

BHUTAN UNCT GENDER SCORECARD ASSESSMENT

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1.Methodology

Literature Review

The following Planning documents – the Common Country Assessment, the Common Country Programme Assistance Plan (cCPAP), MDG Report, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and other relevant documents were referred to for an in-depth understanding of the subject and to help review the questionnaire and identify the relevant stakeholders.

Questionnaire

One of the challenges I faced doing the consultancy for the Gender Scorecard was getting appointments with all the relevant stakeholders. This scorecard assessment was being conducted during the Coronation Celebration month with many inaugurations and meetings happening in Thimphu.

Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, the Resident Coordinator, could not be met as it was his last week in office and he had many prior engagements.

Furthermore, out of the four listed Non-Resident Agencies, I was only able to get UNESCO's response to the questionnaire; the others were not available for comments as their officers were away.

As the UNDAF and the cCPAP was signed only last year, the first reviews had not been carried out. Required details such as the Terms of Reference for the Monitoring and Evaluation Group had also not been decided.

2. Findings

Rating

5 = Exceeds minimum standards

4 = Meets minimum standards

3 = Needs improvement

2 = Inadequate

1 = Missing

Dimension	Rating	Comments/Evidence
<p>1. Planning</p> <p>a. Adequate UNCT review of country context related to gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	5	After careful review of the CCA and the UNDAF documents, it is evident that the areas in which gender disparities exist are recognized by the CCA and addressed in the UNDAF document, a few examples are the gender disparities in the field of education, low representation of women in the political arena and in government positions, and the issue of violence against women. All these concerns are also being addressed in the National Plan of Action for Gender.
<p>b. Gender equality and Women's empowerment in UNDAF outcomes</p>	5	This plan of action or activity has been provided for as stipulated in the UNDAF document: Outcomes One to Four: Poverty, Healthcare Education and Governance.
<p>c. Gender equality and women's empowerment in UNDAF Outputs</p>	5	Clearly listed in the UNDAF Results Matrix and is reflected in four of the five outcomes.
<p>d. Indicators to track UNDAF results are gender sensitive</p>	5	Clearly listed in the UNDAF Results Matrix.
<p>e. Baselines are gender sensitive</p>	5	Clearly listed in the UNDAF Results Matrix.
<p>2. Programming</p> <p>a. Gender perspectives are adequately reflected in Joint Programming</p>	5	This is clearly identified in the National Plan of Action for Gender (NPAG) which highlights seven areas critical for action and an overall gender mainstreaming strategy. This NPAG document addresses the concerns of the CEDAW comments and recommendations (2004). This is also reflected in the CCA/UNDAF programmes.
<p>b. Joint Programmes</p>	5	Based on current projects and joint programmes within the Bhutan UN system, gender equality issues are not only being directly addressed in areas such as education, health and governance, but also through various joint programme initiatives that have integrated gender mainstreaming.

c. UNCT Support for national priorities related to gender equality and women's empowerment	5	According to the UNDAF Document, the estimated resources are clearly outlined. Government counterparts have also expressed their satisfaction for the resources mobilized.
d. UNCT support to gender mainstreaming in programming based approaches	5	UNCT support has been prevalent especially in helping national machinery like relevant ministries, the NCWC and NGOs in building capacity development.
e. UNCT support to gender mainstreaming in aid effectiveness processes	5	The UNCT has already promoted this with the GNHC to include gender outputs into the new monitoring system. The UNCT also conducts monthly meetings with all donors and coordinates donor support, and promotes gender mainstreaming.
3. Partnerships	5	
a. Involvement of National machineries for Women/Gender Equality	5	Interview with UNCT and their relevant counterparts: NCWC and CSOs said that they were involved in the consultations during the CCA/UNDAF planning, the development of UNDAF outcomes and indicators and will be monitoring the UNDAF Results jointly.
b. Involvement of women's NGOs	5	Both the interviews and the UNDAF clearly shows their involvement and participation
c. Women from excluded groups included as programme partners and beneficiaries in key UNCT initiatives	NA	Not Applicable since they are represented by CSOs such as RENEW, Tarayana and NWAB
4. Policies and Capacities	4	
a. Multi Stakeholder Gender Theme Group is effective	4	While the Education and Gender Theme Group is adequately resourced, has clear terms of reference and their recommendations are taken into consideration in the preparation of CCA/UNDAF, there is sub-optimal participation of key stakeholders. Though all UN agencies are members, including non-resident agencies (UNESCO, UNIFEM, World Bank), a few members do not participate actively in theme group communication.
b. Capacity Development of UNCTs in gender equality and women's empowerment programming	4	An introductory online course, 'Gender Journey' is mandatory for all staff joining the UN. Two additional trainings 'Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority' and an introductory course on 'Gender Concepts and Gender Mainstreaming' were also conducted, while a few Gender Theme Group members received specific training on gender equality and empowerment programming.
c. Gender Expert roster with national, regional international expertise used by UNCT members	5	UNIFEM was consulted during the development of the CCA/UNDAF documents along with the NCWC. The Gender Expert Roster has only national experts but as and when required the UNCT consult with regional offices.

