

Consolidated response regarding questions raised following discussions of the paper “Further Details on Institutional Options for Strengthening the Institutional Arrangements for Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women”

This consolidated response addresses the requests and questions raised by Member States regarding the details of the paper on “Further Details on Institutional Options for Strengthening the Institutional Arrangements for Support to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women” especially with regard to a new entity’s structure, governance, staffing, funding and the relationships between the entity and intergovernmental bodies.

THE CURRENT GENDER ARCHITECTURE/STATUS QUO

The current architecture for gender equality and empowerment of women of the United Nations comprises: the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). Gender units and gender focal points in United Nations entities also work to ensure gender mainstreaming, and departmental focal points address issues related to gender balance while gender theme groups work at the country level.

The four gender-specific entities which would be consolidated to form the new entity are composed as follows:

Staffing

The current staffing of the gender specific entities is as follows:

▪ OSAGI/DAW	37
▪ INSTRAW	9
▪ UNIFEM	232 [146 in field offices]

Funding

The current funding of the gender specific entities is as follows:

	2008/9 [Post and Non Post] (\$ millions)
▪ OSAGI/DAW*	10.4
▪ INSTRAW**	1.6
▪ UNIFEM***	76.7

* Funded from Assessed Contributions

** INSTRAW’s figures are for the year 2009 only

Gaps and Challenges of the current architecture

An analysis of the current architecture has disclosed several challenges and gaps.

- Coordination between intergovernmental decision and policy making and implementation on the ground is weak due to fragmented intergovernmental policy making.
- The system lacks a recognized driver with authority and positioning to lead the system. As a result, accountability within the system is weak and gender entities are not represented in high-level policy decision-making.
- There is a lack of accountability, an inconsistency in political will and support for gender equality, and system-wide standards are inadequate.
- Accountability mechanisms and the consequences for non-performance are not clear.
- Resources, both human and financial, are woefully inadequate at all levels.
- Inadequate country-level support for gender analysis and integration of gender perspectives in Common Country Assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (CCA/UNDAFs) has resulted in weak capacity and poor positioning at the country level.
- There is insufficient emphasis on country-driven demands and ownership.

In order to close these gaps and meet the challenges, the current system requires an overhaul. The overwhelming preference is for the elimination of the current weak, fragmented and poorly-resourced individual gender-specific entities and replacing them with a single consolidated entity.

WHY A NEW ENTITY

The Purpose

The objective of the new entity would be to strengthen the United Nations' ability to provide coherent, timely and demand-driven support to Member States in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Vision

The Secretariat's vision of a new and strengthened architecture for gender equality and the empowerment of women was put forth by the Deputy Secretary-General in the Concept Paper of 1 August 2007. It foresaw a centralized entity, headed by an Executive Director at the Under-Secretary-General level, as the leader and voice on gender equality and empowerment of women. It would be adequately resourced and with authority and capacity to drive and hold the United Nations system accountable to provide effective support to Member States. Through this entity, the United Nations

*** Funded from voluntary contributions

would eliminate fragmentation, under-resourcing and incoherence, which are characteristics of the current gender architecture.

The Functions

A new entity would carry out the following functions, as was indicated by the Deputy Secretary-General in the Concept Paper of 1 August 2007 and subsequently reiterated in the paper of 23 July 2008:

- (a) Lead innovative and catalytic country-driven programming, gender mainstreaming and capacity-building, and provide targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building in line with national strategies;
- (b) Provide substantive support to United Nations bodies (Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), General Assembly and Security Council) where commitments, norms, and policy recommendations on gender equality and gender mainstreaming are discussed and agreed upon;
- (c) Building on comparative advantage of United Nations actors, lead and coordinate the system's strategies, policies and actions on gender equality and women's empowerment, and promote effective system-wide gender mainstreaming;
- (d) Ensure accountability of the United Nations system, including through oversight, monitoring and reporting of system-wide performance;
- (e) Undertake global, regional and national advocacy efforts on issues critical to gender equality and women's empowerment to ensure that emerging, under-recognized and under-resourced issues receive national, regional and global attention;
- (f) Undertake new and consolidate existing research and analytical work, to support overall objectives, including acting as a clearing house for knowledge and experience on gender equality and empowerment of women from all parts of the United Nations system;
- (g) Monitor implementation of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Outcome Document of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); and
- (h) Monitor and report on system-wide compliance with intergovernmental mandates on gender balance including at senior/decision-making levels.

