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UNICEF: an organization promoting women's rights: the role of the gender and rights unit

Lucie Vidal

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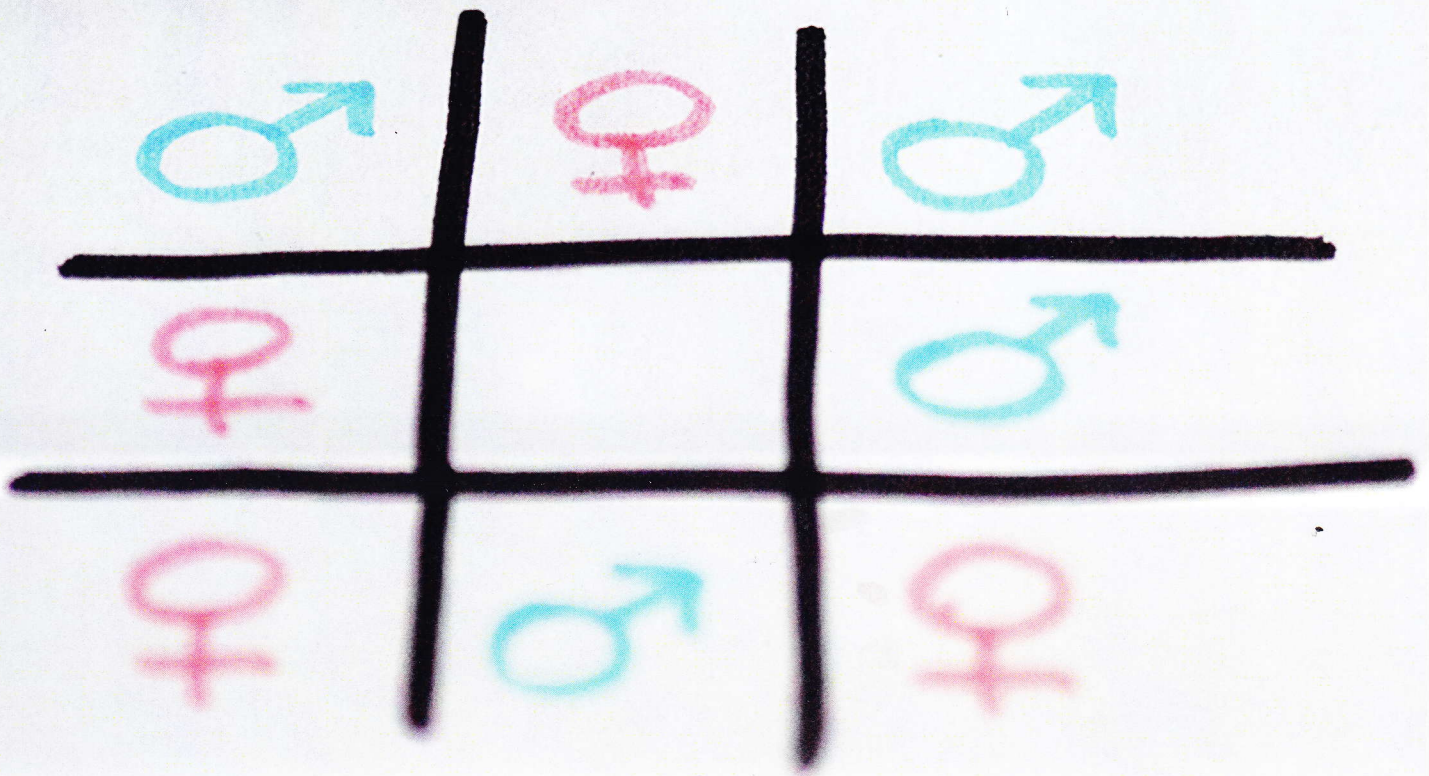
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UNICEF: AN ORGANIZATION PROMOTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The role of the Gender and Rights Unit

Internship at UNICEF
Gender and Rights Unit
Headquarters, New York

01 February- 30 July 2010

University of Pierre-Mendes France
Institute of Political Sciences
Grenoble

Master Degree "International Organization"

LUCIE VIDAL

Under the supervision of Ms. Mathilde Dubesset

University of Pierre Mendès France
Institute of Political Science of Grenoble

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Ce travail a été effectué durant le stage à l'UNICEF sous la direction de la tutrice professionnelle, Madame Noreen Khan, Spécialiste du genre, et de Madame Mathilde Dubesset, directrice de mémoire, Maitresse de conférences d'histoire contemporaine à l'IEPG.

The analysis has been undertaken during the internship at UNICEF under the direction of the internship supervisor, Ms. Noreen Khan, Gender Specialist, and Ms. Mathilde Dubesset, thesis supervisor, Professor of contemporary history at the IEPG.

Cette analyse ne représente que l'opinion personnelle de son auteur et ne peut en aucun cas être attribuée à l'UNICEF où le stage a eu lieu.

The analysis expresses the personal opinion of its author and cannot be attributed to UNICEF where the internship took place

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INTRODUCTION

The year of 2010 marks a milestone in the global gender equality^{agenda} with landmark conferences enshrined for gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women. This year builds a new momentum for progresses and changes with regard to gender equality at the international and national levels. The momentum gives the opportunity to make and sustain gender issues and women's rights as one of the top priority of governments in the forthcoming years.

In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for action was held. This year in March, the Commission on the Status of Women¹, held its 54th session from March 1st – 12th, 2010. This session reincarnated a fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The Platform for Action represents the global agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment and identifies twelve critical areas of concern from women and the economy, to armed conflict, media, education and environment, among others². The General Assembly, in its twenty-third special session from June 5th – 9th, 2000 entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", adopted a Political Declaration and outcome document³ addressing further actions and initiatives to effectively implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

1 The Commission on the Status of Women, established in 1946, is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. The Commission is mandated to prepare recommendations and reports to the Council on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. The Commission also makes recommendations to the Council on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights. Following the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the General Assembly mandated the Commission to integrate into its programme a follow-up process to the Conference, regularly reviewing the critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action and to develop its catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities. The Commission meets annually for a period of 10 working days (late February-early March).

2 A) Women and Poverty, B) Education and Training of Women, C) Women and Health, D) Violence against Women, E) Women and Armed Conflict, F) Women and the Economy, G) Women in Power and Decision-Making, H) Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women, I) Human Rights of Women, G) Women and the Media, K) Women and the Environment, L) The Girl-Child.

3 A/RES/S-23/2, 10 June 2000.

As a result of its fifty-fourth session, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted in March 2010 a declaration⁴ pledging Member States to undertake further actions to overcome the challenges and obstacles remaining in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Moreover, the Declaration emphasizes that its full implementation is essential to achieve the international development goals, including those of the Millennium Declaration and stresses the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In addition, seven resolutions were adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women as follow:

• Declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women⁵

- Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts⁶
- The situation of and assistance to Palestinian women ⁷
- Women's economic empowerment⁸
- Eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women⁹
- Strengthening the institutional arrangements of the United Nations, for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women by consolidating the four existing offices into a composite entity¹⁰
- Ending female genital mutilation¹¹

Fifteen years after the fourth world conference on women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, the idea of a fifth world conference on women is being discussed primarily among civil societies. The Council of Europe adopted

4 E/CN.6/2010/L.1.

5 E/CN.6/2010/L.2/Rev.1.

6 E/CN.6/2010/L.3.

7 E/CN.6/2010/L.4.

8 E/CN.6/2010/L.5.

9 E/CN.6/2010/L.6.

10 E/CN.6/2010/L.7.

11 E/CN.6/2010/L.8.

with this regard a resolution in 2005¹² calling for a fifth United Nations Conference on Women stressing the lack of political will in implementing the Platform for Action and considering that new issues, which were not covered in 1995, emerged. These issues include the rising impact of HIV and AIDS on women, women's access to new information technology, trafficking in human beings, and the targeted victimization of women in armed conflict. To date however, the necessity to set up a fifth world conference in 2020 instead of having a "Beijing +20 Review Process" is not yet on the agenda. Nevertheless, the future establishment of the new United Nations gender entity by January 2011 could bring this idea into being. The General Assembly unanimously voted on July 2nd 2010, the establishment of the new entity "UN Women"¹³.

In September 2009, after three years of consultations, the General Assembly indeed adopted a landmark resolution¹⁴ whereby Member States agreed to support the establishment of a new United Nations gender entity and requested the Secretary General to produce a comprehensive proposal specifying the overall structure of the new entity. In January 2010, the Secretary General proposed in a report entitled "Comprehensive Proposal for the Composite Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women"¹⁵ detailed the mission statement of the composite entity, the organizational arrangements which include an organizational chart and provisions related to funding and the Executive Board. The new entity will bring together the current United Nations entities dedicated to gender equality: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The new entity "will work for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security"¹⁶. This entity will combine the mandates and assets of the four existing gender equality entities. It will perform new and additional functions to

12 Recommendation 1716, Promoting a UN 5th world conference on women, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, 2005.

13 System-wide coherence, General Assembly, Resolution A/64/L.56, June 2010.

14 System-wide coherence, A/RES/63/311, 2 October 2009.

15 A/64/588, Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, 6 January 2010.

16 Ibidem, p. 5.

close the gaps and address the challenges in the gender equality work of the United Nations system. The entity will be led by an Under-Secretary General¹⁷ to ensure the necessary authority and leadership, and the Executive Board will oversee its operational activities with the support of the Commission on the Status of Women. The new entity will require, as a starting point, a budget of 500 million US dollars funded by voluntary contributions and regular budget, which represents the double the current combined budgets of the four entities. The consolidated new entity for gender and women's empowerment will aim to overcome the actual challenges the United Nations face in supporting the Member States to achieve gender equality.

Furthermore, in addition to the Fifty-Fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women held in March, the Annual Ministerial Review¹⁸ of the substantive session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was also held this year from 28th of June to 1st of July 2010. This year, its focus was "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women". Key challenges in achieving the international goals were explored. Recommendations and proposals for action, including new initiatives and partnerships to accelerate the implementation of gender-related objectives at all levels, were considered as well¹⁹. This special session of ECOSOC on gender issues session provides a window of opportunity to strengthen the global agenda on gender equality and sustain the momentum created by the Beijing plus fifteen conference. The United Nations General Assembly will hold a high level plenary meeting reviewing the ten years implementation of the Millennium Declaration²⁰ and

17 An Under-Secretary General of the UN is a senior official within the UN, normally appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Secretary General for a renewable term of four years.

18 The Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) is a function of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its purpose is to a) assess progress made towards the MDGs and the implementation of the other goals and targets agreed at the major UN conferences and summits over the past 15 years, which, together, constitute the United Nations Development Agenda (UNDA) and b) contribute to scaling-up and accelerating action to realize the development agenda, by serving as global high-level forum with broad-based participation, where lessons learned are exchanged and successful practices and approaches that merit scaling-up are identified. The 2007 AMR, 2008 AMR and 2009 AMR focused on the eradication of poverty and hunger; sustainable development; and public health, respectively.

19 ECOSOC web page, 2010 Annual Ministerial Review,
<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/amr2010.shtml>.

20 In September 2000, the General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit, the largest gathering of world leaders in history, which set out the key challenges humanity was facing at the threshold of the new millennium, outlined a response to these challenges, and established concrete measures, goals and targets.

the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)²¹ from 20th to the 22nd of September 2010. The third MDG specifically addresses gender equality with the objectives of eliminating gender disparities in primary and second education, in promoting women's literacy, women in non-agricultural jobs and women in national parliaments. However, gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, is not only clustered in this third goal. The achievement of gender equality is indeed an essential ingredient for achieving all the other MDGs. Moreover, progress towards the others goals will also have positive impacts on gender equality. This meeting enables for another occasion to focus on gender equality and to ensure that gender issues and women's empowerment are at the heart of discussions.

