



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

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GENDER COORDINATION REPORT 2010

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Gender Coordination Unit (GCU) supports the implementation of IOM's gender policy by providing advice and technical guidance to Headquarters departments and the Field. GCU aims to ensure that IOM mainstreams a gender perspective into all of its programmes and policies and within its human resources management. GCU strives to raise awareness at the international level on gender and migration-related issues, actively cooperating with partners at the inter-agency level to promote cooperation and create synergies.

2. In support of these goals, in 2010, GCU has specifically worked in the following thematic areas:

- Violence and discrimination affecting migrant women and girls;
- Gender, migration and development, including women's labour migration, remittances and capacity-building for women in diaspora associations;
- Female genital mutilation in the context of migration;
- Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

3. 2010 marked the fifteenth year of the IOM gender policy and has been an extremely rich year for the Unit. GCU takes pride in the undeniable progress achieved at the Headquarters and Field levels since 1995 in giving more visibility to women in migration and catering to the needs of migrant women, whether they be in dire situations or settling successfully into new societies. Nonetheless, there are still many challenges to better understanding the various faces of women's migration, while at the same time responding effectively to the specific needs and potential of migrant women and men throughout the world.

II. AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES ON GENDER AND MIGRATION

Information sheets on key gender and migration-related issues

4. In 2010, GCU published two information sheets: (a) Taking Action against Violence and Discrimination Affecting Migrant Women and Girls (launched on International Women's Day); and (b) Gender, Migration and Remittances. Several other information sheets are in preparation. It is hoped that they will contribute to making key information more accessible to IOM staff, policymakers and practitioners.

Capacity Building Workshop for Women Leaders of Diaspora Associations

5. This GCU co-organized workshop took place in Haifa, Israel, from 16 to 26 November 2009. It aimed to strengthen the capacity of migrant women mainly in Europe and North America to guide diaspora organizations and to mobilize diaspora contributions and human and financial capital for the development of their country and communities of origin. The workshop had 29 participants, who ranged from leaders of relatively small-scale grassroots diaspora efforts to founders, presidents and directors of established diaspora organizations working for development. They represented eight countries of destination in

Europe and North America and 19 countries of origin in Africa, Asia, South America and Eastern Europe. A video featuring some of the participants was shown during the latest International Dialogue on Migration workshop on “Societies and identities: The multifaceted impact of migration”, held in July 2010. A second edition is planned for 15 to 24 November 2010.

Addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration

6. In 2010, GCU has been involved in many events related to female genital mutilation and pursued its positioning as a centre of expertise on preventing and addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration.

- International conference: Uniting Europe and Africa to Fight Female Genital Mutilation

7. On 25 November 2009, this conference organized by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport was held in The Hague. GCU facilitated and reported on a workshop on preventing and addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration.

- Donors Working Group on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

8. GCU participated in the ninth annual meeting of the Donors Working Group on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, held on 25 and 26 January 2010 in Brussels. The meeting was followed by a day of advocacy activities with representatives from the European Parliament and the European Commission.

- International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (6 February)

9. In Geneva, on 5 February 2010, GCU marked the seventh International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation by jointly organizing for the third year running, with the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Geneva Cantonal Office for Human Rights, an interactive panel, this year on the theme of men taking action for the abandonment of female genital mutilation, as well as an art exhibition at the Geneva Museum of Ethnography.

- Collaboration with the canton of Geneva

10. The Geneva-based steering group on female genital mutilation, of which GCU is a founding member, submitted to the State Council the final report on the implementation of the project to prevent and address female genital mutilation in the canton. The State Council subsequently submitted this report to the Grand Council, which endorsed it in February 2010.

- Global strategy to stop health-care providers from performing female genital mutilation

11. IOM participated in the drafting of the Global strategy to stop health-care providers from performing female genital mutilation. This strategy, initiated by the World Health Organization, was endorsed in June 2010 by several United Nations agencies and professional

health organizations. GCU's contribution to the strategy was to reinforce the attention given to health professionals in destination countries.

Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010

12. GCU, alongside other IOM colleagues, participated in the preparatory meetings and the formulation of the background paper for Roundtable 2.2 on Migration, Gender and Family. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), GCU drafted the annex to the background paper entitled Uncovering the Interfaces between Gender, Family, Migration and Development: The Global Care Economy and Chains.

Others

13. Over the course of 2010, GCU has actively participated in a host of other migration and gender-related events organized by partners such as IPU, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, the International Institute for the Rights of the Child, the Hacettepe University Women's Research and Implementation Center (Turkey), the Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration and the fifteenth International Metropolis Conference.

14. Alongside other IOM colleagues, GCU contributed to the preparation of the report on Gender-related claims for asylum, produced by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population. GCU provided background documentation, commented on the draft report and held a meeting with the rapporteur, Mr. Andrej Zernovski.

III. PROJECT SUPPORT

15. In 2010, GCU has financially supported four IOM projects in the Field, the details of which are given below.

Costa Rica

16. IOM San José conducted an exploratory assessment aimed at improving the knowledge of the situation and labour conditions of Nicaraguan women in Costa Rica engaged in activities other than domestic services. Preliminary results indicate that Nicaraguan women, independently of their migratory condition (regular or irregular), encounter great difficulties in accessing appropriate work opportunities. A validation meeting and a dissemination workshop took place on 19 October and 1 November, respectively.

Egypt

17. IOM Cairo commissioned an in-depth qualitative assessment of the impact of migration on gender dynamics within Egyptian migrant households and proposed practical recommendations to better harness the potential development impact of migration for women in general, and more specifically for female heads of households. The preliminary findings of the study reveal that gender dynamics within the household do not seem to change considerably because of migration. The decision-making power of women respondents is still limited by cultural norms that uphold the decision-making authority of men, even when they

are away. Often, male migrants continue to take most of the decisions related to investment and the purchase and selling of assets. The publication of these findings is expected early 2011.

The Philippines

18. IOM Manila organized a multi-sectoral dialogue and workshop on “Harnessing the development potential of remittances with a gender perspective at the local level”, held on 10 March 2010 in Davao City. The objective of the dialogue was to share the results of the research undertaken by IOM on the Philippines–Malaysia remittance link; to revisit the gender dimension of migration and development in the Mindanao region; to provide a forum for information exchange and foster new networks and partnerships, including with gender advocates; and to sensitize stakeholders on the need to incorporate migration, gender and remittances in national and local development planning.

Bangladesh

19. In collaboration with UNIFEM Bangladesh, IOM Dhaka organized the Policy Dialogue on the Global Economic Crisis: Impact on Women Labour Migration in Bangladesh, held on 27 May 2009 in Dhaka. The proceedings of the policy dialogue were published and disseminated in 2010.

IV. INTER-AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

20. GCU continued to be an active member of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, attending the annual meeting in New York and participating in various task forces and initiatives.

Contribution to the reports of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

21. In 2010, GCU contributed to the report of the Secretary-General on Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, which is currently in preparation. The Organization also contributed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights thematic study on discrimination against women, as well as to the update of the inter-agency inventory on violence against women.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action

22. In coordination with the Emergency and Post-crisis Division, GCU continued to follow meetings of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, and this year provided input to the e-learning course on gender and humanitarian action. The course has been piloted in IOM and plans are under way to include it in several IOM training activities.

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

23. In 2010, GCU continued to contribute to the work of the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women by providing confidential country reports and participating in closed meetings between the Committee and United Nations agencies.

V. GENDER FOCAL POINT NETWORK

24. GCU continues to animate the gender focal point network, sending regular collective and individual information and guidance, while also using the network as a channel to draw on Field experience. The network has grown by 11 per cent over 2010 and seen an encouraging, even if small, increase in male participation. There are now 143 gender focal points (129 in 2009), comprising 113 women (79% – against 82 in 2009) and 30 men (21% – against 18 in 2009) and covering 90 countries (84 in 2009). As has been the practice since 2008, this year, gender focal points were asked to report on their activities. Only 25 per cent of the offices with a gender focal point participated in the exercise; however, it nevertheless led to the publication of an interesting report widely shared within the Organization.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH SERVICE AREAS AND FIELD OFFICES

25. GCU continues to provide technical expert advice and support to Field Offices and departments at Headquarters on a variety of issues. This collaboration is healthy, albeit still ad hoc, and the time devoted to this specific component of GCU's mandate continues to represent a substantial part of the workload. It is worth highlighting that good synergies have been developed in 2010 between the Office of Legal Affairs, the Human Resources Management Division and GCU for the management of allegations of sexual harassment, gender discrimination and sexual exploitation and abuse.

