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### Operational activities for development

#### Advancement of women

## Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

### Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to Assembly resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984.

#### *Summary*

The present report provides a review and update of the programmes and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for the year 2002. The report tracks UNIFEM overall progress and highlights concrete results in the implementation of its Strategy and Business Plan (2000-2003) during the year under review. The report concludes with a set of recommendations on how UNIFEM programmes can be further strengthened.

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## I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a review and update of the programmes and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for 2002. The report tracks UNIFEM overall progress and highlights concrete results in the implementation of its Strategy and Business Plan (2000-2003) during the year under review. The report concludes with a set of recommendations, based on a review by the UNIFEM Consultative Committee, on how UNIFEM programmes can be further strengthened.

2. In its third year of implementation, the UNIFEM Strategy and Business Plan continued to operate in a global context, characterized by an increasing number of opportunities and challenges, with major consequences for women's lives. The opportunities presented by continuous global commitments to gender equality, evidenced by the acknowledgement of Governments of the centrality of women's empowerment to all other development priorities, presented key entry points for the organization to support implementation and accountability. At the same time, the uneven benefits from economic globalization, an increase in intra-State and inter-State conflicts and the continuing spread of HIV/AIDS posed significant threats with increasingly distinct gender dimensions. UNIFEM programmes responded to these challenges by striving to build a better understanding of their impact on women's lives and empowering women to play an active role in identifying solutions and taking advantage of new opportunities.

3. In keeping with General Assembly resolution 56/201 of 21 December 2001 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system UNIFEM placed strong emphasis in 2002 on learning and evaluation — engaging in programmatic and thematic assessments to identify valuable lessons and further strengthen its initiatives on the ground. The findings demonstrated, in particular, the continuous need for UNIFEM to advocate for increased implementation and enhanced accountability mechanisms for gender equality. As a result, the Fund has expanded and strengthened its programmes in support of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which now serves as the cornerstone of all UNIFEM rights-based programming, and accountability mechanisms, such as gender-responsive budgets and improved data collection to better track progress towards gender equality.

4. In addition, UNIFEM has increasingly used United Nations coordination mechanisms to influence mainstream processes and promote greater United Nations commitment to gender analysis and gender-responsive actions at the country level. In 2002, UNIFEM provided inputs into 21 common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) exercises and chaired or co-chaired inter-agency thematic groups in 15 programme countries. The United Nations system's strategic collaboration around the Millennium Development Goals, especially, the formulation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal Core Strategy and necessary alignment of poverty reduction strategies with the Goals, also provided new entry points for UNIFEM to demonstrate the centrality of gender equality to both human development and human security processes.

5. The year 2002 was the second of the three-year term of the current members of the UNIFEM Consultative Committee. Members of the Committee provided valuable guidance and advice to the organization and continued to further strengthen the link between their deliberations and recommendations and larger intergovernmental processes. In 2002, the Consultative Committee briefed the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) Executive Board on UNIFEM programmes, highlighting results and advancing recommendations to further strengthen the organization.

## **II. Programme**

### **A. Overview**

6. As defined in its Strategy and Business Plan (2000-2003), the substance of UNIFEM's work focuses on three main objectives: (a) strengthening women's economic security and rights; (b) enhancing women's leadership in governance and peace-building; and (c) promoting women's human rights and eliminating violence against women, including highlighting the gender dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. UNIFEM programming in 2002 not only increasingly reflected the interconnected nature of its three thematic areas, but also benefited from greater cross-regional synergies and focus. Two crucial factors have had a significant impact on the effectiveness of UNIFEM programmes, notably the quality and breadth of its partnerships and the willingness of other United Nations agencies and Governments to upscale UNIFEM innovations.

### **B. Strengthening women's economic security and rights**

7. UNIFEM's work on strengthening women's economic security and rights is designed to respond to the challenges of economic globalization. As globalization influences economic opportunities worldwide, its impact remains uneven, creating both opportunities and risks for different groups. While opportunities have been generated for some local producers and entrepreneurs to reach international markets, for many poor women existing inequalities have been intensified, often translating into the loss of livelihoods, social benefits and labour rights.

