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Improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/191, the present report provides information on the status of women in the United Nations system, including up-to-date statistics, information on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, and recommendations for accelerating progress. Over the two-year reporting period, 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011, the representation of women in the Professional and higher categories in the United Nations system increased marginally from 39.9 per cent in 2009 to 40.7 per cent in 2011, an increase of 0.8 per cent and a decline from the 1.5 per cent increase in the previous reporting period (2007 to 2009). The highest and lowest proportions of women were found at the P-1 and D-2 levels, at 60.2 and 27.4 per cent respectively, with an inverse relationship between level and the representation of women. Parity was achieved only at the two lowest levels. The Secretariat, the largest entity in the United Nations system, distinguished itself with a record increase at the Under-Secretary-General level from 22.6 to 29.4 per cent (6.8 per cent). However, the combination of declines at the Assistant Secretary-General and P-2 levels and only marginal increases at all others yielded an overall decline of 0.3 per cent, to 38.7 per cent. Analysis of United Nations system trend data between 2000 and 2011 shows that 19 of the 27 entities with 20 or more staff registered increases at the D-1 level and above of more than 20 percentage points; 10 entities experienced increases of more than 30 percentage points; and 2 entities more than doubled the representation of women. The fact that progress at the D-1, D-2 and ungraded levels in the United Nations system between

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2009 and 2011 (1.1 per cent), where it is perhaps more difficult to recruit women, was greater than at the Professional levels (0.8 per cent) indicates that, with determination and focused policy and practice, gender equality in the United Nations system is attainable. Significantly, the Secretariat showed the highest increases at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels (20.8 per cent and 12.1 per cent), which constitutes a very promising trend for the period from 2000 to 2011. The continuing challenge for the United Nations system, including the Secretariat, is to reverse the inverse relationship between the proportion of women and their seniority, bearing in mind the need to target each level independently and recognizing that increased representation of women at the highest levels does not automatically translate into advances at the lower levels. Further, a system-wide survey of United Nations entities regarding gender balance revealed the following challenges, in order of importance: low numbers of qualified women applicants; lack of accountability; lack of special measures for gender equality; an uncongenial organizational culture and insufficient outreach; inability to enforce gender policies and provisions; weak implementation of flexible work arrangements and weak integration of a gender balance focal point system. Recommendations to address these challenges include the need for more intensive senior leadership sponsorship; more rigorous implementation of existing policies, including special measures for women and flexible working arrangements; enhanced monitoring and accountability; and career development for internal female staff members, accompanied by targeted outreach. In this context, and as part of its mandate to lead, promote and coordinate the accountability of the United Nations system in respect of its work on gender equality and women's empowerment, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) spearheaded the landmark United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. This was approved by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in 2012, and constitutes the first-ever unified gender accountability framework in the United Nations system.

Contents

		Page
	Abbreviations and acronyms	4
I.	Introduction	6
II.	Status of women in the United Nations system	7
	A. Overall representation of women in the United Nations system	7
	B. Status of women in the United Nations Secretariat	17
	C. Gender distribution of staff in the General Service and Field Service categories	17
	D. Resident coordinators	18
	E. Appointments, promotions and separations in the Professional and higher categories	18
III.	Progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance in the United Nations system	32
	A. Progress in gender balance policy, tools and good practice in the United Nations system	32
	B. Impediments to achieving gender balance at the P-4 to D-2 levels	40
IV.	United Nations system-wide coordination initiatives and good practices	42
	A. Initiatives of the United Nations inter-agency bodies	42
	B. Initiatives of the United Nations Secretariat	45
	C. Initiatives of the United Nations entities	47
V.	Conclusions and recommendations	50
Annex		
	Gender distribution of staff at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations as at 31 December 2009 and 31 December 2011, by entity	57

Abbreviations and acronyms

CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNU	United Nations University
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPU	Universal Postal Union

WTO	World Trade Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/191 of 21 December 2010, the present report provides information on the status of women in the 32 funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system for the period from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011.[1] It contains up-to-date statistics, information and analysis on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance and improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system. To comply with report length limitations, a series of 17 web annexes supplement the present text and are available from http://www.unwomen.org/status-of-women-un-system/.

2. In preambular paragraph 16 of the resolution, the General Assembly again expressed serious concern that the urgent goal of 50/50 gender balance in the United Nations system, especially at the senior and policymaking levels, remained unmet, and that the representation of women in the United Nations system had remained almost static, with negligible improvements in some parts of the system, as reflected in the previous report of the Secretary-General on the improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system (A/65/334).[2] Accordingly, in paragraph 21 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to review and redouble his efforts to make progress towards achieving the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels throughout the United Nations system. It also requested the Secretary-General to ensure managerial and departmental accountability with respect to gender balance targets and to strongly encourage Member States to identify and regularly submit more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, especially at more senior and policymaking levels, including in peacekeeping operations.

3. Further, in paragraph 22, the General Assembly called upon the United Nations system to continue its efforts towards achieving the goal of gender balance, including with the active support of gender focal points, and requested the Secretary-General to report on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system, including on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, recommendations for accelerating progress, and up-to-date statistics, including the number and percentage of women and their functions and nationalities (see web annex I), and to report on the responsibility and accountability of the offices of human resources management (see paras. 62-92 below) and the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for promoting gender balance (see paras. 95-101).

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[1] The previous reporting period covered 31 entities. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), established by General Assembly resolution 64/289, became operational on 1 January 2011.

[2] From 31 December 2007 to 31 December 2009, the representation of women in the Professional and higher categories in the United Nations system increased marginally from 38.4 to 39.9 per cent, translating into an average increase of 0.75 per cent per annum. The change in percentage points was 3.5 at the ungraded level (above D-2) and 1.4 at both the P-4 and P-5 levels; at the P-3 and D-2 levels, the change was 0.6 and 1 per cent respectively (see table 1 below). Twenty entities increased the representation of women, one remained the same and nine recorded a decrease.

II. Status of women in the United Nations system

4. The establishment of UN-Women pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/289 constitutes the most significant structural initiative in respect of the equal representation of women within the United Nations system since its inception.

5. The former four entities working on gender equality merged to become UN-Women, thereby creating a single, unified driver for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Entity became operational on 1 January 2011 and incorporates the original mandates of its constituent parts and upholds the new mandate to lead, promote and coordinate the accountability of the United Nations system in respect of its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the equal representation of women in the United Nations system.[3]

6. With reference to the General Assembly-mandated goal of gender balance, UN-Women has engaged the United Nations system entities through various mechanisms, including the present report, which complements the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (see paras. 96-99 below). As such, the report endeavours to assess the extent and rate of progress towards gender parity and provide guidance on the way forward.

A. Overall representation of women in the United Nations system

7. In response to the request by UN-Women, all 32 entities in the United Nations system provided data on staff gender balance for the period from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011.[4] The following sections analyse the representation of women by level (P-1 to P-5; D-1 to ungraded),[5] contract type (continuous, permanent, fixed-term and temporary), and location (headquarters and non-headquarters) for the entire United Nations system.

1. Representation of women in the United Nations system over time

2009-2011

8. On 31 December 2011, the representation of female staff with contracts of one year or more constituted 40.7 per cent; this is less than 10 percentage points away from parity and represents an increase of 0.8 per cent since 2009 (see table 1 below). Although this shows a sustained positive trend with respect to the

[3] As set forth in the report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women (A/64/588), the main roles of UN-Women in relation to the United Nations system include: (a) leading and coordinating United Nations system strategies, policies and actions on gender equality and the empowerment of women to promote effective system-wide gender mainstreaming, drawing fully on the comparative advantage of United Nations actors (para. 6 (f)); (b) strengthening the accountability of the United Nations system, including through oversight, monitoring and reporting on system-wide performance on gender equality (para. 6 (g)); (c) monitoring and reporting on system-wide compliance and efforts to develop and apply internal United Nations gender equality policies, including achieving gender balance, eliminating harassment and promoting work-life balance (para. 11 (e)).

[4] UN-Women, which became operational on 1 January 2011, provided data for 2011 only.

[5] "Ungraded" includes Under-Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary-General, Director-General, Deputy Director-General and Assistant Director-General.

proportion of women in the United Nations system, the rate of increase has slowed and, based on the current average annual increment, parity will not be achieved until 2034 (see web annex II). In the two previous reporting periods, the proportion of women rose by almost double the rate of increase in the current reporting period (1.5 per cent and 0.8 per cent respectively).

9. Between 2009 and 2011, the representation of women increased at all levels except P-2, where it decreased by 0.6 per cent. The highest increase was at the P-1 level (5.4 percentage points), and the smallest at the P-5 level (0.8 percentage points). Unlike in 2009, progress is now greatest at the lowest Professional level (P-1), where women are already better represented and the number of staff is small. As a result, parity has been achieved only at the two lowest levels of the United Nations system.

10. Relative progress was nevertheless achieved at the higher levels (D-1 to ungraded), where the increase in the proportion of women in the United Nations system was greater than at the Professional levels (P-1 to P-5).

Table 1

Gender distribution of staff at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations as at 31 December 2007, 2009,[a] 2010[b] and 2011[c]

	31 December 2007[d]			*31 December 2009[e]*			*31 December 2010*			*31 December 2011*			*Change in percentage points (Dec. 2010-Dec. 2011)*	*Change in percentage points (Dec. 2009-Dec. 2011)*
Level	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*		
Ungraded	178	57	24.3	182	70	27.8	187	82	30.5	187	77	29.2	-1.3	1.4
D-2	402	134	25.0	425	149	26.0	422	145	25.6	424	160	27.4	1.8	1.4
D-1	1 250	486	28.0	1 316	543	29.2	1 310	569	30.3	1 275	551	30.2	-0.1	1.0
Subtotal	**1 830**	**677**	**27.0**	**1 923**	**762**	**28.4**	**1 919**	**796**	**29.3**	**1 886**	**788**	**29.5**	**0.2**	**1.1**
P-5	3 576	1 597	30.9	3 981	1 900	32.3	4 096	1 910	31.8	4 060	2 007	33.1	1.3	0.8
P-4	4 789	2 745	36.4	5 500	3 344	37.8	5 633	3 592	38.9	5 704	3 711	39.4	0.5	1.6
P-3	3 687	2 841	43.5	4 424	3 484	44.1	4 499	3 664	44.9	4 559	3 764	45.2	0.3	1.2
P-2	1 189	1 481	55.5	1 441	1 944	57.4	1 351	1 818	57.4	1 324	1 746	56.9	-0.5	-0.6
P-1	65	76	53.9	66	80	54.8	50	74	59.7	47	71	60.2	0.5	5.4
Subtotal	**13 306**	**8 740**	**39.6**	**15 412**	**10 752**	**41.1**	**15 629**	**11 058**	**41.4**	**15 694**	**11 299**	**41.9**	**0.4**	**0.8**
Total	**15 136**	**9 417**	**38.4**	**17 335**	**11 514**	**39.9**	**17 548**	**11 854**	**40.3**	**17 580**	**12 087**	**40.7**	**0.4**	**0.8**

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] One of 31 entities did not submit data for 2009.

[b] One of 31 entities did not submit data for 2010.

[c] Based on data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

[d] For 2007 data, see A/63/364.

[e] For 2009 data, see A/65/334.

2000 to 2011

11. Between 2000 and 2011, with the exception of the ungraded category, the proportion of women increased at all staff levels in the United Nations system at an annual rate of less than one percentage point (see table 2 below), including a disconcerting 0.3 per cent at the P-3 level, where parity has not yet been achieved.[6] The meagre average annual growth in the proportion of women at the P-3 level represents both a concern and an opportunity. The P-3 level constitutes the largest pool from which to populate the P-4 and P-5 levels and since parity at the P-3 level is only 4.8 percentage points away, its attainment is well within reach.

12. In 2011, the difference in the proportion of women at the P-3 and P-4 levels was 5.8 percentage points. However, the gap has been shrinking since 2000, when the difference was 10.4 per cent. Parity at the P-4 and P-5 levels remains elusive, and unless growth is accelerated and women's career development fostered, gender imbalance at these levels will continue to impede progress towards parity at the higher levels. It is therefore a positive sign that the P-5 level has experienced the second largest growth of all staffing levels since 2000 (9.6 percentage points).

13. Since 2000, progress has been greatest at the D-1 to ungraded levels; significantly, the proportion of women at the D-2 and ungraded levels rose by 11.8 and 9.2 percentage points respectively. This suggests that, while parity remains distant at the higher levels, significant gains in the proportion of women at these levels is a highly feasible goal for the United Nations system and one that entities should prioritize (see Web Annex III).

Table 2

Trends in the representation of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations as at 31 December 2000, 2009 and 2011[a]

Level	*31 December 2000[b]*	*31 December 2009[c]*	*31 December 2011[d]*	*Percentage point change (2000-2011)*	*Average annual change in percentage points (2000-2011)*
Ungraded	17.4	27.8	29.2	11.8	1.1
D-2	18.2	26	27.4	9.2	0.8
D-1	21.4	29.2	30.2	8.8	0.8
P-5	23.5	32.3	33.1	9.6	0.9
P-4	31	37.8	39.4	8.4	0.8
P-3	41.4	44.1	45.2	3.8	0.3
P-2	54.5	57.4	56.9	2.4	0.2
P-1	62.6	54.8	58.2	(4.4)	(0.4)
Total	**33.4**	**39.9**	**40.7**	**7.3**	**0.7**

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] This table does not provide information for 2001 because data for multiple entities for that year were not available from CEB.

[b] See CEB/2002/HLCM/3, table 11C. Available from http://www.unsceb.org/ceb/stats/hr/ps/years/2000.

[c] For 2009 data, see A/65/334.

[d] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

[6] There was also a decrease of 0.42 per cent at the P-1 level.

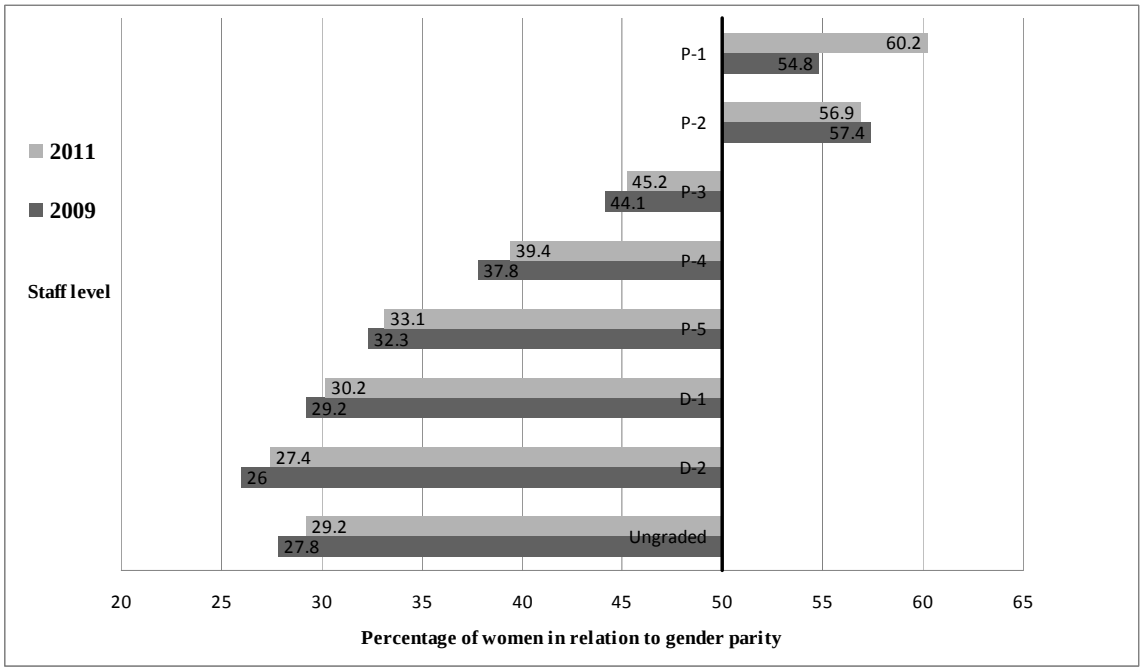
2. Representation of women by level

14. As with previous years, the proportion of women is inversely related to seniority (see figure I below). Specifically, between the P-1 and D-2 levels, the proportion of women decreases with every increase in level. The P-1 level has the highest proportion of women, at 60.2 per cent, and the D-2 and ungraded levels have the lowest (27.4 and 29.2 per cent respectively). It is noteworthy that in each of the last three years (2009, 2010 and 2011) the representation of women was lowest at the D-2 level (see table 1 above), highlighting a need for targeted action by senior managers with direct responsibility and influence in respect of appointments at this level.

15. At the end of 2011, the representation of women at the D-1 level and above and at levels P-1 through P-5 stood at 29.5 and 41.9 per cent respectively, an increase of 1 and 0.8 percentage points for each category since 2009. In the previous reporting period (see A/65/334, table 1), the increases were 1.4 and 1.5 percentage points respectively. This demonstrates how the decline in the overall rate of growth is perpetuated by slow growth at the D-1 to ungraded levels and at the Professional levels.

Figure I

Proportion of women in relation to gender parity at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations as at 31 December 2009[a] and 31 December 2011[b]



Source: United Nations entities.

[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 28 United Nations entities. See A/65/334.

