



### Overview

Historically, in most Commonwealth countries, the major institution for the management of public service personnel has been the public service commission. One of its important functions is to uphold and protect the public service's traditional values of neutrality, selection by merit, and probity and integrity.

Many Commonwealth countries are reforming their public services. This involves, among other things, shifting from a regulative to a performance-oriented approach, and delegating decision-making from the public service commission to other agencies. There is a move to the use of improved performance management systems to ensure that career advancement is linked to high performance.

Public service commissions and central personnel agencies are strategically placed to build the structures and mechanisms of the GMS and coordinate and supervise their functioning. They have a key role in instituting a gender-aware performance appraisal system and providing gender training to members of the public service. They can do much to create an enabling environment through their supervisory role of the whole administration system, identifying targets, giving policy advice to stakeholders regarding gender mainstreaming, and securing implementation of gender-positive policies.

The public service also has a role in encouraging other related ministries to incorporate gender equality dimensions into their structures, policies and programmes. It is particularly important that this is done in such core ministries as finance, development planning, and legal and constitutional affairs.

The GMS *Public Service* manual examines the structures and functions of public service personnel management in the context of public service reform. It examines gender-related policy issues in personnel management. It provides guidelines on gender analysis. It proposes a number of policy interventions that governments may consider adopting, depending on particular national circumstances, to advance gender equality and equity in the public service.

### Points of entry

- Management of public service personnel: public service commission, central personnel office and line ministries/departments (to whom some decisions are delegated) are between them responsible for appointments and promotions, setting terms and conditions of employment, discipline, and staff training.
- A broad-based multi-pronged equal employment opportunities policy should be adopted, where possible, to address policy issues such as:
  - pay discrimination;
  - adequate gender balance in decision-making roles;
  - equitable conditions of employment;
  - equitable disciplinary measures;
  - sexual harassment;
  - gender-awareness training at all levels;
  - equity in the availability of all training options;
  - partnerships with NGOs and the academic community; and
  - incentives for good performance and sanctions for practising gender discrimination.
- A performance management approach can integrate gender awareness into four key elements – information flows, standards of performance, defining areas of responsibility, and systems of accountability.

## Barriers

- Fears that moves to gender equality may conflict with the traditional values of neutrality, selection by merit, and probity and integrity.
- Various types of bureaucratic and institutional resistance.

## What's in this module?

This module contains six training activities relating to the public service.

Four cover gender mainstreaming tools and issues as applied in this sector (B1 'Gender empowerment measure'; B3 'Developing a practical gender action plan'; B4 'Policy analysis from a gender perspective'; B6 'Dealing with resistance'). Two deal with issues specific to this sector (B2 'Personnel policies': B5 'Change and the traditional values of the public service').

## Checklist

- Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the *GMS Public Service* manual before you start to deliver the training activities in this module.
- The Toolkit Action Guide Unit 4 'Using the GMS sector manuals' will give you an overview and help you find out what is in the manual and where, and which sections will be most useful.
- Look through the 'To help you choose' table in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide for activities, topics, methods and handouts from other modules and sectors that you can adapt to fit your purposes.
- Always start planning your training with an analysis of your learners and their needs.
- Use the 'How to' briefings in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide to help you design your training.

## Background

Besides *Public Service*, relevant manuals are *Development Planning, Finance, and Legal and Constitutional Affairs* since these are core ministries.



## ACTIVITY B.1

### Gender empowerment measure

**Aim** To raise awareness of the gender breakdown of participation in economic and political life and decision-making

#### Outcomes

- Define the terms HDI, GDI and GEM and explain what these indices measure
- Compare and discuss examples from different countries
- Use available information to compare ranking of own country to overall picture

