GENDER MAINSTREAMING:
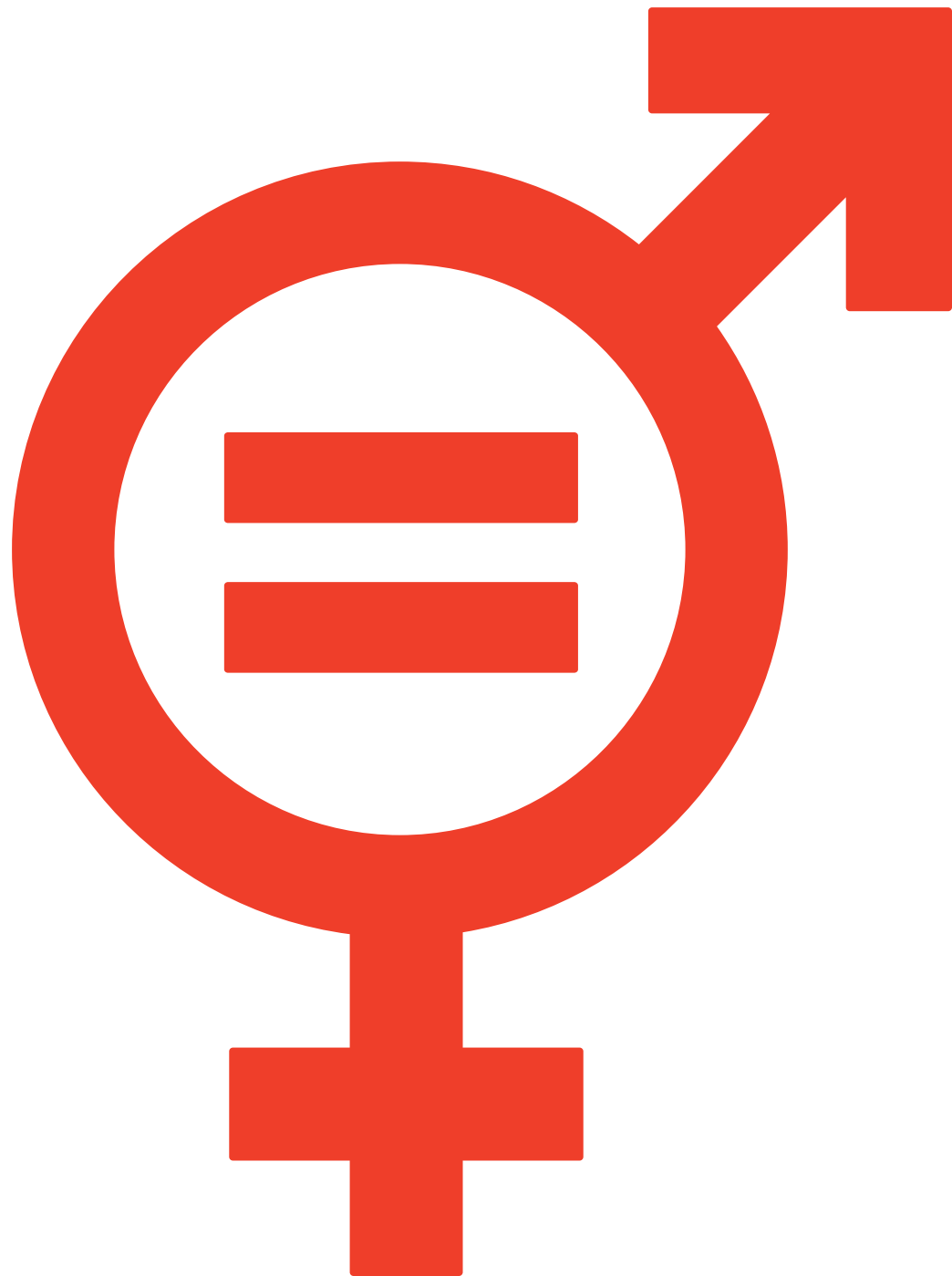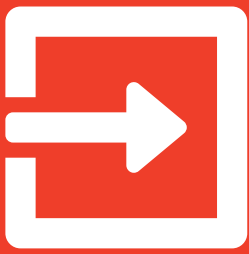
A GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY & THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Gender mainstreaming is the inter-governmentally-agreed, global strategy for achieving the goal of gender equality.

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 established gender mainstreaming as the global strategy for promoting gender equality.[1] The outcome document of this Conference, the Beijing Platform for Action, identified twelve critical areas of concern for urgent action to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men. In each of these areas of concern, the Beijing Platform for Action calls on governments and other actors to "promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.[2]

Accordingly, in 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, in their agreed conclusions 1997/2, defined gender mainstreaming as:

> *"...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality... Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or gender focal points."*

Since then, several United Nations inter-governmental resolutions, mandates and decisions have reaffirmed the commitment to gender mainstreaming, and the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. These include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[3] the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[4] and the Paris Agreement.[5]

Gender mainstreaming remains widely accepted as the most practical means to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. It moves gender equality and the empowerment of women from the margins to the mainstream of decision-making, integrating gender perspectives into all policies, programmes, functions and structures of an institution.