As has previously been described, 2010 has been dotted with landmark gender related conferences, represents a major year in the international women's history. But 2010 is also a key and landmark year for UNICEF with regard to its gender equality policy. Indeed, as it will be further analyzed throughout this thesis, the UNICEF's gender equality policy turns a major and historical point with its launch in May 2010 of a new and strengthened policy reaffirming gender equality at the core of its mandate²².

UNICEF is an organization whose birth in the forties was the result of a combination of circumstances²³. The Allies, anticipating widespread destruction and poverty at large scale at the end of the Second World War, had established in 1943 the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) with the mandate to provide general assistance. During the final meeting of this organization held in Geneva in 1946, Ludwik Rajchman, the delegate from Poland, pointed out the devastating and dramatic situation of Europe's children and proposed to allocate UNRRA's residual resources to a new fund entirely enshrined to children. Member States endorsed this proposition and the United Nations International Emergency Children Fund (UNICEF) was created on December 11th 1946. As such, Ludwik Rajchman is regarded as the founder of UNICEF.

21 The MDGs represent the worldwide road map for implementing the Millennium Declaration. The eight MDGs are: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 3) Promote gender equality and empower women, 4) Reduce child mortality, 5) Improve maternal health, 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7) Ensure environmental sustainability, 8) Develop a global partnership for development.

22 UNICEF, *Working for an equal future, UNICEF policy on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women*, 2010, 13p.

23 *1946-2006, Sixty years for children*, UNICEF, 2006, p.4.

UNICEF was originally mandated to meet the emergency needs of children such as food, clothing, and health care in post war periods. UNICEF was therefore envisioned as an emergency fund and Member States had not intended to prolong its life beyond the postwar emergency. Following concerns raised by developing countries with regard to the situation of children of the postwar period suffering not on the basis of war but on the basis of poverty, the United Nations General Assembly indefinitely extended UNICEF's mandate in 1953 and brought UNICEF into being as a permanent United Nations' body. Thus UNICEF has evolved from an emergency fund to a development agency advocating for children's rights²⁴. Nevertheless, even if the organization dropped at that time the terms "International and Emergency" from its name to become the United Nations Children's Fund, it retained its entire acronym "UNICEF" because of the difficulty to pronounce "UNCF".

In 1959, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of Rights of the Child which defined children's rights to "protection, education, health care, shelter and good nutrition". In 1961, UNICEF added to this list the right of equal opportunity to all children. Then, after more than a decade of work with a specific focus on health issues, UNICEF was awarded in 1965 the Nobel price "for the promotion of brotherhood among nations". Ten years after the International year of the child (1979) and forty year after the Declaration of Rights of the Child (1959), the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted in 1989 the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁵ (CRC), one of the most ratified treaties of it's time²⁶.

In the mid 1980s and 90s, UNICEF started to fully recognize the broad and significant role of women in the achievement of its mandate and developed policies focusing on women's and girl's rights. This momentum towards women's rights coincided with a renewed conviction for children's rights with the First World Summit for children in 1990. This summit, leading to the signing of a world declaration and an action plan for children's rights, represents one of the most important moments in UNICEF's history.

What is interesting is how an organization, originally dedicated exclusively to children's rights, progressively recognized gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women as a cornerstone of its mandate. The linkages between UNICEF and the promotion of

²⁴ Despite UNICEF transformation to a development agency, UNICEF remains fully engaged in disaster relief and emergency situation.

²⁵ The CRC entered into force in September 1990.

²⁶ 190/192 countries adopted the CRC. The USA and Somalia have not ratified it yet.

girls and women's rights have not always been something obvious and it has taken time for UNICEF to fully acknowledge and accept that gender equality is an essential prerequisite to the full achievement of girls and boys rights.

Having carried out my six month internship in the Gender and Rights Unit at the headquarter level, it was interesting to investigate at which extent this unit ensures the implementation of the gender equality policy throughout the organization. The objective is not to study how Country Offices at the local level mainstream gender in their programmes. It is instead about how they are encouraged and supported by the headquarter level through the Regional Offices to integrate a gender perspective in their programmes.

Thus, this thesis aims to analyze how gender equality has progressively become a core element of UNICEF's mandate. Furthermore, it investigate what kind of mechanisms UNICEF and especially the Gender and Rights Unit have developed at the headquarter level to ensure the operationalization throughout the organization of its gender equality policy.

In a first part the overall structure of UNICEF and an overview of my six month internship will be presented. Then, in a second part, the evolution of the UNICEF gender equality policy as well as the headquarter response for its implementation will be thoroughly analyzed. Finally, the relative institutional weaknesses of the UNICEF gender structure will be explored, putting in perspective the UNICEF policy on gender equality.

The objectives of this first part is two fold. First it is to analyze the overall structure of UNICEF, its main features and particularities to better understand on the one hand, the organization in which I carried out my internship. Second it is to analyze the most important keys to explore the role of the Gender and Rights Unit in promoting gender equality throughout the organization.

The several layers of the organization and the respective role of the headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices will be investigated as well as the uniqueness and particularities of the structure. (Section I). In the second section an overview of my six month work experience will be developed, emphasizing the major activities carried out. (Section II).

Two main aspects of the structure and organization of UNICEF will be studied in this part. First, UNICEF's decentralized structure will be analyzed (A) and secondly the uniqueness of the UNICEF structure among the United Nations system will be scrutinized (B). Indeed, UNICEF has the particularity to be a hybrid organization, between an usual UN agency and an non-governmental organization.

A. A highly decentralized structure: a three level organization

UNICEF is a highly decentralized organization characterized by a three level structure: the headquarter, regional and country levels. The main headquarter of UNICEF is located in New York but it gains its support from six extended headquarters, mainly situated in Europe²⁷. Then, the second layer of the organization corresponds to the regional level with the Regional Offices (ROs), clustered into eight regions. Finally, UNICEF as a field based organization, is overwhelmingly represented throughout the world with the existence of 125 Country Offices (COs) and 37 National Committees.

The three level structure had emerged when UNICEF evolved after the Second World War from an emergency fund providing assistance to children of war mainly in Europe into a development organization with a presence worldwide through a lot of programmes and grassroots projects. Thus the structure at the country level was an absolute necessity as the implementation and monitoring of the programmes could not be efficiently done from headquarters or regional locations.

1. The headquarter level: from the New York main headquarter to the extended headquarter locations
 - a) New York: the main headquarter of UNICEF

27 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, The structure of UNICEF, p. 68.

UNICEF's major policy and overall administration is housed in its main headquarter located in New York. Sixteen headquarter divisions and offices²⁸ are in charge of providing overall strategic direction, policy and guidance to UNICEF's programmes with the responsibility for strategic planning, advocacy and oversight for the organization as a whole.

UNICEF is governed by an Executive Board made up of 36 members²⁹ which represents the five regional groups of Member States at the United Nations³⁰. Each of these members is elected to a three year term by the United Nations Economic and Social Council³¹ from States Members of the United Nations, specialized agencies, or the International Atomic Energy Agency. The election of the Executive Board is based on a rotation system which allows for the participation of all countries. The Executive Board is the governing body of UNICEF "responsible for providing intergovernmental support and supervision of UNICEF's activities in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the Assembly and the Council"³². The Executive Board is also responsible to approve UNICEF's programmes, including country programmes, decisions on administrative and financial plans, and the budgets for UNICEF.

The Executive Director of UNICEF is nominated by the Secretary General of the United Nations in consultation with the Executive Board, under General Assembly resolution 48/162. The Executive Director is responsible, under policies established by the Executive Board, for the administration of UNICEF as well as for the appointment and direction of UNICEF staff. Anthony Lake was appointed Executive Director of UNICEF on 16 March 2010 by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and succeeded Ms. Ann M. Veneman, who held the position from 2005 to 2010.

28 Audit, Communication, Emergency, Ethics Office, Evaluation, Finance and Administration, Governance-United Nations and Multilateral Affairs, Human Resources, Information Technology, Learning and Knowledge, Policy and Practice, Private Fundraising and Partnerships, Programmes, Public-Sector Alliances and Resources Mobilization, Security, Supply.

29 The 2010 Executive Board's composition: African States: Cape Verde, Congo, Liberia, Malawi, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Zimbabwe – Eastern Europe: Belarus, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia – Asia: Bangladesh, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Korea – Latin America and the Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, El Salvador, Haiti, Uruguay – Western Europe and Others: Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America.

30 Regional Allocation of seats : African States (8), Asian states (7), Eastern European States (4), Latin American and Caribbean States (5) and Western European and other States (12).

31 As the others governing body of the United Nations agencies or funds, UNICEF is subject to the authority of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

32 The organization of the United Nations Children's Fund, Executive Board, E/ICEF/Organization/Rev.3, 24 April 1998, p. 4.

b) The extended arms of the New York headquarter

Although New York represents the main headquarter of UNICEF, five “*headquarter location offices*” or “*headquarter duty stations*” or “*external headquarters*”³³ in Copenhagen, Geneva, Brussels, Florence and Tokyo perform the extended work of the New York headquarter. Interestingly, an Executive Board’s document describing the organization of UNICEF³⁴ does not explicitly mention them as the extended headquarters and does not establish clear distinctions with the main headquarter. Their existence is briefly mentioned in the headquarters’ section with regard to the responsibilities of the deputy Executive Director: “*The Deputy Executive Directors supports the Executive Director in fulfilling the functions of the Executive Office, and are responsible for the supervision of division directors in New York, Copenhagen, Tokyo and Florence*”. However, the roles of the Florence and Tokyo headquarter offices, contrary to the Copenhagen extended headquarter, are further described in the document which was published in 1998. The role of the headquarters in Geneva and Brussels could not be described as they were not created yet. Nevertheless, on the UNICEF internet website, no distinctions are made between the New York headquarter and the others headquarter locations. There is also no information available regarding their respective roles with the exception of the Tokyo extended headquarter. Despite the confusion and the lack of information available for the general public with regards to the specific issue of the headquarters, their respective functions are well detailed in the UNICEF intranet website³⁵.

Each of the five extended headquarters of UNICEF carries out specific missions to support the central headquarter of New York:

- *Copenhagen, Denmark*: The Copenhagen extended headquarter is the major supply and procurement base of UNICEF³⁶ and its task is to procure supplies for all UNICEF’s development and emergency programmes throughout the world. Each year, this supply division oversees the procurement of over \$500 million worth of supplies³⁷. As Mr. Bijaya Malapathy underlines, Copenhagen is geographically well

33 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, The structure of UNICEF, p. 2.

34 E/ICEF/Organization/Rev.3, The organization of the United Nations Children’s Fund, Executive Board, 24 April 1998, 23p.

35 <http://www.intranet.unicef.org/>, Accessible only to UNICEF staff.

36 UNICEF’s Supply Division is based in Copenhagen with offices in New York, Pretoria and Turkey as well.

37 Organization and Structure of UNICEF, UNICEF Intranet website.

<http://intranet.unicef.org/dhr/learning.nsf/Site%20Pages/Page0205xx01>.

positioned as they can cover the world in a more efficient way than if procurement was done from New York³⁸.

- *Tokyo, Japan:* The Tokyo extended headquarters' role has evolved over time. At the beginning, it used to be in charge of assistance in procurement. Indeed, Japan was at that time the main supplier of vehicles for UNICEF's programmes in Asia and Africa. Tokyo was therefore the main vehicles procurement base of UNICEF. However, in present time, Tokyo is not in charge anymore of this mission. The Tokyo extended headquarters has today a similar role to the one in Geneva, where it is accountable for advocacy and programme fundraising in Japan and the Republic of South Korea. The Tokyo headquarters also serve as liaison with the Governments and National Committees.