8. In response to these trends and opportunities, including action on the Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015, UNIFEM's programme in support of women's economic security and rights achieved significant progress towards the three key results in 2002 set out below:

#### **1. Strengthened institutional, legal and regulatory environment for women's equal ownership and access to economic resources**

9. UNIFEM has been expanding its work on gender-responsive budgets, taking advantage of the strategic opportunities and tools it offers for promoting accountability towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In 20 countries, the programme provides technical support for capacity-building, promotes partnerships among key actors and facilitates learning across initiatives. In 2002, given a strong trend towards decentralization in many countries, UNIFEM

increasingly supported gender budget initiatives at the municipal level, while also continuing national and sectoral budget analyses. In the Andean region, for example, gender budget analyses were completed in municipalities in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. In Ecuador, as a result of a UNIFEM-supported budget exercise, the Municipality of Cuenca has allocated resources for gender equity in the 2003 budget that are 15 times higher than those in the 2001 budget. In Quito, the Mayor made a commitment to increase resource allocations to sectors benefiting women in 2003 and guidelines have been distributed to all municipal departments. UNIFEM is also contributing to better availability of resources to support skill-building and expanded expertise worldwide, through publications, such as *Gender Budget Initiatives: Strategies, Concepts and Experiences*, presentations of lessons and experiences at regional and international meetings and collaboration in sharing knowledge with other agencies, including UNDP, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Development Research Centre and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GTZ).

10. Critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals is also the availability of reliable and gender-sensitive data that can be used to inform situational analysis and the design of policies and programmes. During the reporting period, UNIFEM intensified efforts to build skills, technical capacities and commitments within Governments to develop and collect gender-sensitive statistics. In Cuba, for example, the National Statistics Office, with support from UNIFEM and UNDP, conducted its first national time-use survey. The results show that, when adding up women's total hours of paid and unpaid work, women spend many more hours working than men. The findings, disseminated by the National Statistics Office, are expected to inform future policy formulation. UNIFEM also continued to advocate for new and stronger legislation, policies and programmes in support of women's economic security, focusing on women's right to property, credit, social protection and other economic and social resources. In Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, UNIFEM has been collaborating with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to strengthen social protection systems for home-based workers, supporting mapping surveys and developing draft legislation. In Senegal, a UNIFEM-supported pilot case study will provide guidelines for the protection of women's intellectual property rights in the context of various patent regimes.

## **2. Engendered macroeconomic frameworks and strengthened country capacity to manage globalization and economic transition from the perspective of poor women**

11. In 2002, UNIFEM continued its work on mainstreaming gender perspectives into trade policies and promoting better understanding of the differential impact of trade agreements on women and men. In China, for example, UNIFEM supported research to explore the differential impact that accession to the World Trade Organization may have on women and men in agriculture and industry. Study results will be used to advocate for the integration of a gender and rights approach in the revision of laws and regulations in the World Trade Organization accession. In Africa, UNIFEM, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Commonwealth Secretariat, supported the Economic Community of West African States to develop more gender-equitable trade policies. UNIFEM also facilitated the formation of two regional networks in Africa and Latin America, bringing together gender equality advocates with the aim of integrating gender

perspectives into the preparations and follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development.

**3. Strengthened women's capacity and rights as entrepreneurs, producers and home-based workers**

12. UNIFEM's work on strengthening women's economic capacity focuses on enlarging opportunities within an economic sector or subsector. Access to training and technology, learning to negotiate agreements with potential partners and service providers and understanding national and international markets enables women to improve their products and businesses, making the best use of emerging opportunities. Field-based programmes in 2002 were increasingly designed to enhance women's use and control of information and communications technologies, with support now being provided to initiatives in 15 countries. A regional initiative, "Africans in the Digital Diaspora" has been building linkages with African business leaders to promote an enabling environment for women's access to information and communications technologies. In China, UNIFEM and the All-China Women's Federation co-sponsored the first International Forum on Women's Entrepreneurial Development and a Trade Fair for Women Entrepreneurs. Nearly 600 women executives, entrepreneurs and farmers from China and other countries and regions participated in the discussions, resulting in the conclusion of more than 50 business deals at the two events. In Nigeria, a national forum for women entrepreneurs led to the establishment of a support fund for women entrepreneurs. The Fund, managed by UNIFEM with private sector contributions, will be used to provide women entrepreneurs with better resources on financial management, markets, technology and training opportunities.