**Time** 30-35 mins

**Materials** Handout B.1: 'Gender empowerment measure', flipchart

#### Steps

- 1 Write the terms HDI, GDI and GEM on the flipchart and explain what these terms mean (see Notes). Point out that the GEM is very significant in the public service as it provides a snapshot of the gender breakdown of participation in economic and political life and decision-making. Give participants copies of the handout. (10 mins)
- 2 As a group, identify the countries with the:
  - most seats in parliament held by women
  - most administrators and managers who are women
  - most professional and technical workers who are women
  - highest earned income share
- 3 Are there any surprises? (e.g. women are the majority of professional and technical staff in several countries; a couple of Caribbean countries have almost the same ranking as the UK.) (15 mins)
- 4 Using the handout, point out examples. Show that:
  - women in some countries are well represented among professional and technical staff
  - there are fewer women working as parliamentarians, administrators and managers in all Commonwealth countries for which figures are available
  - in terms of earned income share, most areas show considerable bias in favour of men. (5 mins)
- 5 If it appears on the list, discuss the ranking of the country in which the workshop is taking place. Where does it fall in each of the measures (near the top? middle? bottom?). Ask participants to respond to this ranking. Did they think the country would have fared better/worse? (5 mins)

## ACTIVITY B.1

### Notes

- If possible, get relevant and up-to-date information for the country in which the workshop is taking place.
- The Human Development Report, published annually by the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), records progress in human development according to the indicators of life expectancy, literacy, combined school enrolment and income (defined as gross domestic product per capita).
- Since 1995, the human development index (HDI) has included two gender-related indexes: the gender-related development index (GDI) and the gender empowerment measure (GEM).
- The GDI compares the overall achievements of women and men in the three basic dimensions of the HDI – life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted real income. It shows the relative levels of gender equality in different countries.
- The GEM focuses on: (a) women’s and men’s political participation (seats held in parliament); (b) the percentages of legislators, senior officials and managers, and professional and technical workers who are women; and (c) the share of earned income going to women and men.
- The higher the GEM ranking (i.e. the lower the figure in the GEM rank column), the closer the country is to gender equity in terms of political and economic empowerment.



## Gender empowerment measure in selected Commonwealth countries

HANDOUT

B.1

Country	GEM rank	Seats held in parliament (% to women)	Legislators, senior officials and managers (% women)	Professional and technical workers (% women)	Ratio of estimated female to male earned income
<b>2001 data</b>					
Australia	9	25.4	25	47	0.67
The Bahamas	19	19.6	31	51	0.66
Bangladesh	62	9.1	5	35	0.58
Barbados	17	20.4	39	51	0.60
Belize	40	13.5	37	39	0.23
Canada	5	23.6	35	53	0.61
Malaysia	38	14.5	21	44	0.46
Mauritius	59	5.7	23	38	0.36
New Zealand	6	30.8	37	52	0.65
Singapore	35	6.5	21	42	0.49
Sri Lanka	56	4.0	50	50	0.51
Swaziland	60	6.3	24	61	0.43
Trinidad & Tobago	21	20.9	40	51	0.38
United Kingdom	16	17.0	33	45	0.61
<b>1997 data</b>					
Country	GEM rank	Seats held in parliament (% to women)	Administrators and managers (% women)	Professional and technical workers (% women)	Earned income share (% to women)
Botswana	39	17.0*	36.1	61.4	38.9
Cameroon	65	5.6*	10.1	24.4	30.9
Cyprus	60	7.1*	10.2	40.8	27.1
Fiji	68	5.8	48*	10*	21.4
Guyana	33	18.5*	12.8	47.5	26.4
India	86	7.3	2,3	20.5	25.7
Lesotho	41	10.7*	33.4	56.6	30.3
Maldives	67	6.0*	14.0	34.6	35.4
Malawi	80	9.3*	4.8	34.7	42.0
Mauritius	49	7.6	14.3	41.4	25.4
Mozambique	43	30.0*	11.3	20.4	41.3
Pakistan	92	3.4	8*	25*	20.8
Papua New Guinea	85	1.8*	11.6	29.5	34.8
Sierra Leone	77	8.8*	8.0	32.0	29.7
Solomon Islands	91	2.1	2.6	27.4	40.0
South Africa	22	23.7	17.4	46.7	30.8
Zambia	71	10.1*	6.1	31.9	38.8
Zimbabwe	45	9.3*	15.4	40.0	37.4

\* Figures from 2001 Report. (Source: UNDP, 1997; UNDP, 2001a)