- *Florence, Italy:* Florence hosts the Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), or International Child Development Centre, which was created in 1998 following an agreement between UNICEF and the Italian government. It was created to strengthen the research capability of UNICEF and to support its advocacy for children worldwide. The IRC is a very small office staffed by a team of around 30 people³⁹ and has the particularity to be the only research center in the world maintained by a UN agency. It primarily carries out researches focusing on areas that are relatively new to UNICEF and that will possibly prove important for its work in the future. It also addresses controversial issues and fills knowledge gaps regarding children's rights in existing areas of UNICEF's work. This research center is mainly funded by the Government of Italy, with financial support by other governments such as the Government of Finland, Norway, Sweden, International institutions such as the World Bank and private sources, including UNICEF National Committees.

- *Brussels, Belgium:* The Brussels extended headquarter emerged relatively recently to cover UNICEF's overall relationship with the European Union. Compared to Geneva and Copenhagen's offices, Brussels remains a small extended headquarter.

38 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, The structure of UNICEF, p.3.

39 UNICEF Innocenti Research center in Florence, UNICEF Intranet website.

- *Geneva, Switzerland:* The Geneva headquarters has the particularity to host not only one of the five extended headquarters but also one of the seven Regional Offices. As most of the National Committees⁴⁰ are located in Europe, the extended headquarter office in Geneva serves as the central focal point for managing relations between them, the private sector and UNICEF. This extended headquarter provides guidance and support to the National Committees, develops partnerships with private sector, advocates and raises funds UNICEF.

2. Regional Offices: as a bridge between headquarters and Country Offices

UNICEF is made up of seven Regional Offices within the following geographic regions: Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, East Asia and the Pacific, West and Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North America, South Asia.

Regional Offices plays a crucial role in supporting headquarters to monitor and manage the 125 UNICEF Country Offices situated around the world. They can be regarded as the middle structure linking the headquarter and Country Office levels. Each region is headed by a Regional Director appointed by, and responsible to, the Executive Director.

The duties of Regional Offices have evolved over time and they have progressively gained more responsibilities and authority⁴¹. At the beginning, they were only accountable for providing overall guidance and advice in technical and management areas to Country Offices in their respective regions. In addition to this latter responsibility the Regional Offices have the authority to internally⁴² approve country programmes and, at the headquarter level of their respective region, to monitor the budget . Before the restructuring of Regional Offices, country programmes had to gain internal approval from the headquarter with advices from Regional Offices. Nowadays, this is the contrary. The approval responsibility of country programmes has been delegated to Regional Offices and New York headquarter only provide advice.

40 The structure and role of the National Committee are analyzed in the section I.B.1, p.19-20.

41 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, The structure of UNICEF, p. 4.

42 Before going to the Executive Board for final approval, country programmes need to get internal approval.

3. Country and area Offices: the UNICEF's executive bodies in the field

Country and Area Offices represent the main executive body of UNICEF in the field and the majority of UNICEF's staff work at the country level. Country and Area Offices exist where UNICEF has signed a legal agreement with governments, and where UNICEF implements a programme of cooperation. To date, UNICEF has 125 Country area Offices, and has a presence all over the world as Country Area Offices can cover more than one country.⁴³ In some cases, sub-offices or joint-offices have been established at the country level as a unique Country Office was not enough for ensuring direct monitoring of all programmes in the country.

Country Offices support planning, implementation and monitoring of country programmes in collaboration with national governments and other partners. They are headed by a UNICEF Representative, appointed by the Executive Director and are accountable to the Regional Director for all UNICEF activities undertaken in the country(ies).

B. The particularities and uniqueness of UNICEF' structure

UNICEF was created after the Second World War as a global fund to provide emergency assistance to impoverished children. As the others United Nations funds, UNICEF relies on, and is exclusively funded by voluntary financial contributions from governments, private sectors and individuals.

UNICEF has therefore developed from its earlier inception, its own structures and mechanisms, often borrowed from the private sector, to get sufficient funding for the implementation and achievements of its mandate. Resources from private sectors have tended to become the main source of funding of UNICEF⁴⁴.

The on-going necessity for UNICEF to raise funds has influenced its structure and has resulted in a unique structure from other United Nations organisations. UNICEF has indeed developed through its National Committees and goodwill ambassadors, specific relationships with private sector and general public.

⁴³ This is what explains the designation "area" in the appellation "Country and area Office. Country Offices will be used, instead of Country and area Offices, without sense restriction.

⁴⁴ Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, The structure of UNICEF, p. 8.

1. The National Committees as independent and non governmental bodies advocating and raising funds

The main unique structure of UNICEF stems from the existence of the National Committees. UNICEF National Committees are independent and act as non governmental entities, registered in their own countries but working for the cause of UNICEF. Thus, the fact that UNICEF is made up governmental and nongovernmental components makes its structure exclusive among the United Nations entities.

There are currently 37 UNICEF National Committees around the world⁴⁵, all established in developed countries. The United States Committee was the first created in 1947. As European countries recovered from the Second World War, National Committees were formed in Belgium, Germany, Scandinavian countries, Italy, the United Kingdom, and among others. Today, there are National Committees throughout Europe as well as in Australia, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea. What is interesting to notice is that the National Committee of the Republic of Korea was previously a Country Office, but as the country developed and no longer needed financial and material assistance from UNICEF, it was converted into a National Committee. Thus, as countries become more developed, UNICEF Country Offices can be switched into a National Committee⁴⁶.

As explained above, the National Committees are not UNICEF's offices but they are independent non-governmental organizations. Most of their staff, despite the recent and global professionalization of the non-governmental organizations, volunteer themselves in these Committees. In addition, the National Committees are in charge of hiring and remunerating their own paid workforce without the agreement or financial support from UNICEF.

The National Committees have two main responsibilities: to advocate for children's rights in line with UNICEF's mandate and to raise funds from private sectors and individuals in developed countries. There are key factors in funding the organization as they collectively

45 The following locations are home to UNICEF National Committees : Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong-China, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea Republic of, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.

46 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, *The structure of UNICEF*, p. 6-7.

raise around one-third of UNICEF's annual income. By 2005, they contributed 37% of UNICEF's overall income⁴⁷.

During their first years of operation in the late forties, the National Committees concentrated most of their efforts on selling Christmas cards and creating networks with volunteer support groups. Thanks to these greetings cards, UNICEF became broadly well known among the general public in developed countries. However, these Christmas cards now do not represent the main and only product sold by these National Committees. Merchandise today include a large panel of different objects from calendars to books and toys, among others. Besides, National Committees do not only sell products to the the general public but they also develop a relatively offensive marketing strategy towards the private sector. Indeed, the National Committees establish partnerships with private firms to gain their financial support. Today, more than 50 partnerships have been made between UNICEF and companies such as Evian, Volvic, Pampers, Ikea, Cartier, Gucci, H&M and the soccer team the Real Madrid, and amongst others. The objectives of these partnerships are, to improve the visibility of UNICEF, to increase its financial resources, and to raise the firms' sales to leverage the positive impacts of these partnerships on their image and customers⁴⁸.

Although National Committees are independent non-governmental organizations, "they cannot speak another language from UNICEF"⁴⁹ and they have to respect certain norms and conditions established with UNICEF. For example, the partnerships National Committees developed with private companies have to be in line with UNICEF's mandate and standards conditions. Previously explained, the Geneva extended headquarter is in charge collaborate with them and to provide them with support and guidance.

2. The goodwill ambassadors, bearer of UNICEF's work and image to the general public

One of the other particularity of UNICEF is without doubt, the existence of more than three hundreds goodwill ambassadors advocating and raising funds for UNICEF throughout

47 UNICEF, 1946-2006, *Sixty years for children*, November 2006, p.7.

48 Boissonnet Amélie, Etitia Thomas, Vidal Lucie, UNICEF, *Projet de recherche*, Juin 2009, 3p.

49 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, *The structure of UNICEF*, p. 6.

the entire world⁵⁰. UNICEF has been the pioneer in the use of celebrities to promote its cause and mandate among United Nations bodies. Following the success of this strategy borrowed from the private sector, other United Nations agencies have adopted their own ambassadors as UNHCR, UNDP and UNFPA.

Danny Kaye, a famous American actor and comedian, was the first to hold the position, with the title of Ambassador-at-Large from 1953 to his death in 1987⁵¹. Numerous other celebrities have followed, acting as international, regional or national ambassadors, depending on their degree of popularity at the global or local level. David Beckham or Shakira are current international ambassadors, Mahmoud Kabil and Mercedes Sosa are regional ambassadors and Yves Duteil and Patrick Poivre d'Arvor are French goodwill ambassadors, among others.

The goodwill ambassadors must fulfill three conditions to be selected: a) they need to be well known at the global, regional or country level, b) they have to demonstrated interest in UNICEF issues and c) to be willing to help UNICEF in its work by proving voluntary services⁵².

The main roles of the goodwill ambassadors are to advocate for UNICEF's causes and to draw attention to important and sensitive issues as well as to increase their social acceptability. Thanks to their popularity and "because people listen to them and they carry a lot of weight in the general public's view"⁵³, they bring essential and key support to UNICEF's work. This is a win-win situation as it allows goodwill ambassadors to be known as helping UNICEF in its noble cause, and to be recognized for their support.

50 *UNICEF at a glance*, 2004, p. 7.

51 *A pivotal decade: 1995-2005*, UNICEF, 2006, p.8.

52 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, *The structure of UNICEF*, p. 8.

53 Appendix I: Interview with Bijaya Malapathy, *The structure of UNICEF*, p. 8.

Section II: An overview of my six month internship

From February to the end of July, I carried out my internship in the Gender and Rights unit of UNICEF, at the headquarter level in New York. This work experience has strengthened my expertise on gender issues and gave me the opportunity to enhance my practical understanding of gender mainstreaming. As a full staff member of the gender team, I achieved a broad panel of activities and developed new professional skills. The main features of the Gender and Rights Unit will be presented in a first time (A) and then a description and analysis of the main activities I was in charge throughout my internship will be describe (B).

A. The Gender and Rights Unit of UNICEF's New York headquarters

I carried out my internship with the Gender and Rights Unit of UNICEF located at the headquarter level and more exactly in the gender cluster. Indeed, the Gender and Rights unit is composed of two clusters: the gender and the human rights clusters. As a unit, the Gender and Rights unit is part of a broader section, which is the Gender Rights and Civic Engagement (GRaCE) in the Policy and Practice Division.

I mainly worked with the gender cluster. It was made of two staff members; Noreen Khan and Mita Gupta, both technical experts on gender. As head of the gender cluster, Noreen Khan was my direct supervisor throughout my six month internship.

The working environment was very pleasant and non stressful with ongoing work exchanges and discussions. Given the gender cluster is a very small team with an extreme workload, I was considered as an entire staff member of the team and I had therefore responsibilities and was in charge of valuable and important work.

During the first month of my internship, I was working five days a week and I obtained a weekly day off to work on my thesis, carry out research, and conduct interviews. I indeed felt at that time, that it was extremely difficult to manage both a full time internship with a thesis. Receiving a weekly day off truly helped me to carry out and finalize this thesis on time.

B. A description and analysis of the major activities carried out

Throughout my six month internship, I have been involved in several and diverse projects ranging from 1) assisting in UNICEF's activities leading up and during major United Nations conferences on gender equality and women's empowerment such as the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women to 2) performing deep analytical research and report synthesis on the extent UNICEF's programmes mainstream gender in the organization and 3) providing support in UNICEF's inter-agency gender related work. All of these activities in which I was involved in, gave me the opportunity to gain a broad overview of the work the Gender and Rights unit pursues and in a certain extent, the work a gender unit can carry out in an United Nations agency.