<p>5. Decision-making</p> <p>a. Gender Theme coordinator is part of UNCT Heads of Agency group</p>	<p>No 0</p>	<p>The Education and Gender Theme Group Co-chairs felt that this was not necessary as the Co-Chairs reported back to the UNCTs on the progress of the work plan.</p>
<p>b. UNCT heads of agency meetings regularly take up gender equality programming and issues</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Since Gender Mainstreaming has been incorporated in all programming, issues of gender equality programming and issues are raised, however the frequency is not certain.</p>
<p>6. Budgeting</p> <p>a. UNCT gender responsive budgeting system instituted</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>As per the existing budgetary framework, apart from the UNDP, other UNCTs do not specifically track and reflect gender mainstreaming activities in their budget systems.</p>
<p>b. Specific budgets allocated to stimulate stronger programming on gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>While there is a budget for the UNCTs to support gender equality and women's empowerment (supporting national NGOs, ensuring gender mainstreaming in the UNDAF exercises etc.), there is no specific budget allocation for the capacity development and training of UNCT members.</p>
<p>7. Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>a. Monitoring and evaluation includes adequate attention to gender mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>According to the Monitoring and Evaluation Theme Group, a gender audit is scheduled to take place once during the UNDAF period, but there is no mention of a gender equality evaluation. However, others measures have been put in place to enhance compilation of gender-sensitive indicators, sex-disaggregated data for monitoring and evaluation. Once put in place, this will facilitate UNDAF Annual Review reports, Resident Coordinator reporting and analysis of gaps against planned results on gender-related results.</p>
<p>8. Quality Control and Accountability</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>The existing framework meets all requirements in terms of instituting assessments on gender equality and empowerment while reviewing and revising the CCA and UNDAF. All UNCTs work in close cooperation with the Monitoring and Evaluation Group.</p>

Summary of Findings

Based on the above scorecard, and evidence gathered through documentation and interviews conducted with key stakeholders, it is the finding of this exercise that the UNCTs exceed minimum standards and perform exceedingly well in the areas of planning, programming and partnerships and quality control and accountability.

They do however meet minimum standards in the areas of policy and capacities, monitoring and evaluation, and budgeting. Recommendations have been made to help UNCTs and relevant agencies raise standards and complement other dimensions, especially in terms of improving the participation of members through adequate capacity building, budgetary support, and monitoring and evaluation based on gender disaggregated information.

The only dimension to receive an inadequate average rating of 2 was the decision making dimension. However, this was largely on account of the absence of the Gender Theme Group Coordinator in the UNCT Heads of Agency Group. However, it should be duly noted that this is not considered to be of grave concern in the Bhutan context as it is the consensus that this is not necessary due to an effective reporting and feedback mechanism in place between the UNCTs and the Education and Gender Theme Group.

