

WAR'S OFFENSIVE ON WOMEN

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PREFACE

WAR HAS LONG BEEN an offensive against women. Today more than ever, women and children are the casualties of deliberate and systematic violence against entire populations. However, women are not just the victims of combat and the beneficiaries of humanitarian efforts. They are also the engines of resistance and key problem solvers in their communities. This book examines new ways in which citizens in areas of conflict, humanitarian organizations, and international legal processes respond to and moderate the impact of war on women. In particular, the study analyzes efforts to meet the humanitarian challenge of protecting and assisting women in emergency aid and postconflict reconstruction settings. Special attention is given to recent experience in such places as Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

To some extent, there has been great progress in the ways humanitarian organizations respond to women's needs and take cues from them in charting their course in crafting solutions. One of the most important changes has been the adoption by many aid groups of a gender perspective. Such a perspective takes into account how the different roles, opportunities, and constraints of men and women influence their needs in times of humanitarian crisis. By contrast, the earlier approach to enhancing the role of women, characterized as "add woman and stir," reflected a desire to solve "women's" problems by creating "special" women's programs for their "special" needs. This earlier approach simply substituted women for men in agency staffs and beneficiary communities without making space for the insights that women bring to solving humanitarian problems and without addressing imbalances in power relations. A gender perspective emphasizes using the expertise of women and including women in central decision-making processes in all stages and aspects of humanitarian action. It promises transformative change by examining the socially constructed roles of men and

women and exposing the very root of exploitation and domination of women. It challenges the institutions that perpetuate inequality.

The World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 catapulted gender issues to the world stage. For humanitarian organizations, this new awareness resulted in a flurry of policy statements and programmatic changes, all with the avowed desire to integrate gender concerns throughout their work. These changes, however, rarely lead to transformative institutional change. While some organizations did examine their own management practices, most of the changes targeted overseas activities. And despite well-honed gender policy statements at headquarters and the expressed desire for improved programs, those activities continued to approach gender unevenly.

The lack of more wide-ranging change was in part gender-related and in part inherent in the nature of humanitarian work. Humanitarian organizations, by design, resist top-down change. Many agencies, particularly as a result of changes in recent years, tend to be decentralized, with projects driven more by strong personalities in the field than by headquarters mandates. When staff wish to work on gender problems, they do; when they do not, they find some reason to steer clear of gender. They often justify resistance to taking on gender concerns as “Western issues” that have nothing to do with the populations in need. The emergency nature of many relief operations—the “tyranny of the emergency”—also deprioritizes gender issues. Even if some staff enthusiastically face up to gender issues, their organizations may not back them up with serious institutional commitments that outlast rapid personnel turnover. Although some agencies have developed more long-lived institutional tools for tackling gender issues, many more have not. In addition, the results-oriented nature of humanitarian aid penalizes gender projects, as improvements with respect to gender problems do not lend themselves to predominantly quantitative measurement.

All of these factors have limited the impacts of positive changes. Yet the benefits of the groundswell created by the 1995 World Conference on Women, the most participatory United Nations event in history, which mobilized women at the grassroots level throughout the world, are still being realized. Many humanitarian personnel, consultants, constituents, and donors continue to push for gender-related programs. Positive change has also come about in response to increased reporting on abuses against women by human rights organizations, and by media coverage of wartime sexual violence. Moreover, international law, which is itself evolving, has provided a firm basis for recognizing women’s rights as human rights and for stigmatizing wartime sexual violence as

a violation of humanitarian law. Thus humanitarian action focusing on gender continues to come into sharper focus, however uneven and, at times, mistaken in approach.

With cautious optimism, this book explains this mixed progress of recent years. Chapter 1 provides analytical tools for approaching gender and suggests the ways in which women experience war differently from men. Chapter 2 reviews recent experience in three major crises: Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. Chapter 3 outlines the supportive framework offered by international law. Conclusions and recommendations form the subject of Chapter 4. The study uses non-technical language in order to be accessible to a wide group of students, academics, policymakers, and humanitarian and human rights practitioners. It seeks to stimulate debate on the ways war affects women and how humanitarian organizations should respond. It finds that attempts by humanitarian groups to provide assistance and protection will fall short unless women are enlisted as major participants in the process.

