

2

The Gender Management System

The Commonwealth Secretariat is encouraging the establishment of Gender Management Systems at the national level. This means that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluations of laws, policies and programmes within the legal and constitutional sector should not only ensure equality and justice for all regardless of sex and gender, but should also take into account the contributions that can be made by all stakeholders working in this area. Stakeholders include Ministries of Justice, Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Ministries of Women's Affairs, Ministries of Internal/Home Affairs, Law Reform Commissions, Legislature, Judiciary, Human Rights Commissions, Electoral Commissions, Constitutional Commissions, police, prisons, probation, Law Societies, and relevant women's organisations. The guiding principle should be working together to promote human rights for all, fairness in the administration of justice, and a world free of violence against women, men and children. This can be achieved if there is an enabling environment including: (i) political will and commitment at the highest level to put in place gender sensitive policies and laws; (ii) adequate structures and mechanisms to allow effective collaboration and co-ordination of the work of all stakeholders; and (iii) willingness of those stakeholders and implementers who have never been exposed to issues related to gender, human rights and the law, as well as, women and the law to acquire knowledge and skills in gender awareness, and gender analysis and planning. To this end, training and capacity building are essential. The Ministries of Justice, Legal and Constitutional Affairs and associated agencies, the judiciary and Ministries of Internal/Home Affairs, should therefore consult and also harness the knowledge and skills in gender awareness and sensitisation, gender analysis and planning that exist within the Ministries of Women's Affairs, women's organisations, and Women's Studies Departments at the University and train their staff in order to fully address gender concerns in the legal process.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has developed a model framework for an integrated approach for combating violence against women based on the gender management system principles that illustrates how state and non-state stakeholders can work together to address violence against women (see Chapter 6 for details).

What is the Gender Management System?

The Gender Management System is an approach to gender mainstreaming developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is an integrated network of structures, mechanisms and processes put in place in an existing organisational framework in order to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate the process of mainstreaming gender into all areas of an organisation's work. It is intended to advance gender equality and equity through promoting political will; forging a partnership of stakeholders including government, private sector and civil society; building capacity; and sharing good practice. The GMS is described most completely in the *Gender Management System Handbook* (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1999b).

What are the Objectives of the GMS?

Objectives of the GMS include:

- ♦ assisting government and non-state actors in implementing the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development and its Update, The Beijing Platform for Action, and other gender-aware international mandates;
- ♦ strengthening National Women's Machineries;
- ♦ strengthening the capacity of National Women's Machineries, core and sectoral government ministries, development NGOs, the private sector and other members of civil society to make gender-aware development policies, plans and programmes at all levels, and to facilitate partnership-building so as to create a broad-based national constituency committed to gender equality; and
- ♦ creating an enabling environment which takes into account both favourable factors and obstacles to the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender-aware plans and programmes.

The Stakeholder Framework

The GMS adopts a stakeholder approach to gender mainstreaming. This recognises that the state is not the only player in efforts to achieve gender equality and equity, but must work in partnership with other social partners or stakeholders. The key stakeholders in a GMS are the National Women's Machinery, other government ministries and departments, NGOs, the media, academic institutions, professional associations, inter-governmental organisations, donor agencies and women and men in the broader civil society. Within the stakeholder framework, the GMS is based on the three broad principles of empowerment, integration and accountability.