Gender mainstreaming thus propels progress towards the ultimate goal of attaining gender equality. It transforms society positively through the elimination of discriminatory laws, norms and practices that limit women's and girls' voices, choices, and opportunities and impede them from achieving their full potential.

Why is gender mainstreaming still relevant?

Women **EARN 23 PER CENT LESS** than men.[6]

Women's (aged 25-54) **LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE** is **63 PER CENT** compared to 94 per cent for men.[7]

Women spend approximately **2.5 TIMES** more time on **UNPAID CARE** and **DOMESTIC WORK** than men.[8]

Only **24 PER CENT** of all **NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS** were women as of February 2019, a slow increase from 11.3 per cent in 1995.[9]

As of June 2019, only **11 WOMEN** are serving as **HEAD OF STATE** and **12** are serving as **HEAD OF GOVERNMENT.**[10]

It is estimated that **35 PER CENT** of women have experienced either **PHYSICAL** and/or **SEXUAL** intimate partner **VIOLENCE** or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives.[11]

49 COUNTRIES still lack laws protecting women from **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.**[12]

There are **650 MILLION WOMEN AND GIRLS** in the world today who were **MARRIED BEFORE THE AGE OF 18.**[13]

At least **200 MILLION GIRLS AND WOMEN** worldwide have undergone some form of **FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION.**[14]

Between 1990 and 2017, women constituted only **2 PER CENT** of **MEDIATORS, 8 PER CENT** of **NEGOTIATORS,** and **5 PER CENT** of **WITNESSES** and **SIGNATORIES** in all major **PEACE PROCESSES.**[15]

Approaches to Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is an approach to both programming and institutional change in support of the implementation of global commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment.[16] Implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy, therefore, requires systematic integration of gender perspectives in policies, programmes and thematic issues.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT THE PROGRAMMATIC LEVEL	GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT THE THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL
☐ Gender Analysis ☐ Programme Design ☐ Human and Financial Resource Allocation ☐ Implementation ☐ Monitoring and Evaluation	☐ Establish institutional arrangements to support gender mainstreaming such as gender units and gender focal points systems ☐ Allocate financial and human resources to support gender mainstreaming efforts ☐ Implement accountability mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality

At a **programmatic level**, gender mainstreaming may be applied throughout the programme cycle following a sequence of steps: 1. Gender Analysis, 2. Programme Design, 3. Resource Allocation, 4. Implementation and 5. Monitoring and Evaluation.[17]

Gender Mainstreaming Throughout the Programme Cycle

STEP 1: Gender Analysis

☐ Gather evidence through gender analysis of the context. Identify if, how and why issues affect women and men differently and unequally within a particular context or development sector, and what options exist to address them.

STEP 2: Programme Design

☐ Use the findings of the gender analysis to inform programme design. Programme design includes the selection of priority issues, target groups and coverage, and their integration in terms of programme results, indicators and intervention modalities.

STEP 3: Resource Allocation

☐ Ensure the allocation of adequate resources to effectively address gender equality considerations in the programme cycle.

STEP 4: Programme Implementation

☐ Foster multisectoral and multidisciplinary partnerships, comprised of a range of stakeholders, including women's organizations for programme implementation.