LOOKING AHEAD

THIS CHAPTER IDENTIFIES current trends among humanitarian organizations responding to gender problems and suggests recommendations for further action. It draws together innovative elements in agency policy and practice noted in Chapters 2 and 3 and comments on the process of institutional learning and change pertaining to gender. As with the preceding chapters, interviews with staff of NGOs, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and other intergovernmental and governmental organizations form the basis of this analysis. While written with the specific needs of humanitarian agencies in mind, the material may also be of interest to academics and policymakers.

Trend 1: Creation of Gender Policies and Gender Strategies

Humanitarian organizations have begun to realize that involving women in programmatic activities is “not solely a matter of equity but, in a range of activities, a condition for achieving development and, as far as projects are concerned, a condition of their success also.”¹ Many humanitarian groups have taken steps to integrate gender throughout their programming. This entails, at the initial stage, establishing a policy on gender indicating goals and creating a gender strategy for achieving these goals.

The policy of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) provides one innovative model. Its goals with respect to gender are

- to support the objectives and initiatives of women in developing countries;

- to achieve greater understanding of actual and potential roles for women in developing countries;
- to increase participation of women in design, implementation, and evaluation of development projects;
- to include women in CIDA programs and projects in proportion to their existing participation rates in the target groups;
- to work in partnership with recipient governments to close economic gaps between men and women in their countries;
- to emphasize strategies to assist women in income generation, including reduction of demands on their time and energy from household work and food production; and
- to support special women's programs linked to overall development where special efforts are required.²

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) provides another illustration of innovations in policies pertaining to gender. In 1993–94, LWR made gender equity one of its cross-cutting themes and thus a priority throughout the organization. One of its first steps was to develop a gender equity statement:

We strive to incorporate awareness, attitudes and measures which promote gender equity through all aspects of the life of Lutheran World Relief and its partners. We also strive to ensure that projects favorably impact women. Addressing the particular needs of women as well as men in their respective communities and strengthening their voices in planning and implementation enhances the impact and sustainability of development efforts.

The foregoing policy statement is supported by specific gender strategies. LWR asserts that local leadership must play a key role with LWR as an institution as well as in its relief and development efforts. The organization sees gender equity as a central issue within its own operations and it vows to examine its governance and management to identify, eliminate, and prevent gender inequality. Other strategic aims include

- focusing on advocacy, education, and management to identify, eliminate, and prevent gender inequality and bias;
- accompanying partners through exchange and training as they seek to deepen their understanding, commitment, and competence;

- engaging in dialogue with partners at the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluating projects;
- gathering and disseminating gender assessment tools, methodologies, and approaches;
- sharing particularly effective practices regarding gender equity that have been developed and applied; and
- gathering sex-specific data on the impact of projects.³

The attempts by LWR to create an effective gender strategy have been aided by broad staff participation. LWR has implemented its gender strategy through the development of tools at its headquarters in New York and through training and projects with offices and partner organizations in the field.⁴ A central component was the development of regional gender plans to deal with integration while recognizing and respecting the variety and diversity of partners worldwide. LWR designed a Gender Packet to guide partners and field officers,⁵ including a Counterpart Agency Gender Study (CAGS) as a diagnostic tool for partner organizations.⁶

The study's objectives include finding out how well LWR counterparts have integrated gender into their work, determining whether there is an interest in gender integration, assessing the conditions that can act as a catalyst or constraint, and learning how partners want LWR to help them integrate gender. Through an interactive process, carried out electronically and in face-to-face meetings, LWR field offices reached a consensus on the questions that would be asked on these CAGS objectives.⁷ Catholic Relief Services has embarked on a similar process of incorporating gender into its programming by way of a strong policy statement and by soliciting staff feedback on creating and implementing gender strategies.⁸

Recommendations

- Create a gender policy that underscores the importance of both men and women benefiting from international assistance that recognizes their different needs and improves their roles in decision-making.
- Link policy to concrete steps and timetable for implementation.
- Design mechanisms for monitoring compliance with gender policy and gender strategy.