**C. Enhancing women's leadership in governance and peace-building**

13. UNIFEM promotes women's leadership to ensure that women have an equal voice in shaping the policies that affect their lives. UNIFEM's work in this area focuses on peace and security, by promoting assistance to women in conflict situations and supporting their participation in peace processes, and on gender justice, by strengthening institutional mechanisms, legislation and policies in support of gender equality. During 2002, UNIFEM's work in these areas achieved the following five significant results:

**1. Strengthened gender focus in information collection and exchange to improve prevention and early warning mechanisms**

14. Mitigating the impact of armed conflict on women requires an understanding of how conflicts affect women and girls differently from men and boys. While field-based programmes are the centrepiece of UNIFEM peace and security initiatives, the organization has also invested significantly in strengthening gender perspectives in information collection and exchanges of experiences. The main focus in 2002 was the completion and launch of *Women, War, and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment of the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-building* (volume I of *Progress of the World's Women 2002*). UNIFEM commissioned this publication as a contribution to the follow-up to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and a companion to the report of the Secretary-General on the subject. Two independent experts undertook 14 missions to document women's

voices and lived experiences as survivors, peace-builders, and aspiring policy makers, in conflict and post-conflict situations. Since the second anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), launches have been held in the European Parliament in Brussels, with United Nations agencies in Geneva, as well as in Africa and Asia. Cooperation between UNIFEM and UNDP is also further developing in this area, gaining particular momentum following a joint workshop in 2002, at which lessons learned from both organizations' gender and post-conflict work was discussed and areas for future collaboration explored.

## **2. Improved protection and assistance for women affected by conflict**

15. Women and girls are often neglected in the delivery of protection and assistance during conflict. In 2002, UNIFEM programmes in this area focused especially on preventing gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. In Sierra Leone, for example, UNIFEM developed a partnership with UNFPA, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to improve protection and knowledge about the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS in post-conflict situations. A UNIFEM adviser, supported with funds from UNAIDS and UNFPA, is providing technical assistance to policy makers and local women's groups. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, UNIFEM advocated the need to address women's psychosocial needs, and assisted in devising a strategy of support to community centres where coaching, training and technical assistance for women can be provided.

## **3. Making women and gender perspectives central to peace processes**

16. UNIFEM supports women's participation in peace-building and helps to leverage the political, financial and technical support needed for these efforts to have an impact on peace processes nationally, regionally and internationally. In the southern Caucasus, UNIFEM's programme for linking national level initiatives to a stronger regional momentum for peace has been recognized as a model. In Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia the project is supporting the formation of women's peace clubs and councils to increase women's voice and leadership in advocating for an end to conflict. In Colombia, a year-long process of consensus-building among the country's five regions and across its diverse women's movement has led to the development of a common agenda that includes proposals for both the pre-negotiation and negotiation stages of the conflict. UNIFEM support to the National Mobilization of Women Against the War has been catalytic in assisting five of the country's most important women's networks to develop a unified voice in calling for peace. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNIFEM continued to support the work of the women's caucus to influence the peace negotiations. UNIFEM collaborated closely with the facilitator's office to support the participation of 67 women delegates and experts to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and facilitated a consultation meeting in Kinshasa.

## **4. Expanded support for enhancing gender equality and women's rights in post-conflict peace-building**

17. Recognizing that the opportunities to engender policies and laws in post-conflict situations are significant, UNIFEM's work in Afghanistan, Kosovo and Timor-Leste is building on and generating new insights about effective ways of promoting women's leadership and gender mainstreaming in post-conflict situations.

In Afghanistan, UNIFEM's work in 2002 focused on supporting civil society organizations to advocate for gender justice and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. To enhance the Ministry's outreach to women in rural areas, UNIFEM has been supporting the establishment of women's centres in eight provinces. UNIFEM's support to building gender equality in Kosovo has led to greater collaboration between the Government, parliamentarians, civil society and bilateral partners in developing a plan of action for women's empowerment. At the municipal level, UNIFEM's work, supported by the efforts of other gender equality advocates, contributed to the Municipal Assembly in Prizren adopting legislation exempting women heads of households (many of them war widows) from paying property taxes. Likewise in Prizren, the local government now pays for its female employees to enrol their children in kindergarten.