STEP 5: Monitoring and Evaluation

☐ Utilize effective monitoring and evaluation to build the evidence base for strategic decisions related to gender equality, enable better development planning and hold institutions accountable for their commitments on gender equality.
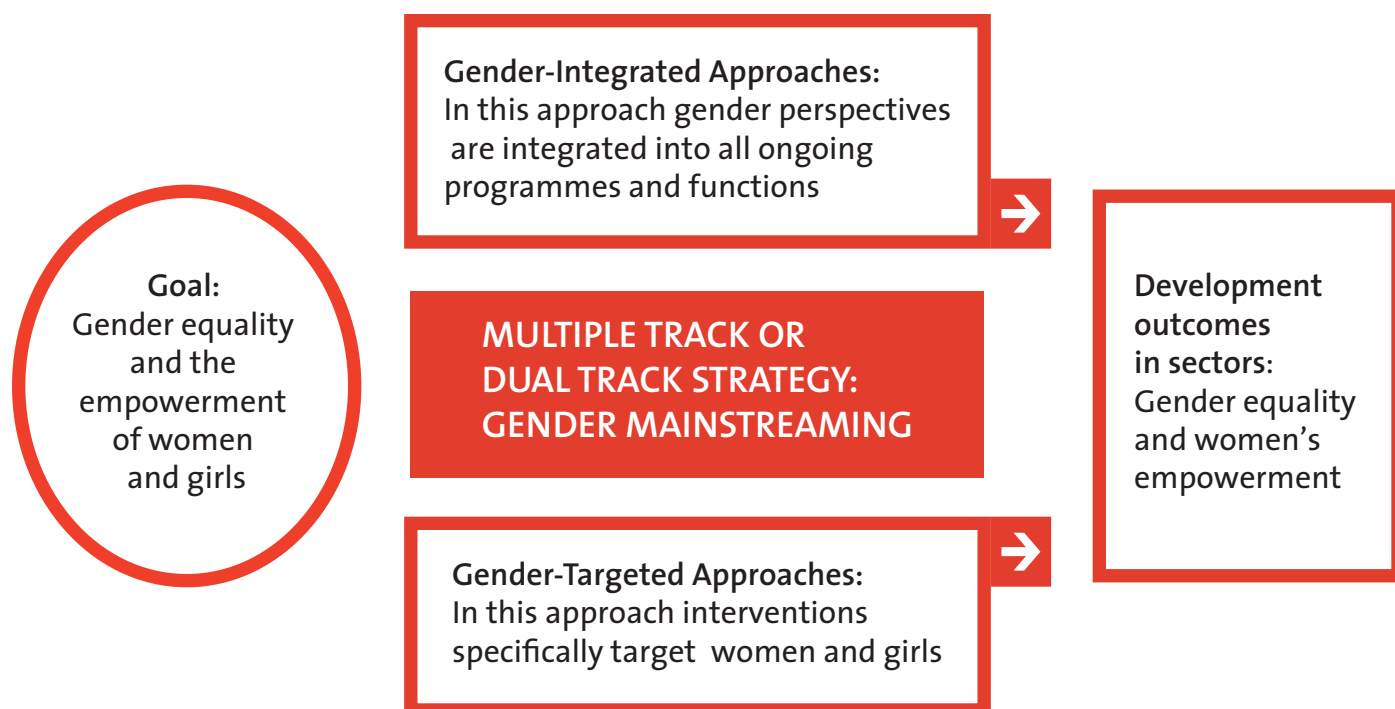
Adapted from UN Women Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming (2014).

In addition to undertaking the above mentioned sequence of steps when designing interventions, widespread development practice has established that a multiple-track strategy for gender mainstreaming has greater potential for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.[19] A majority of development organizations have adopted a multiple-track approach, often called twin-track or dual-track, to implement gender mainstreaming.[20] The multiple-track approach includes combining gender-targeted interventions for specific social groups, organizations and/or processes with gender integrated strategies across the substantive work of all priority sectors.

Goal:
Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Gender-Integrated Approaches:
In this approach gender perspectives are integrated into all ongoing programmes and functions →

MULTIPLE TRACK OR DUAL TRACK STRATEGY: GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender-Targeted Approaches:
In this approach interventions specifically target women and girls →

Development outcomes in sectors: Gender equality and women's empowerment

Adapted from UN Women Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming (2014).

Furthermore, multiple track gender mainstreaming strategies may include a combination of the following interventions:

Gender targeted interventions		Gender integrated interventions
Address the specific needs and circumstances of diverse population groups, geographical areas and/or organizations (such as civil society and community-based women's groups)	⇄	Aimed at changing or shaping existing mainstream policies, sector initiatives and government systems
Direct interventions	⇄	**Indirect interventions**
Include service provision, subsidies, grass-roots advocacy and large-scale social mobilization on a specific theme		Include evidence-gathering, research and analytical work, policy dialogue, institution-building, coalition-building, gender-responsive budgeting initiatives, capacity development, and/or organizational reforms
Short-term measures	⇄	**Long-term measures**
Progressive, transitional and/or preparatory measures such as media campaigns		Systemic changes; behaviour and social change followed by social norms transformation
Government measures	⇄	**Sector-specific measures**
New legislation, policies, data production initiatives or allocations in national budgets		Interventions within a particular sector such as the health sector, security sector, transport, etc
Institutional level	⇄	**Programmatic/thematic level**
At an institutional level, there has been a significant increase in commitment to gender mainstreaming with established institutional arrangements, such as national machineries for gender equality, gender units and gender focal point systems.		At a programmatic level, interventions embrace complexity, intersectionality and multiple discriminations, a diversity of areas and frontier issues

TRANSFORMATIVE GENDER RESULTS

Changes in norms, cultural values, power structures, and the roots of inequalities and discrimination

Adapted from UN Women Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming (2014).