Trend 2: Increased Organizational Awareness of Gender and Human Rights

Emergency relief and human rights organizations have operated synergistically in creating innovations. Pressure from aid groups has leavened the loaf of broader human rights awareness. At the same time, assistance organizations have been profoundly influenced by the heightened awareness of gender problems promoted by human rights advocates.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the heightened awareness of gender violence and abuse in war and peacetime has been inspired by the global movement for women's human rights. "In attempting to unveil the female face of persecution of its victims, advocacy organizations have documented such abuses as sexual violence in all its forms."⁹ Efforts of human rights advocates to expose abuses against women have had important implications for refugee, displaced, and war-imperiled women. These efforts have provided the kind of information necessary for women to make claims of gender-based persecution under the Refugee Convention. In addition, they have exposed the failures of aid organizations to offer adequate protection and assistance.

As a result, when human rights groups document and publicize abuses against women, relief agencies are called to account for the ways in which their policies and programs have responded or, more negatively, have complicated the situation. When they fail to offer a plan for protecting and assisting women, their public—the general public, donors, and, for a membership organization, their members—is now likely to demand an explanation. The widespread publicity regarding rape in Bosnia and the tremendous outpouring of sympathy for victims created intense pressure on humanitarian groups to respond, although with mixed results. Violence against women in conflicts elsewhere has not been exposed equally well. Nonetheless, the trend since the rapes in Bosnia were publicized at the end of 1992 and the World Conference on Human Rights recognized violence against women as a war crime in 1993 has been for aid organizations to be increasingly vigilant about women's human rights.

More public discussion of women's human rights has fostered greater awareness of protection and assistance problems pertaining to women. Aid organizations have become more conscious of the different needs of males and females for physical protection, legal registration, status determination, and assistance. Also, the agencies are more attuned to gender bias with respect to basic needs and human rights, and abuse that targets females.

These steps are significant. Nonetheless, aid organizations have one additional step, which is to recognize the different capabilities that women bring to working on these problems. Humanitarian organizations are only beginning to disaggregate population data so that they may identify and properly help men and women.¹⁰

Recommendations

- For each assistance and protection effort in a given country, identify the different needs of males and females with respect to physical protection, legal registration, and status determination; gender bias with respect to meeting basic needs and respecting human rights; sexual or other physical violence targeting females; and the different capabilities and responsibilities that women could bring to creating and implementing protection and assistance plans.
- Conduct training sessions with management and staff on women's human rights and on the fundamentals of humanitarian law pertaining to gender, including information on gender-based violence as a human rights issue.

Trend 3: Integration of Gender into Agency Activities

Movements to improve gender programs within agencies have generally taken one of two conflicting courses: mainstreaming of gender throughout an organization and all programs, or establishing a gender focal point or unit within an organization. The latter concept is straightforward: each organization would have at least one focal point to ensure that gender problems receive attention, and offer expertise to other parts of the organization. The mainstreaming concept, however, is more complex.

Mainstreaming began as an effort to increase the effectiveness of development programs in incorporating women and women's problems. Today, the concept is applied in the humanitarian field to refer to "achieving women's full participation with men in decisionmaking; getting women's problems centralized (not just near the center); putting women on a par with men in the process of initiating . . . activities."¹¹

Both approaches have drawbacks. Mainstreaming risks submerging gender within the organization so that the problems are no longer given attention. It may also result in words on paper but few changes in programming. For example, a UN mission to Afghanistan in 1997 found

that “several agencies have developed their own guidelines for gender mainstreaming, but these are rarely followed. Many agencies do not address gender concerns in the design, implementation or monitoring phases of their work . . .”¹²

But the gender focal point approach risks marginalizing gender within the organization so that it is treated as something “special” that is not to be dealt with at all apart from the activities of the specified unit. As a result, there is little guarantee that gender problems will be found in any other projects than those which are explicitly about women.

In either approach, organizations may also hold special meetings, training, and workshops on gender and establish mechanisms to report regularly on problems pertaining to gender. Often these steps are accompanied by the hiring of additional personnel. While such personnel may add more women to mid-level management, they rarely are top-level decision-makers. The upper-level management of most humanitarian organizations remains overwhelmingly male.

Recommendations

- Establish a gender unit or focal point with the explicit role of promoting gender perspectives or, alternatively, make gender part of everyone’s job, working at the same time to delimit the drawbacks of either approach.
- Assess personnel policies throughout the organization according to a gender perspective and adopt changes to meet gender concerns.
- Conduct gender training for senior management and for staff to enhance gender awareness, sensitization, analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Link job performance expectations and evaluations to advancement of gender policy and strategy.

