleagues. An induction kit in the form of a series of 11 fact-sheets called "**How can I...?**" has also been prepared to help GFPs see how they can best fulfil their duties. A virtual group was created to promote interaction inside the network. This has fostered very lively discussions and led to some concrete follow-up activities benefiting staff members at large (see section 6.1).

B. Introduction of biannual reporting

5. Until this year, GFPs did not have any formal obligation to report on the activities undertaken in their capacity as GFPs. The evaluation identified this as an obstacle to a more efficient sharing of experiences and best practices. The 2008 ToR introduced a biannual obligation to report on the activities and progress in gender mainstreaming in their respective missions. The reports also enable the GIC to tailor her support, advice and information to the needs and priorities of GFPs.

II. AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES ON GENDER AND MIGRATION

African Gender Forum on Migration

6. The Organization supported the NGO *Femmes Africa Solidarité*, which has observer status in IOM, in organizing the African Gender Forum 2007. This event, which took place in Dakar from 10 to 12 December 2007, represented an opportunity for dialogue between African women and the African diaspora. The discussions focused on the situation of women with regard to migration, the socio-economic and political implications of female migration as well as the positive contributions of migration to development. The Forum was chaired by H.E Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, President of the Pan Africa Parliament and Mrs. Viviane Wade, First Lady of Senegal. During the Forum, the IOM Database of African Professional Women was launched to give more visibility to women's skills, connect women in the diaspora with one another as well as offer opportunities to undertake temporary professional missions in the countries of origin.

Addressing Female Genital Mutilations in the context of migration

7. On 6 February, IOM together with the IPU, the Geneva State Department of Institutions and the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC), jointly organized a round table to mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The round table brought together a range of actors working on the issue, including representatives from WHO, OHCHR, UNICEF as well as academics, representatives from Permanent Missions and Geneva-based civil society organizations.

8. On 20 May, during the 61st World Health Assembly, GIC participated in a side event organized by the IAC. The panel was also attended by the IPU, the Medical Women International Association (MWIA), UNESCO (Chair), UNFPA, UNHCR and WHO. IOM made a presentation on its involvement in addressing FGM in the migration context in Switzerland, Italy and Austria.

9. IOM joined the Donors Working Group on FGM/C Abandonment. During the annual meeting that took place in Geneva (15-16 October) IOM made a case for bridging current efforts in Africa and Europe and committed itself to producing a fact-sheet on FGM and Migration in collaboration with UNHCR.

10. IOM has pursued its collaboration, initiated in 2005, with the Canton of Geneva. As part of the FGM project steering committee, GIC has contributed to the identification and training of 15 cultural mediators (5 Somali, 4 Eritrean, 3 Sudanese and 3 Ethiopian) in charge of awareness-raising activities in their respective communities. Brochures in French (*Protégeons nos filles de l'excision*), Somali, Amharic, Tigrigna and Arabic were also produced.

Workshop on the Migration of Women

11. IOM co-organized a workshop on "Women that migrate, building new lives while supporting those left behind" in Haifa, Israel from 17 to 21 March 2008. The workshop was a follow-up to the International Conference for Women Leaders: "Migration and Gender Issues within the Millennium Development Goals", organized by IOM, MASHAV/The Golda Meir

International Training Center (MCTC) and the Center for International Migration and Integration (CIMI) in September 2005. The same partners co-organized this five-day workshop including expert presentations, study-visits, round-table discussions and several participatory exercises. The workshop focused on the positive contribution migrant women can make to their host society as well as to the development of their community and country of origin. At the same time the workshop integrated human rights and equality considerations in order to provide a broader development “picture” to the 25 participants coming from a variety of countries, including government officials, academics, officials from international organizations and diaspora and civil society activists.

ECOSOC Ministerial Round Table Breakfast on “Migration, Environment and Climate Change: the Gender Perspective”

12. IOM, through the Office of the Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York, co-hosted this event in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and UNFPA on 2 July 2008. During the round table, Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye, IOM Deputy Director General, emphasized the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on population displacement and the need to consider women’s specific needs in this context. In situations of forced migration, as in any crisis and emergency situation, women and girls and men and boys are exposed to different types of risks and trauma, in particular gender-based violence and human trafficking for sexual or labour purposes.

III. SUPPORT TO GENDER PROJECTS

Past years supported projects

- **Study - Gender and Remittances: Colombian Migration from the West Central Metropolitan Area to Spain (AMCO, by its Spanish acronym)**

This study, conducted by IOM and UN-INSTRAW, which benefited from GIC financial support in 2006, was finalized and published this year.

- **Study - Gender and labour migration: Policy-oriented research on linkages and impacts: an Asian perspective**

This project, covering Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam, the Philippines and China, benefited from GIC financial support in 2007. The publication that should be available later this year identified key areas for social and public policy intervention.

2008 supported projects

13. In an effort to improve gender mainstreaming in project development, project support in 2008 focused on initiatives aimed at increasing the Field Missions’ capacity to conduct a gender analysis in projects.

- **MRF Dakar:** inclusion of a gender analysis in MRF Dakar’s strategy to prevent irregular migration in Senegal. This is implemented through a study on women’s participation in irregular migration flows from Senegal as well as their role in

encouraging/preventing irregular migration. The study is in progress and the results will be used to influence programme and policy development. A potential partnership with UNESCO and the addition of Ghana as a second country of origin covered by the study are currently being discussed.