These functions could be grouped around the following four major clusters:

- ***Normative support:*** The normative support work would entail servicing the intergovernmental United Nations bodies where commitments, norms and policy recommendations on gender equality and gender mainstreaming are discussed and agreed upon; supporting the monitoring of these commitments, particularly through the regular reviews of the provisions of

the Beijing Platform for Action and of the agreed conclusions of the CSW annual sessions;

- **Analytical work:** Preparing studies and reports supporting the multilateral decision-making process related to the above-mentioned normative work; assessing progress made in gender mainstreaming policies; proposing policy options in view of such assessment, and addressing emerging issues related to gender equality;
- **Gender mainstreaming:** Promoting the integration of the gender dimensions in the work programmes of all United Nations departments; supporting gender mainstreaming processes undertaken by the funds and programmes as well as the specialized agencies; monitoring and enhancing accountability for gender mainstreaming and facilitating the exchange of experiences on gender mainstreaming strategies among all entities of the United Nations system; and
- **Programming, advisory services, technical assistance, training and capacity development:** Carrying out catalytic, targeted and multisectoral programming; providing advisory services worldwide for the effective implementation of the commitments and norms adopted at the global level in the area of gender; organizing regional, sub-regional and inter-regional capacity-building activities.

INSTITUTIONAL OPTIONS

Three institutional options were proposed for consideration by Member States for a new consolidated entity, namely a Department within the Secretariat, a Fund or Programme and a Composite. It was understood that the institutional option selected would ensure that all the functions identified above would be effectively executed. In addition, the option would be well situated to close the gaps and address the challenges confronting the current architecture.