## ACTIVITY B2

### Personnel management

**Aim** To examine personnel policies to advance gender equality in the public service

#### Outcomes

- Identify relevant policy issues for public service personnel management
- Suggest appropriate indicators
- Assess whether appropriate personnel policies are in place

**Time** 1 1/4 hours

**Materials** Handout B.2 'Policy issues in mainstreaming gender', flipchart paper, markers, prepared index cards

#### Steps

- 1 Explain that, in mainstreaming gender in public service personnel management, there are a number of policy issues. These are related to:
  - the public service commission
  - the central personnel office
  - the personnel divisions of ministriesDistribute Handout B.2 and go through the issues, making sure everyone understands them. (10 mins)
- 2 Divide participants into five small groups. Give each group four different cards (i.e. four points from the list of policy issues). Ask them to suggest indicators that would show how far these criteria for gender mainstreaming have been met. They should write their ideas on flipchart paper. (Example for point 5 might be: There are clear codes of conduct stating that sexual harassment will not be tolerated, there is an effective complaint or grievance process, and immediate and appropriate action is taken when an employee complains.) (30 mins)
- 3 Bring the groups back together. Ask the two groups that had point 1 to report back, then the two with point 2 and so on until all the points have been covered. (30 mins)
- 4 Have a general discussion about how far personnel policies are in place that meet the criteria they have identified. (15 mins)

#### Notes

- Prepare two sets of cards (20 in all) with one point written on each.
- See pages 33-36 of the *Public Service* manual for useful information for the discussion.



## Policy issues in mainstreaming gender



The following ten points are important policy issues to mainstream gender in the public service:

- 1 eliminating gender-based discrimination as regards pay
- 2 ensuring an adequate gender balance in decision-making positions
- 3 determining equitable conditions of employment
- 4 ensuring that disciplinary measures are gender-aware and are applied equitably
- 5 eliminating sexual harassment
- 6 providing gender-awareness training
- 7 ensuring equity in the availability of all training options
- 8 establishing partnerships with NGOs and the academic community
- 9 providing incentives for good performance and sanctions for practising discrimination
- 10 adopting a broad-based equal employment opportunities policy to address these issues

## ACTIVITY B3

### Gender action plan

**Aim** To develop practical ideas for mainstreaming gender in the public service

**Outcomes**

- Suggest practical ideas for action and steps to implement them
- Compare and evaluate groups' suggestions

**Time:** 1 1/4 hours

**Materials** Handout B.3, flipchart

**Steps**

- 1 Give participants copies of the handout. Divide them into four groups and give each two of the actions.
- 2 Ask the groups to come up with one practical idea to accomplish each goal. (Example: for 8, setting up a gender-aware performance appraisal system.) What incentives might be offered? What sanctions introduced? If they suggest setting up a meeting or workshop, who would organise this and who would attend. What might be the stumbling block(s) and how might these be overcome? Ask them to summarise their discussion on flipchart paper. (40 mins)
- 3 In the plenary, the groups should present their ideas. With input from the other groups, discuss how practical these ideas are. How could any stumbling blocks be avoided or overcome? (30 mins)
- 4 Ask participants to vote for what they thought was the most practical idea. What might be the first step that they could take immediately towards putting this into effect?
- 5 Sum up by stressing that the different kinds of actions are interconnected. For example, eliminating gender-based discrimination is a key to all the other activities, and this will not come about without gender-awareness training and the other actions.



## Steps in creating a gender action plan



A plan to mainstream gender within the public service could include action to:

- 1 realise established targets for numbers of women in decision-making positions in the public service
- 2 eliminate gender-based discrimination in appointments, promotions, pay, conditions of employment and disciplinary procedures
- 3 provide gender-awareness training where needed, especially for heads of department in the core ministries, line department heads, managers and decision-makers throughout the public service
- 4 set up institutional structures for the promotion, implementation and monitoring of gender mainstreaming in all core and line ministries (e.g. a gender management system) and to supervise and monitor the functioning of these structures
- 5 ensure that gender issues are integrated in the development of core and sectoral work plans and budget allocations
- 6 establish or strengthen working partnerships between the public service commission, national women's machinery and women's NGOs
- 7 establish or improve monitoring and reporting systems, to ensure that information on gender issues is timely and accurate
- 8 provide incentives to, and/or impose sanctions on, government departments to encourage full implementation of plans for gender equality