1. Assisting in UNICEF's activities leading up and during major United Nations conferences on gender equality and women's empowerment

One of the first missions of my internship was to support the UNICEF's gender team in the preparation of the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held from the first to the twelfth of March at the United Nations in New York. Fifteen years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action at the fourth world conference of women in 1995, Members States reviewed achievements and challenges, and shared good practices through their statements in the high level plenary sessions and during panel discussions. As part of this two-week conference, Members States commemorated both the thirty years anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW as well as International Women's Day.

In parallel of the CSW session, more than two hundred side events were arranged by Member States, United Nations agencies, and non-governmental organizations. UNICEF organized and co-organized at this occasion several events on girls, boys and gender equality and I was particularly involved in the preparation of two of them. The first one was held on the third of March and entitled "*Have Women Forgotten Girls? Bringing Girls to the Heart of Beijing*". It focused on the implementation of the critical area L of the Platform for Action dedicated for girls. This event considered if the women's movement and women leaders sufficiently played their part in promoting the cause of girls and their rights. In addition, UNICEF jointly organized with UNFPA on the fourth of March, an interactive discussion on

"Boys and Men: Partners for Gender Equality" which analyzed how partnerships with men and boys can benefit in the promotion of gender equality.

My involvement in these two side events consisted in designing the flyers to advertise the UNICEF's side events to promote greater attendance from UNICEF staff or Member States delegations, United Nations agencies and civil society. I also prepared for the moderators of these two events, panelists' biographies, and I helped them in the preparation of questions for the discussions taking into account each of the panelists' background. Last but not least, I was tasked at the end of the conference to write thank you letters for all the panelists for their participation in the UNICEF's events. Furthermore, I selected among the two hundreds side events, those that could interest UNICEF's staff the more with regard to their areas of work. We then shared this document with the gender focal points of each divisions and issued it on the intranet website. Furthermore, I wrote an article outlining the main aspects of 54th session as well as promoting the main events UNICEF organized. It was published on the intranet website at the beginning of the CSW, to encourage staff to attend some of the session's side events.

UNICEF along with other UN agencies, displayed at the early beginning of the Beijing +15 conference, publications with regard to the work the organization has been doing on gender equality, women's and girl's empowerment. I therefore contacted all the headquarter divisions to collect materials and publications they wanted to share. I was then responsible for the display table, located at the entrance of the main conference room, where the CSW session was taking place.

Finally, I attended some of the high level plenary sessions, panel discussions or side events and was the rapporteur of the discussions to share the discussions with the other members of the gender unit.

As objective and constructive comments with regard to my involvement throughout the CSW session, I would say that even if I started my internship one month before its kick off, it was still not enough time to ensure my integration in the entire preparation of the two UNICEF' side events. I was indeed more implicated in the final phase of their preparations and I therefore contributed more in providing some lights inputs, even if all necessary and valuable, such as designing flyers, writing down biographies or thank you letters. In addition, I was slightly disappointed that I was not able to attend the high-level plenary sessions and

parallel events as much as I wished as I was asked to carry out another task during the second week of the session (It consisted to bring the introduction of a gender perspective in the Comprehensive Framework for Action, which will be further developed below). I however took part in the young women caucus, attended some high-level plenary sessions, or parallel events or receptions such as the one organized by the International Organization of the Francophony or by the United States Embassy with the intervention of Hillary Clinton, the United States Secretary of State.

2. Performing analytical gender related research and report synthesis

One of the main roles of the Gender and Rights Unit consists of overseeing the implementation of the UNICEF's gender equality policy at the regional and country levels. The only means for UNICEF to assess the extent Country Offices mainstream gender in their programmes is to look at their annual reports and gender assessments.

Country Offices indeed report on the extent their programmes integrate a gender perspective through their annual reports, and especially in the section dedicated to women's rights and gender mainstreaming. With this regard, I was asked to thoroughly examine the 128 Country Offices annual reports submitted in 2009 and to analyze the extent to which CEDAW was integrated in their programmes. The analysis I carried out provides a deep examination of the extent Country Offices mentioned CEDAW in their annual reports, what kind of CEDAW related activities they developed in their country programmes, and compare the results with the previous similar report done in 2006⁵⁴.

Country Offices are also required to undertake a gender assessment or review of their country programmes once in their programme country cycle (about every five years). Regional Offices have to produce an overview of such gender assessments or reviews in their respective regions. Hence, I analyzed all these gender regional reviews submitted in 2009, examined regional trends, successes, promising practices but also challenges, and wrote a synthesis report⁵⁵.

54 Appendix VII: Reporting in the Country Office Annual Reports on CEDAW, Comparison with 2006.

55 Appendix VI: Reporting in the Country Offices Annual reports on CEDAW implementation, monitoring and reporting, June 2006, 5p.

The Gender and Rights Unit is mandated to provide technical guidance to Regional and Country Offices. With this regard, UNICEF, in collaboration with UNFPA, has been developing training material on both the CRC and CEDAW linking both gender, women's and children's rights. I supported UNICEF in revising, consolidating and finalizing this exhaustive learning package. It has represented the major task I was in charge of during the last two months of my internship. I worked on important research in strengthen some modules of this training such as on human rights, women's human rights, HIV and AIDS or child marriage. I also worked in collaboration with another member of the team to ensure the training documents were more user-friendly.

3. Providing support in UNICEF's inter-agency gender related work

UNICEF, as an affiliated agency of the United Nations, often works in collaboration with other UN agencies. I was therefore involved in several inter-agency projects related to gender issues.

First of all, I worked on the revision of the Comprehensive Framework for Action of the United Nations⁵⁶, which corresponds to the response and action plan of the United Nations to the global food crisis. Agencies were asked to revise with gender lenses the whole document and bring a gender perspective throughout the entire action plan. I extensively researched this subject, mainly on agriculture and gender. I proposed a revised document integrating the gender perspective, which was missing in the original action plan. Although gender mainstreaming is a strategy that should be at the core of all UN policies and programmes⁵⁷, a proper gender perspective is added late as it was included two years after the elaboration of the document and action plan.

UNICEF is requested to annually report to the Secretary General⁵⁸ on its efforts in mainstreaming gender into its policies and programmes. The Gender and Rights Unit is asked to annually fill out "the questionnaire on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system". I supported the unit in preparing this

⁵⁶ *Comprehensive Framework For Action*, High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, July 2008, 58p.

⁵⁷ ECOSOC Resolution 2009/12.

⁵⁸ ECOSOC Resolution 2009/12. This resolution requires the Secretary-General to undertake a detailed report on progress made by the UN entities in mainstreaming a gender perspective in their policies and programmes.

document, based on inputs provided by other divisions and on previous questionnaires. At that time, I found it relatively difficult as I had little knowledge of previous policies and activities that UNICEF had carried out during the past years with this regard.

UNICEF supports with twenty UN agencies the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, established in 1996 by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/166 and administered by UNIFEM. As the UN Trust Fund was about to launch its new strategy for the period 2010-2015, UN agencies were invited to revise this new strategy and bring their comments and recommendations. Hence, I read the strategy and suggested my comments. In addition, each agency was required to assess, rank and approve or not for funding, three projects from either NGOs, United Nations Country Programmes or governments. I was in charge of analyzing and ranking three projects⁵⁹ and then defending the projects UNICEF decided to approve for funding in a meeting with representatives of several UN agencies. This project represents actually one of the activities that I most appreciated during my internship in the sense that I was entirely responsible for beginning to the end and also because it was the first time that I was in charge of projects of that magnitude. In my previous internships, I have never assessed projects for *obtaining subsidies*.

59 Young Women's Christian Association/Community Participatory approaches towards ending violence against women in Zambia, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation/Empowering Indigenous Women in Traditional Customary Institutions, Beijing Cultural Development Center for Rural Women/Against Sexual Violence to Rural Left-Behind Girls.

Part II: The evolution of UNICEF's gender equality policy and the headquarter's response for its implementation

UNICEF is an international organization well-known throughout the world for its work towards children. "UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential"⁶⁰. UNICEF has however rapidly recognized the improvement of mother's and women's rights as a pre-requisite to the improvement of children's rights and well-being.

The objective of this second part is therefore to analyze how UNICEF has progressively identified gender equality and women's empowerment as a core element to the achievement of its mandate. It is interesting to examine the different steps UNICEF has made throughout decades to progressively recognize gender equality as an essential element to its mission. This long process highlights the difficulties the organization has faced to fully accept that the promotion of women's rights as individuals and not only as mother of children is part of its mandate. (Section I)

In a second part, the mechanisms developed at the headquarter level by the Gender Unit to ensure the effective operationalization of UNICEF's gender equality policy will be analyzed. (Section II).

Last but not least, the institutional weaknesses of UNICEF's gender equality structure will be highlighted to put in perspective the deep differences between a relative strong political commitment to gender equality and weak translations in actions of this commitment . (Section III).

⁶⁰ E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2, The mission of UNICEF, 22 January 1996.

Section I: The progressive political recognition of gender equality as a core element of UNICEF's mandate

Through an historical perspective, this section analyzes the growth and development of UNICEF's interest in women and gender equality. The different policies promoting women's and girl's empowerment that UNICEF enacted will be examined as well as the elements that influenced the organization to consider gender equality as part of its mandate.

Thus, from the fifties to the mid eighties, UNICEF has progressively recognized the critical role of women for children's welfare and social development (A). The organization adopted in 1994 a landmark policy making gender equality a key strategy within UNICEF (B). The organization promotes, in parallel of gender equality, gender parity and adopted a comprehensive strategy in 2007 with this regard. (C). Last but not least, UNICEF conducted in 2008, a gender evaluation, which has built a new momentum towards gender equality and women's empowerment in UNICEF and was at the inception of the adoption of a new policy on that matter. (D).

However, although UNICEF has progressively recognized women's empowerment and gender equality as an essential pre-requisite to the achievement of its mandate, this process has not been linear. Sometimes the issue got better attention than in other periods and the promotion of gender equality sometimes lost visibility and political commitment. Even today, with a brand new policy, the limits of UNICEF's mandate with regard to the promotion of women's rights and empowerment are not clear, especially in relation to the other UN agencies such as UNIFEM.

A. From the 50s to the mid 80s, the growing recognition of the critical role of women for children's welfare and social development

Throughout these decades, UNICEF's attention towards women was growing little by little, and ended up in the mid eighties with the first policy and action plan on women. UNICEF was among the first UN agencies to adopt a specific policy for the advancement of women and girls. However, it is important to notice that this commitment was significantly

influenced by the United Nations system, especially by the UN Decade for women, and was not a stand-alone commitment from the organization.

I. From an exclusive children centered focus to a broader perspective including mothers and women : the late forties to the late sixties

In her publication, *UNICEF and Women, The long Voyage*, Virginia Hazzard explores the growth and development of UNICEF's interest in women during the period 1946 to 1986. She points out that "women as such were not part of UNICEF's mandate but the realities of focusing on children quickly drew the organization into the field of women"⁶¹. UNICEF has indeed progressively recognized the critical role played by women for the well-being of children, and Virginia Hazzard analyzes step by step the evolution of UNICEF's vision with regard to women. As she describes, four main phases characterize this "long voyage": "In the beginning there were children, then came children and lactating mothers, then children and mothers, then children and women in all their roles"⁶².

In 1946, UNICEF was mandated to assist the rehabilitation of children with supplies, material, services and technical assistance. The Resolution of the General Assembly which created UNICEF⁶³ did not specifically mandated the Fund to improve the situation of mothers or women.