[b] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

3. Representation of women by location (headquarters and non-headquarters) and contract type

16. Analysis of data on women with contracts of one year or more at headquarters and non-headquarters locations revealed that the representation of women in Professional and higher categories was higher at headquarters (45 per cent) than at non-headquarters locations (36.5 per cent). Compared with the previous reporting period, where 7 of the 30 entities (23.3 per cent) had achieved parity at headquarters, 9 of the 32 entities (28.1 per cent) achieved gender parity in the current reporting period (see table 3 below).

17. The analysis of non-headquarters locations is less favourable, with only two entities reporting parity across the Professional and higher categories. This speaks to the persistent barriers that need to be addressed for these duty stations. Notwithstanding, the data do show signs that some United Nations entities are making progress at non-headquarters locations. Six entities had between 40 and 49 per cent female representation at non-headquarters locations, triple the number in 2009. The number of entities with less than 30 per cent representation of women at non-headquarters locations also dropped from 16 to 9, and there are only 3 entities with no women at non-headquarters locations, compared with 9 in 2009.

18. Notably, at non-headquarters locations, neither of the two entities that achieved parity in 2009 maintained it through 2011. Conversely, all the entities that achieved or exceeded parity at headquarters locations continued to do so in 2011.[7] A particular example of progress at headquarters locations is WMO, which had less than 30 per cent women in 2009 but 67.4 per cent in 2011 (see web annex IV).

Table 3
Percentage of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at headquarters and non-headquarters locations as at 31 December 2011, by entity

Percentage of women in the Professional and higher categories	*Entities in range at headquarters*	*Entities in range at non-headquarters*
>50	UN-Women (82.6), WMO (67.4), International Court of Justice (62.5), PAHO (57.1), UNESCO (55.9), UNICEF (54.6), UNDP (52.9), UNFPA (52.6), UNAIDS (51.8)	UN-Women (89.7), UNFPA (50.4)
40-49	UNU (47.6), WFP (47.4), ICSC (47.1), WHO (46.8), ILO (46.6), UNHCR (45.8), United Nations Secretariat (44.9), IMO (44.9), IFAD (44.3), WIPO (44.1), UNRWA (42.9), ITC-ILO (42.3), WTO (43.0), UNITAR (41.4), FAO (41.1)	UNRWA (48.2), UNICEF (47.9), IFAD (47.8), PAHO (42.4), UNAIDS (40.5), UNHCR (40.4),

[7] The International Court of Justice, PAHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF

Percentage of women in the Professional and higher categories	*Entities in range at headquarters*	*Entities in range at non-headquarters*
30-39	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (37.9), ITC (37.5), ITU (34.5), UNOPS (34.4), ICAO (33.9), UNIDO (30.8)	ILO (38.8), UNITAR (37.5), UNDP (37.5), UNESCO (36.4), WFP (36.4), ITU (34.4), WHO (32.5), United Nations Secretariat (31.5)
<30	IAEA (24.0), UPU (0.0)	UNOPS (29.3), UNIDO (23.7), FAO (22.8), ICAO (21.5), IAEA (16.1), UNU (15.8), ITC (0.0), IMO (0.0), WMO (0.0)

Source: Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

19. Table 4 below provides a snapshot of the representation of women on temporary contracts.[8] Analysis shows that by 2011, more entities had achieved gender parity in temporary contract types at both headquarters and non-headquarters locations compared with contracts of one year or more. A total of 13 entities achieved parity in temporary contracts at headquarters locations, compared with 9 that achieved parity in fixed-term and continuous contracts; at non-headquarters, the number drops to 4 and 2 respectively. This trend is illustrated by a number of entities that experience diametrically opposite progress in temporary contracts and contracts of one year or more. For example, ITU achieved 66.7 per cent representation of women on temporary contracts, but only 34.5 per cent on contracts of one year or more. On the one hand, these percentages reflect opportunities for women, albeit temporary, and on the other, potential concern that less secure jobs are given more frequently to women than to men. This trend is identical to the previous reporting period.

20. Even in temporary contracts, in which women are better represented overall (46.2 per cent compared with 40.7 per cent on contracts of one year or more),[9] fewer entities achieved parity at non-headquarters locations than headquarters locations. This corroborates the finding that targeted action is required by all entities at non-headquarters locations (see web annex V).

[8] The number of staff on temporary contracts in each entity is small and therefore subject to greater fluctuations.

[9] The number of women on temporary contracts was 1,399 out of 3,028 staff on temporary contracts.

Table 4
Percentage of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on temporary contracts at headquarters and non-headquarters locations as at 31 December 2011, by entity

Percentage of women in the Professional and higher categories	*Entities in range at headquarters*[a]	*Entities in range at non-headquarters*[b]
>50	UN-Women (83.3), UNHCR (78.3), UNDP (75.0), UNICEF (70.5), ITU (66.7), PAHO (63.0), UNAIDS (62.9), ILO (58.8), UNESCO (55.4), FAO (55.0), WHO (54.1), United Nations Secretariat (52.4), WMO (50.0)	UN-Women (100.0), UNRWA (80.0), UNAIDS (60.0), UNHCR (55.6)
40-49	WFP (48.0), IFAD (41.7), ITC (41.7) ICAO (40.0)	PAHO (44.1), ITU (40.0)
30-39	IAEA (37.3), UNFPA (33.3)	UNESCO (39.2), UNOPS (38.5), United Nations Secretariat (37.7), UNDP (37.1), UNICEF (37.0), WFP (35.3), WHO (30.6),
<30	UNRWA (0.0)	FAO (28.6), IAEA (0.0), ICAO (0.0), ITC (0.0)

Source: Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 21 United Nations entities.

[a] Only 20 United Nations entities reported having staff at the Professional and higher levels on temporary contracts at headquarters locations.

[b] Only 17 United Nations entities reported having staff at the Professional and higher levels on temporary contracts at non-headquarters locations.

4. Representation of women by entity

21. Since the end of 2009, the proportion of women on contracts of one year or more has increased in 16 entities[10] and decreased in 11 entities,[11] and only the International Court of Justice, PAHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women have achieved parity.[12] Progress in overall representation was therefore slower than in the previous reporting period, in which the proportion of women rose in 20 entities and fell in 9. This corroborates the finding that the rate of increase in the proportion of women in 2009-2011 was minimal (0.8 per cent).

[10] IAEA, International Court of Justice, ICSC, ILO, PAHO, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNIDO, United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, UNOPS, UNRWA, UNU, WTO, WHO, WIPO and WMO.

[11] ICAO, IFAD, IMO, ITC, ITC-ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNITAR and UPU.

[12] UN-Women was not an established entity in the previous reporting period and ITU did not provide data for 2009.

Trends at the D-1 level and above

22. Entity-specific analysis of all contract types reveals that between 2000 and 2011, 19 of 27 entities[13] with 20 or more staff registered increases at the D-1 level and above of more than 20 percentage points (see figure II below). Ten entities experienced increases of more than 30 percentage points and two entities more than doubled their representation of women (ITC and UNITAR). This constitutes a promising trend and displays sustained commitment by entities to increase the proportion of women in the top ranks. Only UNU remained without a 10 percentage point increase over the previous 11 years, and no entity recorded a decline.

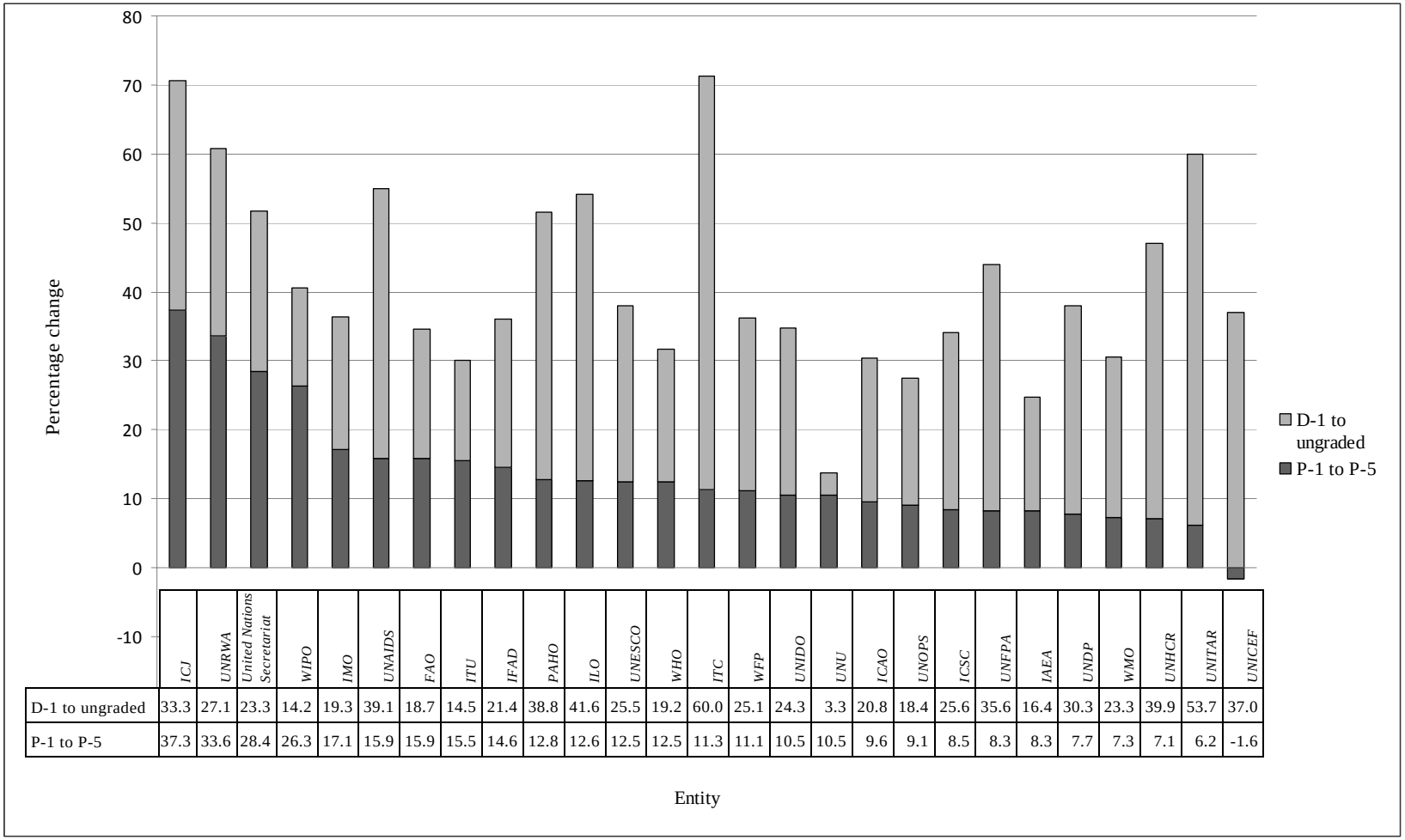
Trends at the P-1 to P-5 levels

23. The P-1 to P-5 levels facilitate a more macro-level analysis of trends within entities because they include more staff members overall and percentages are less likely to vary from year to year. A total of 17 entities with staff of 20 or more registered increases of over 10 percentage points in the representation of women at the P-1 to P-5 levels for all contract types. Nine entities increased their representation by less than 10 per cent. UNICEF reported a decrease, but continues to maintain overall Professional staff parity.

[13] Data were not available for ITC-ILO, UN-Women, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and UNWTO in 2000, and UPU did not have more than 20 staff members.

Figure II

Trends in the percentage change in the representation of women at the P-1 to P-5 levels and the D-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system, for entities with 20 or more staff,[a] on all contract types and at all locations, from 31 December 2000[b] to 31 December 2011[c]



	ICJ	UNRWA	United Nations Secretariat	WIPO	IMO	UNAIDS	FAO	ITU	IFAD	PAHO	ILO	UNESCO	WHO	ITC	WFP	UNIDO	UNU	ICAO	UNOPS	ICSC	UNFPA	IAEA	UNDP	WMO	UNHCR	UNITAR	UNICEF
D-1 to ungraded	33.3	27.1	23.3	14.2	19.3	39.1	18.7	14.5	21.4	38.8	41.6	25.5	19.2	60.0	25.1	24.3	3.3	20.8	18.4	25.6	35.6	16.4	30.3	23.3	39.9	53.7	37.0
P-1 to P-5	37.3	33.6	28.4	26.3	17.1	15.9	15.9	15.5	14.6	12.8	12.6	12.5	12.5	11.3	11.1	10.5	10.5	9.6	9.1	8.5	8.3	8.3	7.7	7.3	7.1	6.2	-1.6

Source: United Nations entities.

Note: ICJ=International Court of Justice.

[a] UN-Women did not exist in 2000 and UPU did not have more than 20 staff members. ICSC had 18 staff members in 2009 but is included because it had more than 20 from 2010 onwards.

[b] See CEB/2002/HLCM/3, table 11C. Available from http://www.unsceb.org/ceb/stats/hr/ps/years/2000.

[c] Prepared on the basis of data from 27 entities with 20 or more staff.

B. Status of women in the United Nations Secretariat

24. The United Nations Secretariat constitutes the largest entity in the United Nations system and has a significant effect on trends and direction. As at 31 December 2011, women constituted 38.7 per cent of Secretariat staff in the Professional and higher categories with contracts of one year or more, a marginal decrease of 0.3 percentage points from the previous reporting period. The representation of women at the Under-Secretary-General level increased a record 6.8 percentage points, to 29.4 per cent (15 out of 51). In contrast, the Assistant Secretary-General level registered an atypical decline for the current reporting period of 2.7 percentage points, to 23.9 per cent (17 out of 71). When combined with a decrease of 3.6 percentage points at the P-2 level, this accounts for the overall decrease of 0.3 percentage points in the Secretariat.

25. The D-2 level registered only a 0.1 percentage point increase since 2009, placing the representation of women at this level (24.4 per cent) only marginally ahead of the Assistant Secretary-General level, which has the lowest representation of women at any given level. As in the United Nations system, the D-2 level in the Secretariat therefore warrants particular attention.

26. With the exception of the decline at the P-2 level, all other Professional levels registered marginal progress, with representation of women ranging from 30.8 percentage points at the P-5 level to 68.8 percentage points at the P-1 level. The P-3 level remained at 41.5 per cent (1,339 out of 3,223). Notably, the substantial difference of -7.1 percentage points in the representation of women between the P-4 and P-5 levels and over 10 percentage points between the P-2 and P-3 levels points to the need for targeted action by all departments and offices for these Professional levels. Parity was reached only at the P-1 and P-2 levels, where women represented 51.6 per cent and 68.8 per cent respectively.

27. Regarding longer-term trends between 2000 and 2011 in the Secretariat, the largest increases occurred at the Under-Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary-General and P-1 levels (20.8, 12.1 and 18.8 per cent respectively). The increases at the highest levels demonstrate that political will and focus consistently improve results. However, gains at the highest levels do not necessarily catalyse similar rates of change at the lower levels as shown by a decrease since 2000 at the D-1 level and stagnation at the P-5 level,[14] highlighting the need to focus on each level independently (see web annex VI).

C. Gender distribution of staff in the General Service and Field Service categories

28. At the General Service levels, the representation of women continues to grow at all locations (see web annex VII). As in previous years, women dominate the General Service levels at headquarters locations, with 64.3 per cent representation on all contract types in 2011 (up 4 percentage points since 2010). Despite the dominance of women at these levels, they continue to be underrepresented at

[14] Representation at the D-1 level decreased from 30.3 per cent in 2000 to 27.4 per cent in 2011. Representation at the P-5 level decreased marginally from 31 per cent to 30.8 per cent.

non-headquarters locations where there are nearly three times the number of posts but almost half the proportion of women (35.9 per cent).

29. A different picture emerges at the Field Service levels. Women are underrepresented at both headquarters and non-headquarters locations on all contract types (36.5 and 28.0 per cent respectively). Notably, the proportion of women at headquarters locations has decreased by 11.6 percentage points since 2010.

D. Resident coordinators

30. The proportion of women resident coordinators decreased from 37.1 per cent in 2009 to 35.3 per cent in 2011 (see table 5 below). No region achieved gender balance among resident coordinators, although Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa continued to register the highest percentage, at 42.9 per cent and 39.5 per cent respectively. Representation of women decreased in all regions except Africa. The Arab region registered a significant 15.3 percentage point decrease in the reporting period, to 20 per cent. This constitutes a reversal of the upward trend across almost all regions that characterized the previous reporting period.

Table 5
Gender distribution of resident coordinators by region as at 31 December 2009 and 31 December 2011

	31 December 2009[a]				*31 December 2011*				
Region	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*	*Percentage women resident coordinators in 2009*	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*	*Percentage women resident coordinators in 2011*	*Change in the representation of women resident coordinators 2010-2011 (percentage points)*
Africa	15	27	42	35.7	15	23	38	39.5	3.8
Arab	6	11	17	35.3	3	12	15	20.0	(15.3)
Asia and Pacific	8	14	22	36.4	8	16	24	33.3	(3.1)
Europe and CIS	7	13	20	35.0	6	12	18	33.3	(1.7)
Latin America and Caribbean	10	13	23	43.5	9	12	21	42.9	(0.6)
Total	**46**	**78**	**124**	**37.1**	**41**	**75**	**116**	**35.3**	**(1.8)**

Source: United Nations Development Group.
[a] See A/65/334.