Trend 4: Programmatic Innovations Pertaining to Gender

International policy changes and efforts to mainstream gender are accompanied by specific programmatic changes. While the changes differ according to the mission, history, focus, and nature of the specific organization, the most ambitious seek to do the following:¹³

- Involve refugee, internally displaced, and war-affected women in the design and implementation of all programs dealing with them.
- Include information about refugee women, preferably by the women themselves, in all educational activities carried out in programs for war-affected women. Include information in public media campaigns to combat abuse of and discrimination against them.
- Make it a practice to deal with all incidents of sexual violence and to respond to related protection and assistance problems.
- Improve the design of refugee and displaced persons camps to promote greater security according to the needs voiced by women. Such measures could include better lighting; security patrols; placement of latrines and washing facilities; access to water, food, and wood; and special accommodations for single women, women heads of household, and unaccompanied minors.
- Offer gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate counseling to women victims. This counseling should be conducted by trained counselors, drawing from the women's culture and community.
- Support the operation of emergency hotlines and safe houses, staffed where possible by the women themselves or women counselors.
- Provide emergency resettlement to refugee women who may be particularly exposed to abuse.
- Ensure that refugee and internally displaced women are not forced to stay for long periods in closed camps or detention centers where they are more likely to be the victims of violence.
- Employ female protection officers and social workers to provide remedies for women who are victims of violence.
- Place international staff that has received gender-sensitive training in border areas which women cross to enter countries of asylum as well as in reception centers, refugee camps, and settlements.
- Ensure that all staff have copies of and have training in the implementation of the UNHCR *Guidelines for the Protection of Refugee Women* and the UNHCR's *Report on Sexual Violence Against Refugees: Guidelines on Prevention and Response*.

- Provide gender-sensitive training for host country border guards, police, military units, asylum officers, aid personnel, and others who come in contact with war-affected women.

Recommendations

- Adopt programmatic changes to address gender problems such as all of those listed above and build in flexibility to adapt to changed circumstances.
- Establish indicators for measuring the success of programs pertaining to gender and link indicators of success to satisfaction of these measures.
- Create partnerships with local women leaders who can offer advice on programming and conduct outreach to other local women. Support the efforts of local women to organize themselves.¹⁴
- Audit programmatic innovations. Examine both the effectiveness in reaching intended goals and unexpected benefits or drawbacks of programs. The accompanying gender audit may be a useful tool.

Trend 5: Supporting International Activities as Triggers for Change

World conferences have played a key role as catalysts for change. In particular, many aid organizations changed their practices in response to the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna and the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Vienna meeting was a watershed in prompting many humanitarian organizations to identify and address violence against women and other human rights problems.

For some organizations and programs, it was the point at which the word “woman” became a part of agency parlance. For others, it was the point at which existing programs targeting the concerns of women in conflict situations gained momentum. Some humanitarian organizations created policies, public education material, and programs for Beijing; many more revised these after Beijing.¹⁵ Beijing was the point at which usage of the word “woman” evolved into the word “gender” in many organizational policies and programs.

Another highly significant agent reinforcing pressure from the international level has been pressure from the field. While field staff can block programs for pragmatic reasons, they can promote them as well.

Gender Audit: Questions to Ask

Gender Impact

- What are the different needs, interests, and capacities of men and women in the target population?
- Who are the intended beneficiaries of the project and what assumptions are being made about them? Are those assumptions well-informed? Who is being overlooked?
- Who devised the goals of the intervention? Are those goals shared equally by men and women, with the same emphasis and degree of priority? Would the intervention promote gender equality?
- Whose interests are being promoted through the intervention?
- Who is likely to gain from this intervention and who is likely to lose? Which men and which women?

Project Preparation and Planning

- Does the organization initiating the project have a stated aim in relation to gender issues?
- How does the project affect the productive, reproductive, and/or social roles of women and men—as family members and mothers or fathers, educators, agricultural producers, income earners, or community leaders?
- What proportion of the planning team are women and are their views taken into account?
- How have women among the participants and beneficiaries of the project been consulted?
- Are training opportunities available equally to women and men, and do these opportunities take into consideration their various roles and commitments?