## ACTIVITY B4

### Policy analysis from a gender perspective

**Aim** To introduce the concept of analysing policy from a gender perspective

**Outcomes**

- Distinguish between types of policy and identify examples of each
- Apply key questions for gender-based policy appraisal to a specific policy

**Time** 45 mins

**Materials** Handout B.4, flipchart

**Steps**

- 1 Discuss what each of these types of policy means, giving examples:
  - (a) Gender-neutral
  - (b) Gender-blind
  - (c) Gender-specific
  - (d) Gender-transformative (5 mins)
- 2 Ask participants for further examples of each. Get agreement from the group that each is an example of the type identified. Draw from the discussion the point that it is difficult to find examples of gender-neutral policies as most have different impacts on women and men because of their different roles and responsibilities. (15 mins)
- 3 Give out copies of Handout B.4 and say that these are some of the key questions to ask to ensure that gender equality is taken into consideration in policy development. Ask participants to suggest a real or hypothetical policy and work through the questions. (20 mins)
- 4 Ask participants to suggest any other questions that might also need to be asked.
- 5 Summarise the discussion, picking out the highlights and filling the gaps.

**Notes**

- Prepare a flip chart with the names of the four types of policy. These are:
  - *Gender-neutral* – policies that have no significant gender dimension or the same effect on males and females, e.g. compulsory primary school education
  - *Gender-blind* – policies that may appear to be gender-neutral are often biased in favour of males because they presuppose that those affected are males, e.g. offering credit to small enterprises without addressing women's constraints in accessing credit
  - *Gender-specific* – policies that target women or men specifically, e.g. a micro-credit programme targeting women
  - *Gender-transformative* – policies that seek to change the distribution of resources and responsibilities to make them more equitable, e.g. a comprehensive equal opportunities employment policy.
- For step 2, an example of a supposedly gender-neutral policy might be: macroeconomic policies such as structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) that involve government cutbacks on social services. In South Africa and elsewhere, these have increased women's poverty because women rely on the services and have to take up the slack, e.g. caring for sick relatives, and women tend to be concentrated in the lower paid jobs that are cut.
- For step 3, a hypothetical policy might be: the government has decided that it wants to increase participation in sports in the country. It is going to put money into football coaching at primary and secondary level and introduce university scholarships for football players.



## Gender-based policy appraisal: questions to ask



- 1 How many and which women and men have been consulted about this policy and at what levels?
- 2 How many and which women and men are included in its implementation?
- 3 How many and which women and men will benefit from this policy, and by how much?
- 4 Does this policy have harmful effects on women or men?
- 5 How should this policy be changed to correct any imbalances?
- 6 How does this policy advance the government's overall objectives and international commitments for equality between women and men?
- 7 What obstacles might prevent women's equitable participation in the policy and an equitable outcome for women? How can these obstacles be overcome?

## ACTIVITY B5

### Change and traditional values

**Aim** To show that a public service commission can promote gender equality without affecting its traditional values

#### Outcomes

- Assess implications of international and Commonwealth mandates for the public service's traditional values of neutrality, probity and integrity
- Suggest ways of correcting gender imbalance without going against the merit principle

**Time** 1 hour

**Materials** Handout B.5 'Mandates', flipchart

#### Steps

- 1 Tell participants that for the purposes of this activity, you are the head of the public service commission and that they are members of your staff. As head, your watchwords are the 'traditional values' of neutrality, probity and integrity, and selection by merit. Write these 'traditional values' on the flip chart. Explain the meanings if necessary. (5 mins)
- 2 Explain that you have been informed that your government has committed the country to several gender-aware international and Commonwealth mandates. Distribute the handout. Ask participants how they think these commitments affect the values of neutrality, probity and integrity and discuss their ideas. (20 mins)
- 3 In your role as head of the public service commission, state that you believe that 'merit is merit' and gender equality has nothing to do with it. If women don't apply for jobs or are under-qualified, there's really nothing you can do about it. Ask participants for arguments that might change your mind. Prompt them if necessary. (20 mins)
- 4 Finish up by thanking 'your staff' for making it clear to you that it is possible to promote gender equality while also upholding the traditional values of the public service.