E. Appointments, promotions and separations in the Professional and higher categories

31. The statistics in the following paragraphs provide information on the overall representation of women in the United Nations system and are comprised of three component parts, namely, appointments, promotions and separations. Increased appointments, career advancement (promotions) and retention (decreased separations) are fundamental to accelerating progress towards equal representation

of women. Analysis in these areas is essential to elucidate the specific obstacles that affect the representation of women.

1. Appointments in the United Nations system in the Professional and higher categories

32. For the current reporting period, all 32 United Nations entities provided data for new appointments of female staff on all contract types (continuous/permanent, fixed-term and temporary). As shown in table 7 below, out of a total of 13,214 appointments, the United Nations system appointed 6,086 women (46.1 per cent). This constitutes a small increase from 45.2 per cent in 2009.

Appointments by level

33. Progress in increasing the proportion of women appointed in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more varied considerably (see table 6 below). Overall, appointments of women have decreased by 1.3 percentage points since 2009. There were also decreases at the P-4, P-5 and D-2 levels. In contrast, the proportion of women appointed at the ungraded level in the United Nations system increased by 6.8 percentage points, from 24 per cent in 2009 to 30.8 per cent in 2011 (28 women out of 91 appointments). This represents the largest increase in recent years and indicates the efficacy of strong leadership, which has a direct influence at this level.

34. The highest proportion of female appointments was recorded at the P-1 level, rising by 6.3 percentage points since 2009 to 64.1 per cent (59 out of 92), and the lowest at the D-2 level (28.5 per cent; 35 out of 123). Representation of women in appointments decreased with each increasing level, up to the D-2 level; women were more than twice as likely to be appointed at the lowest professional level than at any of the four highest levels (P-5 to ungraded). The relatively larger proportion of female appointments at the lower levels also explains the concentration of women at those levels of the system, and the slow progress at levels P-4 to D-1 suggests that efforts to appoint more women need to be redoubled (see web annex VIII).

Table 6
Percentage of appointments of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations, from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009 and from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011

(Percentage of appointments of women by level)

Years	*Ungraded*	*D-2*	*D-1*	*P-5*	*P-4*	*P-3*	*P-2*	*P-1*	*All levels*
1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009[a]	24.0	29.2	27.3	31.1	37.4	44.9	60.0	57.8	43.4
1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[b]	30.8	28.5	28.8	30.0	35.6	45.0	58.0	64.1	42.1
Percentage point change	6.8	(0.7)	1.5	(1.1)	(1.8)	0.1	(2.0)	6.3	(1.3)

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] 2009 data prepared on the basis of data submitted by 28 United Nations entities. These data were amended following the publication of the previous report (A/65/334). The data presented here are the most recent.

[b] 2011 data prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

Appointments by location: headquarters and non-headquarters

35. Analysis of appointments of women by contract type and location revealed that the proportion of women appointed at headquarters locations was higher than at non-headquarters locations at every level. Table 7 below shows that appointments of women at headquarters constituted 50 per cent (3,734) of all headquarters appointments and 40.5 per cent (2,375) of all non-headquarters appointments. At the ungraded level, in contrast to the overall improvement described above, appointments at non-headquarters locations fell by 2.3 per cent.[15] At the D-2 level, appointments fell by 2.9 percentage points to 12.5 per cent, compared with 38.2 per cent at headquarters locations. Overall, gender parity in appointments was achieved or exceeded at headquarters locations only at the P-3 level and below, and at non-headquarters locations only at the P-2 level and below.

Table 7

Percentage of appointments of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on all contract types at headquarters and non-headquarters locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011

	Distribution of appointments — all contract types						*All contract types*		
	Headquarters			*Non-headquarters*			*Headquarters + non-headquarters*		
	Number			*Number*			*Number*		
Levels	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of women*
Ungraded	43	23	34.8	38	6	13.6	81	29	26.4
D-2	55	34	38.2	49	7	12.5	104	41	28.3
D-1	137	77	36.0	116	44	27.5	253	121	32.4
Subtotal	**235**	**134**	**36.3**	**203**	**57**	**21.9**	**438**	**191**	**30.4**
P-5	782	385	33.0	515	217	29.6	1 297	602	31.7
P-4	898	728	44.8	1 059	595	36.0	1 957	1 323	40.3
P-3	1 179	1 526	56.4	1 266	962	43.2	2 445	2 488	50.4
P-2	521	802	60.6	426	500	54.0	947	1 302	57.9
P-1	73	136	65.1	25	44	63.8	98	180	64.7
Subtotal	**3 452**	**3 577**	**50.9**	**3 291**	**2 318**	**41.3**	**6 744**	**5 895**	**46.6**
Total	**3 731**	**3 734**	**50.0**	**3 494**	**2 375**	**40.5**	**7 128**	**6 086**	**46.1**

Source: Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

36. The eight entities with over 1,000 staff at the Professional and higher levels were analysed separately, since their large numbers made them less susceptible to extreme fluctuations in percentages (see figure III below).[16] Overall parity in appointments on contracts of one year or more was attained at headquarters locations by UNDP and UNICEF and at non-headquarters locations by UNICEF.

[15] A total of 6 out of 44 in the current reporting period, compared with 7 out of 51 in the previous period.

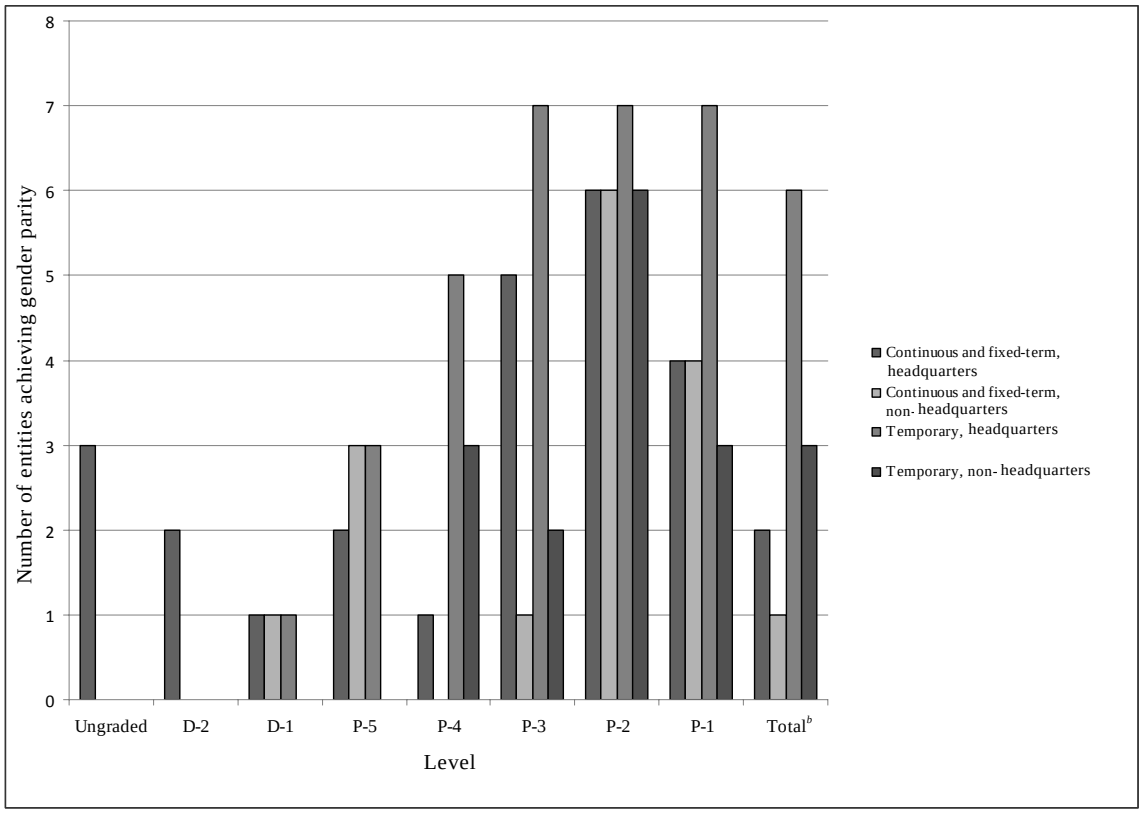
[16] The eight entities were FAO, IAEA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, the United Nations Secretariat, WFP and WHO.

Three entities achieved parity at the ungraded levels (UNICEF, WFP and WHO) and two achieved parity at the D-2 level (UNDP and UNHCR), but only at headquarters locations on contracts of one year or more. The relatively lower representation of women at non-headquarters locations may be partly attributed to the responsibilities of family care, often disproportionately shouldered by women.

37. Overall, at both locations, entities were more likely to achieve parity in temporary appointments than in appointments of one year or more. However, when broken down by level, no entity attained balance in temporary appointments at non-headquarters locations above the P-4 level. Representation of women among temporary appointees at non-headquarters locations was highest at UNAIDS (53.8 per cent), which demonstrates that parity in appointments at non-headquarters locations is feasible (see web annex IX). The relatively larger proportion of women in temporary appointments indicates that there is a large pool of qualified women who are able to take advantage of the flexibility these contracts may offer but consequently miss out on the benefits of more secure contracts, which are disproportionately enjoyed by men.

Figure III

Number of United Nations entities with 1,000 or more staff[a] achieving gender parity in new appointments of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels, by contract type and location, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011



Source: United Nations entities.

[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by FAO, IAEA, the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO.

[b] Total number of entities achieving parity for each contract type across all levels.

Appointments by entity

38. As shown in 8 below, the majority of United Nations entities had either achieved or were close to achieving gender parity in new appointments when the data for the Professional and higher categories were aggregated. Eleven achieved or exceeded gender parity in appointments on contracts of one year or more, three more than in 2009. Another 11 were in reasonable range of reaching gender parity, with appointments of women representing between 40 and 49 per cent of all appointments. However, this positive picture belies the limited progress at the decision-making levels of P-5 and above. In this regard, it should be noted that appointment rates higher than 50 per cent would accelerate progress towards gender balance.

39. Comparison of the P-5 to ungraded levels with the P-1 to ungraded levels reveals the lack of progress by entities at the higher levels. PAHO, for example, exceeded parity when data for the P-1 to ungraded levels were aggregated, but women constituted only 23.1 per cent of appointments at the higher levels alone. Eight entities achieved or exceeded gender balance at the higher levels (two more than in 2009) but only ITC, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (hereinafter the Pension Fund) and WFP increased their representation of women in appointments at these levels. In five entities, women represented between 40 and 49 per cent of new appointments. UNICEF, in particular, was very close to gender balance in appointments and had a large enough total number of appointments for this to be noteworthy. However, the largest group (15 entities) remained far from the goal of gender parity, having appointed less than 30 per cent women at the P-5 level and above. In sum, the data reconfirm that little progress has been made in appointing women to decision-making roles, except at the highest ungraded levels, suggesting that efforts must be intensified if parity is to be achieved in the near future.

Table 8

Comparison of the percentage of appointments of women at the P-1 to ungraded levels and P-5 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011, by entity

Percentage of women in appointments	*Number of entities in the range*	*Entities in range*	*Number of entities in the range*	*Entities in range*
		P-1 to ungraded		*P-5 to ungraded*
>50	11	UN-Women 78.0 (46/59), International Court of Justice 68.8 (11/16), ICSC 66.7 (2/3), UNITAR 60.0 (6/10), ITC-ILO 56.3 (9/16), UNFPA 54.4 (86/158), PAHO 53.7 (51/95), UNICEF 52.2 (228/438), UNAIDS 52.1 (25/48), WIPO 51.4 (38/74), WTO 50.0 (4/8)	8	International Court of Justice 100 (1/1), UNITAR 100 (2/2), UN-Women 67.9 (19/28), UNAIDS 66.7 (10/15), ITC 50.0 (2/4), ITC-ILO 50.0 (1/2), UNHCR 50.0 (8/16), WFP 50.0 (8/16)

Percentage of women in appointments	*Number of entities in the range*	*Entities in range*	*Number of entities in the range*	*Entities in range*
		P-1 to ungraded		*P-5 to ungraded*
40-49	11	UNRWA 49.5 (50/101), UNESCO 47.4 (54/114), IFAD 47.1 (49/104), ITC 47.1 (16/34), ITU 44.3 (43/97), IMO 44.0 (11/25), UNHCR 43.2 (83/192), ILO 43.1 (31/72), United Nations Secretariat 41.7 (1,114/2,674), UNDP 41.3 (460/1,115), WHO 41.1 (78/190)	5	UNICEF 46.4 (32/69), UNRWA 43.8 (7/16), WIPO 43.5 (10/23), ILO 42.9 (9/21), Pension Fund 42.3 (11/26)
30-39	5	Pension Fund 39.8 (35/88), FAO 37.6 (171/455), WFP 34.2 (39/114), UNOPS 33.3 (47/141), UPU 33.3 (6/18)	4	IFAD 36.0 (9/25), UNFPA 35.9 (14/39), IMO 33.3 (2/6), UNESCO 32.4 (11/34)
<30	5	UNU 28.6 (10/35), IAEA 26.4 (69/261), UNIDO 24.5 (13/53), ICAO 18.2 (10/55), WMO 18.2 (4/22)	15	ITU 28.1 (9/32), WHO 27.5 (19/69), UNDP 27.0 (54/200), United Nations Secretariat 26.3 (114/434), UNOPS 25.0 (8/32), WTO 25.0 (1/4), PAHO 23.1 (3/13), UNU 20.0 (1/5), FAO 19.5 (15/77), IAEA 12.7 (9/71), ICAO 8.3 (1/12), UNIDO 7.1 (1/14), ICSC 0 (0/1), UPU 0 (0/1), WMO 0 (0/6)
Total	**32**		**32**	

Source: Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

40. To understand the lack of progress in appointments of women, it is necessary to look at the staff selection process (see web annex X). Women were found to be underrepresented at every stage of the application and selection process, but a greater proportion of women were selected (43.1 per cent) compared with the proportion that applied (38.1 per cent); this is an extremely positive trend, which must be sustained.[17] However, despite the fact that proportionally more applications of women at the P-5 level were forwarded to the hiring manager (32 per cent compared with 30.9 per cent at the P-4 level), significantly fewer women were actually selected at that level (29.3 per cent) compared with the P-4 level (46 per cent). This implies that the obstacles to gender parity will not be overcome simply by increasing the proportion of qualified women applicants.

41. An additional concern is that the proportion of women selected at the aggregated P-5 to D-2 levels (29.8 per cent) was significantly lower than the proportion of women recommended (34.3 per cent) at those levels. This warrants attention by senior managers, who often have direct authority regarding appointments at these levels, and implies that special measures may be required to guarantee the selection of equally or better qualified women at the P-5 to D-2 levels.

[17] Based on data from 20 United Nations entities. Two entities, PAHO and WHO, reported their data on vacancies collectively.

2. Promotions in the United Nations system in the Professional and higher categories

42. A total of 30 out of 32 United Nations entities provided data on promotions for the current reporting period.[18] These data showed that women constitute 42.7 per cent of all promotions on contracts of one year or more. Notably, while women account for 43.3 per cent of P-2 to D-1 promotions, they constitute only 25.5 per cent of D-2 promotions (see table 9 below).[19]

Promotions by level

43. Analysis by level across entities reveals that gender parity was surpassed in promotions at the P-2 and P-3 levels, at 58.6 per cent and 54 per cent respectively (see table 9 below). Additional gains were made at the P-4 level where, at the current rate of change (1.7 percentage points), parity in promotions will be attained in less than three years. In contrast, at the P-5 to D-2 levels, 31.7 per cent of promotions comprised women. The low proportion of female promotions at the most senior levels is an underlying reason for their underrepresentation at these levels across the United Nations system (see web annex XI).

44. There is an inverse relationship in which women's share of promotions decreases with every increase in staffing level, from 58.6 per cent at the P-2 level to less than half that at the D-2 level. Overall, women were 2.3 times more likely to be promoted at the P-2 level than at the D-2 level. However, relatively few women are actually promoted at the P-2 level because there are fewer promotions overall. For example, the combined number of women promoted at the P-2 and P-3 levels (495), the only levels where parity was achieved, is less than the number of men promoted at the P-4 level alone (662). This imbalance is not offset by appointments at these levels (see paras. 33 and 34 above), yielding fewer qualified women in the pipeline for the higher levels of the United Nations system.[20] In this context, it is worth noting that the goal of achieving and sustaining gender parity within a reasonable time frame may require appointments and promotions of women in proportions that exceed parity, particularly at the higher levels.

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[18] UNOPS and UN-Women did not submit data in this reporting period.

[19] The ungraded levels are not included in any of the data on promotions, since they constitute direct appointments rather than promotions. All the data on promotions relate to contracts of one year or more (continuous and fixed-term); temporary contracts are excluded.

[20] Comparative data on aggregated appointments at the P-2 and P-3 levels for contracts of one year or more indicates that more jobs are going to external than internal candidates, but the majority of these are awarded to men.

