



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretary General's Annual Evaluation Report
on the Implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan
for the Promotion of Gender Equality

Executive Summary

September 2009

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Introduction

Since the last Secretary General's report, OSCE structures have continued to make progress in mainstreaming gender issues within recruitment and in programmes and activities, as well as in supporting participating States to promote women's rights in certain priority areas. The balance between men and women at the management level has shown improvement. While in the past, mainstreaming of gender issues in field operations has often been limited to efforts to include women among project staff or beneficiaries, as was the case last year, several field operations have undertaken significant gender analysis and thematic gender mainstreaming this year. The integration of gender issues in police work is an outstanding example from this past year, as well as other projects that address the priority areas as established in the Action Plan.

Findings

1. From May 2008 to May 2009, a total of 108 staff members were trained on gender mainstreaming in the project cycle, another 214 benefited from introductory sessions.
2. Five deputy Heads of Mission were appointed as gender focal points, showing increased involvement of and commitment by senior management to the implementation of the Action Plan.
3. Efforts to ensure a gender-sensitive professional working environment in the Organization have continued, including through the use of mediation focal points and exit interviews with staff leaving the Secretariat.
4. A pilot project to introduce flexible working arrangements in the Secretariat is in place. The majority of field operations are not yet offering a policy with flexibility for staff to better balance private and professional life.
5. Women now account for 45 per cent of all OSCE professionals¹ (excluding managers). In management positions², the percentage of women has increased from 19 per cent last year to 24 per cent in May 2009. Since the approval of the Gender Action Plan the proportion of women in professional positions has increased by two per cent per year, while the percentage of female managers has advanced more slowly and with some fluctuations.
6. Thirty-four percent of all nominations by participating States concerned women. This represents a six per cent decrease from last year's reporting period and a departure from the positive trend observed in female nominations over the last years (30 per cent in 2004, 34 in 2005, 37 in 2006 and 40 percent between January 2007 and May 2008). For management positions, the percentage of female nominations has remained at 25 per cent, similar to the previous year. As in previous years, the fields of military and police exhibit severe under-representation of women.
7. During this reporting period, however, the participating States have consistently increased their nominations of women for professional positions in the Secretariat and Institutions (to 57 per cent between May 2008 and May 2009). Women currently represent only 34 per cent of the seconded staff in the Secretariat and institutions.
8. An increase has been observed in the number of female professionals applying to vacant P1 to P4 positions, seven per cent more in comparison to last year's reporting period. However, there is still considerable loss of female candidates in the recruitment process as compared to males. While female and male candidates represent over 40 per cent and almost 60 per cent respectively in the application process, men represent two-thirds of those hired for employment. Women's applications for P5 and above positions remain low with only 21 per cent of total applications.

¹ Including national professionals, P1 to P4 and S1 and S2 levels.

² Including P5 and above and higher S.

9. For the first time, data have been provided about the percentage of men and women participating in recruitment panels. Panels recruiting G staff are gender balanced. The presence of women in the panels selecting contracted professional staff, went from 19 per cent in panels formed in 2007 to 31 per cent in those in 2008.
10. Field operations reported a total of 146 projects where gender issues were integrated. However, in more than half of them, “gender mainstreaming” consisted exclusively of including several women among project staff and beneficiaries. Fewer cases included gender aspects in the thematic substance of the projects.
11. By contrast, and as a result of a direct assistance from the Gender Section, some field operations were open to undertaking adequate gender assessments, for example addressing gender-differentiated needs in police programmes, such as those implemented by the OSCE Office in Baku and the Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. In order to consolidate this trend, the Gender Section has published and is disseminating a fact sheet with concrete guidelines on how to integrate men’s and women’s concerns in police-public partnerships.
12. Gender focal points continue to work mainly in the human dimension, mostly as human rights officers, implementing women’s rights/anti-trafficking projects and, therefore, have few links with broader programmes. This compromises their ability to effect gender mainstreaming across programmes and dimensions in their field operations. The appointment of deputy Heads of Mission as gender focal points is expected to improve this situation.
13. The Gender Section, in cooperation with other Secretariat departments, institutions and field operations, has published several tools as part of a thematic oriented methodology to support OSCE staff members to mainstream gender issues in the most neglected areas. Such resources are also of use to delegates.
14. Field operations continued to support activities in the priority areas of the Gender Action Plan throughout OSCE regions, in a number of cases with support from the ODIHR and the Gender Section. As in the past, most of the women’s rights projects, conducted in the framework of the Gender Action Plan, fall under themes of the human dimension. Far fewer activities on gender issues are conducted in the politico-military or economic and environmental dimensions. Numerous activities were dedicated to the development, monitoring and amendment of legal frameworks and national policies on gender equality, however with no major breakthroughs for a number of draft equality laws.
15. Significant attention was given to preventing violence against women including domestic violence, violence in conflict situations and anti-trafficking issues. The Gender Section published a comprehensive compilation *Bringing Security Home* presenting nearly 100 tested effective good practices to combat violence against women across the OSCE region.
16. Progress in the area of promoting women’s participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction remains slow. However, while last year only the Mission to Serbia reported an initiative in this field, in this reporting period field operations in Kosovo, Moldova and Montenegro carried out activities in this area. The Gender Section intensified awareness-raising among OSCE staff and delegations through a thematic round table and an address to the FSC. The Section continues to implement a project on mapping female experts for military and police matters in the OSCE, in line with various gender related MC Decisions.
17. The amendments to the questionnaire to the Military Code of Conduct were approved in April 2009, however, they did not include a requirement for reporting on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Nevertheless, 17 participating States have taken the commendable initiative to voluntarily include information on women, peace and security in their annual responses.
18. The commitment and leadership of management continues to be paramount for ensuring progress in all areas of the Gender Action Plan. This reporting period shows in an unmistakable way that in the departments and field operations where management is demonstrating a strong engagement, for example through the appointment of the deputy Head of Mission as the gender focal point, and