#### Notes

- The commitments are not party-specific and therefore incorporating them does not affect the neutrality of the public service commission. The watchwords of 'probity and integrity' demand that human rights are respected, and denying the equality of women is an abuse of their human rights.
- Some of the ways in which the gender imbalance can be corrected without going against the merit principle, might be:
  - developing a list of qualified women
  - encouraging applications from qualified women
  - creating a welcoming/enabling recruitment and selection process
  - creating an enabling work environment (childcare, etc.)
  - using positive action (selecting the woman when a man and a woman are equally qualified)
  - changing job descriptions to include gender-awareness and/or experience in dealing with gender issues.



## Mandates for gender equality and equity



### Commonwealth Mandates

The 1995 Plan of Action on Gender and Development agreed to by Commonwealth governments includes seven actions that are of particular relevance to public service commissions, central personnel offices and similar government agencies:

- 1 establish and strengthen gender management systems and national women's machineries;
- 2 integrate gender equality issues in all national policies, plans and programmes;
- 3 build capacity in gender planning;
- 4 become a model of good practice as a gender-aware employer;
- 5 promote equal opportunities and positive and/or affirmative action throughout the country and consult women and men equally on priorities;
- 6 take action for anti-discrimination;
- 7 take action to increase women's participation in decision-making.

At their 1996 meeting in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers set the target that by the year 2005, 30 per cent of those in decision-making positions in the political, public and private sectors should be women. They added that countries already close to achieving this target should be encouraged to strive for a 50-50 balance. Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsed these targets at their 1997 summit in Edinburgh.

### International Mandates

#### CEDAW

The majority of countries of the Commonwealth have also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It commits governments to passing laws to taking "all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights" (Article 11).

#### The Beijing Platform for Action (PFA)

In the PFA, adopted by the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, governments agreed to take action on 12 critical areas of concern. These included "inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources" and "inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels". Under these concerns the following strategic objectives were stated:

- eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination;
- take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making;
- increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

## ACTIVITY B6

### Dealing with resistance

**Aim** To look at types of bureaucratic resistance that people trying to mainstream gender may meet from both governmental and development institutions

#### Outcomes

- Identify types of resistance and ways of dealing with them
- Get practice in recognising and countering resistance

**Time:** 1 1/4 hours

**Materials** Handouts B.6a, B.6b and B.6c

#### Steps

- 1 Tell participants that they are likely to meet resistance at different levels to the concept of gender mainstreaming. It is helpful to anticipate the types of resistance and develop responses. For this activity they will take opposite sides of the argument.
- 2 Divide the participants into four groups. Give all of the groups handout B6a. Tell them to assume that it is a memo that has just been circulated. Read through it with them. (5 mins)
- 3 Explain that groups 1 and 2 are opposed to introducing gender equality principles into training in the public service. They are going to come up with as many reasons as possible why it cannot take place. Give them handout B6b and tell them that this is to give them some ideas of arguments they can use. Give handout B6c to groups 3 and 4. Explain that they want to introduce gender training and capacity building and should therefore come up with as many arguments as possible to deal with resistance. Encourage the participants to use their own experiences/imaginings in developing their points. (30 mins)
- 4 Bring the groups back together. Have groups 1 and 2 sit on the opposite side of the room from groups 3 and 4. Ask for a volunteer from group 1 or 2 to start the ball rolling. Ask someone from group 3 or 4 to respond. Keep a note of the types of resistance used. Allow one point from each side and then let the other side respond until participants have made all their points. (30 mins)
- 5 Tell participants what types of resistance you heard used. Ask if they used or heard any others. Sum up by noting how the exercise shows that there are many ways to resist gender mainstreaming. Suggest that they be particularly on the lookout for those like dilution and subversion that lie below the surface. Give them copies of the handout that they did not get in their group. (10 mins)

#### Note

- This activity relates to Activity 5.7 'Working with resistance' in Module 5 Change Management.