**5. Strengthened gender focus in electoral, constitutional, legislative and judicial processes**

18. UNIFEM-supported efforts in 2002 also contributed to strengthening gender justice in electoral, constitutional, legislative and judicial processes in many countries. UNIFEM is building women's capacities as candidates and voters, judges and lawyers and in national women's machineries to promote gender equality legislation. Increases in women's political representation resulted from support provided by UNIFEM and other donors to women candidates in Burundi, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Morocco. In Morocco, for example, UNIFEM support to the women's movements contributed to the adoption of a quota for women, resulting in an increase from 2 to 35 women parliamentarians in the new parliament. UNIFEM also supported the launch of a regional Southern African Development Community Women's Parliamentary Caucus in Angola, aimed at transforming national parliaments and dismantling structural barriers and institutional practices that make it difficult for women parliamentarians to become effective legislators.

**D. Promoting women's human rights and eliminating violence against women, including by highlighting the gender dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic**

19. Women's human rights are central to all UNIFEM programmes and are mainstreamed into all of its subgoals. At the same time, a number of programmes focus specifically on building capacity, awareness and compliance with globally agreed norms and standards to advance women's human rights. In 2002, UNIFEM noted progress towards three key results, as set out below:

**1. Expanded capacity to eliminate violence against women and girls by investing in prevention, protection and advocacy strategies**

20. UNIFEM links innovative efforts to end violence against women to opportunities to replicate and scale up successful strategies. UNIFEM programmes in 2002 focused on strengthening integrated responses to violence against women through better research and data on the causes and prevalence of violence, building capacities to formulate and implement effective legislation and policies, strengthening regional-level action and learning and building awareness of policy



makers and the public about the urgency of ending this pandemic. In India, UNIFEM, in collaboration with Zonta International, published a series of resource directories to improve networking and access to services for women victims of violence; by the first quarter of 2003, the project will have mapped support services for violence survivors in 12 states. In Ecuador, UNIFEM is working with the national women's machinery, el Consejo Nacional de las Mujeres (CONAMU) to support the development of a Provincial Plan on Violence against Women, spearheaded by the Municipality of Guayaquil and is also contributing to the formulation of a national plan on ending violence against women. An inter-institutional committee has been formed to develop the plan, consisting of the Mayor, a Councilwoman, UNIFEM, UNFPA, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Oxfam and CONAMU. In addition to UNIFEM-executed programmes, UNIFEM also manages an Inter-agency Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995 in 1996. The Trust Fund generates lessons and good practices that inform larger programmes of UNIFEM and its partners at the national, regional and global level. The Trust Fund has awarded US\$ 7.8 million in grants to 147 initiatives in over 73 countries. The seventh grant-making cycle of the Trust Fund, in 2002, provided slightly over \$1 million to 18 initiatives in 22 countries. UNIFEM reviewed more than 267 proposals with requests of over \$15.5 million. Joining Finland, Italy and Japan as donors to the Trust Fund in 2002, the Government of Germany has contributed funds to a regional funding mechanism, which will build capacities of Governments and women's organizations in four countries in Central Asia to coordinate efforts to address violence against women.

## **2. Increased effectiveness at the country level in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

21. The Convention serves as the cornerstone of all UNIFEM rights-based programming. While the Convention and other human rights instruments are increasingly being integrated into all thematic areas, UNIFEM has placed special emphasis on programming that supports its implementation. In Brazil, a national campaign, supported by UNIFEM and other donors, contributed to creating an enabling environment for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention. UNIFEM programmes in 2002 also focused on integrating the Convention's principles into domestic legislation and translating the Convention into local cultural contexts. In Kazakhstan, UNIFEM supported the development of a national action plan to implement the observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and in Kenya, UNIFEM support contributed to a new draft constitution that clearly articulates women's human rights.