Table 9

Gender distribution of promotions at the P-2 to D-2 levels in the United Nations system for contracts of one year or more at all locations, from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009 and 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011

	Gender distribution of promotions for contracts of one year or more								
	1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009[a]				*1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011*[b]				*Change in percentage points 2009-2011*
Level	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*	*Percentage women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*	*Percentage women*	
D-2	91	31	122	25.4	82	28	110	25.5	0.1
D-1	181	82	263	31.2	262	113	375	30.1	(1.1)
Subtotal D-levels	**272**	**113**	**385**	**29.4**	**344**	**141**	**485**	**29.1**	**(0.3)**
P-5	415	257	672	38.2	592	294	886	33.2	(5.0)
P-4	544	432	976	44.3	662	565	1 227	46.0	1.7
P-3	317	364	681	53.5	323	379	702	54.0	0.5
P-2	60	100	160	62.5	82	116	198	58.6	(3.9)
Subtotal P-levels	**1 336**	**1 153**	**2 489**	**46.3**	**1 659**	**1 354**	**3 013**	**44.9**	**1.4**
Total	**1 608**	**1 226**	**2 874**	**42.7**	**2 003**	**1 495**	**3 498**	**42.7**	**0**

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] 2009 data prepared on the basis of data submitted by 26 United Nations entities. These data were amended following the publication of the previous report (A/65/334). The data presented here are the most recent.

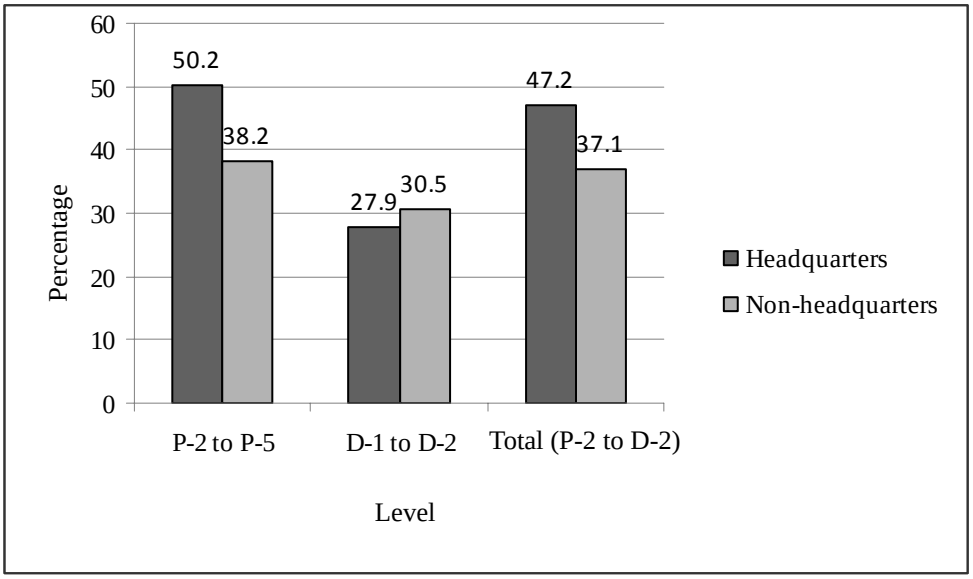
[b] Prepared on the basis of data provided by 30 United Nations entities; UNOPS and UN-Women did not submit data.

Promotions by location: headquarters and non-headquarters

45. Analysis of promotions by headquarters and non-headquarters locations (see figure IV below) indicates that, overall, at the Professional and higher levels (P-2 to D-2), a greater proportion of women were promoted at headquarters locations (47.2 per cent) than at non-headquarters locations (37.1 per cent) in 2010 and 2011 (see web annex XI). However, as in the previous reporting period, this trend was reversed at the D-1 to D-2 levels, where more women were promoted at non-headquarters locations (30.5 per cent) than at headquarters locations (27.9 per cent). In fact, at headquarters locations, almost twice the proportion of promotions were awarded to women at the P-2 to P-5 levels (50.2 per cent), compared with women at the higher levels (27.9 per cent).

Figure IV

Comparison of the percentage of female promotions at the D-1 and D-2 levels and at the P-2 to P-5 levels in the United Nations system, for contracts of one year or more, at headquarters and non-headquarters locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[a]



Source: United Nations entities.

[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 30 United Nations entities. UNOPS and UN-Women did not provide data.

Promotions by entity

46. Table 10 below shows the proportion and number of women promoted overall at the P-2 to D-2 levels and at the higher levels (P-5 to D-2) in each entity in 2010 and 2011. The number of entities that achieved or exceeded gender parity in promotions at the aggregated P-2 to D-2 levels doubled in the current reporting period (from 6 to 12 entities). In addition, the number of entities in which promotions of women were below 30 per cent decreased from seven in 2008-2009 to three in 2010-2011. This reflects significant progress across the range of levels, as demonstrated by the four entities that have consistently achieved parity in promotions at the P-2 to D-2 levels since 1 January 2008 (IFAD, UNICEF, PAHO and WIPO).

47. However, looking at the higher levels (P-5 to D-2) in isolation, the picture changes considerably, with only six entities achieving parity in promotions. While this is triple the number of entities that achieved parity in 2009 and 2007, it exemplifies a persistent trend across the United Nations system in which the majority of promotions of women are awarded at the P-2 to P-4 levels (70.9 per cent). For example, in three of the entities where 100 per cent of promotions at the P-5 to D-2 levels were awarded to men (UNRWA (0/7), UNU (0/2) and WTO (0/5)), over 30 per cent of the P-2 to P-4 promotions were awarded to women. The result is that the number of entities in which promotions of women constitute less than 30 per cent at the P-5 to D-2 level has remained the same since 2009 (13).

48. WMO was the only entity to achieve parity at the D-2, D-1 and P-5 levels, while five other entities achieved parity at the D-1 level alone, three times the number in 2009. In contrast, five entities promoted only men to the D-2 level (FAO, IMO, UNAIDS, UPU and WIPO) and three promoted only men to the D-1 level (IAEA, ITC and ITU).

49. Of the entities that gave promotions in at least two of the P-5, D-1 and D-2 categories (21), those that achieved parity at the P-5 level also achieved parity in promotions at the D-1 or D-2 levels (4/4). Conversely, only 16.7 per cent of entities that did not achieve parity in promotions at the P-5 levels achieved parity at the D-1 or D-2 levels (3/18). This suggests that entities that prioritize women's advancement at the P-5 level are more likely to also make progress at the Director levels.

Table 10

Comparison of the percentage of promotions of women at the P-2 to D-2 levels and the P-5 to D-2 levels in the United Nations for contracts of one year or more at all locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[a]

Percentage of women promoted	*Number of entities in range 1 January 2010-31 December 2011*[a]	*United Nations entities and number of promotions (women/total) 1 January 2010-31 December 2011*	*Number of entities in range 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011*[b]	*United Nations entities and number of promotions (women/total) 1 January 2010-31 December 2011*
	P-2-D-2 levels		*P-5-D-2 levels*	
>50	12	ICSC 100.0 (2/2), UNITAR 100.0 (2/2), ITC-ILO 60.0 (3/5), UNFPA 57.8 (37/64), WIPO 56.1 (46/82), UNICEF 55.7 (170/305), PAHO 52.9 (27/51), IFAD 52.4 (11/21), UNAIDS 51.6 (16/31), IMO 51.2 (21/41), Pension Fund 50.0 (2/4), UNU 50.0 (4/8)	6	UNITAR 100.0 (2/2), WMO 75.0 (3/4), IFAD 60.0 (3/5), UNAIDS 52.6 (10/19), ITC-ILO 50.0 (1/2), UNFPA 50.0 (10/20)
40-49	8	UNESCO 49.6 (65/131), ILO 48.6 (51/105), WMO 45.5 (5/11), ITU 43.2 (19/44), International Court of Justice 42.9 (3/7), ICAO 41.9 (13/31), WFP 41.2 (77/187), United Nations Secretariat 41.0 (644/1,572)	2	UNICEF 45.7 (49/107), UNESCO 40.0 (12/30)
30-39	7	FAO 38.2 (99/259), WHO 36.5 (112/307), WTO 36.4 (4/11), UNRWA 31.6 (6/19), UNDP 30.8 (4/13), IAEA 30.7 (31/101), UNHCR 30.0 (3/10)	6	ILO 34.5 (19/55), PAHO 33.3 (5/15), United Nations Secretariat 33.3 (190/571), WIPO 32.3 (10/31), WFP 31.8 (21/66), UNDP 30.8 (4/13)

Percentage of women promoted	Number of entities in range 1 January 2010-31 December 2011[a]	United Nations entities and number of promotions (women/total) 1 January 2010-31 December 2011	Number of entities in range 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[b]	United Nations entities and number of promotions (women/total) 1 January 2010-31 December 2011
	P-2-D-2 levels		*P-5-D-2 levels*	
<30	3	UNIDO 28.9 (13/45), ITC 25.0 (5/20), UPU 0.0 (0/9)	13	ITU 29.4 (5/17), WHO 26.2 (50/191), IMO 25.0 (4/16), UNHCR 25.0 (2/8), IAEA 20.0 (7/35), ITC 20.0 (1/5), FAO 19.6 (21/107), UNIDO 19.0 (4/21), ICAO 16.7 (2/12), UNU 0.0 (0/2), UPU 0.0 (0/5), UNRWA 0.0 (0/7), WTO 0.0 (0/5)
Total	**30**		**27**	

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] Prepared on the basis of data provided by 30 United Nations entities; UNOPS and UN-Women did not submit data.

[b] The International Court of Justice, ICSC and the Pension Fund did not report any promotions at the P-5 to D-2 levels in the current reporting period.

50. As in the case of appointments, the data provided by the entities indicate that promotions of men to the more senior levels (P-5 to D-2) continue to far outnumber promotions of women. Concerted and focused efforts, including sustained and consistent monitoring, are required to accelerate progress, especially in the entities where the proportions are below the United Nations system average. Since men also constituted the majority of transfers in the current reporting period (58 per cent),[21] greater attention to inter-agency mobility would help to expand the number of posts available to women at all levels (see web annex XII).

Separations in the United Nations system in the Professional and higher categories

51. All 32 entities provided data on staff separations for the current reporting period. A total of 12,694 staff, including all contract types and locations, separated from the United Nations system. Of these, women constituted 44.8 per cent (5,682 women), an increase from 42.6 per cent in the previous reporting period. Analysed by levels, the proportion of female staff separating ranged from 62.3 per cent at the P-1 level to 25.3 per cent at the D-2 level (see web annex XIII).

52. Appointment expiration was the most common reason for separation, accounting for 46.5 per cent of all female separations and 41.3 per cent of all male separations on contracts of one year or more. Resignation was the second most common reason, constituting 26.6 per cent of female separations and 20.7 per cent of male separations. The fact that both appointment expiration and resignation accounted for a higher proportion of female than male separations warrants further investigation, since these separations represent a significant pool of qualified women who, if retained, would expedite progress towards gender parity.

[21] A total of 2,148 out of 5,114 inter-agency transfers were awarded to women.

53. In addition, the proportion of men taking mandatory retirement at the P-2 to D-2 levels (74 per cent) was significantly higher than their proportion in the system (59 per cent), which means that they retired at a faster rate than women at those levels. This was also true at the higher levels (P-5 to D-2), where men constituted 77.8 per cent of mandatory retirements but only 67.9 per cent of staff. This suggests that the gap in the representation of women at these levels could be closed if assessments and planning were used to inform staff selection processes (see web annex XIV). It is therefore disconcerting that only 15 entities took into account an assessment of staffing changes in the next five years, and only half of them were informed by an assessment of the numbers of men and women who would need to be hired, broken down by grade (see para. 77 below).

Separations by level

54. All things being equal, women would be expected to constitute the same proportion of separations as they do staff. However, their current rate of separation on all contracts is higher than their overall representation (44.8 compared with 42.4 per cent),[22] which suggests that women are separating at a faster rate than men overall.

55. However, on contracts of one year or more, the proportion of women separating declined with each higher staffing level from the P-2 level and above (except at the ungraded level). Consequently, at all but the P-2 and P-3 levels, the proportion of women separating was proportionately lower than their representation in the United Nations system (see table 11 below). This indicates that attrition of women occurs at a slower rate than attrition of men at each of these levels. Women therefore constitute a lower attrition risk than men at most levels on contracts of one year or more and may therefore yield savings for the system.

56. At the P-5 and D-1 levels, the share of female separations was lower than women's overall representation by 4.5 and 4.1 per cent respectively. In contrast, separations of women at the ungraded level spiked from 15.6 per cent in the previous reporting period to 27.1 per cent in the current period, while the overall proportion of female staff at those levels changed only slightly from 28.1 to 29.2 per cent.[23] In addition, at the D-2 level, the proportion of women separating rose from 21.6 per cent to 24.0 per cent between reporting periods, while the proportion of female staff at that level rose only 1.4 per cent.

[22] Based on data from the 31 entities that had separations on all contract types at the P-1 to ungraded levels; the Pension Fund is not included.

[23] In the previous reporting period, 10 women separated out of 64 ungraded staff and in the current period, 29 women separated out of 107 ungraded staff.

Table 11

Comparison of the percentage of women and the proportion of female separations from the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system for contracts of one year or more at all locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[a]

(Percentage)

Level	*Ungraded*	*D-2*	*D-1*	*P-5*	*P-4*	*P-3*	*P-2*	*P-1*
Representation of women in the United Nations system[b]	29.2	27.4	30.2	33.1	39.4	45.2	56.9	60.2
Women as percentage of total separations in the United Nations system	27.1	24.0	26.1	28.6	35.6	46.8	60.7	51.7
Difference between the representation of women and the percentage of separations	2.1	3.4	4.1	4.5	3.8	(1.6)	(3.8)	8.5

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

[b] As at 31 December 2011; see table 1 above.

Separations by location: headquarters and non-headquarters

57. Analysis of separations by location reveals a significantly lower proportion of separations by women on all contract types at non-headquarters locations at every level (see table 12 below). This is to be expected, given the lower proportion of women at non-headquarters locations (36.7 per cent compared with 45.5 per cent at headquarters locations). At each location, the proportion of women separating was greater than their representation at that location.[24] However, the difference is greater at headquarters locations (4.7 percentage points), which suggests that women are separating at a faster rate than men at headquarters locations compared with non-headquarters locations.

58. At non-headquarters locations, a lower proportion of women than men separated at the P-4 level and above, while at headquarters locations this was the case only at the P-5, D-2 and ungraded levels. This suggests that at headquarters locations, consideration needs to be given to why women at the P-4 and D-1 levels in particular are separating at a faster rate than men. Conversely, the particularly low proportion of women separating at the P-5 to ungraded levels at non-headquarters locations relative to their representation at those levels suggests that the obstacle to improved gender balance is not the retention of women but rather their recruitment in the first place. Efforts to increase non-headquarters appointments and promotions should therefore produce significant progress.

[24] At headquarters locations, women constitute 50.2 per cent of separations and 45.5 per cent of staff; at non-headquarters locations, women constitute 38.5 per cent of separations and 36.7 per cent of staff (on all contract types).

Table 12
Gender distribution of separations from the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system for all contract types at headquarters and non-headquarters locations, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[a]

	Comparison of gender distribution of separations and representation of women					
	Headquarters			*Non-headquarters*		
Level	*Percentage of women*	*Percentage of women separating*	*Percentage difference*	*Percentage of women*	*Percentage of women separating*	*Percentage difference*
Ungraded	28.4	28.0	0.4	29.7	14.3	15.4
D-2	28.9	28.4	0.5	24.4	20.7	3.7
D-1	31.9	34.0	(2.1)	28.2	21.6	6.6
P-5	34.6	32.9	1.7	31	25.9	5.1
P-4	44.1	47.3	(3.2)	34.5	33.2	1.3
P-3	52.8	58.9	(6.1)	38.7	45.3	(6.6)
P-2	60.4	63.7	(3.3)	53	54.9	(1.9)
P-1	65.3	64.4	0.9	58.3	50.0	8.3
Total	**45.5**	**50.2**	**(4.7)**	**36.7**	**38.5**	**(1.8)**

Source: United Nations entities.
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

Separations by entity

59. In 14 entities, women constituted a smaller proportion of separations on all contracts than of overall staff (see web annex XIII).[25] In the remaining 17 entities,[26] however, the proportion of female separations was higher than their representation overall, showing that female attrition occurs at a faster rate than male attrition in the majority of entities.[27] Seven entities (IAEA, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNITAR, UNOPS and WFP) recorded a share of female separations that was close (within 2 per cent) to the overall representation of women. IFAD recorded the highest proportion of separations compared with representation of women, at 60.4 per cent and 44.5 per cent respectively. The International Court of Justice had the lowest separation rate relative to overall female representation, with women constituting 62.5 per cent of staff but only 22.2 per cent of separations.[28] There were no separations at the Pension Fund.

60. The data on separation of female staff (see table 12 above) show that the proportion of separations for women was significantly and consistently lower than for men at both headquarters and non-headquarters locations at the P-4 level and

[25] IAEA, ICAO, International Court of Justice, ICSC, PAHO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNRWA, UNU, WTO, WIPO and WMO.
[26] Data on separations for this reporting period was incomplete for WHO and may therefore be inaccurate.
[27] FAO, IFAD, ILO, IMO, ITC, ITC-ILO, ITU, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNITAR, UNOPS, United Nations Secretariat , UPU, UN-Women, WFP and WHO.
[28] ICJ and WTO recorded no female separations at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the current reporting period.

above. Furthermore, at those levels, on contracts of one year or more, women were underrepresented in separations compared with their overall representation. Women therefore appear to constitute a lower risk for separation than men at the higher levels, which should guide policy, especially in regard to recruitment and promotion.

III. Progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance in the United Nations system

61. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 65/191 for information on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, UN-Women surveyed the 32 entities in the United Nations system (see web annex XV). Progress made in the implementation of relevant gender balance policies and practices is summarized below, followed by a summary of impediments to the achievement of gender parity.