Desk review

26. In 2010, GCU conducted a desk review of a random sample of project proposals to measure the extent of gender mainstreaming in IOM project development activities. In total, 40 projects were identified and reviewed using a checklist specifically designed for this purpose. The desk review revealed that only 5 per cent of the sample fully meets gender mainstreaming standards, while 70 per cent of the reviewed projects do not, or do not adequately, address gender issues. This illustrates that gender is not consistently mainstreamed into IOM projects and that more efforts need to be made to improve the quality of gender mainstreaming in IOM project documents. A document containing some background information, the results of the desk review and recommendations was submitted to the Project Endorsement Working Group, the Structure Review Team and the Senior Management Team.

VII. GENDER IN HUMAN RESOURCES

27. Over 2010, GCU has continued to regularly monitor gender balance data within the Organization. The percentage of women officials in IOM stands at 42 per cent in 2010, registering a drop after four years of stagnation.

***Statistics tell the story* – Data on gender and human resources**

28. This year, GCU published the third issue of *Statistics tell the story* to sensitize senior management and staff at large about data on gender and human resources within the Organization. This third issue focused on the representation of women at senior levels. The data collected and analysed revealed that women represent only 26 per cent of IOM staff in P5 and above positions. The paper provided recommendations to redress this imbalance.

United Nations Dual Career and Staff Mobility programme

29. In 2009, in the framework of GCU efforts to foster a gender-sensitive implementation of the rotation policy in IOM, support to spouse employment had emerged as an important area for future action. GCU followed up on this by preparing a memorandum for the Director General encompassing recommendations on short-, mid- and long-term measures to facilitate spouse employment in the Organization. As a result of the memorandum, the Director General approved IOM's membership to the United Nations Dual Career and Staff Mobility programme which became effective early 2010.

Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse

30. Following IOM endorsement of the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel, GCU has worked on a comprehensive sensitization package for all staff, which is in its final stages of preparation. GCU substantially contributed to IOM's participation in the IASC Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel, and is now part of the task force established at IOM Headquarters to spearhead the implementation of the review recommendations and to adopt and implement a 2010–2011 plan of action to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse.

VIII. SENSITIZATION OF STAFF ON GENDER ISSUES

International Women's Day

31. On the occasion of International Women's Day, GCU organized a high-impact workshop for women entitled "Master the rules of the game and boost your career". The objective was to help colleagues realize and use their full potential and develop the skills needed to enhance their career progression. The workshop covered topics such as career development, gaining recognition for professional contributions, capacities to influence supervisors and colleagues with confidence and credibility, and skills to set limits and make clear requests.

32. Still in the context of International Women's Day, in collaboration with the Staff Security Unit and the Staff Development and Learning Unit, GCU organized security and

safety training for women travellers on 22 and 23 March. The main objective was to enhance the capacity of the 12 participants to ensure their own safety when on duty travel. The training was followed up by recommendations for senior management to strengthen the IOM staff safety framework.

Training and information

33. In 2010, GCU has continued to train Chiefs of Missions through the Chief of Mission Programme. It has also introduced a new tool for general staff information: the reading summaries, which is a new series designed to make gender and migration (academic) resources and knowledge more easily accessible to staff. Succinct and easy to read, they touch upon a variety of issues relevant to IOM activities such as brain drain, migration and development, and health. Four summaries were issued in 2010.

IX. ONGOING ACTIVITIES

34. GCU continues to attend meetings of the Appointments and Postings Board and the Rotation Appointments and Postings Board as a non-voting ex officio member as part of the strategy to ensure that proper attention is given to gender considerations and to assist in achieving a gender balance in the Organization.

35. *IOM Gender and Migration News* is disseminated to a growing audience and positive feedback and attention is on the rise.