## **3. Better understanding of the gender and human rights dimensions of HIV/AIDS**

22. In 2002, UNIFEM programming on HIV/AIDS further evolved from a concentration on piloting and capacity-building to a focus on policies and advocacy. With support from the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security and other bilateral and multilateral donors, UNIFEM launched programmes in 10 countries to strengthen the capacities of national AIDS councils to programme from a gender and human rights perspective. The programmes also support the review of legislation and policies to identify the factors that assist or prevent women's equal access to

treatment and care. UNIFEM has also been building new partnerships with networks of HIV positive women in India and Zimbabwe, with youth advocates in the Caribbean, southern Africa and Senegal, and with faith-based networks in Kenya and Nigeria. Moreover, UNIFEM deepened and expanded partnerships within and outside the United Nations system. Building on their longstanding collaboration, UNIFEM and UNAIDS launched in 2002 the first electronic portal on gender and HIV/AIDS. UNIFEM and ILO have been collaborating on a cross-regional project to address the unpaid care work performed by women coping with HIV/AIDS. In 2002, UNIFEM participated in 13 HIV/AIDS inter-agency thematic groups in the field, advocating for a stronger gender dimension in their work.

**E. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations system to support the empowerment of women and gender-mainstreaming in policies and programmes**

23. UNIFEM's work in support of gender equality in the United Nations system has been influenced by a number of factors: the Secretary-General's reform agenda and update, emphasizing increased coordination and stronger action on human rights; the coalescing of the United Nations system and Member States around coordination mechanisms, including the Millennium Development Goals, common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, poverty reduction strategy papers, and others; and lessons learned from UNIFEM pilots in support of gender-mainstreaming processes in United Nations coordination mechanisms. In 2002, UNIFEM catalytic support to gender equality and women's rights initiatives in the United Nations system achieved three results, as follows:

**1. Increased and more focused support to the implementation of the United Nations reform agenda**

24. In its decision 2002/20 adopted on 27 September 2002, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board reaffirmed the UNIFEM mandate to support the United Nations system and called upon the organization to promote gender mainstreaming throughout the operational activities of the United Nations system, in the context of the resident coordinator system and in particular within the common country assessment and the national poverty alleviation strategies, including the poverty reduction strategy papers and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes. During the reporting period, UNIFEM provided inputs into 21 common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework exercises, including in four of the five roll-out countries for the mechanism. In the Philippines, for example, the gender theme group, backstopped by UNIFEM, conducted an assessment of the gender dimensions of the country's key development challenges (for the common country assessment) and prepared a subsequent strategy paper to guide the United Nations country team during the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process. UNIFEM also supported efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into other coordinated planning efforts, including the Joint Action Recovery Programme for Somalia, the United Nations system's Humanitarian Action Plan for Colombia and the poverty reduction strategies in Niger and Senegal. In addition, UNIFEM, as chair of the gender task force on common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) for the Inter-Agency Network on Women

and Gender Equality, coordinated an assessment of 15 CCA/UNDAF exercises and joined in a UNICEF-led assessment of CCA/UNDAF initiatives in West Africa. The assessments have resulted in a concrete set of recommendations for strengthening gender mainstreaming in the CCA/UNDAF processes.

25. UNIFEM has also been promoting the use of inter-agency thematic groups on gender as key mechanisms for strengthening gender mainstreaming in United Nations system initiatives. The 2002 resident coordinator annual reports indicated that there were 47 gender theme groups. UNIFEM chaired or co-chaired thematic groups in 15 countries and supported efforts to strengthen theme groups in many other countries. In Nigeria, for example, UNIFEM facilitated the development of gender-sensitive monitoring indicators for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework to allow the United Nations country team to track progress towards gender equality in priority areas of United Nations support in the country. In Zimbabwe, UNIFEM led the preparation of a gender issues paper as part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework joint mid-term review. At the global level, UNIFEM and UNDP are planning to undertake a scan of gender theme groups in 2003 to collect good practices and develop a capacity-building strategy.