However, it did not take too long for UNICEF to recognize that the improvement of children's rights and lives is closely related to those of their mothers. Thus, as early as 1947, UNICEF's programmes to children included assistance to pregnant and lactating mothers. Nevertheless, the scope of the approach developed by UNICEF regarding mothers was very limited as it only took into account the lactating and pregnant women. This particular attention of UNICEF to mothers was requested by ECOSOC on 29 March 1947, who called the organization to alleviate malnutrition and disease, and safeguard the health of expectant and nursing mothers. Improving the health of both mother and child was therefore legitimized and became an accepted responsibility of the organization.

61 Virginia Hazzard, *UNICEF and women, The long voyage, A historical perspective*, 1987, p8.

62Ibidem, p.8.

63 Resolution UN/GA/57 (I), 11 December 1946, Establishment of an International Children's Emergency Fund

UNICEF restricted focus on solely lactating and pregnant mothers shifted in the early fifties to all mothers. The understanding of mother was at that time extended in a broader sense than just being “pregnant or lactating women”. UNICEF indeed delivered trainings for women through the development of mothercraft and homecraft courses with the goal to improve child rearing and family life. The content of these trainings were however limited to housework and domestic roles. Women were trained for example on child care, the importance of breastfeeding and vaccinations, cooking, sewing and in some regions writing and reading.

It was not until the sixties we see UNICEF starting to recognize women in their entire role in the development process, not only as mothers but also as worker and producer. It became at that time increasingly evident that raising the status of women was necessary for social development and children welfare. UNICEF was consequently developing two types of programmes which involved women.

The first set of programmes included activities targeting women as mothers. As has been previously described, these trainings aimed to help mothers to learn what actions could help to protect their children such as how to combat diarrheal, the benefits of breastfeeding or vaccinations.

As regards the second type of trainings, women were trained as workers or as volunteers such as primary school teachers, workers in day-care facilities or nurses to support income-generating activities and capacity of women. UNICEF started to develop programmes that specifically focus and benefit women.

2. The seventies: the positive impact of the UN Decade for Women

In the seventies, UNICEF began to politically recognize the crucial importance of women’s empowerment in the achievement of its mandate. Indeed, in the early seventies, the Executive Board, admitted that the success of many of UNICEF country programmes aided by UNICEF depends in a very large degree upon women both as workers and volunteers and recommended that the promotion of activities for girls and women should be a priority. It was the first time that UNICEF examined the positive impacts of programmes and trainings designed for women as women and not as mothers of children. The growing political

awareness of the positive influence of women on the lives of children and their community was reflected by the appointment in 1974 of the first person in UNICEF with the mandate not only for family planning but also for women's programming. However, as Virginia Hazzard rightly notices, although UNICEF created a position with the aim to promote programmes for women it did not mean that the organization suddenly became fully committed to women's empowerment. Indeed, the title of this position kept changing over the years epitomizing the difficulty UNICEF faced to politically recognize its support to women's empowerment. Thus, this job was firstly entitled "Family Planning Adviser", then "Family Welfare Adviser", and latter "Family Welfare and Community Participation Adviser" to finally in 1983, the title of "Senior Policy Specialist, Women's Economic activities and basic services". As words in the title can speak volumes, it was the first time the title had the word "woman". It demonstrated the reluctance of the organization to fully accept that UNICEF could promote programmes that are not directly designed for children or their mothers.

The International women's year conference in 1975 and the United Nations decade for women had a positive impact on UNICEF and its view on women. First of all, the necessity to increase the number of women in professional posts was addressed and a number of women were appointed as Regional Directors. In 1975, Ms. Aida Gindy was the first ever female nominated at that level. Other women followed who also held this position included Titi Memet in Southeast Asia, Teresa Albanez in Latin America, Marcy Racelis in Easter and Southern Africa. In addition, by 1976, in each of the six regional offices, regional advisers were in charge of focusing the programming for women and girls. Last but not least, the Executive Board reaffirmed that the needs of women and children cannot be compartmentalized, women should not be limited to motherhood or domestic roles, but that they should be seen in the totality of their roles as mothers, wives, economic providers, and citizens. The Executive Board encouraged Regional and Country Offices to study and analyze the situation of women in their entire roles and also recommended more participation of women in planning, implementing and managing programmes.

Hence, programmes directed at improving the conditions of women received more attention and UNICEF developed trainings, and income generating projects specifically oriented to women. The review of these programmes conducted in 1985⁶⁴ highlights the kind

64 *UNICEF response to women's concerns*, E/ICEF/1985/L.1, February 1985, 35p.

of activities developed. Thus, with regards to training programmes, they covered functional knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, basic information about health, nutrition, child care and household management. As regards to income-generating projects, they aimed to develop basic skills to generate incomes such as sewing, knitting, basket-weaving, small animal raising, and food processing. These income-generating projects intended to improve women's access to credit as well to fund women's projects, and small scale enterprises. Although UNICEF politically recognized the positive impacts of women's empowerment for the achievement of its mandate, the support of actions benefiting women was not always well perceived within the organization and among staff. The recognition of the importance of women's empowerment in UNICEF's mandate was not internalized and remained a challenge for the organization⁶⁵.

3. The 1980s: the development of the first UNICEF's policy on women

In preparation to the World Conference on the Decade for Women in Nairobi in 1985, UNICEF undertook a major policy review of its programmes dedicated to women's empowerment and developed its first policy⁶⁶ ever with this regard. The "UNICEF response to women's concerns" represents a major milestone in UNICEF's history related to gender equality as the organization officially recognized the importance of women's empowerment in the achievement of its mandate and approved to strengthen its support to women's centered programmes and activities. The policy recognized the fact that the improvement of women's conditions is a necessary pre-requisite for social development and for the improvement of the health and well-being of children. The policy states that UNICEF needs to intensify its programming on women-centered activities which recognize women as generators and agents of change. In addition, it asserts that women need to be included in planning, implementation and evaluation, focal points for women's programmes need to be designated, and mechanisms need to be established to ensure that women's concerns are built into sectoral programmes.

65 Ibidem, p. 28-29.

66 Ibidem.

Two years later, the "Implementation Strategy for UNICEF Policy on Women in Development", was finalized⁶⁷. The strategy adopted was a multiple axes strategy from a comprehensive approach where women's needs and interests are fully integrated in programmes for a more traditional approach which supports projects focusing especially for women. In order to ensure that women's needs were integrated at all stages of programming, the strategy recommended that the situation analysis of the country where programmes were developed, particularly focuses on women's needs and interests. To do so, Country Offices were asked to gather data and information about the situation of girls and young women and their differing access to resources in order to adapt programmes. Furthermore, a checklist was created to assess the integration of women's needs and interests in programmes. The policy encourages the participation of women from projects planning, to their implementation and evaluation.

B. 1994: The adoption of a milestone policy making gender equality a key strategy within UNICEF

Ten years after the adoption of the first policy of UNICEF on women, and in the period just prior to the Beijing Fourth World Conference on women, UNICEF's Executive Board called for a review of the 1985 policy on women. Hence, the organization adopted in 1994 a landmark policy review on gender equality⁶⁸ making gender equality a core strategy in UNICEF's work. Surprisingly, this policy is often considered in the mind of UNICEF staff⁶⁹ as the first policy issued by the organization on women. However, as its title mentions and implies, UNICEF conducted a review of its previous policy on women.

Gender equality is recognized as a pre-requisite in the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. The promotion of gender equality is mentioned as a high organizational priority. The Executive Board requested the Executive Director to strengthen

67 *Stratégie d'application de la politique du FISE concernant l'intégration des femmes dans le développement*, E/ICEF/1987/L.1, Janvier 1987, 17p.

68 *Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls: A policy review addendum*, Recommendations of the Executive Director, E/ICEF/1994/L.0005/Add.1, 1994, 3p.

69 In various discussions with UNICEF's staff working on gender issues, the 1985 policy on women's concerns does not seem to be well-known. Even in the documents related to gender equality, (policy documents, reports...) the 1985 is rarely mentioned. The 1994 policy is therefore often presented as if it was the first time UNICEF issued a policy on women.

the integration of gender concerns in country programmes and support specific actions and strategies for promoting gender equality. In addition, the policy promotes the development of gender sensitive indicators and the integration of gender specific targets in country programmes. It also emphasizes the importance of adopting a life cycle perspective in addressing the gender based discrimination at each stages of the life cycle of women and girls. Besides, to ensure that priority is given to the integration of gender issues in development programmes, the policy stresses the necessity of establishing appropriate monitoring and accountable mechanisms. Last but not least, the linkages between the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are for the first time clearly established. This document indeed affirms that CEDAW and CRC are not only complementary and mutually supportive but also that they both provide an essential framework for UNICEF's work. This policy remains for more than fifteen years, the only framework for promoting gender equality in UNICEF's work until the adoption of the new and revised policy this year.

C. 2007: The adoption of a comprehensive gender parity policy

In parallel to its gender equality policy, UNICEF has adopted throughout its history several recommendations, guidelines and policy aiming to reach gender parity in UNICEF's workforce. Gender balance was identified in the 2007 UNICEF's Gender Parity and Equality Policy⁷⁰ as "a good business practice" for achieving its mission and mandate⁷¹.

The organization started to be willing to increase the number of women in its workforce in the seventies, as the request of the Executive Board to the Executive Director in 1975 to improve the situation of women in UNICEF⁷² confirmed. Despite some progress⁷³ the results were far to be satisfactory and a task force was established in 1984 to analyze the

⁷⁰ UNICEF's gender parity and equality policy – *The gender balanced workplace and the action plan for gender parity and equality policy*, CF/EXD/2007, 2007, 10p.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p.1.

⁷² *Report of the UNICEF Board Session*, E/ICEF/639, 1975, para. 127.

⁷³ The percentage of female at international professional core posts rose from 14 percent to 23.9 percent in 1986. In addition, the number of women in senior professional posts increased from 2.2 percent in 1974 to 16 percent in 1986. Then, in 1986, two out of six Regional Directors were women. (Women and UNICEF, *The long voyage*, Annex I, Women of UNICEF, p115.)

situation of women in UNICEF. On the basis of the report submitted by this task force⁷⁴, UNICEF set in 1985 the target to achieve 33 percent female representation of International Professional staff by 1990. The goal was met in the nineties and UNICEF fixed in 1991 the target of reaching gender parity by 2000. This time, gender balance was not achieved and women represented 42 percent of the workforce. It has taken the organisation more than five years for UNICEF to take further steps and actions to address the gap. Indeed, the organization commissioned in 2005 a study to analyze the obstacles to the advancement of women in the workforce, particularly at senior levels, and a policy on gender parity was then issued two years later in 2007. The resolution of the General Assembly adopted in 2004⁷⁵ which encourages the UN and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy making levels, helped UNICEF to build a new momentum in its way towards gender parity. As Tanya Accone explains, the UN system as a whole is committed towards gender parity and “it has been something important that it is not something UNICEF was doing in isolation but something the system is doing and working toward”⁷⁶.

UNICEF enacted in June 2007 a comprehensive gender parity policy and action plan with the aim to achieve the goal of 50/50 throughout the organization, in every office and division and at all levels by 2010. In order to effectively attain gender parity, the policy set concrete targets. Indeed, it established that two women for every three vacancies where gender imbalance exists need to be recruited. However, as Tanya Accone explains, the recruitment process has not been managed “from a number perspective” but “informed and guided” by statistics⁷⁷. The basic process is that “it always has to be the best qualified person for the job regardless of gender”. Hiring to fulfill the quotas reduces organization capacity as “the person selected was not the best for the job” and undermines the whole gender parity process as it can “give the impression that all people that have that character are not really capable and that they are just employed because of their gender”. This was a lose-lose situation. However, as stated in the policy, “where competencies of a male and a female

74 *Final report of the task Force on the situation of women in UNICEF*, CF/TFSW/IC/1985-1, 1985.