## Training and capacity building



Training in the public service has two distinct gender dimensions. The first has to do with building the capacity for gender analysis, policy development and planning, and gender-aware management and decision-making. The second has to do with access to career-related training in diverse fields. Women and men do not always have equal access to training opportunities, and may suffer impediments to career choice and advancement as a result.

**Gender-awareness training:** In mainstreaming gender in the public service, it is necessary as a first priority to ensure that the key decision-makers at senior levels are gender-sensitive. Gender-awareness training should therefore be provided for the Permanent Secretaries of all core and line ministries (except of course those who have already received such training or who are conversant and experienced in dealing with gender issues). It is particularly important that the heads of the core ministries (finance, planning, personnel, and legal and constitutional affairs) are gender-sensitive. Gender-awareness skills should be a requirement for all those in management positions. Gender training is a means of building a critical mass of women and men who have gender-related skills and knowledge, both for use in their own professional responsibilities and to impart to others who are thus likewise empowered to become agents for change.

The ultimate goal is to position the level of gender awareness of as many staff as possible, particularly those in key decision-making positions. However, in devising and running gender-awareness training programmes, the principle of 'less is more' should be borne in mind. Rather than attempting to achieve full gender awareness and equity throughout the public service overnight, training should incorporate an understanding of the prevailing socio-cultural environment and should be tailored to specific, realistic goals and targets.

For the provision of gender training, relevant units within national governments can be grouped together to maximise available resources. The training of trainers is another important strategy to maximise the propagation of gender awareness throughout the public service. In Commonwealth countries, there is potential for the training division within the public service to organise courses in gender sensitivity and gender analysis in collaboration with centres for gender and development studies at institutes of higher education.

**Ensuring equity in the availability of training options:** It is important to ensure that women and men receive equal opportunities for training – including on-the-job training – to ensure that they are equally competitive in their respective fields. Training is a particularly useful indicator of progress towards gender equality and equity since it is readily accountable, in terms of expenditures, time, numbers of women and men being trained, and level of skills or knowledge imparted. The training should itself be gender-sensitive. For example, women who are receiving management training may benefit from training in specific areas like leadership and assertiveness and in understanding the values that permeate male-dominated areas of society and of the public service. Part of the process of mainstreaming gender in the public service entails questioning some of the prevalent values and behaviours regarding gender equality.

**HANDOUT**  
**B.6b**

## Types of resistance

**Denial:** The basis of resistance is complete denial of the existence of gender gaps or discrimination against women. The claim is that “here women already have equality of opportunity, individuals gain positions and promotion purely on merit; the problem is merely to encourage women to take advantage of the opportunities given to them”.

**Inversion:** Denial is closely connected with inversion, which may be summarised as putting the blame on the victim. In other words, following the claim that equality of opportunity already exists, it may be further claimed that it is women’s own fault if they are not participating sufficiently, or not coming forward to take advantage of the opportunities already open to them.

**Dilution:** Dilution admits that the problem of women’s development exists at the level of access to resources, but denies that there is any structural problem of resources being controlled by men or there is discrimination against girls and women. Dilution involves selective denial, i.e. admitting gender gaps but denying discrimination.

**Selection:** One obvious means of perpetuating dilution is through selective choice of programme priorities. This may mean selectively editing out project objectives that explicitly involve women’s increased participation and control, or that suggest the need for women’s increased empowerment, or selecting projects that limit the programme.

**Subversion:** This involves pursuing gender issues in a manner that is calculated to perpetuate the status quo, i.e. no change. It is the standard response of officials who are asked to implement policies that they personally find unacceptable. It may involve such tactics as requiring constant reference of decisions up or down the hierarchy, forwarding simple administrative decisions to a high level management committee, losing the file, etc.

**Shelving:** This is a more honest and overt form of delay or slow destruction. Like other strategies, it does not challenge the policy principles or goals. On the contrary, the goals may actually be praised as absolutely desirable. However, follow-up hinges on the experienced bureaucrat’s judgement that ‘the time is not yet ripe’ for this sort of initiative or programme.