## **2. New agreements and deepening collaboration to strengthen gender equality with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes**

26. UNIFEM has also been strengthening strategic collaboration with key United Nations partners in areas of common concern. Over the past year, UNIFEM and UNDP have further deepened their unique relationship — building on their distinct mandates and identities — to support local, national, regional and global efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. UNIFEM collaboration with UNDP has increased and grown in effectiveness, spurred by the Fund's ability to execute projects for UNDP and strong support from the UNDP Administrator. In 2002, UNIFEM executed 14 projects for UNDP (4 of which were signed in 2002) and began work on developing execution arrangements for an additional 6 projects. In addition to strengthening its partnership with UNDP, UNIFEM also continued to develop closer institutional relationships with other United Nations agencies. During the past year, UNIFEM signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Fund for Agricultural Development to mainstream gender dimensions into the West African Rural Development Hub. Collaboration with UNFPA has also been expanding in all regions, especially in ending violence against women, strengthening women's national machineries, mainstreaming gender into HIV/AIDS strategies and bringing a gender dimension to peace and security initiatives. Moreover, UNIFEM's strong partnerships with UNAIDS continues to generate innovative field-based programmes, including an inter-agency programme with the Government of India to address the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. Work with ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund has also been expanding, especially related to HIV/AIDS strategies and new partnerships have been built with UNHCR in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Ecuador.

## **3. Stronger linkages between UNIFEM's operational activities and intergovernmental processes**

27. UNIFEM worked closely with other United Nations agencies to ensure visibility and inclusion of gender and women's rights issues in intergovernmental arenas throughout 2002. As in previous years, the Commission on the Status of

Women provided an important space for UNIFEM to build stronger linkages between its programmes (and constituencies) in the field and normative deliberations at headquarters. UNIFEM organized a series of briefings for United Nations agencies and Government delegations on gender and macroeconomics, specifically focused on the gender implications of fiscal and monetary policies and gender dimensions of trade negotiations. UNIFEM also supported the participation of non-governmental organizations from all regions at meetings of the Commission, and hosted a meeting of the African Women's Caucus enabling the group to meet with and dialogue with United Nations agencies gender focal points. Throughout 2002, UNIFEM also further strengthened its interaction with the Security Council. UNIFEM opportunities to engage in high-level advocacy, using the independent experts' assessment as the clarion call for attention to women's interests and contributions in war and post-conflict countries, are formidable. UNIFEM has developed an ambitious strategy, including a series of book launches, to ensure that the insights and recommendations contained in the publication reach a wide audience. In July 2002, the Executive Director of UNIFEM addressed the Security Council during an open debate on women, peace and security calling upon the Council to systematically recognize women, peace and security as a regular issue of concern in its deliberations (see S/PV.4589 and Corr.1).

**F. Strengthening the Fund's effectiveness by incorporating the principles of a learning organization and building strategic partnerships**

28. UNIFEM believes that in a learning organization, staff members need to be provided with the opportunities and skills to continually expand their capacities to produce the results embodied in the organization's mission and mandate. In 2002, UNIFEM initiated a wide range of internal and external assessment and review processes to enhance innovation and learning. At the same time, the organization expanded the breadth of its partnerships and capacity-building opportunities in order to deepen understanding and know-how towards achieving gender equality. In 2002, UNIFEM achieved the following key results:

**1. Improved communication strategies to raise awareness of the "how-to" of achieving women's rights and gender equality**

29. In 2002, UNIFEM completed work on a two-volume set of its biennial flagship publication entitled *Progress of the World's Women*. Volume 1 (entitled *Women, War and Peace*) presents an independent experts' assessment of the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in peace-building, and volume 2 (entitled *Progress of the World's Women 2002*) provides an update of data and statistics on commitments to gender equality. The books serve as key advocacy tools to support UNIFEM programming and the programmes of partners. They capture good practices, achievements, challenges and gaps in particular areas of importance to women's lives. UNIFEM has also been increasingly using audio-visual and electronic resources to draw attention to progress made and challenges faced in achieving gender equality and to provide access to knowledge in a variety of themes. In 2002, UNIFEM re-launched the <end-violence> electronic working group, with the participation of over 2,000 activists and advocates, and supported a Gender-AIDS electronic forum that attracted over 2,000 members to strategize on

mainstreaming gender perspectives into the fourteenth International AIDS Conference held in Barcelona in July 2002. The UNIFEM web site received approximately 70,000 unique users monthly in 2002, an increase of about 20 per cent since 2001.

