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INSTRAW's Strategic Framework for the period 2008-2011

Report by the Director of the Institute

BACKGROUND

1. Since the First World Conference on Women held in Mexico City in 1975 gender equality, development and peace have become key components of sustainable development efforts throughout the UN system and beyond. Subsequent Conferences in Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) have highlighted both positive results and persistent obstacles to the empowerment of women. As the historic ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action demonstrated, we are currently at a crucial moment of political challenge and potential change. This reality was reinforced during the 2005 World Summit and review of the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals, during which UN Member States affirmed that **“progress for women is progress for all.”** Through the review and appraisal of these commitments, we learned that significant challenges remain for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Though the new, globalized and interdependent world presents unprecedented opportunities for cooperation and change, it also presents new challenges to equity, social justice and the protection of women's rights.

2. The reform process that is currently being implemented throughout the UN system is an important opportunity for reflection. The task now is to review and evaluate the work of the UN system on gender equality, including resources, impacts, effectiveness and sustainability, in order to identify good practices, challenges, and openings for change. The reform process could give rise to a strengthened gender equality architecture that is capable of responding both to existing challenges and to new and emerging issues for women and gender equality. The debate that has surrounded the gender equality architecture over the last year demonstrates that gender equality and the empowerment of women are now central components of the international development agenda. The challenge now is to put policy into practice and make the commitments adopted at Beijing, the Millennium Summit and other conferences a reality.

3. 2004-2007 was also a time of change and progress for UN-INSTRAW, which saw the implementation of a new Strategic Framework designed to renew and reinforce the Institute's capacity to be a catalyst for gender initiatives and women's empowerment worldwide. As the only institute in the United Nations system with the mandate to conduct research and training

activities for the advancement of women, UN-UN-INSTRRAW has also adapted over the years to address new and emerging issues. The Institute will continue to adapt in accordance with the results of the restructuring of the UN gender architecture, as well as the UN Research and Training institutes once a decision is reached by the General Assembly.

4. UN-INSTRRAW's Strategic Framework 2004-2007 emphasized the importance of articulating research, training and information sharing in a continuous cycle of analysis, learning and action, so that research results feed into the distribution of information and the design of training and capacity-building programmes, as well as the formulation of policy. Through its applied research programmes, the Institute aims to make policies and programmes gender-responsive on the basis of concrete research results, the application of lessons learned, and the replication of best practices. This approach allows for flexibility in responding to both existing challenges and new and emerging issues.

5. The UN-INSTRRAW Strategic Framework 2008-2011 will carry forward the priorities established in 2004, consolidating our research and training programmes in specific areas and enhancing our knowledge management capacity to ensure that research results have a concrete impact on policy and programme formulation and implementation.

6. The Strategic Framework is based on the founding documents of the UN as well as specific mandates related to gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women, *inter alia*:

- Charter of the United Nations
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- The Outcome documents of the two Beijing Review and Appraisal processes (Beijing+5 and Beijing+10);
- The Millennium Declaration and Development Goals;
- The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document;

- Other Plans of Action from conferences dealing with population, human rights and sustainable development, among other issues.
- Numerous resolutions of the United Nations both from the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly, reaffirming the unique role of UN-INSTRRAW as the only Institute in the UN system devoted to research, training and information in the context of gender equality and women's empowerment, reiterating support for its revitalization, and amending its Statutes.
- Numerous resolutions of ECOSOC and the General Assembly on women and gender issues reaffirming the critical role of UN bodies that focus on the implementation of commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment; calling for increased attention on issues such as women's political participation, violence against women, migration and trafficking of women and girls, women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building; and women's sexual and reproductive health; and stressing the need for increased collection and circulation of information on gender mainstreaming.
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security calling for the equal participation of women at all levels of peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities.
- Reports of the Secretary-General and other UN entities on gender related issues.

7. The Strategic Framework was developed through a participatory exercise with the support of all staff at UN-INSTRRAW headquarters in the Dominican Republic.