**Lip service:** Shelving might be categorised as one form of lip service, which may be summarised as verbal enthusiasm not matched by any action. The rhetoric is loud but quiet on the action.

**Compartmentalisation:** In a government context, this involves giving the responsibility for women’s development to a separate women’s development officer, ideally belonging to a separate department or bureau of women’s development that does not belong to any of the implementing ministries. Strategically, this means sidelining women’s development and relegating it as a ‘separate issue’. Compartmentalisation may, therefore, be regarded as an institutionalised form of subversion. With elaborate lip service it may be sometimes even presented as a strong strategy in support of women’s advancement.

**Tokenism:** This is an institutional complement of compartmentalisation. It involves having token women in all discussions to address ‘gender issues’ and to acknowledge ‘the woman’s point of view’. In most cases, such women are a token few – preferably one. Tokenism is another form of lip service and is frequently encountered at all levels.

**Investigatory diversions:** This is really a last resort strategy, when a bureaucracy is compelled to show some action. The common situation is when attention is drawn to a glaring and very visible instance of gender gap and gender discrimination where everybody is aware that the problem exists, and also according to policy guidelines some remedial action is warranted. The way out here is to say, “we don’t know enough about this problem” (a statement that is warranted). From such a premise it is then possible to suspend all further discussion and action until there is an investigation. In other words, the investigation strategy is a more sophisticated and expensive example of shelving.

(Adapted from UNDP, 2001b.)



## Tackling resistance



**Denial:** Present irrefutable statistical evidence of actual gender gaps and of discriminatory practices. If necessary, commission desk research and even original empirical research for presentation of the facts.

**Inversion:** Present actual examples, even first-hand accounts of gender discrimination in girls' and women's access to resources and opportunities; concentrate on examples of clear contravention of the principles of equality of opportunity, highlighting the consequences in terms of the deprivation of women, children and girl children.

**Dilution:** Reveal the dimension of the problem arising from gender discrimination, women's lack of participation, and women's lack of control over the utilisation of resources and distribution of benefits.

**Selection:** Do not be content with the identification of gender issues at the level of defining the problem. The interest in closing gender gaps must remain a focus of interest in all stages of the programme process, from problem identification through the programme implementation, and a participatory system of programme management and administration.

**Subversion:** Be alert to any tendency to lack of interest in the progress of addressing gender issues in programme implementation. Where necessary, look for alternative agencies or departments to implement the particular projects or programmes. This could lead to collaboration with NGOs or other bodies.

**Shelving:** Take a shelved project to an alternative implementing agency or take it to another level in the system depending on interest capacity.

**Lip service:** Ensure that the agency develops its own system for monitoring and evaluation of the women's empowerment components within all programmes, and that programme progress and effectiveness are regularly assessed.

**Compartmentalisation:** Ask for overall attention to gender issues in programme planning and implementation. In a meeting where gender issues have been relegated as unimportant issues, constantly ask questions and remind members about the actual pervasive and crucial nature of gender issues. Remember that gender equality issues are relevant to all items on the agenda of development.

**Tokenism:** In a meeting where one woman seems as if she might have been invited as the 'token woman', join her in identifying and pursuing gender equality issues, and encourage others to join the process. If the token woman has a good understanding of gender issues, and if she gets allies, much progress may be made. In this way the original strategy of tokenism is subverted, and may entirely backfire. If you are the token woman, bring this fact to the attention of the group as well as build allies.

**Investigatory diversions:** Since the claim that 'we need to know more about this problem' cannot easily be denied, do not deny it. Support the need for further research but argue against this being a pre-condition for action. Recount all the aspects of the problem and causes that are already established, and argue for preliminary action on the basis of what is already known. Perhaps the investigation could take the form of a pilot project. Cite examples of other programme interventions where more research is needed, but programme interventions are already under way. If all diplomacy fails, it might be necessary to say that "We don't want to be seen as being against research but surely we can jointly discuss this in the national planning body (at the higher level) and get their views on this very important issue".

(Adapted from UNDP, 2001.)



*Use this space to make notes*