## **2. Strengthened strategic partnerships that underpin the transmission of knowledge to widening constituencies**

30. Strategic partnerships are at the very core of UNIFEM efforts to ensure that people understand why gender equality is central to development and how they can join in efforts to achieve it. Central among these partnerships to increase learning are innovative partnerships with the media. In 2002, UNIFEM continued to support regional and global media and advocacy efforts, including campaigns on ending violence against women in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Latin America, and media advocacy activities on gender and HIV/AIDS in West Africa and the Caribbean. A campaign to end violence against women in the Commonwealth of Independent States resulted in more than 1,000 media reports, with an estimated reach of 250 million people. A training workshop for journalists on gender aspects of HIV/AIDS held in Dakar brought together 120 media representatives from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal and Togo. In Kazakhstan, UNIFEM created an award for young journalists reporting on gender issues. The winner is awarded a scholarship for a master course in journalism at a reputable TV company in Almaty.

## **3. Strengthened capacity and systems to support innovation and learning**

31. Continuing from 2001, UNIFEM paid special attention to closely linking reporting, evaluations and assessments to learning, strategic planning and programme development. In preparation for its next Strategy and Business Plan, UNIFEM undertook 15 evaluations, assessments and mid-term reviews during 2002, including a series of regional scans on ending violence against women, a desk review of work on women's leadership and political empowerment and a learning-oriented assessment focused on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in post-conflict situations. UNIFEM also coordinated a multi-stakeholder assessment of women's empowerment in post-conflict situations, with a particular focus on Rwanda. The learning-oriented assessment brought together six bilateral donors, national Government and civil society partners and UNDP to identify lessons for effective UNIFEM strategies and better coordination of gender equality initiatives in post-conflict situations. In addition, UNIFEM established an Innovation and Learning Unit and an internal knowledge-sharing strategy to better support staff learning. The strategy promotes more tactical use of the UNIFEM Intranet, electronic communications and interregional exchanges. Since the start of its Strategy and Business Plan, UNIFEM has more systematically been tracking the extent to which its initiatives generate replication and upscaling. In 2002, the Fund was able to identify 18 examples in which Governments, civil society organizations and/or United Nations agencies replicated or upscaled UNIFEM-supported innovations. In addition, UNIFEM resources, such as *Picturing a Life Free of Violence*, which provides access to visual resources on ending violence against women, have been reproduced and adapted by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

### **III. Financial management**

32. The UNIFEM Strategy and Business Plan (2000-2003) established ambitious targets for the organization to reach \$40 million in total resources by the end of 2003. Over the last three years, the Fund has seen an increase in financial contributions, growing from \$26.6 million in 2000 to \$34.6 million in 2002. Resource growth has resulted from multi-year cost-sharing contributions to thematic programmes, particularly on gender budgets, peace and security initiatives and HIV/AIDS. However, while this has enabled the organization to increase the scope and breadth of its initiatives, the relative stagnation in core resources — at approximately \$20 million annually — creates pressure on its infrastructure and capacity to respond to unanticipated opportunities, including increasing demand from Governments, women's organizations and United Nations partners.

33. The UNIFEM strategy to expand and diversify its resource base has focused on (a) strengthening and expanding partnerships with bilateral donors around areas of common concern; (b) leveraging funds for gender equality and women's rights through new partnerships with multilateral agencies; and (c) exploring opportunities to develop partnerships with socially responsible private sector entities. While achievements have been noted in all of these areas — although not as much progress in the latter as hoped — a more intensive push and broader community of support will be needed to attract necessary resources.

34. In 2002, contributions from bilateral donors accounted for approximately 88 per cent of the UNIFEM resource base, down from 92 per cent in 2001. Contributions from its top three donors — the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands — increased between 2000 and 2002, owing in part to commitments to support UNIFEM's work in Afghanistan. In all, 40 Governments contributed to UNIFEM in 2002. Partnerships with United Nations agencies, especially UNAIDS, UNDP and UNFPA, have also contributed to an increase in resources in 2002.