3. Follow up Issues and Recommendations

3.1 Planning

With an average rating of 5, this dimension of the Gender Scorecard Assessment is reported to be on track in terms of ensuring that the UNCT planning process is largely based on in-depth evidence based analysis and sex disaggregated data, with due attention to gender specific gaps, all of which is reflected in the CCA and UNDAF documents. In terms of follow up, it is recommended that careful monitoring and efforts be continued to enhance collection of sex disaggregated data for planning and evaluation purposes.

3.2 Programming

As elaborated in Section 2, this dimension received an average numerical scorecard rating of 5. It is recommended that UNCTs continue to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment is reflected in long-term programming, as well as extend full assistance to the GNHC to promote gender-responsive budgeting in line with the GNHC's new planning, monitoring and evaluation system, PlaMS, planned for full implementation from July 2009.

3.3 Partnerships

Although this scorecard dimension received an average numerical rating of 5, there are two major issues for follow up including extended support and awareness building among government counterparts on recent developments of the National Plan of Action for Gender (NPAG) and gender mainstreaming initiatives. While there is political will to support gender mainstreaming activities, as shown in the CCA, cCPAP and UNDAF documents, many of the UNCT counterparts were unaware of the NPAG Document. Furthermore, there was a serious lack of awareness and understanding on gender concepts and gender mainstreaming. It is recommended that National Gender Focal Points conduct basic awareness training workshops within their ministries and organizations to understand the importance of gender relevant policies and to keep them abreast on the gender mainstreaming initiatives in the country. This would in turn improve the efficiency of those involved in the planning and implementation process. UNCTs along with NCWC could also explore how they could help initiate this process.

Second and related to this issue, is that of succession and continuity among ministerial gender focal points, currently hindered by the high turnover among government gender focal points. In order to address this issue, it is recommended that Ministries and relevant organizations appoint, train, and maintain at all times, 2 gender focal points (A primary and secondary gender focal point) so that the secondary serves as standby. It should also be supported and emphasized by the top management that the focal point need not necessarily constitute only female officers and male representation should be duly encouraged. While it may appear to be advantageous to appoint a higher official as a gender focal point, it is not considered practical given the nature and frequency of work that is required of a focal point (conducting trainings, participating in meetings and workshops etc.).

3.4 Policies and Capacities

Following from the scorecard assessment of the capacity of UNCTs and this dimension's average numerical rating of 4, in the area of the Education and Gender Theme Group level and quality of participation, it has been noted that the Theme Group has made significant progress in joint planning, programming and gender mainstreaming, advocacy, coordinating joint work plans, and ensuring against duplication, all evidenced by the degree of completion of their Work Plan. However, it is now believed that the Theme Group could do more when it comes to introducing major initiatives that will enhance their functioning and effectiveness. In that respect, the following recommendations can be made at this point:

- (i) *Segregation of the Gender and Education Theme Group*: This is considered timely given that mainstreaming and programming are cross cutting issues that spans beyond the education sector and the latter alone constitutes a significant section that warrants stand alone. Specialization of the Gender Theme Group is recommended not only to streamline membership and promote participation but mostly to enhance the output of the Theme Group through greater focus on gender related issues.
- (ii) *Uniform Gender Mainstreaming by the Gender Theme Group*: Given that gender mainstreaming is a core component of the Theme Group, it has been suggested that best practices currently adopted by individual UN agencies should be explored. In particular, the current project screening mechanism adopted by the UNDP could be turned into a uniform screening process to be implemented by the Gender Theme Group and replace current practices of individual agencies.
- (iii) *Capacity Building of UNCT and Gender Theme Group Members*: Related and essential to the feasibility of the above recommendations, UNCT and Gender Theme Group members would greatly benefit from additional training on gender mainstreaming. Besides the two basic gender courses, most of the members have not received specialized training. Training and participation in international courses and workshops would enable members to network and gain from the experiences of regional gender experts, in addition to improving coordination and organizational skills.

3.5 Decision making

This dimension received a scorecard average rating of 2 due to the non-participation of the Gender Theme Group Coordinator as part of the UNCT Heads of Agency Group. However, this has not been deemed necessary due to the close collaboration between both groups.