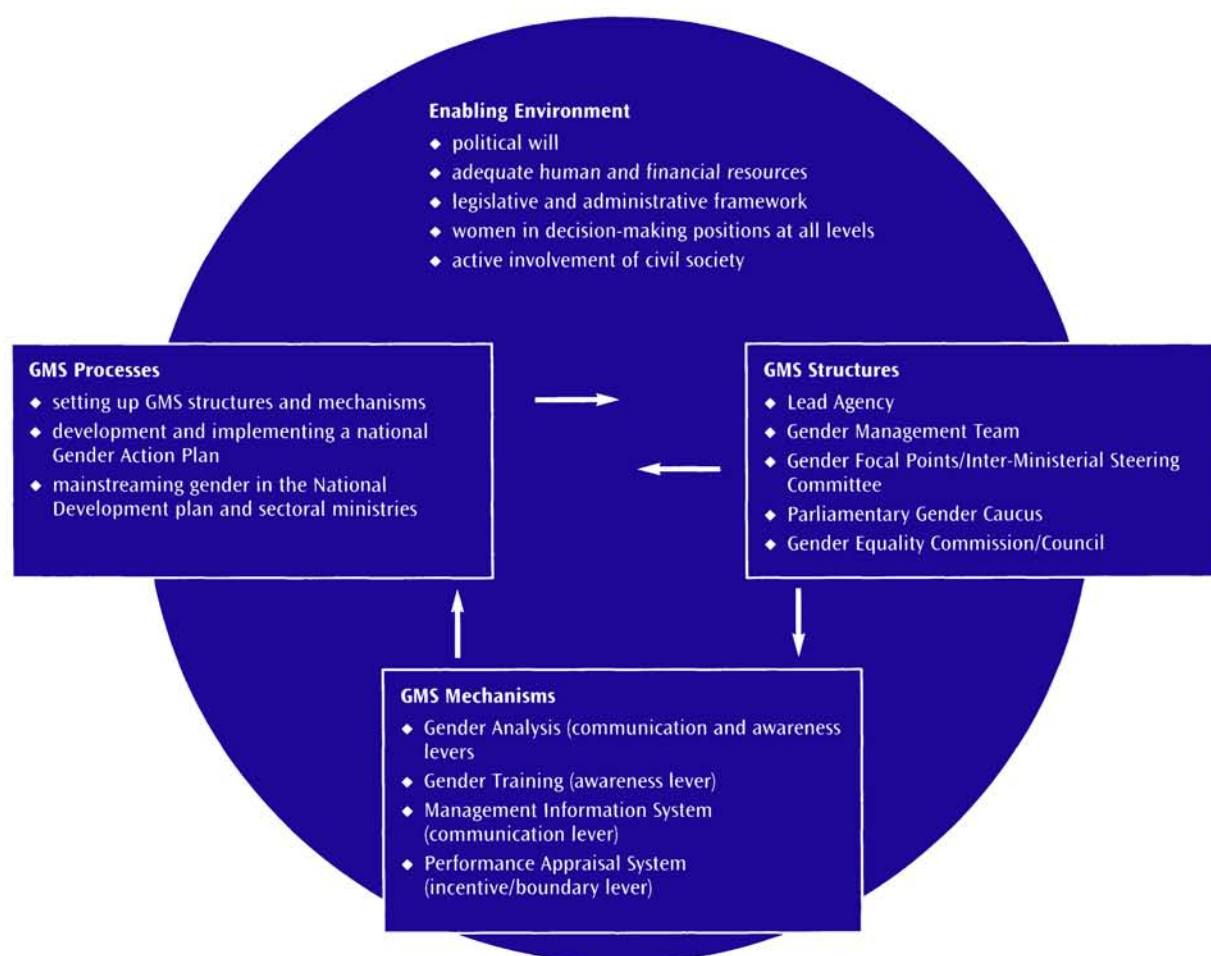
Empowerment: Empowerment means having control over the decisions and issues that affect one's life. In particular, it means having representation in decision-making bodies and control over the distribution of resources. Where women are under-represented in decision-making positions, the GMS recommends action to redress the imbalance. Participation in planning and decision-making processes has the additional benefit of increasing a sense of commitment to and ownership of the plan's objectives. At the personal level, this means that equality will inform the choices women and men make in defining gender roles and responsibilities expressed at home, in the work place and in community life. The widest possible participation in gender planning is therefore desirable.

Integration: The GMS adopts a systemic, holistic approach to mainstreaming. It aims to transform the structures in societies that create and perpetuate gender and other inequalities rather than to merely make ad hoc piecemeal interventions. This entails a high degree of analysis, co-ordination and integration of effort. The GMS is structured to operate in a co-ordinated way at different levels and in different sectors of government and society. Such integration is necessary if the GMS is to reflect the diversity in society; 'women' and 'men' do not exist separate from other constructs such as race/ethnicity, class/caste, age and disability. Gender inequalities cannot be addressed adequately unless the inequalities arising from these other variables are also addressed.

Accountability: Creating change in an organisation and in society requires action to motivate people to effect the necessary changes. The systems that motivate change can be of two kinds: incentive systems, which provide rewards for the achievement of specific goals; and boundary systems, which define what behaviour is unacceptable, set minimum standards of achievement and impose sanctions if these standards are not attained.