Project Implementation

- How are women and men involved in the execution of the plan? Are the women involved in the governing bodies, project staff, as activists and beneficiaries?
- How does that project affect women's and men's access to, and control over, resources and benefits?
- Is there continuing attention to possible changes in the pattern of women's and men's lives?
- Have women and men in the community grown in gender awareness through their involvement in the project?

Sources: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), *Overview: Gender Equality*, 2 [citing Nalia Kabeer, *Triple Roles, Gender Roles, Social Relations: The Political Sub-Text of Gender Training* (Sussex: Institute of Development Studies, 1992); and Christian Aid, "Towards Gender-Aware Development: Ten Questions to Ask," 1989 (available at <www.oneworld.org/aprodev/good/tenq.htm>). Although these questions were originally intended to apply to development projects, they are generally applicable to humanitarian assistance and protection activities.

Innovations in protecting refugee and displaced women in camps, for example, are often driven by pragmatic field initiatives. A resourceful aid worker in the Great Lakes Region of Africa solved the problem of males hoarding food for themselves by changing the labeling on some of the boxes of biscuits to read "women's biscuits." When a rumor spread among the men that male consumers would grow breasts, women and girls suddenly had more to eat. From then on, some aid agencies specifically targeted their food provisions, creating new kinds of female-only food.¹⁶

Very few organizations view the UNHCR guidelines on war-imperiled women or sexual violence as catalysts for change, stating their strong belief that the guidelines are often ignored in the field. Nonetheless, some advocacy groups, such as the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, have created programs specifically to promote the UNHCR guidelines. Even so, a study by Judy Benjamin, a consult-

ant to the Woman's Commission, found a need for even more knowledge about UNHCR Guidelines among field staff.¹⁷

More influential as a catalyst for change has been the emergence of strong and active professional association working groups, such as InterAction, a Washington-based network of U.S. NGOs. By coordinating responses to humanitarian crises, organizing topical workshops, sharing information through reports and other publications, and providing peer recognition of pioneering efforts, InterAction has been instrumental in fostering innovations in humanitarian responses, including gender problems.

Recommendations

- Continue involvement in international meetings, using each as an opportunity to present positive programmatic developments and to reassess organizational weaknesses with respect to gender.
- Encourage innovations among field staff with respect to gender problems and develop mechanisms for sharing such innovations organization-wide.
- Improve knowledge of UNHCR guidelines and other international instruments by conducting training with local and expatriate staff; include refugee and displaced women in such efforts.

Trend 6: Development of Nomenclature

Humanitarian organizations continue to debate whether to use the word "women" or "gender." The two are not interchangeable. This book has stressed the term "gender" in order to refer to the different roles that men and women play in society and thus to their different needs, interests, and capabilities. The term "woman" has more limited utility.

Some humanitarian staff view the use of the word gender as the less controversial alternative, because "saying 'women' may imply that women get more than men, but 'gender' means men and women." Staff at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), for example, use the term "gender" instead of "woman" because gender includes both men and women while "woman" signifies treatment accorded to women and not men. In the summer of 1998, the IFRC was debating whether to add gender problems to its mandate without violating its "neutrality principle." In taking a stand against female genital mutilation, they asked, would the federation side with

women or with one political group against another? As agencies take a greater advocacy role, such questions become more relevant.

By contrast, some other organizations find use of “gender” more controversial than “women.” “Gender” sounds Western and radical. The International Working Group on Refugee Women, for example, steers away from use of the word gender for fear of alienating women who do not come from Western traditions.¹⁸ Some staff voice a different concern: that in the absence of the word “women,” the focus on women’s human rights will be lost. To accommodate both concerns, IGOs and NGOs sometimes use both “gender” and “women.” For example, a recent conference at the UN in Geneva was publicized as being about “women, conflict and gender.”¹⁹ Staff explained that the title was not redundant but simply more precise. “Women” underscored women’s human rights and the notion that women’s status should improve, and “gender” emphasized the different roles that men and women play in society, the different challenges they face and the different resources they bring.