A. Progress in gender balance policy, tools and good practice in the United Nations system

1. Gender balance strategies

62. A gender balance strategy is designed to improve gender balance and the status of women through organizational action. This may include steps to increase gender awareness, enhance monitoring and accountability, and improve the work environment through the promulgation and implementation of appropriate human resources policies.

63. Gender balance strategies constitute a performance requirement of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and it is therefore of some concern that only 14 of the 32 entities have developed such strategies.[29] Of the 18 that have not, 10 have plans to introduce one. ICSC and the Pension Fund noted that they did not have their own strategies but followed those of the United Nations Secretariat. An additional concern is that only eight entities reported that their strategies specified accountability mechanisms.

2. Gender balance scorecards

64. The gender balance scorecard is a monitoring system that incorporates gender balance data for the entity as a whole and for its larger component units. They are a common tool among United Nations entities and provide an effective and regular measure for progress towards gender parity.

65. A total of 10 entities reported having a scorecard in place,[30] which marks both an increase since 2009, when only 7 had a scorecard, and a reverse of the decline

[29] IFAD, ILO, ITC, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, United Nations Secretariat, UNRWA, WFP, WHO and WMO.

[30] IFAD, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNRWA, United Nations Secretariat and UN-Women.

between 2007 and 2009, when 4 entities abandoned their scorecards. An additional four entities have alternative reporting mechanisms on gender balance data.[31]

66. It is of some concern that proportionately fewer entities populate their scorecards with real-time data, namely, 50 per cent compared with 71 per cent in 2009. This limits the scorecard's potential for identifying negative trends in the early stages, when corrective action is most effective.

3. Temporary special measures to improve the status of women

67. The guarantee of equal treatment of women and men does not always lead to substantive equality. In this case, it may be necessary to use non-identical treatment to address biologically and socially constructed differences between men and women. Special measures, in this context, are procedures designed to accelerate the achievement of gender parity at the Professional levels and above. As stipulated in article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, they are temporary in nature because they will be discontinued when gender parity has been achieved and sustained for a period of time.

68. Special measures can include a range of instruments, policies and practices, such as targeted recruitment and promotion, training programmes for women and quantified mandates. All such measures are aimed at ensuring gender balance in recruitment and promotion, but also at rectifying past and current forms and effects of discrimination against women.

69. The United Nations Secretariat has promulgated a variety of temporary special measures since 1996,[32] although many of these have been nullified by the current staffing system. This complexity was highlighted by survey respondents, with two entities stating that they did not have special measures because they were following the practices of the Secretariat, despite the fact that the Secretariat itself reported having special measures in place.

70. In the current reporting period, only seven entities reported having special measures to improve the status of women.[33] This can be attributed largely to a lack of understanding about what special measures are, since an additional 12 entities cited examples of special measures elsewhere in their survey responses.[34] In fact, survey data from 2011 indicate that most entities equate special measures with the stipulation that a woman candidate must be selected over a man candidate in cases where she is equally or better qualified. This suggests that more work needs to be done to clarify the nature and meaning of special measures to ensure their full utilization by United Nations entities. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women observed similar challenges with States parties and issued General recommendation No. 25 to help elucidate the meaning of these measures.[35]

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[31] FAO, ICSC, ILO and WFP.

[32] See ST/AI/412 and ST/AI/1999/9.

[33] UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, United Nations Secretariat, UNRWA and WTO.

[34] FAO, ICSC, IFAD, ITC, ITC-ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNITAR, the Pension Fund, WFP, WHO and WIPO.

[35] See General recommendation No. 25, on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures.

71. Overall, there has been an increase in the number of entities with special measures since the 2009 survey, from 15 to 19. Thus, for the first time, the majority of United Nations entities have special measures in place. This trend is expected to continue, with an additional nine entities reporting that they intend to implement some form of special measures over the next two years. Four of these do not currently have any form of special measures in place.

72. Entities cited the following reasons for not having special measures: lack of political will; poor understanding of special measures; the small pool of qualified candidates; and equal treatment being required for both genders. In this context, it is noteworthy that despite numerous challenges over the past decade, the (former) United Nations Administrative Tribunal has upheld the legality of special measures, noting that they are fully compatible with the objectives of Article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations.[36]

4. Staff selection systems

73. Staff selection policies govern the selection and recruitment of candidates across the United Nations system and are managed by a range of senior officials within each entity. These policies can be used to increase the proportion of qualified women candidates and to eliminate bias in the selection process. Figure V below shows the number of entities with stipulations in their staff selections systems that affect the recruitment and promotion of female candidates.

74. Regarding appointments, very few entities use traditional special measures in the recruitment of women, with only nine entities requiring a female candidate to be included on the list of recommended candidates[37] and only four requiring that hiring managers request permission from their human resources department to select a male candidate over a qualified female candidate in departments with a low percentage of female staff.[38]

75. Fifteen entities use a roster for candidates that have not been selected so that they may be selected for other similar posts, but only four have a provision that specifies that women candidates be retained on the roster longer than male candidates, and none have a gender-specific roster. Of the entities that have rosters, the majority (eight) reported that they are “not used very often” for selection and placement of women candidates. Interestingly, half the entities that keep women on rosters for a longer period than men use them “quite often” to select and place women candidates.

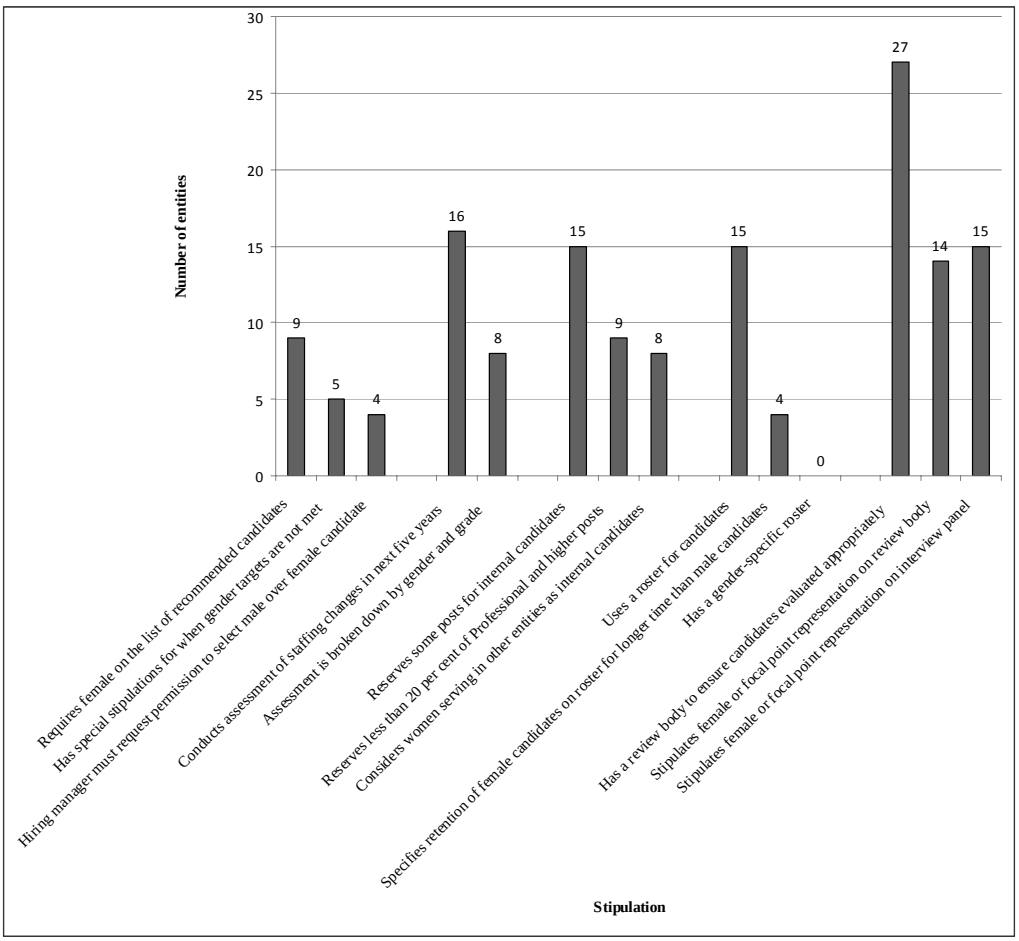
76. Regarding promotions, 15 entities have reserved posts for which only internal candidates are considered. The majority of these (nine) include less than 20 per cent of Professional and higher posts in this category, although three entities (ITU, UNDP and UNESCO) include 40 per cent and one (WFP) includes 80 per cent. A total of eight entities[39] consider women serving in other entities of the United Nations common system as internal candidates for promotions and appointments at some levels.

77. Figure V below also reveals the lack of accountability in staff selection systems for the placement of women candidates. Of the 16 systems that take into

[36] See, for example, Judgement No. 671, *Grinblat* (1994).
[37] FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNITAR, United Nations Secretariat, WFP, WHO and WIPO.
[38] ICSC, ITC-ILO, UNDP and UNICEF.
[39] ICSC, ITC, PAHO, UNFPA, UNHCR, United Nations Secretariat, the Pension Fund and WHO.

account an assessment of staffing changes in the next five years, only half are informed by an assessment of the number of men and women who will need to be hired over the next five years, broken down by grade. Further, as many as 18 entities do not stipulate either female or focal point representation in their review bodies, and 17 entities do not specify either on their interview panel. Therefore, improved accountability and enhanced implementation of stipulations governing the recruitment and promotion of women will better enable progress towards gender parity.

Figure V
Number of entities with gender-related stipulations in their staff selection systems as at 31 December 2011[a]



Source: Entity survey (2012).
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

5. System of gender balance focal points

78. In its resolutions, the General Assembly has repeatedly called upon the United Nations system to continue its efforts towards achieving the goal of gender balance, including with the active support of gender focal points (see resolutions 65/191, para. 22 and 64/141, para. 20) and has requested the Secretary-General to ensure

that the focal points are designated at a sufficiently high level and enjoy full access to senior management, both at Headquarters and in the field (see resolution 57/180, para. 5 (e)). Furthermore, the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women requires that, in order to meet its performance standard, United Nations system entities must designate focal points, from the P-4 level or above, with written terms of reference and at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to focal point functions. In the past 10 years, successive reviews have pointed to the junior level of designated gender-balance focal points as symptomatic of the lack of commitment to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women across the United Nations system.[40]

79. The survey showed that 19 entities have gender balance focal points,[41] but 13 were not appointed at the P-4 level or above. Significantly, 13 entities reported that their focal points allocated less than 10 per cent of their time to focal point functions; the focal points at five entities allocated between 10 and 20 per cent of their time. The focal points at only one entity (IFAD) allocated more than 50 per cent of their time to such duties.

80. The lack of adequate formal designation of gender balance focal points continues to emerge as a significant impediment, with the actual workload far outweighing the designation of responsibilities.

6. Exit interviews

81. Surveying departing staff is critical to gaining insight into organizational culture issues that have a bearing on recruitment, retention and staff experience. This has particular relevance in the current reporting period, since the two levels that experienced an increase in female separations (D-2 and ungraded) also have the lowest overall proportion of women[42] (see para. 56 above). Understanding the causes of attrition of female staff could therefore help to address specific barriers at these levels.

82. In 2010, CEB designed and distributed a standardized exit interview questionnaire to strengthen the practice and facilitate central data collection according to a range of variables, including gender and age. To complement this analysis, the aforementioned UN-Women survey included a section on exit interviews.

83. Twenty-three entities reported conducting exit interviews, either in person or electronically. This is an increase of only one compared with the previous reporting period; more importantly, five entities initiated exit interviews[43] and five discontinued the practice altogether.[44] Eight entities review their exit interview data

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[40] For an overview, see African Development Bank, *Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere? Evaluation Synthesis* (Addis Ababa, 2012), pp. 4-42. Available from http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Evaluation-Reports/Mainstreaming%20Gender%20Equality%20-%20An%20Evaluation%20Synthesis_www.pdf.

[41] FAO, IAEA, IFAD, ILO, ITC, ITC-ILO, ITU, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, the Pension Fund, UNOPS, UPU, UNRWA, the United Nations Secretariat, WIPO and WMO.

[42] The proportion of women separating at the ungraded level has doubled since 2009, from 13.5 per cent to 27.1 per cent. At the D-2 level, the proportion of women separating has increased from 21.6 to 24 per cent. The D-2 and ungraded levels have the lowest proportions of women, at 27.4 and 29.2 per cent respectively.

[43] ICSC, ITC, UNDP, UNWTO and UN-Women.

[44] International Court of Justice, UNAIDS, UNITAR, the Pension Fund and UPU.

annually, one biennially, and two biannually. Only 5 of the 13 entities that provided samples of their exit interview forms used the CEB form.

84. In addition to this survey, one entity provided a gender analysis of 46 individual exit interviews. Data showed that five times the number of women listed "lack of career opportunities" as their main reason for leaving compared with men, and three women and no men listed "family reasons". This analysis illustrates the importance of exit interviews and gender analysis of results in highlighting the various obstacles that men and women face. It is thus of great concern that so many entities have discontinued the use of exit interviews and that so few use the CEB standardized questionnaire.

7. Other gender policies

85. In addition to the policies mentioned above, entities reported adopting other policies that affect retention and recruitment by promoting accountability and a more gender-sensitive organizational culture.

86. All but one entity (UPU) reported having policies that prohibit discrimination and harassment; 19 indicated that they had special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; and 28 noted that they had an ethics office, an increase of seven since the previous reporting period.[45] Twenty-eight entities also reported having policies for conflict resolution and against retaliation, an increase of four since 2009; 29 reported having an adoption leave policy; and 28 indicated that they also had a breastfeeding policy. With regard to care for ageing relatives, an increasingly relevant issue given global demographic shifts, 26 entities indicated that they accommodated such demands mostly through special leave without pay.

8. Work-life balance and flexible work arrangements

87. Successive General Assembly resolutions have called for strengthened implementation of flexible working arrangements, requesting that the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system ensure that work-family policies accelerate the goal of 50/50 gender distribution.[46] Accordingly, the Secretary-General has reiterated the importance of work-life balance policies, most recently in a message on 15 May 2012 to mark the International Day of Families.[47]

88. All 32 entities offered flexible working arrangements, although none offered all eight.[48] As shown in figure VI below, the majority of entities offered part-time work, staggered working hours, telecommuting and scheduled breaks for extended learning activities. Only nine entities provided financial support for mothers travelling with a child. The biggest improvement was in relation to scheduled breaks for extended learning activities, with seven new entities offering this arrangement since 2009. Less growth was seen in arrangements that particularly benefit women with family-care responsibilities, such as compressed work schedules and telecommuting.

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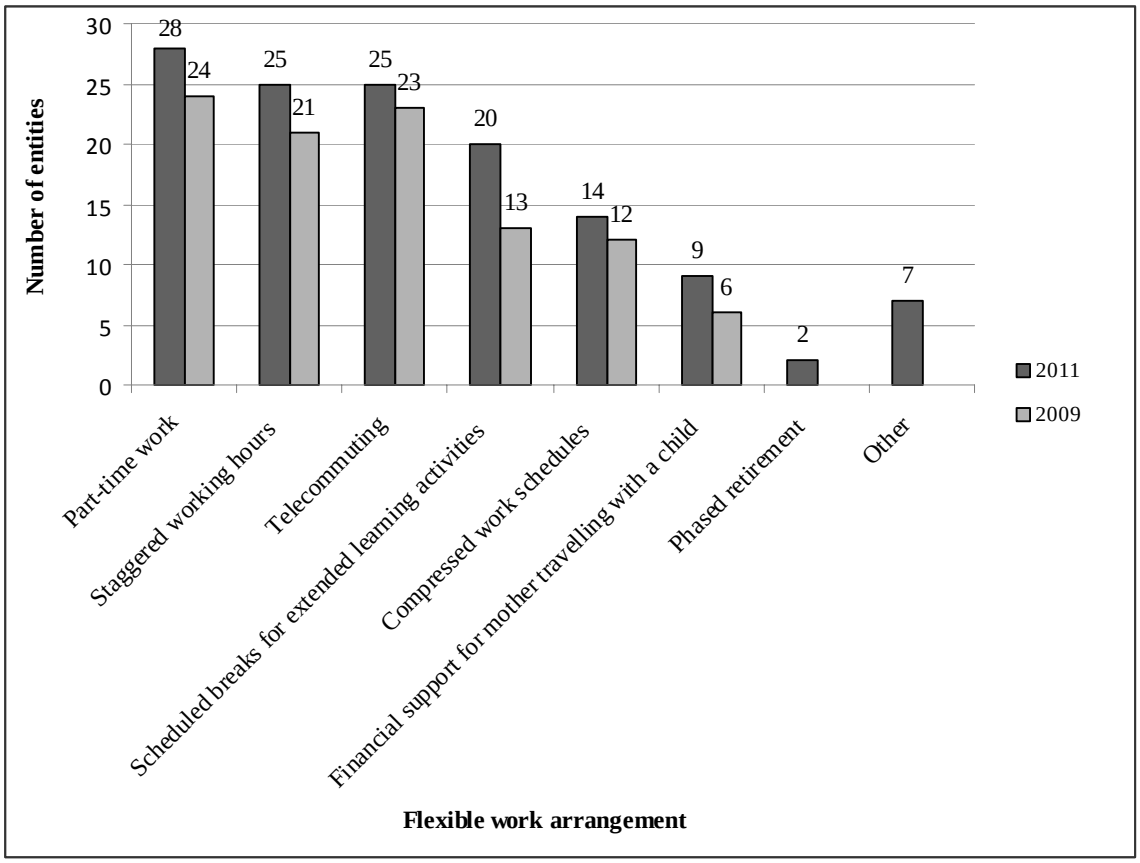
[45] ICAO, IFAD, IMO, ITC-ILO, UNAIDS, UNITAR and UN-Women.