STRUCTURE OF A NEW ENTITY

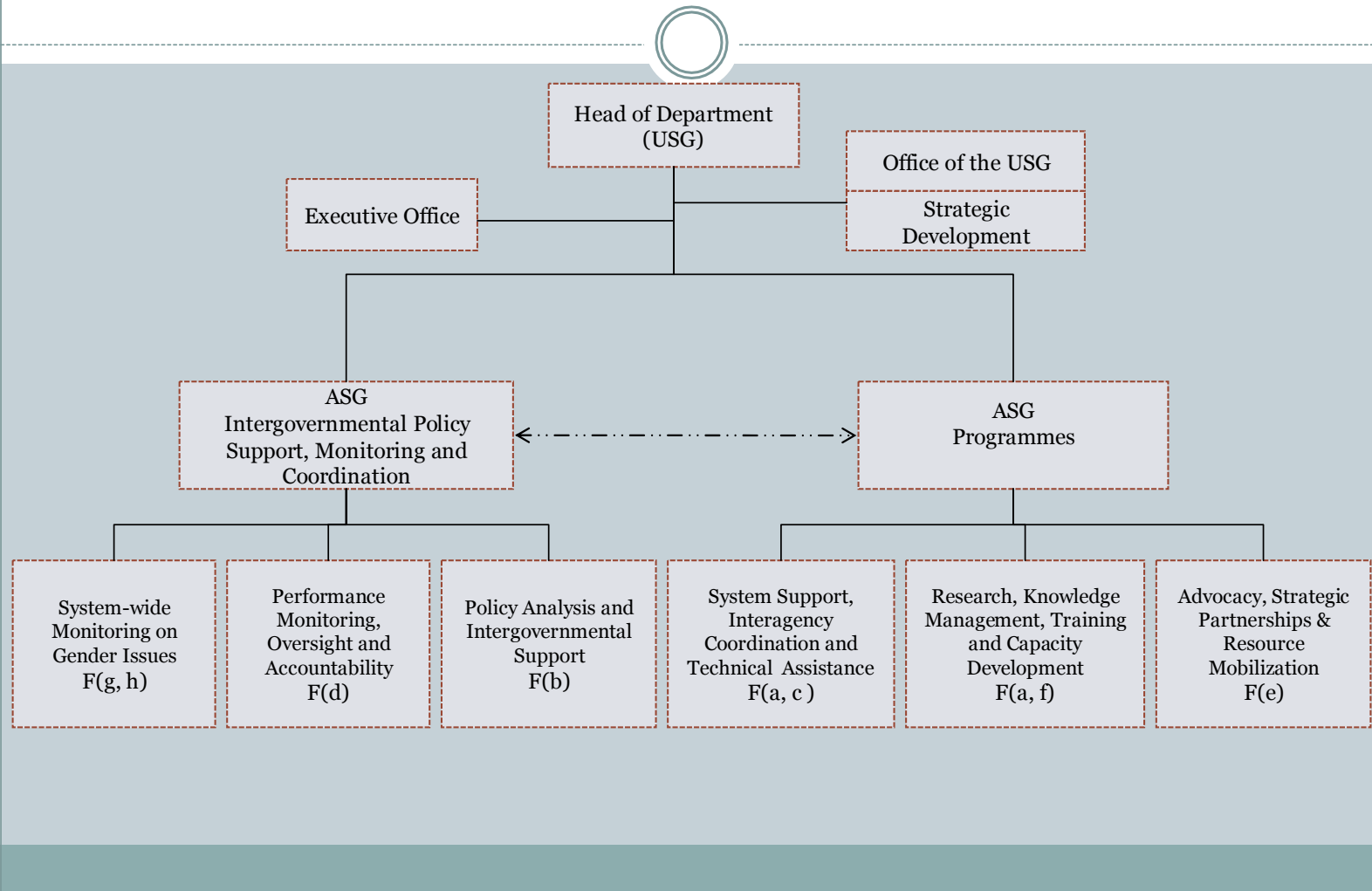
Assumptions

- A new Gender Equality Entity would be led by an Under-Secretary-General, who would be a member of the CEB and assisted by two deputies at the Assistant Secretary-General level.
- The entity would be positioned, authorized and mandated to support the United Nations system and hold it accountable for gender mainstreaming. It would undertake all the functions previously outlined in the Deputy Secretary-General's papers of 1 August 2007 and 23 July 2008.