Recommendations

- Do not allow programmatic innovations to be stymied by debate over language.
- Include staff in decisions over what language to employ; encourage discussion regarding the implications of the word “gender” and “women.”
- Use “woman” to emphasize that women’s human rights should improve and “gender” to focus on the different needs and capacities of men and women.

Trend 7: Tensions between Agency Policies and Operational Constraints

Agency policies on gender often are not consistent with realities in the field. Frequently, policy statements by humanitarian organizations conflict with actions taken. However, with respect to gender, particular problems exacerbate the degree of inconsistency.

At a given agency headquarters, a concrete and realistic plan of action may not exist for implementation of gender policies. Organizational decision-makers may in fact be unaware of the extent of dissonance between their policy statements on gender and operational reality. Thus,

they may not even attempt to improve implementation. Many efforts undertaken to strengthen programs in relation to gender tend to focus on training in the abstract with little connection to field realities. Field staff often are not given an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and to exchange ideas about best practices. These problems are exacerbated when women are not represented at top levels of management and decision-making.

At the office level, responses to gender problems tend to be pragmatic. Some of the most effective responses are created by staff who, as individuals, feel particularly strongly about gender problems that may not be represented as agency policy. Again, these experiences are rarely collected and shared, providing little opportunity for institutional learning. Local staff develop their own methods to deal with what appears to be cultural dissonance. If locals are disturbed by the ways a project addresses gender problems—for example, because the project challenges traditional notions about women’s roles—field staff tend to handle the discomfort quietly, without addressing the difficult underlying issues. These difficulties sharpen when local women are not included among field staff or are present only as tokens. “NGOs too often hire male national staff who rely almost exclusively on other men for input and guidance from the local community.”²⁰ Local women leaders should be consulted as well on how cultural practices should be interpreted. The lack of awareness of UNHCR guidelines and of women’s human rights further aggravates the problem.

Recommendations

- Monitor fieldwork for inconsistencies with gender policies and strategies on an ongoing basis and develop mechanisms to improve implementation.
- Include local women in field offices and give them positions of authority. Consult them when questions arise as to cultural sensitivity.
- Do not sweep difficult problems under the rug. When local people are disturbed by a project, deal with the problem in as visible and open a manner as possible.
- Train all staff in UNHCR guidelines and women’s human rights and provide opportunities for staff to connect the information presented to realities in the field.

Trend 8: Increasing Advocacy Activities

Humanitarian organizations have become increasingly involved in advocacy on gender problems. For some, this reflects a general increase in humanitarian advocacy. Others have deliberately devoted greater attention to advocacy related to women.

Three strategies characterize forays into advocacy activities concerning gender. The first stresses general humanitarian principles and underscores the long-standing mandate of the particular organization, relating both to gender problems. Nearly all humanitarian organizations that do any advocacy on gender problems take as an initial step some kind of internal advocacy: that is, an educational effort to explain to their own staff, board of directors, and constituents why their mandate covers gender. This entails relating gender to their traditional goals as an organization.

The second strategy links gender to the less-controversial problems traditionally confronting aid organizations such as health and freedom from violence. It is in the context of these problems that gender is discussed. Advocacy around female genital mutilation (FGM) thus discusses the health concerns of girls and forced mutilation as child abuse instead of raising the more controversial argument that FGM also perpetuates the subordinate status of girls and women in society. In these campaigns, "women's human rights" or "equality for women" are rarely articulated but instead presented as "human dignity" or health concerns. This approach is viewed as consistent with the principal mandate of aid agencies of promoting human welfare.

The third strategy directly addresses the cultural relativism debate. Advocacy here may stress the existence of international conventions applying to women and the consensus achieved at recent international meetings as indicators of an emergency global consensus on women's human rights. It may also stress that cultures are not static, pointing to voices for change within such cultures themselves. Local women's organizations are particularly helpful in developing such campaigns, which often promote alliances between aid groups and human rights agencies.

Recommendations

- Discuss how the organization's mandate supports advocacy on gender problems; adopt policy changes, if necessary, to encourage effective advocacy on gender problems.
- Consider increased use in advocacy of international and regional

human rights mechanisms, such as the submission of NGO reports to the Women's Convention and the Children's Convention and increased cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

- Train relevant staff in advocacy techniques. Include information on the cultural relativism debate and, if relevant, on creating advocacy strategies regarding specific UN bodies.