75 Resolution 59/164, 20 December 2004

76 Appendix V: Interview with Tanya Accone, *The Gender Parity Policy*, p. 97.

77 Appendix V: Interview with Tanya Accone, *The Gender Parity Policy*, p.101.

candidate are assessed as essentially equal on the basis of knowledge, skills and expertise, the female candidate should be preferred over the male candidate”⁷⁸.

1. The mechanisms implemented for achieving gender parity

UNICEF has created a system which provides real time sex-disaggregated data on the evolution of its workforce. It informs the organization with updated data, and especially offices in recruitment processes, on the UNICEF gender balance situation. Special measures can therefore be introduced where imbalances persist.

Thus, if it is known that there is a gap in a certain area and that this sector does not typically get female candidates, the recruitment body supported by the headquarter human resource division have to pro-actively encourage women to apply to the vacancy and to go beyond the regular recruitment process to try to find qualified female candidates. For example, as Tanya Accone describes, “we pro-actively go to recruitment fairs, or we advertised in the Economist, do global campaign or go to graduate schools for recruiting in a certain area”⁷⁹. In addition, at the job description level, it is clearly mentioned that qualified females and males are encouraged to apply. Then, as stated in the policy, “shortlists of candidates for all advertised vacancies shall be gender-balanced or include at least two qualified females [...] and shortlists that do not meet these standards must be accompanied by a detailed explanation that all required gender equality measures have been followed”. After that, “all recruitment panels shall be gender-balanced” and during selection processes, gender sensitive interviews for both men and women have to be applied. Interviewees need to feel comfortable in a respectful environment, where there are no appropriate jokes for example. Finally, “if an external male candidate is proposed for a new or vacant position, the division or office shall submit to the appointment and placement bodies, or their equivalent, a written analysis with appropriate supporting documentation, indicating how the qualifications and expertise of the recommended candidate are clearly superior to those of the shortlisted internal candidates”⁸⁰. This clause of the gender parity policy was put in place to ensure that offices do

78 *Annexe I, Action Plan for Gender parity and Equality Policy, UNICEF's gender parity and equality policy – The gender balanced*, CF/EXD/2007, June 2007, p.1.

79 Appendix V: Interview with Tanya Accone, *The Gender Parity Policy*, p. 99.

80 *Annexe I, Action Plan for Gender parity and Equality Policy, UNICEF's gender parity and equality policy – The gender balanced*, CF/EXD/2007, June 2007, p.2.

think about gender balance and make sure they have appropriately and effectively looked for qualified female candidates.

2. Gender parity as a matter of gender friendly work culture

Gender parity is not only a question of good number. This is also a matter of gender friendly work culture and environment. The workplace need indeed to take into account the different needs and constraints of both men and women to give them the same opportunities to equally fulfill their work with their personal and family life. The report from 2006 on gender parity in senior management at UNICEF⁸¹ underlines the challenges UNICEF staff face in terms of its working environment. To take only few examples: “UNICEF tends to reward long hours, and this principle cause female attrition and in some cases hesitation to move into senior management positions”, “A career in UNICEF involves many sacrifices from staff and their family” and “given this environment, the record that UNICEF has achieved in gender parity is remarkable.”

To address these challenges, UNICEF has adopted several policies to improve work and life balance: as the flexible workplace policy⁸² with mechanisms such as compressed work schedule, part time work, flexible work schedule, job sharing or tele-working, the policy on preventing harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority⁸³ or the policy on family, adoption, maternity and paternity leave⁸⁴. Thus, UNICEF has enacted these last past years a set of different policies aiming to ensure a supportive environment and workplace.

However, the implementation of these policies and the changes they imply remain one of the main challenge of the organization. The enjoyment of the different mechanisms included in these policies are not administered fairly and equally. As Tanya Accone mentioned “Some people will say that for some people it is easier to work flexibly than for others”⁸⁵. The organization is however aware of these challenges and the Human Resource Division is preparing a manager programme “to raise the awareness of managers about their

81 *Gender parity in Senior Management at UNICEF*, Final Report, May 2006, p 8.

82 CF/AI/2008-007 Flexible workplace

83 CF/AI/2005-017, UNICEF’s policy on preventing harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority

84 CF/AI/2010-004, Family, adoption, maternity and paternity leave

85 Appendix V: Interview with Tanya Accone, *The Gender Parity Policy*, p. 102.

role and responsibilities, and making them accountable in administering these policies fairly without bias of any kind”.

D. The 2008 gender evaluation at the inception of the new policy on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women

UNICEF undertook from 2006 to 2008 a three year evaluation process to identify how the organization had implemented gender mainstreaming in its policies, programmes, strategies and actions. Interestingly, this gender equality assessment was not a single case in the United Nations System. Indeed, as Maie Ayoub von Kohl underlines, other agencies such as UNDP, UNFPA or OHCHR evaluated at the same time their performance in mainstreaming gender equality⁸⁶. This evaluation was divided into two phases: the first phase was completed in 2006, corresponded to a self assessment of the implementation of gender mainstreaming in five UNICEF Country Offices (Barbados, Egypt, Kenya, Pakistan, Turkey) and one regional office (ESARO)⁸⁷. The second phase completed in 2007, was carried out by an external organization and assessed the overall implementation of gender mainstreaming throughout UNICEF⁸⁸. Both evaluations gave an honest picture of the situation and thoroughly identified the main challenges the organization was facing in mainstreaming gender. These evaluations built a strong momentum in the organization and gave the visibility and commitment gender mainstreaming requires to be successfully implemented. UNICEF indeed developed on the basis of the evaluation’s results a set of actions and launched in May 2010 its new policy on gender equality.

1. The main findings of the gender evaluation

The evaluations pointed to the drastic lack of knowledge by UNICEF’ staff either on the strategy of gender mainstreaming and the extent to implement it in their work or on the existing UNICEF’s policies with regard to gender equality. Gender mainstreaming was often

86 Appendix IV: Interview with, Maie Ayoub Von Kohl, the 2008 Evaluation Follow-up process, p.93.

87 *Gender mainstreaming self-assessment, Based on five country offices exercises, Phase one of UNICEF’s mainstreaming evaluation*, UNICEF, May 2007, 78p

88 *Evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF*, March 2008, 256p.

misunderstood or understood by staff in a narrow sense, such as gender parity or non discrimination. Some staff for example did not clearly distinguished between UNICEF's gender policy and its gender parity policy. In addition, many UNICEF staff had either not read the 1994 gender policy or were not aware that the organization had that kind of policy. Furthermore, those who had read the policy found it inaccessible. The evaluations underlined fears some staff expressed in term of the workload gender mainstreaming represents. Already overwhelmed by a number of different strategies, UNICEF staff perceived gender mainstreaming as a complex strategy requiring high workload. One of the main explanations to this deep lack of knowledge by UNICEF' staff with regard to gender equality is the few number of training they have had. Indeed, only half of UNICEF staff had any gender training and only a small minority of this group felt that they had adequate skills and knowledge to be able to apply gender equality principles within a regular programming context. They noticed that the gender mainstreaming tools and guidelines were not meeting their needs in term of practical understanding on how to implement gender mainstreaming in their work. This lack of understanding of gender mainstreaming represented one of the main impediments for consistent and effective implementation and revealed UNICEF's failure to systematically implement its 1994 gender policy.

The evaluations highlighted the general lack of institutional accountability in the organization with regard to the implementation of gender mainstreaming. For example, senior staff did not sufficiently promote gender equality to their staff and did not systematically hold them accountable to do so. In addition, even if the 1994 gender equality policy states that all UNICEF' staff should promote gender equality, it was not included in their terms of references. Besides, although the gender focal points are supposed to ensure the integration of gender mainstreaming into the organization, their position did not have a specific term of references, most of them do not have the requisite gender background to effectively serve their role and many of them, with relatively junior positions, did not have the authority to hold their colleagues accountable for integrating gender equality in their work and programmes.

Gender mainstreaming did not receive sufficient financial support to be effectively implemented and there were no system to track expenditures on gender equality initiatives. The lack of funding reveals the absence of a concrete commitment from UNICEF to effectively change the organization and make gender equality a real institutional priority.

The evaluations, in highlighting the main obstacles and challenges UNICEF was facing in mainstreaming gender, showed the reality of the situation and forced UNICEF to react and take strong measures. The evaluations were at the inception of a new momentum and from 2008, UNICEF has been developing a number of actions addressing the difficulties revealed by the evaluations. One of them was the updating of the 1994 gender equality policy.

2. Working for an equal future: UNICEF policy on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women

UNICEF issued in May 2010, as part of its management response to the 2008 evaluation, its new policy on gender equality “Working for an equal future, UNICEF policy on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women”⁸⁹. It took more than fifteen years for UNICEF to revise its policy on gender equality. As Ms. Noreen Khan explains, “there was a problem in the early 2000 in terms of gender mainstreaming, gender equality in terms of getting attention and being a visible issue [...] it lost attention basically over the last decades and it was only after the evaluation that gender became a very visible issue”⁹⁰.

The policy clearly confirms that the promotion of gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment is part of UNICEF’s mandate : “ UNICEF works for women’s rights not only as an inherent good for societies as a whole, and in the recognition of women as agents of human development, but specifically because the empowerment of women facilitates the very environment in which gender-equal results can best be achieved for children [...] and the empowerment of women is a prerequisite for the equal rights for all”⁹¹. The policy mentions the particular role of UNICEF with regard to the empowerment of girls and boys: “UNICEF also works for the equal rights and empowerment of girls and boys” and the “principal contribution of UNICEF to women’s rights is through empowerment of girls who will become women”.

Another main point of the policy is its emphasis on the CRC and CEDAW conventions. The policy indeed acknowledges that these both conventions are central to

89 UNICEF, *Working for an equal future, UNICEF policy on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women*, 2010, 13p.

90 Appendix II: Interview with, Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 76.

91 *Ibidem*, p. 2-3

UNICEF's mandate. "These Conventions are mutually and strongly reinforcing in the realization of UNICEF's mandate for the rights of children."

In addition, this policy introduces a new element which was never mentioned in previous policies or guidelines: the necessity to work more explicitly with boys and men. In the whole policy, it is always written that UNICEF works for the empowerment of women, girls AND boys. Men and boys are both described as "agents and beneficiaries of gender equality" are "powerful allies in the achievement of gender equality". "UNICEF seeks to ensure that its programmes with boy's groups are complementary with girls groups in the same neighborhoods, so that relationships between them can be addressed". Besides, UNICEF can develop specific actions for boys victims of discrimination: "UNICEF also works with boys to address the specific discriminations that they experience".

The policy also addresses a major element underlined by the 2008 gender evaluation: the issue of accountability. Thus, the responsibility of the organization as a whole with regard to the application of the policy and implementation of gender mainstreaming is clearly established:

- The Gender Equality Task Force⁹² oversees the application of this policy
- Members of the Global Leadership Team⁹³ are accountable to the Executive Director for implementation and senior and mid-level managers implement and monitor the policy
- Senior and middle management are expected to make clear intention to implement this policy to their unit, define gender equality outcomes that they wish their staff to achieve, track progress towards the achievements these results
- Each Country Offices are required to undertake a gender equality assessment or review of the UNICEF-assisted programme at least one during each programme cycle.

92 The Gender task Force is made up deputy directors from headquarter and Regional Offices and from the Global Leadership team. It overviews the divisions and regions actions on gender mainstreaming. It contributes to the review of the gender equality policy and procedures, provides technical expertise for the elaboration of new policies, programme development and advocacy tools. The Gender Task Force met every six weeks in 2009 and early 2010.

93 The role of the Global Leadership Team is to guide strategic planning and policy development, advise the Executive Director on major organizational priorities, optimize use and allocation of resources and assess organizational performance.