MISSION

UN-INSTRRAW is the leading United Nations Institute devoted to research, training and knowledge management in partnership with governments, the United Nations System, civil society and academia to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment

VISION

UN-INSTRAW is a leader in strategic and innovative actions that make a difference in women's lives

PRINCIPLES

- ***Integrity, Transparency and Accountability:***¹
– The Institute will continue to apply the principle of integrity as defined by the UN in all actions and decision. Furthermore, it will continue to widely disseminate information and communicate with stakeholders to maintain transparency and accountability to encourage participation and feedback.
- ***Professionalism:***² - The UN-INSTRAW staff will continue to act with professionalism in accordance with the definition of this principle by the UN.
- ***Respect for diversity:***³ The Institute will work with people and institutions within the United Nations System as well as other stakeholders with respect for diversity of cultures and needs.
- ***Inclusiveness*** - The Institute will seek inputs from all stakeholders in the development of activities with particular attention to fostering alliances with other UN Agencies, Programmes and Funds so that resources are effectively utilized. Participatory and team-building approaches will continue to be the basis of the Institute's work methodology both internally and externally.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES

8. UN-INSTRAW will develop its programme of work within the context of the three pillars of United Nations –Security, Development, and

Human Rights– as identified by Member States in several official documents of the UN, including Resolution 60/1 from the 2005 World Summit:

- I. **Development:** Issues of *Gender, Migration, Remittances and Development* will be further addressed by the Institute with particular focus on how women migrants contribute to local development including poverty reduction and to achieving the MDGs. UN-INSTRAW will also foster policies and programmes in both origin and destination countries to increase the development potential of remittances from a gender perspective and the recognition of women's contribution, needs and priorities. The Institute will include capacity-building activities for women migrants in destination countries in order to protect their human rights and maximize the development potential of their remittances. Through its activities, the Institute will also support local/national governments to identify/formulate policies to optimize the utilization of remittances for sustainable livelihoods and building social capital. Possible areas for further development include: (i) migration and the establishment of global care chains; (ii) transnational families and the impact of migration on children; and (iii) migration and the construction of social capital.
- II. **Peace and Security:** Activities on *Gender, Peace and Security* will continue to be central to the promotion of gender equality and women's full and equal participation in peacekeeping, peace processes, post-conflict reconstruction and peace building, and the reform of security institutions. Further work will be done on gender and security sector reform, violence against women and the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (SCR 1325). Possible areas for further development include: (i) the gender dimensions in trafficking in women; (ii) gender and small arms control; and (iii) gender, peacekeeping and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- III. **Human Rights:** The main focus in this priority will continue to be *Gender,*

¹ As defined by the UN, an Organization with Integrity demonstrates the values of the UN in daily activities and behaviours; Acts without consideration of personal gain; resists undue political pressure in decision-making; Does not abuse power or authority; Stands by the decisions that are in the Organization's interest, even if they are unpopular, and Takes prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behaviour.

² As defined by the UN, an Organization with Professionalism shows pride in work and in achievements; Demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; Is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; Is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; Shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; Remains calm in stressful situations.

³ As defined by the UN, an Organization that respects diversity works effectively with people from all backgrounds; treats people with dignity and respect; treats men and women equally; shows respect for and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates this understanding in daily work and decision-making; examines own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses; and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Governance and Women's Political Participation, with emphasis in strengthening the political participation of women at national and local levels to achieve their political empowerment, with a particular focus on indigenous women in the Latin American region. Possible areas for further development include: (i) women's civil, economic and social rights; and (ii) the participation of other marginalized groups of women.

STRATEGIC AREAS

9. In all of its work UN-INSTRAW promotes an interactive dialogue between civil society, governments and international organizations through the creation of networks and the continual dissemination of gender-related information. In particular, the Institute seeks to foster North-South dialogue and promoted decentralized cooperation throughout its activities. The Institute has created networks, working groups and other associations of practitioners and stakeholders on various issues.

10. In line with its mandates and mission, the Institute will continue to work in four strategic areas: (i) Action-oriented Research; (ii) Knowledge Management; (iii) Capacity-building; and (iv) Institutional Development.

1. ACTION-ORIENTED RESEARCH

Undertake action-oriented research that leads to gender-responsive policies, programmes and projects at all levels.

Lines of Action

- Develop new methodologies, conceptual frameworks, case studies and other research tools on *Gender, migration, remittances and development; Governance, and women's political participation at the local level; Gender, peace and security; and Gender mainstreaming* to contribute to the design of public policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Strengthen institutional relationships with academia and other governmental and non-governmental research institutions in order to generate knowledge and promote action-oriented research in these and other gender issues;

- Strengthen the use of research results to impact decision-making processes and foster gender-sensitive public policies and programmes through policy recommendations, capacity-building and awareness-raising materials and other tools,.

2. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Foster exchange of relevant knowledge and information to increase understanding and support decision-making and actions on gender and women's issues.