However, it has also been noted that documentation from the UNCT Heads of Agencies Meetings does not indicate the frequency of discussions related to gender equality programming and support issues. Since proper documentation and dissemination following the work carried out by the UNCTs is of high importance, it is recommended that the minutes recorded should highlight any gender equality programming and support issues, and whether or not they are followed through. This would allow the UNCT members and the Gender Theme Group to periodically evaluate and monitor whether gender mainstreaming processes are being adhered to.

3.6 Budgeting

While it is clear that there is a system in place to provide for gender equality programming, aside from the UNDP, other agencies do not specifically track expenditures on gender mainstreaming activities in their budgets. However, this is expected to change following the implementation of the GNHC PlaMS (Procedure, Planning and Monitoring System), where a separate output for disaggregating gender outputs will be enabled. It is recommended that the UNCT follow up with the GNHC to ensure that separate disaggregated gender output is incorporated in the PlaMS framework. Moreover, it is recommended that adequate resources be allocated through the budget towards the capacity development and training of UNCT members in support of recommendations specified under section 3.4.

3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The annual review for the first year of UNDAF assistance has not been conducted yet. However, the UNDAF results matrix is expected to include a gender audit once during the UNDAF period. It is recommended that a Gender Audit be undertaken once during the UNDAF period so as to ensure that a timely evaluation of programmes is conducted and that the gender mainstreaming process keeps evolving. Moreover, it is recommended that the Monitoring and Evaluation Theme Group ensure the collection of gender sensitive indicators, and measurement of gender related outcome and output expected results.

3.8 Quality Control and Accountability

As outlined in Section 2, CCA/UNDAF quality control and accountability exceeds minimum standards. At this time, there are no follow up issues and recommendations.

UNDG Gender Equality Scorecard Follow-up Matrix

Dimension	Average Numerical rating	Main Follow up issues	Steps to be taken, including technical assistance needed, time-frame, allocation of responsibility, and resources required
1. Planning	5	On track.	<p><i>Continue monitoring and efforts to enhance collection of sex disaggregated data for planning and evaluation.</i> Timeframe: ongoing. Responsibility: UNCT Additional resources not necessary.</p>
2. Programming	5	On track.	<p><i>Assistance to the GNHC to promote gender-responsive budgeting in line with the GNHC's new planning, monitoring and evaluation system, PlaMS.</i> Timeframe: ongoing. Responsibility: UNDP Additional resources not necessary.</p>
3. Partnerships	5	<p>Limited capacity development/ understanding among UNCT counterparts on gender and gender mainstreaming etc.</p> <p>Succession and continuity challenges related to high turnover of gender focal points.</p>	<p><i>Basic awareness training workshops for relevant government ministries.</i> Timeframe: 1 year Responsibility: UNCT and NCWC Resources: To be borne by respective government partners</p> <p><i>Appointment and training of an additional gender focal point.</i> Timeframe: 1 year Responsibility: Gender Theme Group Resources: Additional resources not necessary</p>
4. Policies and Capacities	4	<p>Limited participation of all members of the Gender Theme Group.</p> <p>Lack of new initiatives from the Gender Theme Group.</p> <p>Limited capacity building of UNCTs and Gender Theme Group Members.</p>	<p><i>Segregation of the Gender and Education Theme Group</i> Timeframe: 6 months Responsibility: UNCTs Resources: Additional resources not necessary</p> <p><i>Uniform Gender Mainstreaming by the Gender Theme Group based on the UNDP Model.</i> Timeframe: 1 year Responsibility: Gender Theme Group Resources: Additional resources not necessary.</p> <p><i>Capacity Building of UNCT and Gender Theme Group (general and specialized trainings)</i></p>