[46] See resolutions 59/164, 52/96, 53/119, 55/69, 56/127, 57/180 and 58/144.

[47] See http://www.un.org/en/events/familyday/sgmessage.shtml.

[48] The options were staggered working hours, compressed work schedules, scheduled breaks for extended learning activities, telecommuting, part-time work, special leave without pay, phased retirement and financial support for mothers travelling with a child.

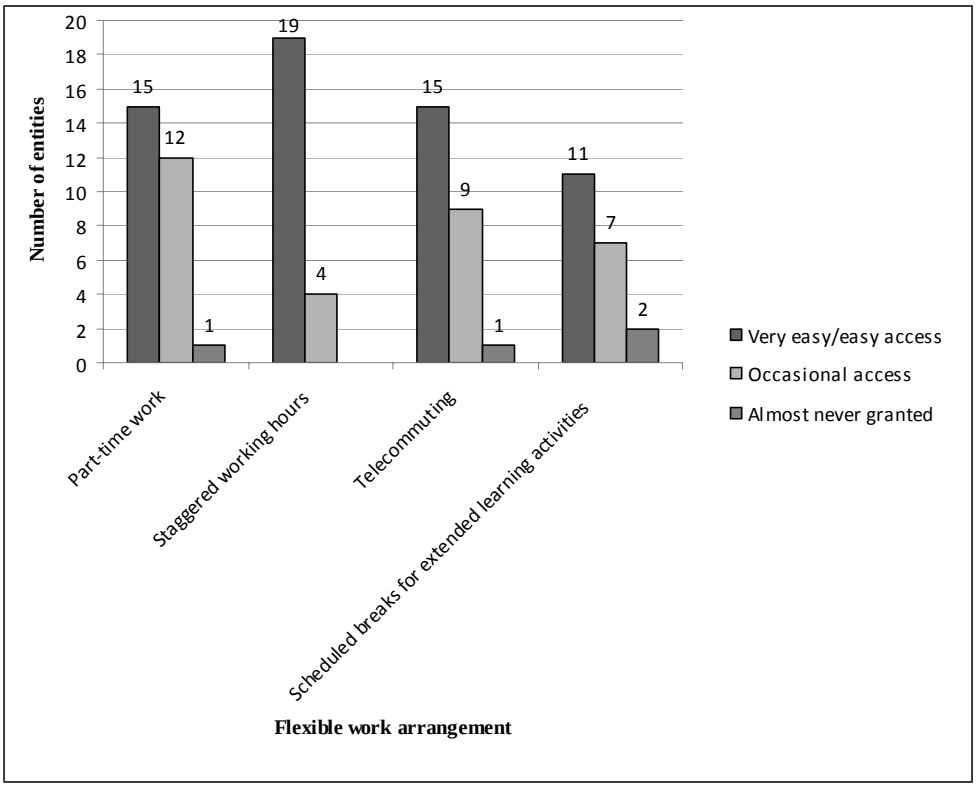
Figure VI
Number of entities in the United Nations system offering each flexible work arrangement as at 31 December 2009 and 31 December 2011[a]



Source: Entity survey (2012).
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

89. Figure VII below shows the accessibility of the four most commonly implemented flexible working arrangements. The option of staggered working hours was clearly the most accessible, while part-time work and telecommuting, which provide flexibility for family-care responsibilities, were granted only "occasionally" in a large proportion of the entities at which they were available. A 2009 survey of Secretariat staff conducted by the Focal Point for Women showed that staff perceived support for flexible working arrangements among management to be low. The fact that a considerable number of entities do not offer a wide range of such arrangements and that it remains relatively difficult to access some of them suggests that this remains a challenge, giving credence to the recommendation by the CEB Human Resources Network that, in addition to collecting data on the range of flexible working arrangements offered, analysis of the implementation and impact of the policies on these arrangements is also required (see CEB/2012/HLCM/HR/13).

Figure VII
Accessibility of the four most common flexible work arrangements in the United Nations system, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011[a]



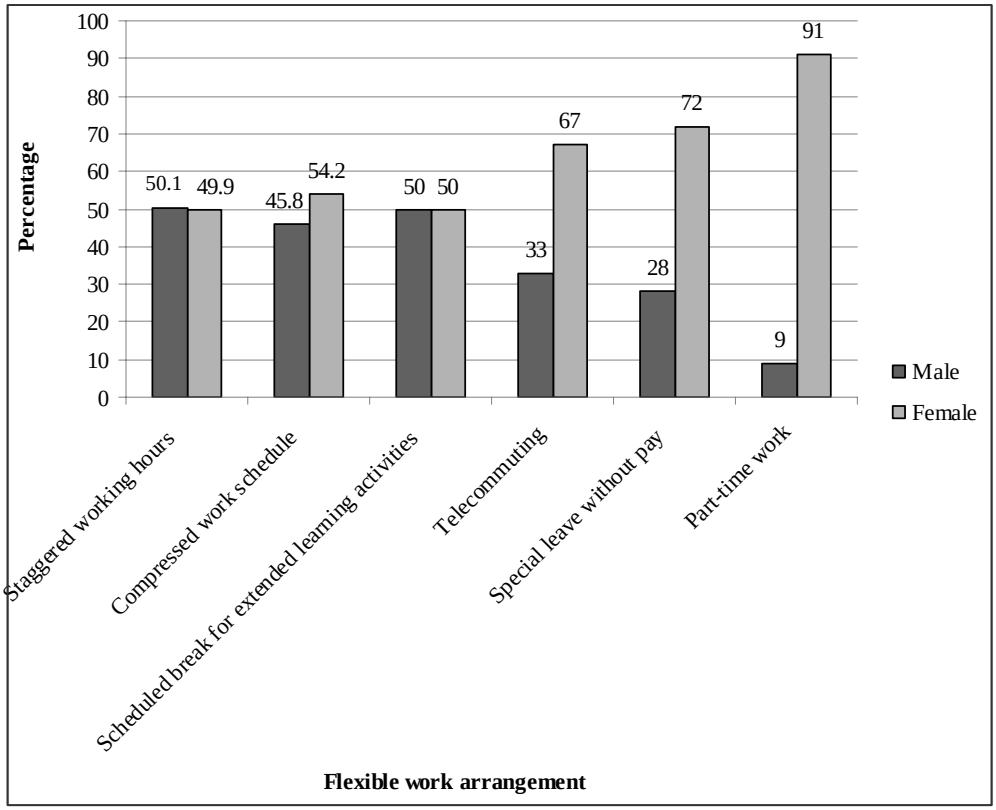
Source: Entity survey (2012).
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

90. Although the majority of entities offered flexible working arrangements, usage remained disconcertingly low. The increase in usage in the reporting period was minimal, although more significant for women (3.3 per cent) than for men (0.7 per cent). Of the entities that monitored usage, the vast majority had less than 10 per cent staff participation in each arrangement, and many had lower than 1 per cent. The options with the most participants were staggered working hours, telecommuting and part-time work arrangements.

91. As seen in figure VIII below, usage was higher among women than men across the United Nations system for all arrangements except staggered working hours and scheduled breaks for learning activities. This is not an unexpected finding, since women are more likely to bear childcare or elder-care responsibilities that may require them to take advantage of flexible working arrangements. This finding is in line with research that shows that flexible working arrangements are important in the retention of female employees during these stages of their lives.[49]

[49] See UN-Women, Report of the Expert Group Meeting, “Policy, Practice and Potential: Work-Life Integration in the United Nations System”, 9-11 November 2010, p. 14.

Figure VIII
Comparison of the percentage of men and women in the United Nations system using flexible work arrangements as at 31 December 2011[a]



Source: Entity survey (2012).
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 28 United Nations entities.

92. The findings of a 2010 survey[50] of Secretariat staff by the Focal Point for Women reaffirmed the importance of flexible working arrangements for progress towards gender parity. The survey revealed a lack of awareness about such arrangements but a high level of interest in their use, which has been found to improve productivity, motivation and satisfaction. In corroboration, the Joint Inspection Unit 2011 survey on the management of sick leave revealed that absenteeism is higher among women, significantly because of work-life balance conflicts (see JIU/REP/2012/2).

B. Impediments to achieving gender balance at the P-4 to D-2 levels

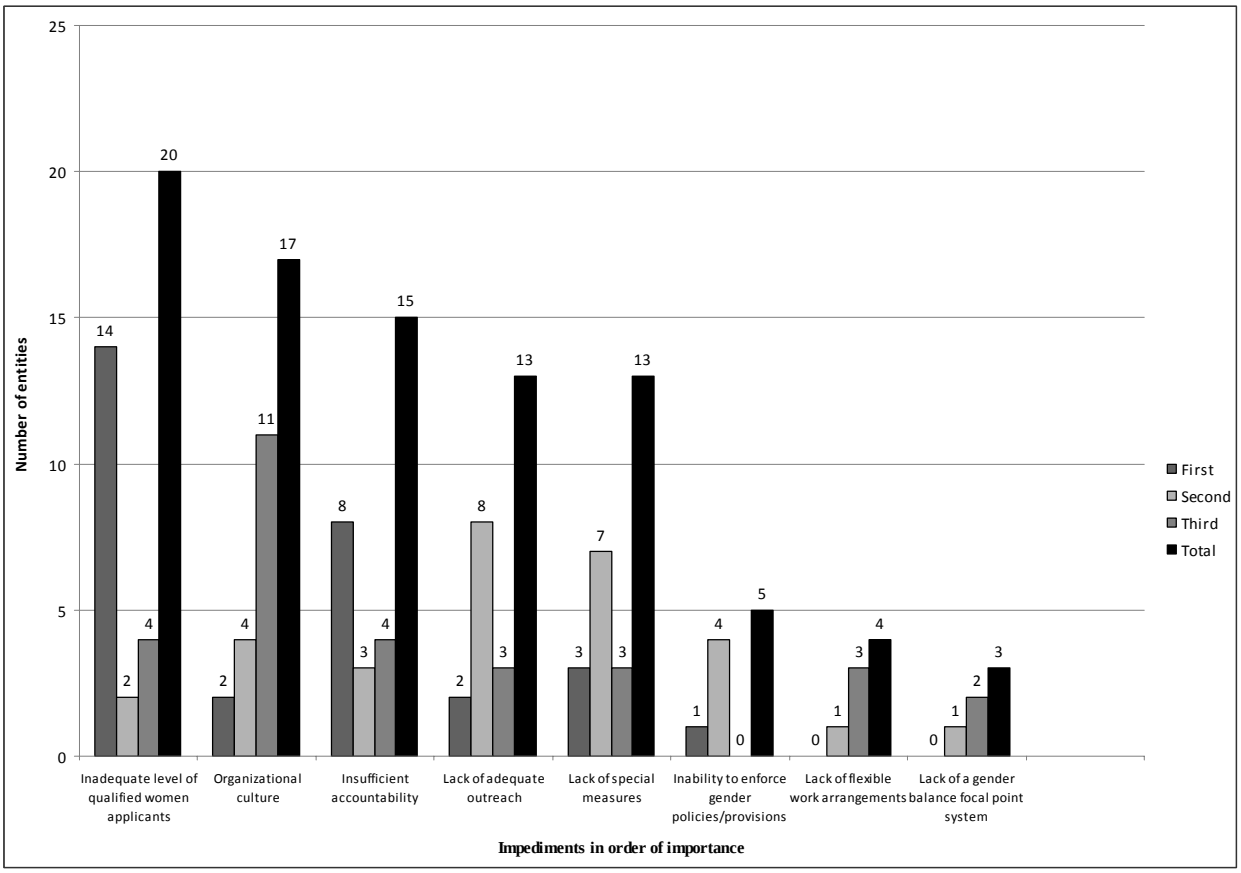
93. Thirty out of 32 entities provided data on impediments to the achievement of gender balance at the P-4 to D-2 levels.[51] All responding entities noted that they continue to encounter obstacles in one or several of the eight categories of

[50] See http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/ianwge2011/FWA-Survey-2011-ES.pdf.
[51] Given their high proportion of women, WTO and UNFPA did not consider impediments relevant.

impediments which, in order of importance, include an inadequate level of qualified women applicants; lack of accountability; lack of special measures; uncongenial organizational culture and lack of adequate outreach; inability to enforce gender policies and/or provisions; lack of flexible working arrangements; and lack of a gender balance focal point system.[52]

94. Figure IX below shows the number of entities ranking each impediment among the top three impediments to progress towards parity. Crucially, the number one ranking is the same as in the previous reporting period, indicating that the same obstacles persist (see A/65/334) and that insufficient progress has been made. In addition, the present report also includes "organizational culture" and "the inability to enforce gender policies and/or provisions" as additional impediments (for a more detailed analysis, see web annex XVI).

Figure IX
Rankings of impediments to gender parity at the P-4 to D-2 levels by United Nations entities as at 31 December 2011[a]



Source: United Nations entities.
[a] Prepared on the basis of data submitted by 30 United Nations entities.

[52] Based on the total number of entities identifying each impediment as the number one obstacle to progress.

IV. United Nations system-wide coordination initiatives and good practices

A. Initiatives of the United Nations inter-agency bodies

1. United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

95. CEB is the highest-level coordination mechanism in the United Nations system. It brings together the leaders of the United Nations system organizations under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General with the goal of aligning the strengths, capacities and expertise of the United Nations organizations to enhance coherence and to ensure that the United Nations system can deliver as one at the global, regional and country levels within its various intergovernmental mandates.

United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

96. In 2006, CEB requested the development of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (see CEB/2006/2). In July 2011, UN-Women began to develop the Action Plan in consultation with the United Nations system and in line with its mandate (see resolution 64/289) to lead, coordinate and promote the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. At its spring 2012 regular session, CEB adopted the United Nations System-wide Action Plan, ensuring that, for the first time, the United Nations system will use a unified accountability framework with a common set of measures to assess and propel progress on gender-related work. The framework features 15 performance indicators derived from intergovernmental mandates and through consultation with 50 departments and entities.

97. The Executive Board of UN-Women commended the development of the Action Plan and welcomed its adoption by CEB as an accountability framework to be applied throughout the United Nations system. The Board also called upon UN-Women to continue its effective coordination work and recommended that the Economic and Social Council consider steps to encourage the full application of the Action Plan.[53] Subsequently, in its 2012 resolution on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (resolution 2012/24), the Council welcomed the Action Plan and called upon the United Nations system to actively engage in its roll-out. The Secretary-General was asked to report to the Council on progress in the implementation of the Action Plan at its next substantive session, in 2013.

98. Embedded in the Action Plan are a series of criteria focused on gender balance in staffing across the United Nations system, including human resources, gender architecture and organizational culture. The criteria help to shape a common understanding of the route to gender parity and the minimum requirements that each entity is expected to meet. The accountability framework thus strengthens the Organization's commitment to the equal representation of women by facilitating an analysis of strengths and weaknesses across the United Nations system and

[53] See UN-Women Executive Board decision 2012/2, para. 5, contained in UNW/2012/9, annex I.

identifying the resources and capacity needed to achieve it. Three Action Plan indicators in particular relate to gender balance:

(a) Entities have attained equal representation of women at the P-4 level and above, including at the most senior levels of representation, in field offices, committees and funds linked to the entity, and at the General Service level;

(b) Gender balance focal points or the equivalent at the headquarters, regional and country levels are appointed from staff at the P-4 level and above; have written terms of reference and at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to focal point functions; and specific funds are allocated to support focal point networking;

(c) Organizational culture fully supports the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through the promulgation and implementation of appropriate gender-relevant policies and practices; and senior managers demonstrate leadership and public championing of the equal representation of women.

99. The scope of the Action Plan is such that it will simultaneously provide a snapshot of each entity's placement against these indicators and guidance on further improvements. Equally, it will enable the United Nations system as a whole to consider the obstacles that persist across the Organization and identify collective solutions.[54]

Spouse employment[55]

100. At its February 2012 session,[56] the CEB Human Resources Network decided that the functions of the dual career and staff mobility programme, currently hosted by the CEB Secretariat, would be mainstreamed into the role of the human resources officer in individual organizations by the end of 2013, when the programme is to end.

101. The Human Resources Network noted that many issues have not yet been addressed, such as provisions for domestic partnerships. The issue of spouse/partner work permits remains a fundamental constraint in achieving gender parity in the Professional categories and above.

2. Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

102. At the annual sessions of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, including its eleventh session, in 2012, members shared challenges and successes in respect of gender balance and the status of women in the United Nations system, noting that as a standard-setting organization, the United Nations has a particular responsibility to achieve gender balance and to lead by example.[57]

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[54] See the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for Implementation of the CEB Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Performance Indicator Technical Notes at http://www.unwomen.org/2012/04/un-women-welcomes-a-landmark-action-plan-to-measure-gender-equality-across-the-un-system/.

[55] See the Human Resources Network report CEB/2012/HLCM/HR/13.

[56] Although outside the reporting period, this is included because of its relevance.

