

1. Objectives and Definitions

The purpose of this policy is to improve the way in which gender and diversity considerations are integrated in all aspects of the Institute’s work. This concerns internal matters (composition of staff and working methods), external working practices (aspects of collaboration with external partners, composition of speakers at events that we organize or in which we participate), as well as substantive elements of UNIDIR’s research.

One of the objectives of this policy is to ensure that the Institute’s relationships and work with all its partners is based on the principle of non-discrimination in line with the UN’s broader policies, which take precedence at all times. Further objectives are to actively promote diversity and gender balance at the Institute and to identify ways UNIDIR personnel can actively use their work to promote these values.

Gender most often refers to social and cultural differences between male and female, as opposed to biological differences (sex). It refers to the socially constructed characteristics of masculinity and femininity—characteristics that are plastic. Gender is also an analytical perspective to investigate the implicit or explicit ways in which concepts of gender are embedded in social institutions or create different opportunities for women and men.

Gender balance implies that men and women are represented equally in any given group. This comprises both quantitative aspects, equality in numbers, and qualitative aspects, equality in terms of opportunity and status.

Gender parity refers to a condition of equality in terms of status and representation.

Diversity refers here more broadly to the inclusion of different perspectives and is best ensured by including or consulting individuals of different backgrounds, such as training, profession, origin, ethnicity, gender or religion.

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications of gender on any planned action, including policies. It also means taking different experiences and perspectives into account in the design, implementation and evaluation of UNIDIR’s work.

2. Promoting Gender Parity and Diversity in Working Practice

The possession, use, and trade in weapons affect men and women in different ways. Moreover, ideas about gender affect the way people and societies view weapons, war, and militarism. Considering gender perspectives is crucial to developing deeper understandings of obstacles to peace and disarmament, and is for developing sustainable and effective policy responses. This in turn underlines the importance of working to achieve equal participation in decision making processes at all levels.²

¹ As of 22 November 2017

² See for example UN Security Council resolution S/RES/1325 on Women, Peace and Security; Resolution A/RES/65/69, adopted by the General Assembly on 8 December 2010 on “Women, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation”.

For these reasons gender parity and diversity are core commitments of the United Nations³ and therefore for the Institute too, to which all staff are expected to give practical effect.

To achieve gender parity at all levels the Institute is therefore committed to:

- Fostering a work culture that promotes and values diversity among staff at all levels.
- Ensure gender and diversity mainstreaming in all projects.
- Promote equal representation, for example in delegations and in the compositions of expert panels and groups UNIDIR organizes or is asked to participate in.
- Use its work as a platform to promote gender parity and diversity, also when working with partners.
- Contribute to a better substantive understanding of gender and disarmament through research and equip staff with appropriate competencies.

3. Promoting Gender and Diversity in Human Resource Management

UNIDIR seeks to offer equal opportunities, and encourages the recruitment and selection of under-represented groups. The Institute also seeks to provide a supportive working environment with appropriate conditions of employment that are free of discrimination. For these reasons the Institute commits to:

- Practicing fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures, which seek to include under-represented groups.
- Give effect to the specific undertakings the Institute has made under the Geneva Gender Champions initiative, for instance to avoid discriminating against employees who need to provide care for others (e.g. avoid calling meetings in the early morning or evening).
- Strict adherence to United Nations non-harassment policies (i.e. ST/SGB/2008/5).⁴

4. Accountability, Responsibility and Monitoring of Policy Implementation

Responsibility for implementing this policy lies with each staff member at every level.⁵ To effectively apply the policy and ensure it hold itself accountable, the Institute will:

- Ensure that all staff familiarize themselves with this policy, and with ST/SGB/2008/5.
- Dedicate at least two meetings per year to gender and diversity-related issues.
- Oblige all staff to report on the panel composition of all events they organize or in which they participate as experts in a dedicated spread sheet.
- Continue to ensure that all project proposals and narrative reports explain how the research concerned relates to the implementation and promotion of the aims of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- Monitor gender and diversity awareness among staff as part of the performance appraisal process.
- Develop an annual action plan to identify institutional priorities and concrete steps to help implement this policy.

³ Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by the General Conference of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 2 November 2001; Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

⁴ Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority (ST/SGB/2008/5), 11 February 2008.

⁵ For the purpose of this policy "staff" includes Consultants and Interns.