Based on the results of the several evaluations and the Institute's experience since 2004, UN-INSTRAW's "information-sharing" strategy has evolved to a knowledge management⁴ programme, which includes a greater focus on the formation of "knowledge communities" or "communities of practice" around specific issues – namely gender, migration and remittances; gender and security sector reform; and women's political participation and governance at the local level. The advantage to knowledge communities over other networking modalities is that they bring people together around a specific issue in which they are already interested. These knowledge communities come together through virtual seminars, online chats, mailing lists and other tools in order to exchange information and participate in the development of UN-INSTRAW's research and training agenda.

Lines of Action

- Create knowledge communities in all of UN-INSTRAW's priority areas - *Gender, migration, remittances and development; Governance, and women's political participation at the local level; Gender, peace and security; and Gender mainstreaming;*
- Ensure that relevant information from UN-INSTRAW and other stakeholders reaches different audiences such as governments, UN System, civil society, academia, media networks, private sector etc.;

⁴ Knowledge Management is a system to facilitate learning, innovation and sharing to achieve the strategic objectives of an organization. The concept of Knowledge Management was adopted to enhance UN-INSTRAW's research programme by conceptualizing the collection and dissemination of data and information as part of a continuum Data -> Information -> Knowledge -> Wisdom that eventually has a measurable impact on policy and programme formulation.

- Strengthen the interactivity of information on gender issues utilizing multiple technological means such as the web, virtual discussions, networks, etc.;
- Ensure a constant flow of information within the Institute, the UN System and among women's organizations to inform decision-making and contribute to the effective implementation of policies, programmes and projects.
- Expand the website to include other languages as necessary funds become available.

3. CAPACITY-BUILDING

Strengthen stakeholder capacity to address and effectively integrate gender issues in all policies, programmes and projects.

Lines of Action:

- Further the development and effective use of the first-ever *wiki* devoted specifically to gender training and capacity-building developed by UN-INSTRAW, and assess the applicability of the wiki software to UN-INSTRAW's other priority areas;
- Develop specific capacity-building tools using the results of UN-INSTRAW research in *Gender, migration, remittances and development; Governance and women's political participation at the local level; Gender, peace and security; and Gender mainstreaming* in order to encourage policy change and gender mainstreaming throughout the UN system and with other stakeholders;
- Strengthen the capacity of women's organizations and the political leadership of women in public functions to influence the design, implementation and follow-up of policies, programmes and projects from a gender perspective;
- Using existing UN-INSTRAW capacity-building materials, develop specific e-learning programmes in collaboration with other UN Research and Training Institutes.

4. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Shape a financially sustainable institution that is innovative, applies good governance, and works in partnership with other relevant UN entities.

Lines of Action:

- Increase non-earmarked core contributions from Member States;
- Strengthen resource mobilization actions engaging relevant private philanthropic foundations, corporate foundations, private sector companies, individuals, and development/research foundations to support research capacity and implementation of activities, particularly within the framework of the UN-INSTRAW/UNFIP/UN Foundation Agreement;
- Coordinate activities internally between the strategic areas of action-oriented research, knowledge management and capacity building with the appropriate support from administrative services and strengthen teamwork capacities within UN-INSTRAW through continued capacity building, new technologies and on-going coordination;
- Implement strategies for increasing UN-INSTRAW's representation within the UN Systems and in all regions;
- Develop strategies for increasing non-monetary support to the Institute through secondment posts, non-reimbursable loans, resident research fellow positions, junior professional officers, etc.

STRATEGY

In order to secure sustainable technical and financial support for the implementation of UN-INSTRAW's programme of work, the Institute will implement a number of strategies designed to involve stakeholders from the UN System, academia, civil society, the private sector and other areas:

- Foster alliances with multiple actors for resource mobilization and implementation of the Institute's mission.
- Convene a Technical Advisory Committee comprising gender experts from academia, civil society and the United Nations system, to ensure substantive support to the Institute in the overall development of its programme areas and increase the visibility of the Institute's activities.
- Convene Thematic Advisory Groups – one each for the thematic priorities - comprising five renowned experts in order to provide

methodological and other orientation in the development of programme activities.

- Continue to establish strategic partnerships with UN system, civil society, academia, foundations, public institutions, private sector, etc. to involve more actors in working for gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Foster a sustained dialogue between feminist movements in the North and South as well as south-south cooperation with a view toward developing a Global Partnership for Engendered Development, in line with Millennium Development Goal number 8.