the implementation of several measures with the Gender Section, progress on gender issues is taking place.

Conclusion

Given the lack of quantitative and time-bound targets in the 2004 Gender Action Plan, it is difficult to make a detailed, concrete and factual evaluation of the extent to which the Action Plan is being implemented. However, palpable advances have been made over the short reporting period. It should be noted that they occurred mostly when dedicated OSCE staff and managers took gender aware decisions and in some cases when a close and intense assistance was given by the Gender Section. This is clearly the case in processes that led to an increase of female professionals in management positions, in conducting gender assessments within policing projects and in the development of comprehensive methodologies and tools and the documentation and dissemination of good practices. Despite this encouraging trend, we are still far from a systematic integration of gender concerns and dimensions in all OSCE policies, structures and programmes.

A great many of the recommendations from the previous Secretary General's report on the Gender Action Plan remain valid.

Strong leadership by OSCE managers and the commitment of participating States still needs to materialize in concrete decisions to move forward in the implementation of the unanimously approved gender policies. Principally, participating States should direct their attention to secondment and recruitment processes in order to ensure equitable representation of men and women in all categories of staff and in particular in leadership positions.

The consideration of the distinct but equally relevant needs, contributions and expected benefits of women and men in projects across dimensions should be at the heart of OSCE actions. It is hoped that the recent gender supportive attitude, partially through two consecutive Chairmanships whose priorities have included gender issues, the openness of the Forum for Security and Cooperation to activities on gender issues and the initiative taken by several participating States to fund and support gender projects will set the tone for further advances in the future.

Other key recommendations for the next reporting period include:

1. Field operations should build on the good example given by five missions and appoint deputy Heads of missions as gender focal points.
2. Mainstreaming gender across programmes and policies is not only ethically sound but also ensures a higher efficiency and quality of programmes. Field operations should adapt their management practices for more efficiency and initiate activities to mainstream gender as a cross-dimensional issue rather than as an issue mostly dealt with in the human dimension. Particular attention should be given to the politico-military and economic and environmental dimensions, where project managers are least aware of the benefit to integrate gender issues into their work.
3. Field operations and institutions should use more systematically specialized expertise to integrate gender aspects into projects in all dimensions. In order to accomplish this, additional and more appropriate capacity building modules need to be developed and offered by field operations as well as by the Training and the Gender Sections. Project managers across structures should also make regular use of the tools and publications recently developed by the Gender Section.
4. The participating States should energetically correct the current alarming decrease in the number of women they nominated during the reporting period and propose a significant number of female nominees to top management vacancies in the Secretariat, institutions and field operations.
5. The DHR and the hiring managers should intensify efforts to advertise and attract applications from women and should aim for a balance between the proportion of qualified female applications/

nominations and the proportion of women effectively recruited / seconded to positions, especially for professional positions in the Secretariat and institutions. They should, in particular seek to ensure that contracted management P and D vacancy notices are brought to a wider attention in time and that recruitment for these positions is not started unless a minimum of 40 per cent applications from female candidates is received. The hiring sex ratio should subsequently correlate reasonably with the percentage of qualified men and women who applied.

6. In order to improve the work on the priority areas established in the Gender Action Plan, the field operations and the participating States should ensure continuous political support to gender issues and allocate sufficient resources to gender activities in particular for economic empowerment, inclusion of women in crisis management and conflict resolution and peace processes.
7. During 2010 the international community will celebrate important landmarks in women's involvement in and contributions to conflict prevention, crisis management and post conflict rehabilitation (the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and the 5th anniversary of MC. DEC 14/05). During its upcoming Chairmanship, it is strategically important that Kazakhstan maintain the implementation of the Gender Action plan and related MC Decisions among its priorities for the Organization.