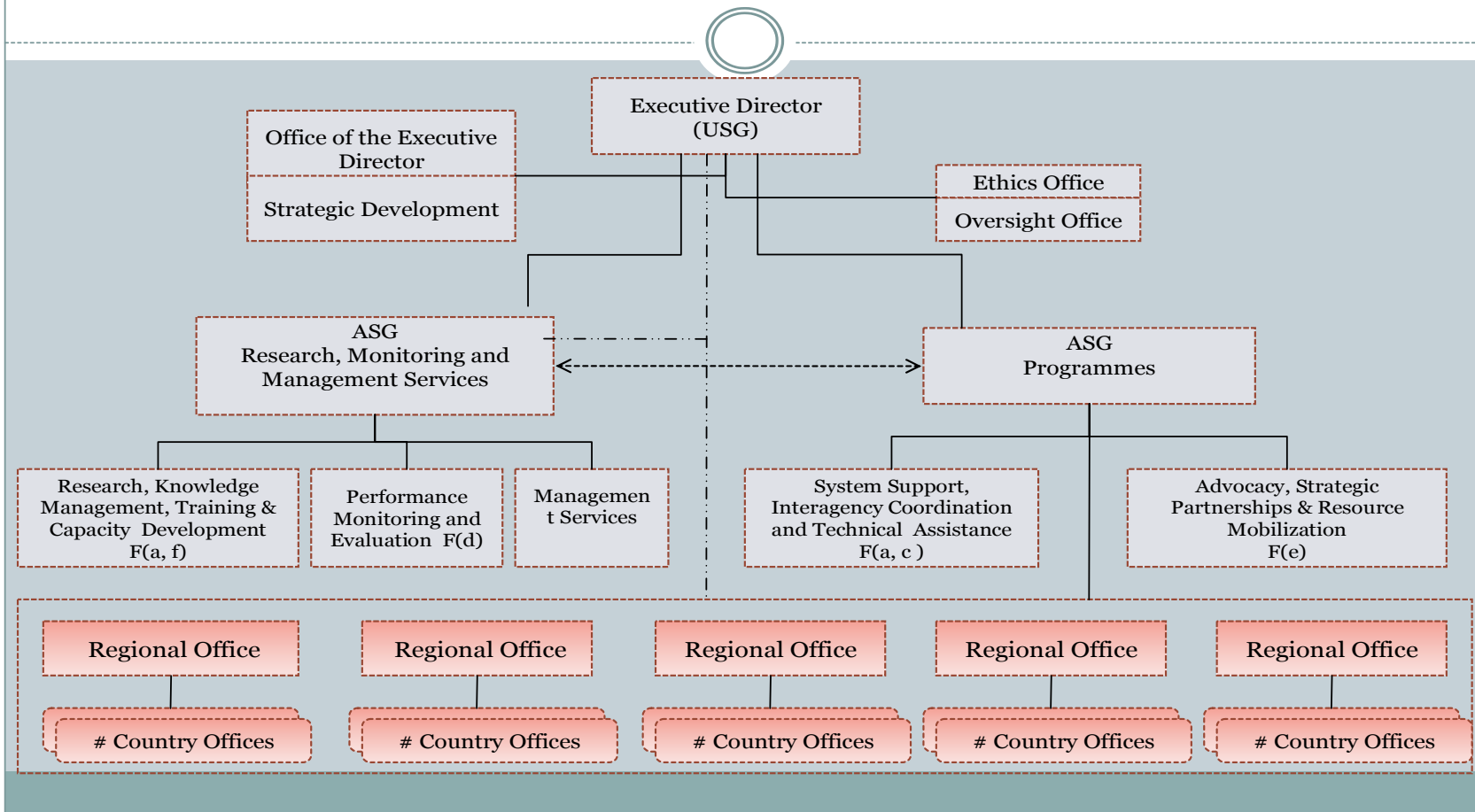
- It would have strong and strategic field presence to enable it to provide robust support to Member States for country-driven catalytic programming and targeted technical cooperation, within available resources.
- It would also maintain and strengthen collaboration between Member States, the United Nations system and civil society, particularly women's NGOs and networks, in pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment. The entity would be provided with substantially increased and predictable resources.
- It is assumed that the functions identified in the Deputy Secretary-General's Concept Note of 7 August 2007 and reiterated in the Institutional Options Paper of 23 July 2008, are accepted by Member States as the functions of a new Gender Entity. Keeping in mind that one of the key principles in the design of organizational structure is that "form follows function", the functions identified in the 7 August 2007 paper have been used as the basis for drawing the organigramme proposed for each option of the gender entity.

It is proposed that the Under-Secretary-General would be supported by two Assistant Secretaries-General. Each Assistant Secretary-General would manage three divisions. In the case of the Fund/Programme and the Composite entity, the structure would include regional and country offices. The diagrams below summarize the structure of the entity for the Department, Fund/Programme and Composite. It is estimated that almost 89 per cent of the staff of the Fund/Programme or the Composite would be in the field. In the case of the Department, country level work would be performed by Advisers based at Headquarters, with the support of a network of regional experts.

OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ENTITY - Department

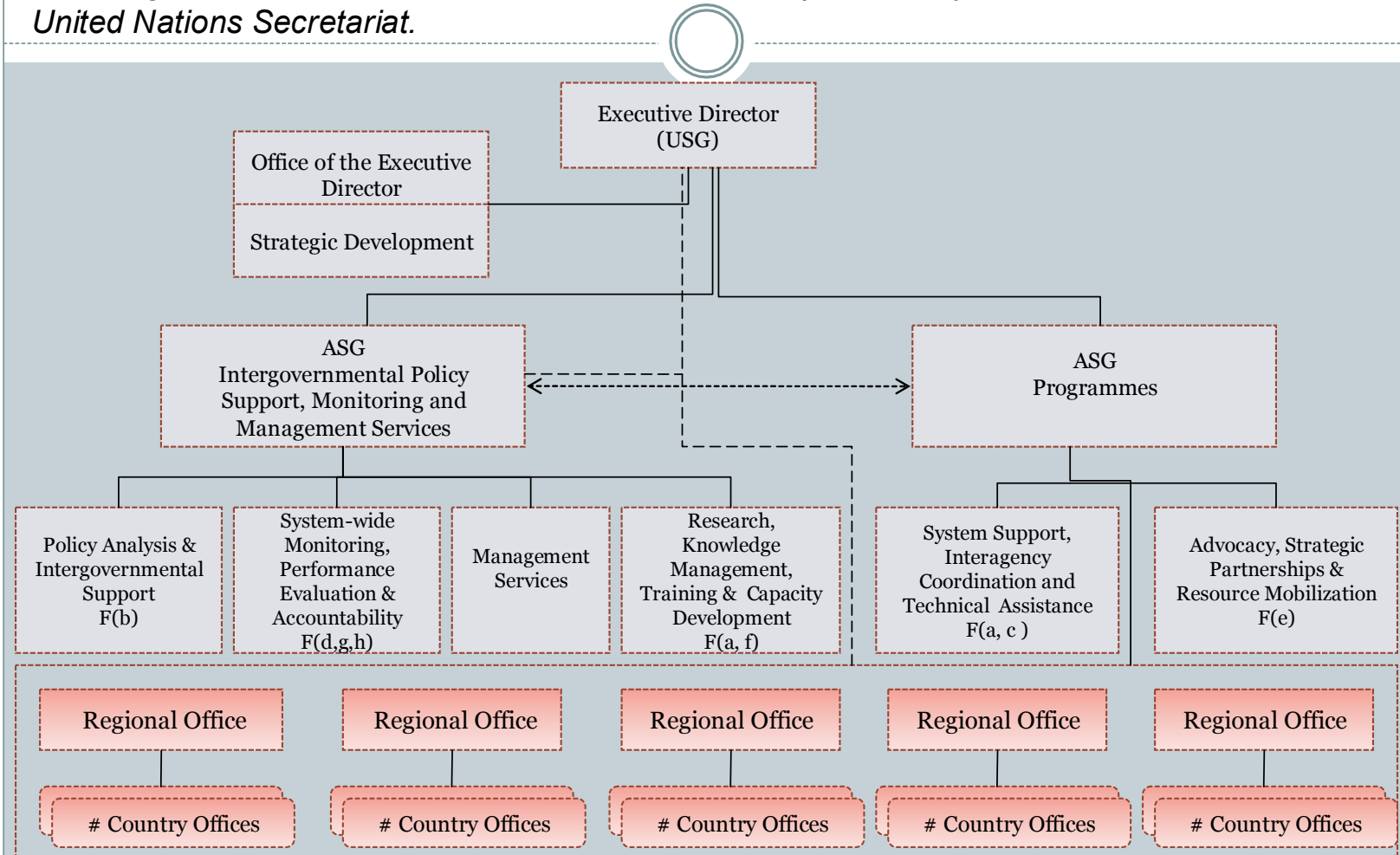


OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ENTITY – Fund or Programme



OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE GENDER EQUALITY ENTITY – Composite

** Oversight and Ethics functions would continue to be provided by the relevant offices within the United Nations Secretariat.*



Governance Structure

In its resolution 50/203 of 22 December 1995, the General Assembly decided that the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates, should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism with the primary role in policymaking on gender equality and follow-up.

In line with this, on policy implementation issues, the Department and the Composite entity would report to these three intergovernmental bodies, whereas the Fund/Programme would report to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

On programmatic and financial matters, the following arrangements are proposed:

- (a) The department would report to the General Assembly through CPC and ACABQ (given that funding would be provided from assessed contributions).
- (b) Both the Fund/Programme and the Composite entity would report to an Executive Board (given that funding would be wholly/primarily provided from voluntary contributions).

Executive Board

The General Assembly may choose either to establish a new Executive Board or utilize an existing one such as the UNDP/UNFPA or UNICEF Executive Board. In the latter case the terms of reference would have to be modified to cover the new gender entity.

An Executive Board has proven to be an effective governance structure to provide oversight and operational policy guidance to the existing Funds and Programmes in line with policies and norms established by Member States. In addition, an Executive Board has the following advantages:

- It is technical in nature, and stresses the importance of national ownership and capacity development.
- It is focused on setting strategic direction, assessing performance according to results and lessons learned, and it is well suited to resource mobilization.
- It allows the General Assembly to build on existing models.