[57] See opening remarks by the Executive Director of UN-Women, Michelle Bachelet, at the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, available from http://www.unwomen.org/2011/02/commission-on-the-status-of-women-55th-session-introductory-statement/.

103. Despite advances, the Network concluded that the following challenges continue to hinder the achievement of gender parity within the various United Nations entities: lack of strong political will and leadership support from the most senior levels; lack of a comprehensive gender strategy in entities; inadequate accountability, monitoring and enforcement/compliance mechanisms; lack of special measures for gender equality; weak integration of focal point systems; weak implementation of flexible working arrangements; organizational cultural barriers; insufficient outreach and low numbers of qualified women applicants.

104. In relation to gender balance, the Network recommended:[58]

(a) Increasing accountability by encouraging entity heads to report to CEB on gender balance each year (as opposed to every two years) and by establishing sanctions;

(b) Strengthening the implementation of existing policies through consistent messages, strong communications plans and robust action plans with a results-based management approach;

(c) Strengthening the implementation of temporary special measures which, at best, have been adopted in some organizations but have little meaning;

(d) Strengthening the focal point network and gaining political support from the highest levels;

(e) Strengthening the Office of the Focal Point for Women in UN-Women;

(f) Enhancing inter-agency coherence and coordination by developing a consolidated database of tried-and-tested advocacy tools;

(g) Sharing information and analysis on gender-based violence in the workplace and cases of harassment, discrimination and sexual harassment in the context of the administration of justice system.

3. International Civil Service Commission review of gender balance in the United Nations common system

105. At its seventy-first session in July/August 2010, ICSC reviewed the status of implementation of the Commission's recommendations on gender balance in the United Nations common system from prior reviews. It emphasized the importance of equal representation of women at the D-1 level and above to catalyse and sustain concrete advancement in the status of women.

106. The Commission noted that effective implementation remained a challenge despite policies and measures and emphasized the need for entity action plans and accountability mechanisms to accelerate progress, including in respect of the implementation of special measures for gender parity. It expressed concern that the goal of 50/50 gender balance, especially at the D-1 level and above, remained unmet without any noticeable progress and noted with disappointment that organizations

[58] See the Report of the tenth session of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, available from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/annualmeetings/Report_of_IANWGE-2011.pdf and the Report of the eleventh session of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, available from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/annualmeetings/Report_of_IANWGE-2012.pdf.

had not fully implemented its previous recommendations. It therefore requested organizations to: (a) enforce existing gender balance policies and measures, conduct regular monitoring of implementation, and hold management accountable, through their annual performance appraisals, for achieving established annual gender targets; (b) explore the feasibility of establishing a common data depository for future data collection; and (c) have the secretariat of the Commission report back to the Commission at its seventy-ninth session, in 2014.

B. Initiatives of the United Nations Secretariat

107. More detailed information is included here because the Secretariat employs approximately 32.5 per cent[59] of all Professional and higher-level staff, and its policies shape and inform the practices of the United Nations system as a whole, with a large number of entities explicitly either following or basing their policies and practices on those of the Secretariat. For data on the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat, see web annex VI.

1. Secretary-General's Policy Committee

108. In 2011, the highest-level Policy Committee, chaired by the Secretary-General, reviewed the status of women in the Secretariat and decided on specific actions for heads of departments, offices and missions to accelerate progress towards the goal of gender parity. These included the requirement to update administrative instruction ST/AI/1999/9 on Special measures for the achievement of gender equality to ensure its effective implementation; the promulgation of an updated gender balance strategy and action plan, bearing in mind such issues as flexible work arrangements; and the convening of a task force to study the situation and needs of pregnant women at difficult duty stations.

2. Steering Committee on the Implementation of Change Management Measures

109. The Steering Committee on the Implementation of Change Management Measures was established to manage the process of renewal in the Secretariat. In 2010, it endorsed the gender balance strategy and action plan for the Secretariat prepared by the Focal Point for Women in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management. The Steering Committee was effectively replaced by the Secretary-General's Change Management Team, which delivered The Change Plan in December 2011 to foster a modern, engaged and efficient Secretariat that is transparent and accountable in its work. The Team agreed to establish a matrix to identify, track and monitor progress with respect to the gender dimension of the relevant initiatives of The Change Plan, with the participation of UN-Women.

3. Senior manager compacts and human resources management scorecards

110. Senior manager compacts are co-signed by the Secretary-General and reviewed annually by the Management Performance Board. The gender indicators are:

[59] Based on data for all Professional and higher-level staff at headquarters and non-headquarters secretariat locations, on contracts of one year or more, as at 31 December 2011. There are 29,667 Professional and higher staff (P-1 to ungraded) in the United Nations system overall, 9,653 of whom are in the Secretariat.

(a) Percentage of female staff in all categories of posts (excluding the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General but including the General Service levels). Seventeen departments applied the target of gender parity, while 13 applied the target of closing the gap towards gender parity by 20 per cent. Twenty-three departments met their target; seven did not;

(b) Percentage of female staff in P-5, D-1 and D-2 posts. Only 2 out of 30 departments applied the target of gender parity (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Peacebuilding Support Office). A total of 10 departments reached their targets; 20 did not.

4. Outreach by the Office of Human Resources Management

111. The Office of Human Resources Management intensified its outreach efforts, including by establishing a unit to broaden the scope of outreach; introducing the use of social media; revamping the jobs website; producing specific promotional materials; and showcasing recruitment videos at the World Cup in South Africa and at Expo 2010 Shanghai, China.[60]

5. Flexible working arrangements awareness and outreach strategy

112. A comprehensive three-year strategy (2012 to 2014) was developed to integrate advocacy, garner support for implementation, track the usage of flexible working arrangements and determine policy revisions. A new flexible working arrangement iSeek site "Flexwork"[61] was launched; a network of departmental focal points on flexible working arrangements was established; and promotional graphic materials were created. Lastly, a six-month pilot for expanded flexible working arrangement options was rolled out in November 2011 in three departments/offices.

6. Network of departmental focal points

113. A network of approximately 60 departmental focal points and alternates in the Secretariat coordinated by the Focal Point for Women aims to facilitate the formulation, implementation and monitoring of gender-relevant policies and the sharing of good practices. The mandate of the departmental focal points is to support the head of the department, office or regional commission in fulfilling his or her responsibilities for the achievement of gender equality (see ST/SGB/2008/12, para. 12).

7. Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support

114. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support established a "respect for diversity" team to review the outreach, selection, recruitment and deployment chain to maximize opportunities for identifying and attracting qualified international and national women; examine the possibility of bias in performance appraisals and propose remedial measures such as bias-awareness training for managers; propose measures to improve the welfare of staff, particularly women serving in missions, and work with the positive work environment task force

[60] See http://careers.un.org.

[61] United Nations staff members can access the website at http://iseek.un.org/webpgdept2105_1.asp?dept=2105.

to advance the efficient use of flexible working arrangements at headquarters locations; suggest metrics to track situations addressed by the team; and measure progress towards improved gender diversity in the field and at headquarters locations. For detailed information on the status of women in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, see web annex XVII.

C. Initiatives of the United Nations entities

1. International Atomic Energy Agency

115. In order to encourage and attract more women applicants, IAEA created gender-specific brochures, web pages and promotional tools. In addition, it established a contact point in each Member State to reach out to universities, high-level research institutions and large energy companies. The Agency found this to be instrumental in recruiting women and now engages with these contacts two to three times per year. In addition, it employs a talent acquisition specialist to headhunt senior-level candidates, with a specific emphasis on women. Lastly, members of interview panels are reminded of the priority of searching for women candidates and are asked to assess all candidates' views on gender equality.

2. International Civil Aviation Organization

116. As part of the Organization's outreach efforts, ICAO participates in the conferences of the non-profit organization Women in Aviation International to showcase the work of the Organization and to identify and establish contact with potential candidates. Training in the Air Navigation Bureau and the Air Transport Bureau was also provided to qualified women through the ICAO women in aviation scholarship programme. Combined with these outreach activities, the internal monitoring and accountability of programme managers with respect to diversity and gender representation were enhanced. Additional measures include: (a) establishing partnerships with collaborators in the aviation industry and government organizations involved in the work of ICAO; (b) circulating in advance the list of expected vacancies to allow extra time to search for candidates; and (c) expanding internship and secondment opportunities. Outreach activities with Member States were also strengthened, seeking their support in encouraging qualified women to apply for ICAO posts, especially from underrepresented Member States. Member States were also encouraged to appoint women representatives to the ICAO Assembly, Council and other bodies involved in ICAO's work.

3. International Labour Organization

117. In 2010, phase I of ILO's Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-2015 was created as the primary basis for achieving gender parity in all Professional posts and focuses on the three priority areas identified in the 1999 Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in ILO, namely, staffing, substance and structural arrangements. The 1999 policy focused in particular on the representation of women at senior levels, the expansion of career development opportunities for General Service staff and the implementation of specific measures to create a family-friendly and enabling working environment for all staff. In 2011, ILO drafted phase II of the Action Plan

for Gender Equality 2010-2015, which seeks close alignment with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

118. In addition, ILO hosts an annual Interregional Gender Learning Forum, which provides an opportunity for knowledge-sharing among some 40 gender specialists and coordinators on all aspects of gender equality. The Forum, facilitated by the Bureau for Gender Equality provides updates on staff gender balance, the representation of women and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan.

119. Lastly, in November 2011, the Director-General issued an announcement on the use of gender-responsive language in legal text. It affirmed the importance of language in promoting gender equality, with a view to affecting organizational culture in the long term.

4. United Nations Children's Fund

120. In 2010, UNICEF began to implement targeted recruitment practices and gender-focused internal policies that foster and reinforce gender balance by requiring that a minimum of two qualified women candidates be included on all shortlists for advertised vacancies. They also require a woman candidate to be hired over a male candidate when knowledge, skills and expertise are deemed equal. In addition, the hiring of an external male candidate over shortlisted internal candidates must be justified in writing. Recruitment panels are gender-balanced and training in diversity and gender-sensitivity is provided to members.

5. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

121. In 1999, UNHCR introduced a measure to allow female staff to reduce their working hours to 75 per cent of the workday on full pay status following maternity leave, until their baby is one year old, to help them to continue breastfeeding. In 2010, this policy was amended to introduce a choice for female staff members who became mothers to take one day off per week plus two additional hours during one of the remaining workdays, to allow for more flexibility in meeting the diverse needs of female staff members caring for an infant.

122. In 2010, UNHCR revised its policy on flexible working arrangements to make them more accessible to managers and staff at large by increasing flexibilities and encouraging managers and staff to make use of such arrangements whenever operational requirements allow and personal needs require. To promote the new measures, an intranet story highlighting the benefits of flexible working arrangements was posted and shared throughout the Office. Although the number of employees who use these arrangements are still low (0.8 per cent of men and 3.6 per cent of women in 2011), this marks an increase from 2010 and a positive trend favouring women.

6. United Nations Institute for Training and Research

123. The recruitment system at UNITAR aims to emphasize transparency. Each interview panel is closely monitored by human resources to ensure both gender parity and geographical balance. The panel is briefed on gender bias and stereotypes by the Chief of Human Resources (ex officio on panels) during the preparatory meeting when recruitment criteria and related questions for each post are discussed. Shortlists are established, taking into account gender and geographical balance at

the time of recruitment, and the Appointment and Promotion Board reviews the shortlist to ensure that gender and geographical balance have been considered.

7. UN-Women

124. In its effort to propel the United Nations system to lead by example and with cutting-edge policy informed by good practice, UN-Women convened two expert group meetings during the reporting period:

(a) Policy, practice and potential: work-life integration in the United Nations system

125. The ubiquity of technology and the continuing requirements to meet multiple caregiver burdens have resulted in an increased demand for flexible working arrangements. To this effect, various General Assembly resolutions and ICSC and CEB reports note that gender-balanced staffing depends on the effective implementation of work-life policies (see the report of ICSC on its sixty-seventh session (ICSC/68/R.7) and CEB/2008/HLCM/HR/11 respectively).

126. The Focal Point for Women convened an expert group meeting on the policy, practice and potential of work-life integration with a focus on flexibility in the workplace. The objective was to assist the United Nations in exploring state-of-the-art research and analysis, identify good practices and pinpoint practical lessons for strategy and implementation. The experts concluded that a flexible work culture is one where employees feel comfortable working flexibly, whether on a formal schedule or in a more ad hoc way; a culture where managing flexibly is a required management ability, where employees are empowered to challenge notions of where, when and how work gets done, and where the business case for flexibility is well understood and support for flexibility is characterized by clear and visible leadership. The report on the expert group meeting concluded with a proposed work-life strategy and action plan for the United Nations. In response, some entities, including the Secretariat, doubled their efforts and, inter alia, piloted new arrangements in a number of departments and offices.

(b) Gender-based violence and the workplace

127. In the context of the upcoming session of the Commission on the Status of Women and its review theme of violence against women, the Focal Point for Women convened an expert group meeting in December 2011 on violence and the workplace. The experts produced a report with recommendations, on the basis of which UN-Women drafted a template policy informed by good practices that emanated from the expert group meeting. It seeks to establish a framework that addresses the issue and promotes a workplace culture that is adequately informed, supportive and responsive.

128. The experts' report provides valuable information on the ways gender-based violence affects the workplace and incorporates lessons learned from policies successfully implemented by other organizations worldwide in respect of, inter alia, impact on health and productivity, cost to the employer, and awareness and organizational response. Lastly, the report suggests elements for the creation of a model policy.

8. World Intellectual Property Organization

129. In 2011, WIPO carried out a comprehensive assessment of internal gender balance. The assessment found a direct correlation between the number of applications from women and the proportion of women at each level. It concluded that increasing the representation of women at higher levels would require boosting applications from qualified women, and at the D-2 and higher levels, advocacy with Member States. It recommended establishing a 50/50 target for recruitment of women to P-5 and higher levels based on a gender assessment of anticipated retirements between 2011 and 2021. An organizational planning exercise is currently under way to determine what posts and department positions will be available.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

130. The establishment of UN-Women signifies a renewed and determined priority to achieve gender balance in the United Nations system. As part of its broader global mandate, UN-Women leads, promotes and coordinates the accountability of the 32 entities in the United Nations system in respect of gender equality and the empowerment of women (see A/64/588). As a primary standard-setting organization, the United Nations has a particular responsibility to lead by example, including by demonstrating gender parity at all levels. The present report represents an important part of UN-Women's efforts to monitor and report on the system's progress on, and compliance with, the established goal of gender parity and associated internal policies and practices. It was compiled using qualitative and quantitative data from all 32 entities in the United Nations system, including the Secretariat and its departments and offices, in partnership with the gender balance focal points and human resources offices.

131. Across the United Nations system, significant strides were made in the current reporting period at the higher levels (D-1 to ungraded), where progress was greater than at the Professional levels (P-1 to P-5). In fact, the ungraded and D-2 levels experienced some of the highest annual growth since 2000,[62] with the proportion of women increasing by 11.8 and 9.2 percentage points respectively. Although this amounts to negligible average annual growth (1.1 and 0.8 per cent), making parity as yet a distant goal, it attests to the feasibility of reaching that goal. Overall, women currently constitute 40.7 per cent of staff on contracts of one year or more.

132. Notwithstanding progressive trends in the United Nations system, there remains both an inverse relationship between level and the representation of women (except the ungraded level) and a slowing in the overall rate of growth. The proportion of women stands at 60.2 per cent at the P-1 level and 27.4 per cent at the D-2 level, and the growth rate in women's overall representation slowed from 1.5 percentage points in the previous two-year reporting period to 0.8 percentage points in the current reporting period.[63] The challenge for each entity is therefore to

[62] In addition to the P-5 level, which has demonstrated 9.6 per cent growth since 2000 across the United Nations system.

[63] From 1.5 per cent between 2007 and 2009 to 0.8 per cent between 2009 and 2011 across the United Nations system.

reverse the current trend of appointing and promoting women at a much greater rate at entry levels than at progressively higher levels and to accelerate progress. Targeted action and demonstrable leadership are necessary on appointments and promotions of women for each level but especially at the decision-making levels.

133. At the present rate of change, the General Assembly mandate to achieve gender parity in the United Nations system by the year 2000, now 12 years past due, will not be achieved for 102 years at the higher levels (D-1 to ungraded) and 20 years at all Professional levels (see web annex II). With the exception of the ungraded category, all staff levels continue to grow at an average annual rate of less than one percentage point (see table 2 above).

134. Women are more underrepresented in the Secretariat, the largest entity, than in the United Nations system as a whole (38.7 per cent compared with 40.7 per cent). However, this belies the very significant gains made at the Under-Secretary-General level, where the proportion of women has increased by a record 6.8 percentage points since 2009, to 29.4 per cent. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the authority exercised by the highest level of leadership, in partnership with Member States, in support of the goal of gender equality for the most senior staff levels.