			Timeframe: 4 years Responsibility: UNCTs and Gender Theme Group Resources: US \$ 20,000
5. Decision-making	2	Documentation from the UNCT Heads of Agencies Meetings does not specifically track discussions related to gender equality programming and support issues.	<i>Improvements and proper documentation and dissemination of minutes recorded highlighting gender equality programming and support issues discussed at the UNCT Heads of Agency Meetings.</i> Timeframe: Should be ongoing Responsibility: UNCT Resources: Additional resources not required
6. Budgeting	4	No gender budgeting being conducted at present.	<i>Follow up with the GNHC to ensure that separate disaggregated gender output is incorporated in the PlaMS framework.</i> Timeframe: Ongoing Responsibility: UNDP Resources: Additional resources not required
7. Monitoring and Evaluation	4	No gender audit has been conducted at present.	<i>Carry out Gender Audit</i> Timeframe: 2-3 years Responsibility: UNCT Resources: Additional Resources not Required <i>Continue to ensure collection of gender sensitive indicators, and measurement of gender related outcome and output expected results.</i> Timeframe: Ongoing Responsibility: UNCT Resources: Additional Resources not Required
8. Quality Control and Accountability	5	On track.	<i>No follow up issues as of date.</i>

Reference Documents

1. Scorecard and Users' Guide
2. Common Country Assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assessment Framework (UNDAF)
3. Common Country Programme Action Plan
4. National Plan of Action for Gender (NPAG)
5. CEDAW
6. UNDG Work plan 2008
7. UNDG 2007 Resident Coordinator Annual Report Annex: Results and Use of Funds and Budget 2008
9. Education and Gender Theme Group Terms of Reference and 2007 Work plan and Results

Interviews

1. Bakhodir Burkhanov, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
2. Gepke Hingst, Representative, UNICEF
3. Leo Van der Velden, Representative, WFP
4. Phintsho Dorji, Asst. Representative, FAO
5. Yeshey Dorji, Asst. Representative, UNFPA
6. Lise A. Sorenson and Sunita Giri, Program Officer, Communication Officer, UN RC Office
7. Education and Gender Theme Group Members – Tashi Doma (WFP), Rinzi Pem (UNDP) Dechen Chime (UNFPA) Ruby Noble (UNICEF)
8. Dolay Tshering (Poverty & Data Theme Group Co-Chair)
9. Yeshey Dorji and Dorji Phub (Health & HIV Co-chairs)
10. Kinley Penjor (Governance Co-Chair)
11. Karma Rabten and Vathinee Jitjaturunt (Environment and Disaster Management Co-Chairs)
12. Cecilia Barbieri, UNESCO, New Delhi
13. M&E Focal Points – Tashi Doma, Dechen Chime, Phintsho Dorji, Dr. Dorji Phub
14. Communication Theme Group – Miraj Pradhan, Dechen Chime, Sunita Giri
15. Thinley Namgay, Chief Planning Officer, Gross National Happiness Commission
16. Dechen Zam, Offtg. Chief Planning Officer, Policy & Programming Division, Ministry of Education
17. Sangay Wangmo, Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Health
18. Karma Doma Tshering, Disaster Management Division, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs
19. Jamyang Tshomo, Asst. Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Labor and Human Resources
20. Nidup Penjor, Offtg. PPD Head, Ministry of Agriculture
21. Kesang, Radio General Manager, Karma Wangchuk, TV Manager, Bhutan Broadcasting Service
22. Chhimi Wangmo, Executive Director, RENEW
23. Jigme Thinley, Planning Officer, Youth Development Fund

24. Chhoek Penjor, Program Officer, National Commission for Women and Children
25. Sonam Pem, Planning Officer and Project Manager, Tarayana
26. Ugyen Lhendup, Head of Environment Unit, RSPN
27. Sonam Lhaden, Environment Officer, Policy Coordination Division, National Environment Commission
28. Dorji Penjore, Researcher, Center for Bhutan Studies
29. Ramesh Thapa, Research Officer, Center for Educational Research Development, National Institute of Education, Paro
30. Phuntsho Choden, Director, Research and External Affairs, Royal University of Bhutan
31. Phub Sangay, Head, Survey and Data Processing Division, Project Manager for UN, National Statistical Bureau, Thimphu
32. Phuntsho Drukpa, Researcher/ Project Manager for School Educational Reform, Royal Education Council
33. Yangchen Pelden, Project Coordinator, NWAB