Even if the policy on gender equality outlines UNICEF's vision and goals in promoting gender equality and affirms the links between CRC and CEDAW, it does not clarify to which extent UNICEF can promote women's rights and what kind of programmes the organization can develop without overlapping other UN agencies such as UNIFEM.

Section II: The mechanisms developed at the headquarter level to ensure the effective operationalization of the UNICEF's gender equality policy

The Gender Unit is mandated to oversee the implementation of the gender equality policy throughout the organization. Thus, the Gender Unit has been developing several mechanisms to ensure the effective operationalization of the policy on gender equality⁹⁴. One of the major mechanisms developed by the gender unit is to build UNICEF staff capacity and knowledge on gender equality and gender mainstreaming (A). Indeed, following the 2008 gender evaluation, it appeared essential to strengthen UNICEF' staff knowledge on gender mainstreaming in order to successfully ensure the effective implementation of the UNICEF's policy on gender equality. In addition, the monitoring mechanisms put in place to assess the integration of a gender perspective in UNICEF programmes are important not only to assess how gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the organization but also to adapt, if necessary, the gender equality strategy (B).

A. Building capacities and knowledge of UNICEF staff as the fundamental prerequisite to any success of the gender equality policy

One of the main points stressed by the 2008 Gender Evaluation is the significant lack of knowledge on gender mainstreaming by most of UNICEF staff. The absence of a wide understanding of what gender mainstreaming means represents the major impediment to the effective implementation of this strategy. Any success of the strategy of gender mainstreaming indeed relies on the ability for all staff to incorporate a gender analysis and perspective in its work. The "Zoomerang Survey"⁹⁵ conducted in 2009 confirmed the poor level of understanding of the strategy of gender mainstreaming and knowledge about the policy developed by UNICEF with this regard. Indeed, only 42% of respondents overall were able to identify the correct definition of gender mainstreaming with major differences between headquarter staff and Regional/Country Offices staff. Only 29% of headquarter staff

⁹⁴ In this section, the main actions implemented by the Gender Unit will be analyzed. However, the other actions developed by UNICEF in overall since the 2008 Gender Evaluation to ensure an effective implementation of the gender policy will not be examined.

⁹⁵ *Zoomerang Survey: Results Analysis, Gender mainstreaming in UNICEF*, August 2009, 26p.

could identify the correct definition compared to 45% in Regional/Country Offices⁹⁶. Furthermore, only 13% of total respondents were familiar with UNICEF's 1994 Gender Policy, even though another 39% considered that they were, somewhat familiar, with the document⁹⁷. Hence, UNICEF has been developing several measures to address this drastic lack of knowledge and build capacity.

1. Development of training materials on gender equality

The Gender and Rights Unit has been developing training materials to improve knowledge of UNICEF's staff on gender equality. For example, UNICEF in collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM, have produced a common e-learning package on gender mainstreaming designed for all their staff⁹⁸. The main objective of this future mandatory course is to provide fundamental knowledge and skills on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, present the international commitments on that matter, the UN system on gender mainstreaming and some entry points for working with men and boys. The aim is to create a shared and common understanding of gender equality at the conceptual and practical levels and accelerate systematic and sustained progress on women's and girls' rights and gender equality.

In addition, UNICEF with UNFPA, are developing and finalizing a learning package on CRC and CEDAW⁹⁹ for "increasing knowledge of UNICEF staff on CRC/CEDAW, demonstrate the links between the two conventions and explain how they can be both used as tools at the national level to promote the intersection of children's and women's rights"¹⁰⁰. This training material provide modules on human's rights, women's human rights, CRC and CEDAW, basic knowledge on gender, gender mainstreaming and the human rights based approach. Some thematic areas such as child marriage, HIV and AIDS, maternal mortality and adolescent girls are incorporated in the learning package offering guidance to address these issues with using CRC and CEDAW.

96 *Zoomerang Survey: Results Analysis, Gender mainstreaming in UNICEF*, August 2009, p8.

97 *Ibidem*, p10.

98 *Gender equality, Un Coherence and You, E-learning course*, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNDP, 2010.

99 *CRC and CEDAW: Promoting and protecting the human rights of women and children*, Workshop materials and facilitator's guide, 2010, 218p. (under final review)

100 *Appendix II: Interview with, Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit*, p. 76.

The Gender and Rights Unit has started in June 2010 to develop a comprehensive gender training with the aim to reinforce UNICEF staff knowledge on the issue. This training package will include conceptual and practical knowledge on gender and specific tools to ensure the introduction of a gender perspective at each stage of the five year Country programme cycle.

At the regional level, a number of initiatives have also taken place. Several regions launched dedicated programme trainings, including gender equality in HIV and AIDS, early childhood development, child protection, and basic education. ESAR for example, conducted a gender focal point training in August 2009 and WCAR organized a gender and human rights workshop was organized. In MENA, the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research produced an analysis report on capacity building for gender responsiveness in UNICEF programming.

2. The creation of a Community of Gender: a platform for exchange and communication

Following the 2008 Gender Evaluation, UNICEF has put in place a gender community of practice, “to share knowledge among UNICEF staff on gender equality and connect staff all over the world to better information and to increase their ability to integrate gender equality and gender analysis in programming at every level”¹⁰¹. This community of practice is one of the sixteen communities of practices within UNICEF¹⁰², and has been launched in January 2010 as a joint community with UNDP. UNDP has indeed more than fifteen years of experience in community of practice and its gender community of practice, currently made of about 4000 members, has been well established for about nine years. However, as Ms. Emily Krasnor underlines, “the characterization of the joint community is quite limited because that just mean that sometimes we cross post things”.

101 Appendix III: Interview with Emily Krasnor, The Gender Community of Practice, p.86.

102 Accelerate Child Survival and Development (108 members), Community Leadership and Facilitation (67 members), Enterprise Risk Management and Evaluation (346 members), Policy Advocacy (203 members), Sandpit and Support (64 members), Gender Equality in Humanitarian, HIV and AIDS (180 members), Humanitarian Negotiations (164 members), Children Knowledge management (212 members), One, Human Resource (66 members), Social and Economic Policy (253 members), Unicef Brand Focus (23 members), UNICEF GIVAS Pilot (37 members), Simplified Programme Results structure (126 members). Accessed 02:07.2010.

Although UNICEF's gender community of practice is still in its infancy, it already represents one of UNICEF's strongest communities with the most members (250 members). As Ms. Emily Krasnor explains, her role as facilitator of the community is crucial to encourage UNICEF staff to actively participate. Indeed, in contrast to UNDP where contributing to the different community of practices is "expected", "part of their culture" and considered "at the top of their work"¹⁰³, the UNICEF gender community of practice "still need some nurturing"¹⁰⁴. She indeed individually encourages UNICEF staff to contribute as well as to share their work. The problem raised by Ms. Emily Krasnor, is that "people need to be less afraid to share, post questions, and that is okay to say I do not know"¹⁰⁵. She explains as well that sometimes people accept to post on the platform, but they only post two or three paragraphs that seem "perfect". In her words, UNICEF does not seem to be "an institution where everybody feels comfortable sharing knowledge, sharing their work and questions [...] this is a culture that needs to change through the institution"¹⁰⁶.

3. Providing gender expertise at the Regional and Country level

Taking into account the lack of knowledge on gender equality and gender mainstreaming throughout the organization, UNICEF created at the headquarter level a pool of female and male gender experts within specific sectors and areas. However, Country Offices did not receive special funding to hire these gender experts and as Ms. Noreen Khan explained, there is still "a lot of work to make alive this roster and making sure that there is a quality check on people who have been selected, to maintain it updated, maintain the quality and make sure that the Country Offices get the gender expertise very quickly through this roster"¹⁰⁷. This global roster makes available to all Country Offices 46 gender experts shortlisted out of 560 candidates. This global gender roster has been consolidated by the development of three regional gender rosters in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Middle East and North Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. Developed in May 2009, the Central and Eastern Europe and the

103 Appendix III: Interview with Emily Krasnor, The Gender Community of Practice, p. 87.

104 Ibidem, p. 91.

105 Ibidem, p. 88

106 Ibidem, p.4.

107 Appendix II: Interview with Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 81.

Commonwealth of Independent States gender expert roster includes a total of 19 gender experts clustered by experience, sub-regional zones and languages ability. Middle East and North Africa established its own database of gender experts in the first quarter of 2010 and established a list of 55 institutions working on gender equality issues in the region. Then, Latin America and the Caribbean has developed a consultant gender roster with a good representation across the region and a strong mix of languages and expertise.

B. Monitoring the integration of gender equality in programmes as a long term incentive to further implementation

UNICEF and the Gender and Rights Unit have mainly two ways to assess how gender is mainstreamed at the country level: a) the annual Country annual reports, b) gender review or assessment. A new mechanism, the gender equality marker system, which has just been put in place in June 2010, is going to strengthen the capacity of the gender unit to monitor the implementation of gender in the country programmes.

As Ms. Noreen Khan states, “The only way to see for us what is happening at the country level is to look at the annual reports”¹⁰⁸. Thus, in the country annual reports, a special section is enshrined to an analysis of the situation affecting children and women. Country Offices describe in this section the situation of children and women in their country and present the work they have done to empower women’s, girls’ and boy’s rights. Based on these annual reports, UNICEF, and especially the Gender and Rights Unit, can get an idea of what kind of actions Country Offices have implemented to mainstream gender and improve the situation of women, girls and boys.

Given information available in the annuals reports with regard to gender equality was limited; Country Offices were required in 2005 “to undertake an assessment and review of gender issues in the UNICEF-assisted Country Programme, within the present CP cycle.”¹⁰⁹. Following very poor levels of compliance, about 31% by end 2008, another directive was adopted¹¹⁰. In 2009, 68 countries reported in their annual reports having conducted gender

108 Appendix II: Interview with Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 79.

109 Programme Directive 06-05. A country cycle last five years.

110 Executive Directive 2009-005

reviews¹¹¹. However, the main issue is that Country Offices have not been provided with any guidelines regarding the way they have to conduct these gender assessments. In addition, UNICEF, at the headquarter level and especially the Gender and Rights Unit, do not receive any reports from Country Offices on these gender reviews. Country Offices only need to indicate to the headquarter level they have conducted a gender review, but they are not required to inform any further on the methodology and their results. What the headquarter level receives, is a regional overview of these gender assessments. Each region is required to write a regional report on the gender reviews Country Offices have conducted in their specific regions. However, the quality of the regional reports significantly varies. Some of the regions for example based their reviews on only few countries offices gender assessments (WCAR's gender review is based on only 2 out of 21 countries and TACRO's on 8 out of 24 countries). In addition, while ESAR deeply analyses the different gender assessments in the region through a report exceeding 50 pages, others provide a brief report country by country without proving a regional analysis (Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States and South Asia).

The gender unit has also just developed a Gender Equality Marker (GEM) system¹¹² with the aim to track expenditures on gender equality. The objective of this mechanism is basically to assess how much Country Offices allocates to gender equality in their programmes. It is not however a mechanism such as gender budgeting, which goes beyond the simple evaluation of how much has been spent to promote gender equality. Gender budgeting corresponds to an analysis on how the budget will promote the needs and interests of women and men and how the budget will benefit to women and men. If this analysis reveals an unequal repartition of the budget, it should be then restructured. On the contrary, the gender equality marker will not lead any changes in the budget. Its objective is to assess how much has been spent to gender equality and to make aware and sensitize the planning team to develop programmes and results that advance gender equality.

The mechanisms of the Gender and Rights to monitor the implementation of the gender equality policy throughout UNICEF remains limited, revealing the failure of the

111 Appendix VI: Synthesis Report of the Regional Gender Equality Reviews, p.106.

112 *Initial Guidance Note, Gender Equality Marker, Tracking of resource Allocations and expenditure for Gender Equality Results, 2010, 21p.*

organization to effectively give to the Gender Unit the necessary means to ensure an effective implementation of gender equality.