35. UNIFEM has also been building stronger partnerships with foundations and socially responsible private sector companies. Pledges in 2002 increased to an all-time high of \$3 million, due primarily to an arrangement with the United Nations Foundation to match donor contributions. Through the Executive Director's participation in the Global Peace Initiative, a group of women from the private sector and civil society organizations formed a Global Women's Business Council to promote women's entrepreneurship and peace. The Council is supporting UNIFEM to raise resources for a Women's Business Centre in Afghanistan and to connect Rwandan women basket makers — who are survivors of the genocide — to markets in the United States of America. While small steps have been taken and constructive partnerships have developed, UNIFEM recognizes the importance of further expanding efforts to collaborate more closely with private sector partners. In 2002, UNIFEM further expanded support to its network of national committees. The majority of these committees signed a new recognition agreement in 2002, whereby they were called upon to increase membership and resource mobilization efforts to reach a higher level of annual contributions. Through a grant from the Swiss Agency for International Development Cooperation, UNIFEM will continue to assist its national committees in 2003 in developing strategic plans to strengthen their organizational structures.

## IV. Recommendations

36. The UNIFEM Consultative Committee, which is comprised of five Member States (Croatia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Namibia and the Netherlands) appointed by the President of the General Assembly, provides key recommendations to the organization each year. Recommendations of the forty-third session of the Committee included the following:

- The Consultative Committee encouraged UNIFEM to continue its important work in the field of peace and security by ensuring follow-up to the recommendations contained in the independent experts' assessment and the report of the Secretary-General. To this effect, the Committee recommended that UNIFEM collaborate with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs to devise a joint strategy on how implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) can be guaranteed.
- The Consultative Committee concluded that, given UNIFEM's increasing involvement and expertise in HIV/AIDS and post-conflict crises, among others, a wider interpretation of the violence against women focus appears warranted. In this regard, the Committee invited UNIFEM to continue to undertake innovative and catalytic activities in these fields, and for this purpose, to consider expanding the scope of the existing Trust Fund on Violence against Women.
- The Consultative Committee took note of General Assembly resolution 57/276 of 20 December 2002 related to the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and, in that regard, invited UNIFEM to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action into its programme of work.
- The Consultative Committee recommended that UNIFEM continue to foster and build strategic partnerships, both within and outside the United Nations system, so as to broaden its audience and ultimate impact, both at field and headquarters levels. Such partnerships should contribute to sufficient attention to gender equality and women's rights issues within Millennium Development Goals, poverty reduction strategy papers and common country assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.
- The Consultative Committee strongly encouraged UNIFEM to strengthen its work in tracking progress on the gender dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals in close collaboration with UNDP, the official scorekeeper for the Goals, and encouraged the Administrator to involve UNIFEM in the areas of its comparative advantage.
- The Consultative Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on reform an outstanding opportunity for UNIFEM to consolidate its role as a catalyst in order to ensure gender equality through gender mainstreaming in the United Nations overall system of development cooperation. The Committee encouraged UNIFEM to keep apprised of and

involved in reform discussions, and likewise recommended that UNIFEM's view be solicited and taken on board in these discussions.

- The Consultative Committee welcomed UNIFEM's work in collaboration with UNDP on mapping gender expertise in the United Nations system. UNIFEM was invited to elaborate on the qualitative aspects of the scan in addition to the quantitative aspects, perhaps with partners in evaluation, and to share its findings with the United Nations system, as well as with the Development Assistance Committee working party, so as to bring together expertise within the United Nations system to better understand good practices and challenges in achieving gender equality. The Committee encouraged United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to cooperate in this venture and to enhance the dialogue in gender thematic working groups.
  - The Consultative Committee recommended that UNIFEM develop creative and cost-effective ways to expand and improve its use of media and communications, including information technologies, on the understanding that communication and dissemination in a low-technology environment is equally important as the use of high-technology avenues.
  - The Consultative Committee appreciated the distribution of resources for new projects as proposed in the UNIFEM finance report and endorsed the focus on Africa.
  - The Consultative Committee strongly encouraged donors to consider devoting a greater share of their contributions to the UNIFEM core budget, and to adopt multi-year funding frameworks. This would contribute to predictability and thus, to stability. Growth should be achieved first and foremost through effectiveness. The Committee appreciated UNIFEM's performance in this regard and encouraged UNIFEM to maintain its course.
  - The Consultative Committee encouraged UNIFEM to further explore the possibilities of private sector funding for some of its activities, including contributions from foundations.
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