135. However, the progress at the Under-Secretary-General level is not found across all levels of the Secretariat, contradicting the myth that increasing the proportion of women at the senior leadership level — however important — automatically yields progress at other levels. The proportion of women at the Assistant Secretary-General level actually decreased by 2.7 percentage points to 23.9 per cent, perpetuated, inter alia, by the low proportion of women at the P-5 to D-2 levels and the consequent reduction in the pool of qualified women in the senior pipeline. The P-2 level has also experienced a significant decline in the representation of women since 2009 (3.6 percentage points). Slow progress is not limited to the 2010-2011 biennium; the D-1 level experienced an overall decline in the proportion of women and the P-5 level remained stagnant relative to their levels in 2000.[64]

136. The analysis in the present report suggests that growth at the highest levels does not automatically translate into growth at the lower levels and that three levels in the personnel structure hold particular significance for the advancement of women in the United Nations system. The first is the P-3 level, which prepares staff for the assignment of substantive and managerial responsibilities at the P-4 and P-5 levels. Yet, even at the relatively junior P-3 level, parity remains unattained (45.2 per cent at the end of 2011) and, although close to the 50/50 goal, the average annual growth at this level is among the lowest in the system (0.3 percent). This may be attributable to the failure to retain women at this level, which limits the pool from which to populate the P-4 and P-5 levels. In addition, there remained a significant difference in the representation of women between the P-3 and P-4 levels in 2011 (5.8 percentage points). This gap is shrinking over time, having almost halved since 2000, when the difference was 10.4 percentage points, because of the higher rate of growth at the P-4 level. Nonetheless, parity at the P-4 and P-5 levels remains elusive and, unless growth is accelerated and career development actively

[64] Representation at the D-1 level decreased from 30.3 per cent in 2000 to 27.4 per cent in 2011. Representation at the P-5 level decreased marginally from 31 per cent to 30.8 per cent.

fostered, these levels will continue to constitute a critical barrier in the advancement and empowerment of women.

137. The second level that holds particular significance for the advancement of women is the P-5 level, the highest in the Professional category. Advancement to this level signifies that the staff member has gained the knowledge, experience and confidence for higher responsibilities, and constitutes the launching pad for promotion to the Director levels. The 33.1 per cent of women at the P-5 level at the end of 2011 represents a sharp drop from their proportion at the P-3 and P-4 levels. This low percentage is perpetuated by declines in the proportion of appointments of women to the P-5 level and, in particular, the largest single decrease in the proportion of promotions of women of any level (five percentage points) (see table 9 above).

138. The third level is D-2, which warrants special attention. This level entails substantial responsibilities, including decision-making, strategic vision and leadership, and high-level programme management. The D-2 level marks the highest attainment for international civil servants, from which a select few may advance to the ungraded levels, and carries particular significance given the underrepresentation of women at the ungraded levels. While improving substantially from 18.2 per cent at the end of 2000, in the past three years, the D-2 level has had the lowest proportion of women of any level in the United Nations system (currently 27.4 per cent). Significantly, the proportion of female separations is the lowest at the D-2 level (24 per cent) and 3.4 percentage points below women's representation at this level, indicating that women separate at a slower rate than men at the D-2 level and constitute a lower risk of attrition compared with men. Gender imbalance at this level can therefore largely be attributed to both recruitment and career advancement barriers. Indeed, the smallest share of both appointments and promotions was granted to women at the D-2 level (28.5 per cent and 25.5 per cent), while as many as five entities promoted only men to vacancies at this level.[65] Clearly, there is an urgent need for targeted and determined action by senior managers, who have direct responsibility for, and influence on, appointments and promotions at this level.

139. Women constitute 46.1 per cent of appointments overall, but on contracts of one year or more, are twice as likely to be appointed at the lowest level (P-1) than at any of the highest levels (P-5 to ungraded). The result is that parity in appointments was achieved at headquarters locations only at the P-3 level and below, and at non-headquarters locations, at only at the P-1 and P-2 levels. Also, the relatively larger proportion of women appointed on temporary contracts indicates that the obstacle to parity is not merely a lack of qualified women applicants, but also their inability to secure fixed-term contracts. It is thus a serious concern that only nine entities[66] stipulate the inclusion of a woman on lists of recommended candidates and that over half the entities do not require either a woman staff member or the focal point to be on their review bodies.

140. Regarding promotions, only 30.1 per cent of promotions are awarded to women at the D-1 level and only 25.5 per cent at the D-2 level. Women's share of promotions decreases with each increasing level of seniority, and men are awarded three times the number of promotions at the D-1 and D-2 levels. Notably, entities

[65] FAO, IMO, UNAIDS, UPU and WIPO.

[66] FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNITAR, United Nations Secretariat, WFP, WHO and WIPO.

that do not achieve parity in promotions at the P-5 level are less likely to achieve parity at the higher levels.[67] The combination of crowding of women at the lower levels and the decreasing proportion of female promotions at the higher levels is disturbing and undermines both the engagement and retention of promising junior women of leadership calibre.

141. As regards separations from service, the statistics show that on contracts of one year or more, women separate at a slower rate than men at the P-4 to ungraded levels. This means that women constitute a lower attrition risk at these levels and may yield savings for the Organization. The fact that appointment expiration and resignations account for a greater share of female separations (46.5 and 26.6 per cent compared with 41.3 and 20.7 for men) warrants further investigation. It also highlights the importance of exit interviews for staff separating from the United Nations and of regular staff surveys to capture and address issues of organizational culture that continue to undermine the goal of attaining and sustaining gender parity. It is regrettable that in the current reporting period, five entities abandoned the practice of conducting exit interviews[68] and that very few demonstrated use of the standardized form prepared by CEB to facilitate central data collection and analysis.

142. Location continues to be a strong predictor of female representation, with women persistently underrepresented at non-headquarters locations on all contract types (37.5 compared with 46.9 per cent at headquarters), and only two entities achieving parity at non-headquarters locations for contracts of one year or more. Women constitute a smaller proportion of both appointments and promotions at non-headquarters locations. However, a lower proportion of women than men separated at the P-4 level and above at non-headquarters locations, suggesting that efforts to improve recruitment and career advancement will have a sustainable effect. It should be noted, however, that women bear a disproportionate share of caregiver burdens, which constrains their access to field opportunities. For that reason, they need appropriate incentives, such as time-bound mobility and reassignment, improved spouse employment opportunities and greater job security. The impact of mobility on women needs to be carefully monitored and steps taken, especially by Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and human resources managers, to identify and address barriers, including bias.

143. The survey of United Nations entities conducted in the context of the present report confirms that entities have, for the most part, made significant progress in developing a range of policies and practices for the advancement of women. However, few entities incorporate accountability mechanisms into their corporate strategies, illustrated, inter alia, by the lack of implementation of special measures for gender equality, poor implementation of flexible working arrangements (inadequate authorization and managerial leadership having resulted in low usage among staff) and inadequate data collection systems that fail to provide real-time data to routinely feed into scorecards and decision-making. Together with the issues highlighted above, this implies an accountability deficit and a need for senior and mid-level managers to focus on effective implementation. In this respect, it is significant that CEB has approved the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the landmark unified

[67] Based on data from the 21 entities that awarded promotions in at least two of the P-5, D-1 and D-2 categories.

[68] International Court of Justice, UNAIDS, UNITAR, the Pension Fund and UPU.

accountability framework for the Organization's work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the equal representation of women.

144. Given that the guarantee of equal treatment between women and men does not always lead to substantive equality, entities need to consider the role of staff selection systems in preventing bias against women in appointments and promotions. This is corroborated by the 13 entities that identified lack of special measures as one of the top three impediments to the goal of attaining gender parity. Staff selection systems may be required to address biologically and socially constructed differences between men and women. These measures are designed to accelerate the achievement of gender parity at the Professional levels and above. They are temporary in nature because they will be discontinued when gender parity has been achieved and sustained for a period of time. They also constitute an inherent part of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and have been repeatedly upheld by the (former) United Nations Administrative Tribunal. Special measures can include a range of instruments, policies and practices, such as targeted recruitment and promotion, training programmes for women and quantified mandates. All such measures are aimed at ensuring de facto gender equality, of which the equal representation of women constitutes possibly the most obvious and quantifiable manifestation; they also help to counter past and current forms and effects of discrimination or bias against women.

145. This is the first report on the improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system prepared by UN-Women. However, the above conclusions should also be considered in the context of past experience, as reflected in the reports of the Secretary-General over the past decade. The trends over the 11-year period (2000-2011) are consistent and point to persistent obstacles and lack of prioritization in the organizational cultures across the United Nations system.

146. Notwithstanding these trends, female staff in the United Nations system can find encouragement in the high priority that the Secretary-General himself has assigned to the improvement in the status of women and in the establishment of UN-Women, which signifies a renewed and historic emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Recommendations

147. The analysis in the present report reveals some encouraging trends after years of marginal improvements in the representation of women in the staffing of the various entities in the United Nations system. The most senior levels have registered appreciable increases in appointments of women, where the Secretary-General and the executive heads of entities exercise discretionary and direct authority. The challenge is to enhance accountability for, and the implementation of, measures that specifically target and accelerate progress at all levels, but especially where progress is slow and at the decision-making levels. Further, increased representation at the higher levels does not automatically translate into similar high increases at the lower levels. While seemingly distant particularly at certain levels, parity remains a critical and attainable goal central to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. To this end, recommendations are outlined below, with a

request that executive heads of entities give them serious attention and that the heads of Secretariat departments ensure their timely and effective implementation:

(a) Heads of department and senior managers, especially at the Director levels, with primary responsibility for the implementation of personnel policies, should prioritize improvement in the representation of women at the Professional and decision-making levels across functions, actively promoting the advancement of women, their full participation and the achievement of gender parity;

(b) Temporary special measures for the advancement of women should be effectively utilized for the placement of women candidates who are equally or substantially better qualified and should be introduced or restored in entities and at levels where progress is slow. In the United Nations Secretariat, pursuant to the decision of the Policy Committee chaired by the Secretary-General, senior officials are to ensure the effective implementation of special measures for gender equality. These measures include mandatory selection of equally or better qualified women candidates, mandatory inclusion of women candidates on all shortlists, and justification in cases where they have not been included or where the shortlisted women are not selected despite prevailing imbalance at that level;

(c) Special and sustained priority should be given to establishing measures for the promotion of women to the P-3, P-5 and D-2 levels, each of which represents a critical threshold for career advancement, and to attain and sustain parity;

(d) Senior managers at all entities should be held accountable, in accordance with the relevant and applicable procedures, for their responsibility in the implementation of the prescribed measures through, inter alia, enhanced performance objectives; management compacts; appointment of focal points at appropriately high levels, with terms of reference, access to management and minimal 20 per cent allocation of time to associated functions; regular use of exit interviews and surveys of management and staff to identify organizational culture barriers, causes of separation and remedial measures and; full implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the unified accountability framework for the Organization's work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, unanimously endorsed by CEB and welcomed by the Economic and Social Council, and mandatory annual reporting by entities;

(e) Executive heads of entities should place special emphasis on the promulgation and enhanced implementation of work-life policies and practices to meaningfully support flexibility in the workplace and to accommodate disproportionate caregiver burdens;

(f) Mobility-related concerns, particularly in relation to women, should be consistently and regularly reviewed to effectively attract women to non-headquarters locations and to retain them, including with such incentives as improved spouse employment, time-bound placements and reassignments, and greater job security. Inter-agency mobility should also be facilitated;

(g) Senior managers should investigate and address the underlying causes of the high proportion of women on temporary contracts relative to their proportion on contracts of one year or more, to guard against and rectify negative bias in fixed-term appointments;

(h) Given the lower attrition risk that women present at the higher levels and the associated savings they may yield, greater focus should be placed on outreach, recruitment and career advancement for women to, and at, the senior levels. Member States are encouraged to actively submit names of women candidates, especially for the senior levels, including for peace operations.

148. This report sets forth the many challenges facing the United Nations system in its continuing efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women within its own ranks. Success in this endeavour would render significant credibility to its wider goal of achieving equality for women in all parts of the world.

Annex

Gender distribution of staff at the P-1 to ungraded levels in the United Nations system on contracts of one year or more at all locations as at 31 December 2009[a] and 31 December 2011,[b] by entity

2011	*Ungraded*		*D-2*		*D-1*		*P-5*		*P-4*		*P-3*		*P-2*		*P-1*		*Total*			*Percentage of women*			*Percentage change 2009-2011*
Entity	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*Total 2011*	*Dec. 2011*	*Dec. 2009*[c]	*Dec. 2007*[d]	
FAO	4	11	6	32	17	63	101	332	172	366	165	201	118	76	12	12	595	1 093	1 688	35.2	31.8	28.6	3.4
IAEA	0	9	3	7	5	22	39	247	102	314	90	196	20	42	2	0	261	837	1 098	23.8	22.3	22.8	1.5
ICAO	0	1	2	3	3	15	7	38	41	118	20	24	21	13	0	0	94	212	306	30.7	31.3	31	-0.6
International Court of Justice	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	3	6	4	14	5	12	7	0	0	35	21	56	62.5	53.1	47.7	9.4
ICSC	0	2	1	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	0	3	1	1	0	0	10	13	23	43.5	33.3	35	10.2
IFAD	1	5	1	8	5	9	24	58	26	47	52	17	26	23	1	2	136	169	305	44.6	45.4	45	-0.8
ILO	5	5	7	17	31	34	88	166	114	139	65	50	18	5	0	0	328	416	744	44.1	43	41.5	1.1
IMO	0	1	2	5	4	16	14	27	12	25	17	12	21	5	0	0	70	91	161	43.5	43.8	41.8	-0.3
ITC	1	0	0	1	2	1	6	16	10	31	15	18	16	21	1	2	51	90	141	36.2	36.6	35.5	-0.4
ITC-ILO	0	0	0	1	0	2	6	7	5	11	14	19	4	1	1	0	30	41	71	42.3	42.7	35.1	-0.4
ITU	0	5	1	4	3	14	18	63	36	59	47	69	15	19	3	1	123	234	357	34.5	0	31.7	34.5
PAHO	2	1	0	1	18	25	23	38	96	122	57	35	42	22	13	7	251	251	502	50.0	45	39.4	5.0
United Nations Secretariat	32	90	41	127	129	342	476	1 068	1 139	1 870	1 339	1 884	567	531	11	5	3 734	5 917	9 651	38.7	38.7	37.4	0.0
UNAIDS	1	2	3	7	18	20	50	87	69	56	23	26	2	0	0	0	166	198	364	45.6	44.2	48.8	1.4
UNDP	6	5	21	52	91	163	225	418	279	469	301	282	150	94	2	1	1 075	1 484	2 559	42.0	43.8	38.8	-1.8
UNESCO	6	7	10	16	15	52	58	91	99	121	160	134	119	61	5	2	472	484	956	49.4	49.5	47.6	-0.1
UNFPA	1	1	4	6	24	33	89	96	79	88	56	49	53	20	0	0	306	293	599	51.1	51.2	52	-0.1
UNHCR	2	2	8	9	33	48	70	107	216	290	273	388	95	118	0	0	697	962	1 659	42.0	41.1	39.4	0.9
UNICEF	1	2	12	21	36	51	237	298	470	477	383	368	176	97	2	3	1 317	1 317	2 634	50.0	50.2	48.2	-0.2
UNIDO	0	1	1	4	9	25	13	56	18	57	27	38	10	14	5	5	83	200	283	29.3	27.5	25.1	1.8
UNITAR	0	1	0	0	3	1	5	6	0	8	4	2	3	4	0	0	15	22	37	40.5	41.2	55.6	-0.7

2011	*Ungraded*		*D-2*		*D-1*		*P-5*		*P-4*		*P-3*		*P-2*		*P-1*		*Total*			*Percentage of women*			*Percentage change 2009-2011*
Entity	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*Total 2011*	*Dec. 2011*	*Dec. 2009*[c]	*Dec. 2007*[d]	
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	0	1	1	1	0	5	9	9	12	20	10	18	1	0	0	0	33	54	87	37.9	35.6	37.5	2.3
UNOPS	0	3	4	8	6	30	18	59	36	109	55	111	27	23	1	0	147	343	490	30.0	24.6	28.8	5.4
UNRWA	1	1	1	3	5	11	8	30	38	44	30	16	4	0	0	0	87	105	192	45.3	43.4	24.2	1.9
UNU	0	1	0	8	1	9	0	6	1	16	7	14	10	5	0	0	19	59	78	24.4	12.1	19.6	12.3
UN-Women	2	1	5	1	11	2	42	6	51	12	49	7	36	4	0	0	196	33	229	85.6	0	0	85.6
UPU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	7	7	0.0	25.5	45.2	-25.5
WFP	2	2	11	35	28	72	88	122	149	221	221	342	70	61	1	0	570	855	1 425	40.0	40	20.5	0.0
WHO	7	12	9	29	43	163	241	485	335	478	185	161	70	39	10	5	900	1 372	2 272	39.6	38.8	39.1	0.8
WIPO	1	7	3	10	6	36	37	77	76	94	71	49	28	8	0	0	222	281	503	44.1	41.6	37.7	2.5
WMO	1	2	2	8	4	8	9	36	15	29	8	10	5	5	0	1	44	99	143	30.8	27.6	42.2	3.2
WTO	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	8	5	3	6	6	6	4	1	1	19	26	45	42.2	37.5	27.1	4.7
Total	**76**	**186**	**160**	**424**	**551**	**1 275**	**2 007**	**4 060**	**3 711**	**5 704**	**3 764**	**4 559**	**1 746**	**1 324**	**71**	**47**	**12 086**	**17 579**	**29 665**	**40.7**	**39.9**	**38.4**	**0.8**

Source: United Nations entities.

[a] One of 31 entities did not submit data for 2009.

[b] Based on data submitted by 32 United Nations entities.

[c] For 2009 data, see A/65/334.

[d] For 2007 data, see A/63/364.