Section III: The relative institutional weakness of the UNICEF's gender equality structure as a central impediment for an effective fulfillment of the UNICEF's gender equality mandate

Although the limits of some mechanisms developed by UNICEF to promote gender equality have been addressed throughout this thesis, this section will specifically focus on the two major weaknesses of the UNICEF's structure promoting gender equality: the Gender and Rights Unit (A) and the gender focal point system (B). The objective of this section is to highlight the fragility of UNICEF's commitment toward gender equality.

A. The Gender Unit as the smallest gender unit among UN agencies

Although gender equality gained significant support and momentum after the 2008 Gender Evaluation and that UNICEF wants to be a champion in gender equality, the UNICEF gender unit is the smallest gender team among UN agencies¹¹³. Indeed, only two gender specialists permanently work in this unit, considerably limiting the scope of their actions. In addition, although gender equality is considered as one of the two organizational strategies, gender equality is dramatically under-resourced. Furthermore, the gender unit is, as its title mentioned, not a section but a unit within a section, which limits its status and authority. Given the structure of UNICEF is highly decentralized, the gender unit does not have any authority over Regional and Country Offices with regard to their work on gender equality. Last but not least, the organization suffers from a lack of gender expertise either at the country and regional levels¹¹⁴.

The strategy of gender mainstreaming requires to be effectively implemented a strong political commitment. Besides, although the strategy implies that everybody should mainstream gender in its work, it does not mean that nobody should lead and support its implementation. On the contrary, it is necessary that a gender expert team has the authority and means to provide guidance and direction to the overall organization. UNICEF

113 Appendix II: Interview with Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 79.

114 Ibidem, p. 83.

unfortunately operates under the guise that, because gender mainstreaming is everyone business, the gender unit does not need to increase in human capacity. The gender unit does not have therefore sufficient means, either in term of human resources or funding, to effectively translate UNICEF's commitment on gender equality.

B. The Gender Focal Point system as the Achilles' heel of the UNICEF gender equality structure

As the majority of UN agencies, the Gender Focal Point (GFP) system encounters many challenges. However, as this issue was addressed in the 2008 Gender Evaluation, the organization should have address it and even consider it as one of the main priority of its strategic management response. Indeed, without a proper structure to support the small gender unit and to promote gender mainstreaming, UNICEF will not create important organizational changes and will not become a gender equality champion.

UNICEF has not properly addressed the issue in its management response to the 2008 Gender Evaluation. Indeed, GFP capacity was only "strengthen" from 2008 to 2009 by attending at least one expert workshop and one meeting. Furthermore, the issue is almost not addressed in the new gender equality policy, except the fact that their term of references should be created. Last but not least, the Strategic Action plan for 2010-2010 does not plan consequent changes for the gender focal point system¹¹⁵. It only mentions that the GFP system should be gender balanced and that they need clear terms of reference.

At the headquarter level, there is at least one designated GFP for each focus areas¹¹⁶ and one in each section. At the Regional level, a regional gender focal point position has been recently established. Then, at the Country Office level, there is at least one gender focal point. However, different systems exist. In some Country Offices, a committee system has been developed with several GFP. For example, in Bangladesh, it was the Deputy Director that was

115 UNICEF Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender Equality: 2010-2012, 20p

116 The five UNICEF focus areas are: a)HIV/AIDS and children, b)Child survival and development, c)Child Protection, d)Basic education and gender equality, e)Policy advocacy and partnerships.

GFP, and she put in place in the management team, people from each programme area GFP for that programme area¹¹⁷.

One of the most curious facts is that all these GFP do not have any Term of References, which concludes they do not have a description of their function and mission. At the headquarter level, their Term of References were developed but interestingly they were never institutionalized¹¹⁸. Furthermore, the GFP is generally a designated person, sometimes without any gender expertise and authority, who has to carry out its GFP role in addition to its original function. Even if things are changing at the headquarter level, and the GFP were staff with higher level position, at the Country level the GFP are often junior staff, who do not have the authority to hold his/her colleagues accountable to mainstream gender. Finally, annual global meetings are now no longer a regular occurrence.

117 Appendix II: Interview with Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 84.

118 *Ibidem*, p.84.

CONCLUSION

The promotion of gender equality, women's and girl's rights has progressively become one of the core feature of UNICEF's mandate. The UNICEF mission statement indeed declares that "UNICEF aims through its country programmes is to promote the equal rights of women and girls, and to support their equal participation in the political, social, and economic development of their communities"¹¹⁹. UNICEF has recognized, little by little, the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment as a pre-requisite to the achievement of its mandate. The new UNICEF gender equality policy launched in May 2010 reaffirms that the organization works for women's and girl's rights and promote gender equality.

UNICEF has recognized first of all the rights of women in relation to their children, as pregnant and lactating mothers and then as mothers. The use of the term "women" instead of the restrictive term "mother" appeared in the sixties with the recognition of women as individuals in their entire role and not in their unique reproductive role. UNICEF started at that time to implement projects focusing exclusively on women and aiming to promote women's rights. However, the promotion of women's rights by UNICEF has always been subject to discussion and debate and cannot be considered as something granted. Indeed, as Ms. Noreen Khan explains, even if the 1994 Policy made clear that the organization should promote gender equality, women's rights and empowerment, the focus slowly came back to women as mothers in the mid nineties. "All the organization was talking about mothers, mothers and using the word mother. It reduced UNICEF programming on gender equality to women's reproductive role"¹²⁰. In addition, even if the 2010 gender equality policy clarified previously that UNICEF works for women's and girl's rights with using both CRC and CEDAW, these elements were at risk out of being left behind in the reviewing process. It needed a lot of clarifications, debates, and discussions to explain why UNICEF needed to promote women's rights, gender equality and CEDAW along to UNIFEM, UNFPA and the entire UN system¹²¹. The commitment of UNICEF on gender equality and women's empowerment still remains today, after a "long voyage toward gender equality" something

119 E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2, The mission of UNICEF, 22 January 1996.

120 Appendix II: Interview with Noreen Khan, The Gender and Rights Unit, p. 85.

121 Ibidem, p.85.

fragile. Even if the 2008 Gender Evaluation gave a new momentum to gender equality and built up the organization with this regard, a unique and rare chance to definitively anchor gender equality within the organization may have been missed. Indeed, for the first time in UNICEF history, donors and governments attributed to the organization an additional budget to address the challenges revealed by an evaluation. More than 4 million US dollars were indeed given to UNICEF to make up for lost time on gender equality. However, even if numerous actions have been developed, the main and core issues have not been addressed. The commitment of the organization to effectively take significant steps towards gender equality has not come yet. Indeed, UNICEF has a very small gender unit in charge of the promotion of gender equality throughout the entire organization. The gender focal point system, essential to ensure an effective implementation of gender mainstreaming throughout a highly decentralized organization, has not been reformed as it should have been. Moreover, although gender budgeting is one of the major tool of any success of the strategy of gender mainstreaming, the organization has not addressed that issue at all. UNICEF has only launched in July 2010 a gender equality marker system aiming to track expenditures dedicated to gender equality. However this system will not bring fundamental changes in the way budgets are designed to better benefit to women and men, girls and boys. The “long voyage” of the organization toward gender equality is far from being finished, and there is still a long way to go to make UNICEF an organization champion in the promotion of gender equality and women’s and girl’s rights.

Working six months in a professional and English speaking environment was a fruitful experience either from a professional or personal point of view. This work placement enabled me to broaden my conceptual and practical knowledge on gender issues and to gain professional competences, essential for future career prospects.

Thanks to my internship, I have strengthened my expertise on the international institutional framework related to gender equality and the empowerment of women. I have deepened my conceptual and practical knowledge on the global follow-up process of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in 1995, which represent the international agenda on gender equality. I attended the global Beijing +15 conference in New York, after having attended during my previous internship with the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe, the European and regional Beijing +15 conference. Having attended

both the global and a regional Beijing +15 conference, they provided me a broad understanding of the overall process and the respective roles of the different actors before and during conferences, from United Nations agencies, to Member States, and civil society. In addition, working with an UN agency, and especially with the UNICEF's Gender and Rights Unit, has kept me updated about the last negotiations and discussions in relation to gender equality, especially with regard to the current reform of the United Nations architecture on gender equality. Moreover, this internship reinforced not only my conceptual knowledge on gender issues but above all my practical understanding of what gender mainstreaming means at an organizational level and what kind of mechanisms an organization can develop to promote, support, build capacity and monitor the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Besides, my six month experience within UNICEF has built up some of my professional competences such as adapting in a working and English speaking environment or working independently as well as in a team. Last but not least, I have definitely improved my oral, writing and understanding English skills and enhanced my self-confidence in working in an English speaking environment. This can be regarded as one of the strongest asset and result of my internship.

This internship has not only confirmed my willingness to work on gender issues and women's empowerment but also my preferences in the large scope of issues covered with regard to gender equality. I am in fact more interested in issues focusing on gender inequalities in developed countries rather than in developing countries. The issues raised are indeed not the same and I feel more concerned about inequalities faced in developed countries, especially in the workplace, the economic and political spheres. Hence, I would prefer to work at the international level for example for the European Union or at the national level for the gender equality department in the Ministry of Social Affairs. In addition, if I have the opportunity to work for the United Nations, I would favor working in the field rather than doing desk work at the headquarter level where I think that staff is not direct actor of change but more facilitator of it. From a more personal perspective, I would say that this internship has had an important influence in my reflexion about what kind of life I wish. It made me aware about the difficulties or at least impacts of having a career at the international level. Indeed, working for the UN for example, requires one to be mobile and this mobility can be an impediment for personal and family life.

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ACRONYMS LIST

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations Against Women
COs:	Country Offices
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAW	Division on the Advancement of Women
GEM	Gender Equality Marker
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GRaCE	Gender Rights and Civic Engagement
GRU	Gender and Rights Unit
HQ	Headquarter
ICR	Innocenti Research Centre
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues
ROs	Regional Offices
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund / United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund For Women
UN-INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

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Summary: This thesis aims to analyze how UNICEF, an organization originally dedicated exclusively to children's rights, has throughout its history and all of these decades progressively recognized gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women's rights as a cornerstone of its mandate. In addition, this thesis examines to what extent the Gender and Rights Unit ensures the promotion and implementation of the UNICEF's gender equality policy throughout the organization and what kind of mechanisms have been developed at the headquarter level to ensure its operationalization.

Key words: UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund- Gender and Rights Unit – Gender Equality- Gender Mainstreaming - Women's and girls' rights- Gender Policy and mandate- Headquarter- Capacity building- Monitoring- Structure and Organization- International Organization- United Nations.

Résumé: L'enjeu de ce mémoire est d'analyser comment l'UNICEF, une organisation à l'origine exclusivement dédiée aux droits des enfants, a tout au long de son histoire et de toutes ces décennies progressivement reconnu le genre et l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes comme un élément essentiel de son mandat. Par ailleurs, ce mémoire étudie de quelle manière l'unité du genre et des droits assure la promotion et l'application de la politique du genre et de l'égalité de l'UNICEF à travers l'ensemble de l'organisation et quels sont les mécanismes qu'elle a mis en place au niveau du siège pour assurer sa mise en application.

Mots clés: UNICEF- Fond des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance- Unité du genre et des droits- Egalité du genre- Gender Mainstreaming- Intégration transversale de la perspective de genre- Droits des femmes et des filles- Politique du genre et mandat – Siège- Amélioration des capacités- Contrôle- Organisation et structure- Organisation- Nations Unies.