- **IOM Riga:** evaluation and inclusion of a gender analysis in IOM Riga's counter-trafficking prevention activities. The project is in its final stages and was comprised of the evaluation of two key IOM Riga counter-trafficking projects from a gender perspective, including the analysis of the project's target audience in order to assess whether all potential risk-groups were properly included and serviced. Recommendations for improvement of future projects are currently being drafted.
14. Two other projects have received gender funding in 2008 but experienced delays in implementation.

IV. SENSITIZATION OF STAFF ON GENDER ISSUES

Preventing and addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

15. Following the first allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers and peacekeepers in 2001, IOM amended its Standards of Conduct (SoC) in 2002 to properly reflect the absolute prohibition of the sexual exploitation and abuse of people of concern to the Organization. Since then, initiatives to prevent and address SEA have been mostly field-based and ad hoc. Although to date there have been no cases with substantial evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by IOM staff members or implementing partners, it is nonetheless critical to ensure that no such cases ever occur in the future. This is especially important considering IOM's increasing involvement in emergency and post-crisis operations, its cluster-leadership for Camp Coordination and Camp Management in natural disasters as well as its important role in fighting trafficking in human beings.

16. Furthermore, in December 2006, during the High-Level Conference on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and NGO personnel held in New York, the Deputy Director General expressed the Organization's support and willingness to take appropriate steps to prepare for the full endorsement of the Statement of Commitment presented at the conference. In this framework, GIC set up an internal working group on SEA and conducted consultations with relevant departments, which resulted in the adoption and endorsement of a 13-point internal plan of action to prevent and address SEA.

International Women's Day: Gender sensitive budgeting booklet

17. In line with the UN-selected theme for this year's International Women's Day, "Financing for Gender Equality," GIC has developed a booklet to raise awareness and build capacity of staff members on gender-sensitive budgeting (GSB). This booklet seeks to build understanding and to serve as a tool for any staff member likely to prepare budgets. Through this simple guide, staff members are invited to take ownership of the implementation of IOM's gender policy and consider how they can, at their respective level, contribute to funding gender equality in IOM, the ultimate objective being that this initiative will contribute to increased funding and commitments for gender mainstreaming.

V. INTER-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

18. During the course of the year, IOM continued to participate in several gender networks, task forces and groups such as the UN and NGO Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and its five working groups, the UN's Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), UN Task Force on Women, Peace and Security and the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) sub-working group on Gender.

IASC Policy Statement on Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action

19. IOM has participated in the coordination of and endorsed the new IASC Policy Statement on Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action, revising the 1999 IASC Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance. The new Policy Statement allows for the inclusion of upgraded normative guidance as produced by the recent IASC gender handbook and guidelines. The Policy calls on members of IASC to work in an inter-agency fashion towards the goal of gender equality in all aspects of humanitarian response. It also urges individual members to strengthen their own actions to ensure that the human rights of women, girls, boys and men are equally promoted and protected, and their different needs and responsibilities addressed.

Contribution to United Nations Secretary General Reports

20. IOM contributed to two United Nations Secretary-General's reports, namely the SG Report on Eliminating Rape and other Forms of Sexual Violence and the SG Report on Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). The Organization also contributed to the updating of the inter-agency inventory on violence against women.

CEDAW and the CEDAW committee

21. IOM is committed to addressing the issue of discrimination against migrant women in order to ensure respect for their rights, regardless of their status, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In this framework, it actively contributes to the CEDAW committee sessions.

VI. GENDER IN HUMAN RESOURCES

Mentoring

22. In April, GIC carried out a survey among IOM female senior officials to assess the possibilities for IOM to use mentoring as a tool for the advancement of women. A questionnaire was sent to 20 female staff members at the P5 level and above. GIC received 12 answers to the questionnaire and 2 written feedbacks. 10 out of 12 respondents were clearly in favour of such a programme. 10 were in favour of targeting both men and women and 2 suggested targeting only women until gender balance is achieved. These results were discussed with the GFPs through the virtual discussion group and recommendations will be prepared for the Human Resources Department.

Emergency leave

23. Through a field-initiated discussion via the virtual discussion group, GIC became aware that taking care of children when they are sick was a concern for many colleagues, especially since many IOM staff members live in foreign countries and cannot rely on family members to do this. GIC has designed a brochure available in the three official IOM languages to inform/remind staff that IOM, in accordance with its Policy in Support of Work/Family Responsibilities (GB 1272), allows staff members to use uncertified sick leave entitlements for emergencies related to the illness of an immediate family member requiring hospitalization or home care.

Women in hardship duty stations

24. In line with the Organization's effort to improve the quality and dissemination of Human Resources gender data, GIC has issued a fact-sheet: "Statistics tell the story" on IOM female staff members working in D and E duty stations. The fact-sheet presents data from April 2008 which indicate that 41 per cent of IOM's international workforce in duty stations categorized as D and E are female. They represent 70 staff members out of a total of 170. Thirty-nine per cent are posted in D duty stations while 44 per cent are working in E duty stations.

VII. ONGOING ACTIVITIES

25. The Gender Officer continued to sit in on meetings of the Appointments and Postings Board (APB), as a non-voting ex-officio member, as part of the strategy to ensure proper attention to gender considerations and to assist in reaching gender balance in the Organization. Review of the Gender officer non-voting status is in progress.

26. GIC will continue to provide support and guidance to Field Offices and departments in Headquarters including participation in training courses.

27. GIC launched a new version of the Gender and Migration News Bulletin. It is issued quarterly and widely shared internally and externally.

28. The Occupational Health Unit, the Office of the Ombudsperson and GIC increased their collaboration in order to create synergies and harmonize their action in areas of common interest.

29. Estimated budget for 2009: USD 120,000.