Additional Resources

United Nations, 2002. Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. **Gender Mainstreaming: an overview.** Accessible online at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf

United Nations, 2017. **System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.** Accessible on: https://www.un.int/sites/www.un.int/files/Permanent%20Missions/delegate/17-00102b_gender_strategy_report_13_sept_2017.pdf

United Nations Development Group, 2018. **UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard: 2018 Framework and Technical Guidance.** Accessible online at: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/UNCT-SWAP_Gender-report_Web.pdf

United Nations Development Group, 2018. **Resource Book for Mainstreaming Gender in UN Common Country Programming.** Accessible online at: https://undg.org/document/resource-book-for-mainstreaming-gender-in-un-common-programming-at-the-country-level/

UN Women, 2014. **Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming.** Guidance Note. Accessible online at: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2014/gendermainstreaming-issuesbrief-en%20pdf.pdf?vs=747

UN Women, 2018. **UN-SWAP 2.0: Accountability Framework for Mainstreaming Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in United Nations Entities: Framework & Technical Guidance.** Accessible online at: http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/how%20we%20work/unsystemcoordination/un-swap/un-swap-2-framework-and-technical-guidance-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406

For more information on UN-SWAP, please see: https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability

Endnotes

[1] UN Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Beijing +5 Political Declaration and Outcome, (New York, 2015). Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration

[2] United Nations, Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Gender Mainstreaming: an overview (New York, 2002). Available at: https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf

[3] For more information, please see: https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

[4] For more information please see: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

[5] For more information, please see: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

[6] UN Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (New York, 2018). Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018

[7] UN Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (New York, 2018). Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018

[8] ILO, *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017* (Geneva, 2017).

[9] For more information, please see: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures

[10] For more information, please see: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures

[11] World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council, *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*, (Geneva, 2013). Available at: http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/, p.2.

[12] For more information, please see: http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-5-gender-equality

[13] For more information, please see: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures

[14] For more information, please see: https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures

[15] For more information, please see: http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures
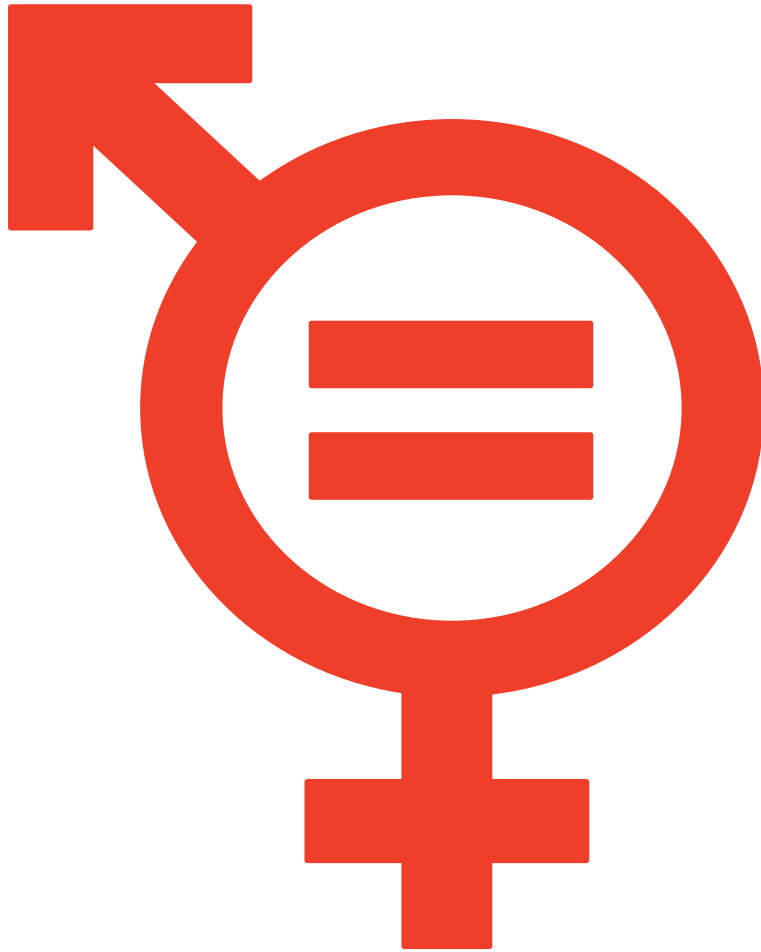
[16] United Nations, Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: An assessment of Gender Mainstreaming in UN Operational Activities for Development (2012)

[17] UN Women Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming (2014). Available at: https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/02/gender-mainstreaming-issues

[18] The most commonly used gender frameworks include The Harvard Analytical Framework, the Gender Planning Framework, the Social Relations Framework, the Women's Empowerment Framework.

[19] UN Women Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming (2014). Available at: https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/02/gender-mainstreaming-issues

[20] Ibid.

UN WOMEN