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

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**GENDER COORDINATION REPORT 2012**



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### **Introduction**

1. In 2012, the Gender Coordination Unit devoted great effort to three main initiatives:
  - (a) Improving the knowledge base on skilled migrant women's underemployment;
  - (b) Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA);
  - (c) The system-wide action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
2. Throughout the year, the Unit also pursued its regular activities in the areas of inter-agency cooperation and gender in human resources and continued to manage the gender focal point network.

### **Publications on skilled migrant women's underemployment**

3. In 2012, the Gender Coordination Unit finalized the publication *Crushed Hopes: Underemployment and Deskilling among Skilled Migrant Women*. This work was initiated in 2011 in order to contribute to a better understanding of how women are affected by brain waste and professional deskilling linked to migration. The publication includes a literature review, three case studies (Canada, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) and recommendations for future research. On 22 June 2012, the Unit organized a workshop in Geneva with key stakeholders, including local authorities, academia, practitioners and migrant women, to publicize the result of the Swiss chapter of the publication.

### **Other awareness-raising activities on gender and migration**

#### ***Addressing female genital mutilation in the context of migration***

4. To mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, the Unit issued a joint press release with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children and the Geneva Human Rights Office, calling for the adoption of more human-rights based legislation to end female genital mutilation.

#### ***Rural women and migration***

5. On the occasion of International Women's Day 2012, the Gender Coordination Unit published a fact sheet and a press release calling for more attention to be given to the specific situation of rural women and their experience as migrants as well as family members left behind.

### **Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse**

6. In 2012, much of the Unit's resources continued to be devoted to PSEA. The Unit continued the roll-out of the mandatory sensitization session on PSEA for all IOM staff at Headquarters and in the Field. As of November 2012, approximately 7,000 staff members had

been trained worldwide, representing a compliance rate of 82 per cent of the IOM workforce and efforts are still ongoing to increase the number of staff trained.

7. The Director General of IOM has been serving as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) champion on PSEA since November 2011. He is spearheading a new initiative whereby each IASC member agency appointed a senior focal point on PSEA and developed a new internal plan of action to accelerate progress on implementing commitments on PSEA. IOM is organizing the Senior Focal Points Group and ensuring monitoring and continuity. The Gender Coordination Unit and the Office of the Chief of Staff have been acting as the secretariat for this initiative.

8. A revised IOM PSEA plan of action has been adopted and the Gender Coordination Unit is supporting the Office of the Chief of Staff to ensure efficient and timely implementation. The Unit, in collaboration with the Office of Legal Affairs, is involved in drafting a PSEA policy for the Organization and in developing and rolling-out a poster to reinforce awareness-raising among staff. A survey on IOM's experience in using feedback mechanisms was also conducted.

### **System-wide action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women**

9. IOM participated in this new inter-agency initiative designed to provide stronger accountability and commitment for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in the United Nations system. IOM was among seven other piloting entities that tested the system-wide action plan reporting framework, validated its performance indicators and made useful recommendations for revisions and additional indicators. After the piloting phase, the Chief Executives Board endorsed the system-wide action plan, which is now a mandatory tool for all United Nations system agencies. The Gender Coordination Unit will continue to coordinate IOM's participation in the system-wide action plan.

### **Inter-agency involvement**

#### ***Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality***

10. The Gender Coordination Unit continued to be an active member of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. It also participates in the informal network of Geneva-based United Nations gender advisers.

### ***ORIGIN***

11. The Gender Coordination Unit attended the 17th Annual Meeting of ORIGIN, a network of gender and diversity advisers working in international and European organizations.

#### ***Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women***

12. The Gender Coordination Unit contributed to the fifty-second Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by providing the Committee with confidential country reports. The Unit also provided comments on the draft general comment on harmful practices affecting girls produced jointly by CEDAW and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

***Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse***

13. The Unit continued to substantially support IOM's participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

**Gender in human resources**

14. The Gender Coordination Unit is actively contributing to the current work led by the Human Resources Management Division to revise IN/90: Policy for a Respectful Working Environment. The Unit is, among other things, providing advice on how to address prohibited conduct based in whole, or in part, on gender, sexual orientation, family situation, marital status or maternity issues.

15. The Unit continued to sensitize IOM Chiefs of Mission on gender and PSEA issues through the Chiefs of Mission training as well as at the Global Chief of Mission Meeting.

**Collaboration with service areas and Field Offices**

16. In 2012, the Gender Coordination Unit continued to provide expert advice to service areas and Field Offices upon request. In collaboration with the Donor Relations Division and the Department of Operations and Emergencies, the Unit supported Field Offices involved in the Consolidated Appeals Process in better mainstreaming gender in their projects and understanding the IASC gender marker.

**Gender focal point network**

17. The Unit continued to lead and animate its network of 142 gender focal points, not only providing bilateral and collective guidance, but also drawing on the network to better understand, use and promote Field work. The network has continued to grow in terms of the total number of focal points, the number of men focal points and geographical coverage. In 2012, a survey to better understand the composition of and expertise available in the network was conducted by the Gender Coordination Unit. A reform of the network will be conducted in 2013 to make it more efficient and better aligned with inter-agency practices and standards.

**Ongoing activities**

18. The Gender Coordination Unit 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.

19. The IOM *Gender and Migration News* continues to be disseminated to a varied audience, including United Nations organizations, diplomatic corps and academics.