Figure 1

The Gender Management System (GMS)



GMS Structures

Enabling all the key stakeholders to participate effectively in the mainstreaming of gender into governments' policy and programming requires the establishment and/or strengthening of formal institutional arrangements within and outside government.

These arrangements can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ A **Lead Agency** (usually the Ministry of Gender or Women's Affairs or other National Women's Machinery), which initiates and strengthens the GMS institutional arrangements, provides overall co-ordination and monitoring and carries out advocacy, communications, media relations and reporting;
- ◆ A **Gender Management Team** (consisting of representatives from the Lead Agency, key government ministries and civil society), which provides leadership for the implementation of the GMS; defines broad operational policies, indicators of effectiveness and timeframes for implementation; and co-ordinates and monitors its performance;
- ◆ An **Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee** whose members are representatives of the Lead Agency and the Gender Focal Points (see below) of all government ministries, and which ensures that gender mainstreaming in government policy, planning and programmes in all sectors is effected and that strong linkages are established between ministries;

- ♦ **Gender Focal Points** (senior administrative and technical staff in all government ministries), who identify gender concerns, co-ordinate gender activities (for example training); promote gender mainstreaming in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all activities in their respective sectors; and sit on the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee;
- ♦ **A Parliamentary Gender Caucus** (consisting of gender-aware, cross-party female and male parliamentarians), which carries out awareness raising, lobbying and promoting the equal participation of women and men in politics and all aspects of national life and brings a gender perspective to bear on parliamentary structures and procedures and matters under debate;
- ♦ **Representatives of civil society** (a National Gender Equality Commission/Council, academic institutions, NGOs, professional associations, media and other stakeholders), who represent and advocate the interests and perspectives of autonomous associations in government policy-making and implementation processes.

GMS Mechanisms

There are four principal mechanisms for effecting change in an organisation using a GMS:

- ♦ **Gender analysis:** This clarifies the status, opportunities, etc. of men and women. It involves the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data which reveal how development activities impact differently on women and men and the effect gender roles and responsibilities have on development efforts. It also involves qualitative analyses that help to clarify how and why these different roles, responsibilities and impacts have come about.
- ♦ **Gender training:** Many of the stakeholders in a GMS will require training in such areas as basic gender awareness and sensitisation, gender analysis, gender planning, the use of gender-sensitive indicators, monitoring and evaluation. Since the GMS aims at the gradual transformation of organisations and a realignment of the belief systems, power structures and policy and planning processes in them, training must also include segments on overcoming hostility to gender mainstreaming and may also need to include conflict prevention and resolution and the management of change.
- ♦ **Management Information System:** This is the mechanism for gathering the data necessary for gender analysis and sharing and communicating the findings of that analysis, using sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators. The Management Information System is much more than just a library or resource centre; it is the central repository of gender information and the means by which such information is generated by and disseminated to the key stakeholders in the GMS.
- ♦ **Performance Appraisal System:** Based on the results of gender analysis, the GMS should establish realisable targets in specific areas. For example, women should make up 20 per cent of judges, or 30 per cent of those in decision-making positions in government, by the year 2005 and, on achievement, further targets should be set. The achievement of these targets should be evaluated both at the individual and departmental level through a gender-aware Performance Appraisal System. This should not be separate from whatever system is already in place for appraising the performance of employees; rather the present system should be reviewed and overhauled to ensure that it is gender-sensitive. The Performance Appraisal System should also take into account the level of gender sensitivity and skills (for example as acquired through gender training or field experience) of individuals. The Gender Management Team should work in partnership with the central personnel office of government and sectoral personnel departments to ensure that the Performance Appraisal System in place reflects these concerns.

What does a GMS Achieve?

A Gender Management System can have the following beneficial impacts:

- ♦ development policies and programmes that work because they take into account the realities of, and draw upon the skills of, all the world's population, not just the male half;
- ♦ a fair and equitable distribution of power, resources and decision-making between women and men;
- ♦ government ministries and institutions that are able to respond to the needs of both women and men in their respective sectors;
- ♦ staff who are trained and experienced in addressing issues from a gender perspective; and an efficient and effective mechanism for meeting reporting requirements under international treaties and agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and for implementing the concluding comments and recommendations of such bodies (see Chapter 3).