Staffing of a New Entity

The staffing of a new entity is estimated on the assumption that the functions of the new entity would be those outlined in the Deputy Secretary-General's papers of 7 August 2007 and 23 July 2008. As indicated in the structures given above, there would be six divisions. At headquarters, each division would be further subdivided at least into two branches. In the case of the Department, the computation of staffing is based on the

assumption that field level support, that is support at the regional and country levels, would be provided on a non-resident basis. The Department would not have country or regional representatives in the UNCTs and Regional Directors Teams.

On the other hand, staffing of the Fund/Programme and the Composite is based on the premise that each would be represented both at country and regional levels at a rank comparable to those of other UN system entities present. The majority of the staff resources (approximately 89 per cent) would be deployed in the field. On the basis of the foregoing the staffing requirements under the three options are projected as follows:

STAFFING COMPARISON TABLE			
Field Staff in Parentheses			
LEVEL	DEPARTMENT	FUND/PROGRAMME	COMPOSITE
USG	1 (o)	1 (o)	1 (o)
AGS	2 (o)	2 (o)	2 (o)
D2	6 (o)	10 (5)	11 (5)
D1	21 (o)	45 (30)	45 (30)
P5	25 (o)	77 (60)	78 (60)
P4	18 (o)	35 (20)	36 (20)
P3/P2	13 (o)	66 (55)	67 (55)
NO	0 (o)	400 (400)	400 (400)
GS PL	3 (o)	3 (o)	4 (o)
GS OL	55 (o)	402 (350)	405 (350)
TOTAL	144 (o)	1041 (930)	1049 (930)
% Field Posts	0	89.3	88.7

Funding of a new entity

A new, strengthened and coherent gender equality and women's empowerment entity would require substantial and predictable resources. This would inevitably be much more than is currently at the disposal of the four gender equality specific entities.

- The Department, on the assumption that it would be based at headquarters, would, like other departments of the Secretariat, be funded from assessed contributions.
- The Fund/Programme, like other funds/programmes would be funded entirely from voluntary contributions.
- The Composite, drawing on features from both the department and the Fund/Programme would be funded from both assessed and voluntary contributions.

Based on the number of staff indicated above, and using the United Nations pro-forma cost calculation, estimated annual staffing costs in US dollars for each option would be as follows:

ESTIMATED STAFFING COSTS FOR EACH OPTION (INCLUDING SALARY AND POST ADJUSTMENT COSTS, RECURRENT PAYROLL COSTS AND NON-RECURRENT PAYROLL COSTS)	
DEPARTMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total Number of Posts: 144 (All based in NY) ▪ Cost: \$ 24,312,561.00 (all from Assessed Contributions)
FUND or PROGRAMME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total Number of Posts: 1041 (HQ: 111; RO: 80; CO: 850) ▪ \$ 124,012,083.00 (All from Voluntary Contributions)
COMPOSITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total Number of Posts: 1049 (HQ: 119; RO: 80; CO: 850) ▪ \$ 125,216,964.00 (\$ 19,911,294 from Assessed Contributions, which is equal to 15.9%; and \$105,305,670 from Voluntary Contributions , which is equal to 84.1%)

Advantages of the Composite Entity in comparison to other options

In order to truly enhance United Nations effectiveness in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment, it is critical that the current reform tackles all the gaps and challenges in the current architecture.

The Composite has been identified by the Secretary-General and many Member States as the option with the best promise to address all gaps and to ensure gender mainstreaming and accountability. The composite entity should seamlessly merge DAW, OSAGI, UNIFEM and INSTRAW into one consolidated entity that would be tasked with combining the United Nations' normative support and operational functions and enhance United Nations performance on gender equality. The Composite would fully integrate all existing mandates of these four entities and build on them. The main advantage would be the improvement in structure/architecture that allows for more effectiveness in the implementation of these mandates.

The Department and the Fund/Programme would leave some of the current gaps in place. The Department would not have robust field presence. The Fund/Programme would miss the opportunity to link the normative and operational functions, an area of noted weakness. The servicing function would continue to be performed within the Secretariat, thereby sustaining fragmentation. Leaving in place certain gaps/challenges will be a lost opportunity.

After almost three years of intensive consultations and interactive debates among the Member States, fully back-stopped by the Secretariat and the entire United Nations system, there is a compelling need to take decisive action without further delay in order to better equip the United Nations with an adequate institutional capacity to fully realize the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women.