

**UNDP'S APPROACH TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS: THE CASE OF TURKEY**

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**YELDA DEVLET**

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## Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Sencer AYATA

## Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Yıldız ECEVİT

### **Head of Department**

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Yakin ERTÜRK

## Supervisor

## **Examining Committee Members**

Prof. Dr. Yakın ERTÜRK (METU, GWS) 

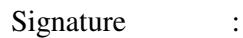
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Assoc. Prof. Ayşe GÜNDÜZ HOŞGÖR (METU, GWS)

Assoc. Prof. Şebnem AKİPEK (ANKARA Univ. Fac.of Law)

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Name, Last name : YELDA DEVLET

Signature : 

## **ABSTRACT**

### **UNDP'S APPROACH TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS: THE CASE OF TURKEY**

Devlet, Yelda

M.Sc., Department of Gender and Women's Studies

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Yakın Ertürk

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This study has focused on UNDP's approach to women's rights particularly in Turkey. In order to provide a context for the discussion of the role of the UNDP in Turkey on the realization of women's rights, the thesis examines the emergence of women's rights discourse within the international arena and its repercussions in Turkey. This has facilitated the understanding of (1) the emergence of a women's rights movement at the global level, (2) the spread of the idea and perception of 'women's rights' movement in Turkish society, and (3) the transformation of the approaches related to women's issues within the Turkish context. in the light of the support of the UNDP programmes in Turkey.

Within this context, this research focused on two UNDP programmes including "National Programme for Enhancement of Women in Development" and "Local Agenda 21". Both of the programmes have had progressive impacts over the enhancement of women's rights in Turkey in different stages. They are critical tools on facilitating the contributions and effectiveness of the UNDP in engendering the political agenda in Turkey. It is believed that analyzing the impacts of the UNDP's women's rights related programs has crucial importance for identifying the gaps and recommending solutions to bridge the gaps in Turkey.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, Women's Rights in Turkey, International Regimes, UNDP and Women.

## ÖZ

### BİRLEŞMİŞ MİLLETLER KALKINMA PROGRAMI'NIN KADIN HAKLARINA YAKLAŞIMI: TÜRKİYE ÖNEĞİ

Devlet,Yelda

Yüksek Lisans, Kadın Çalışmaları Ana Bilim Dalı

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Bu çalışma Birleşmiş Miletler Kalkınma Programı'nın (BMKP) özellikle Türkiye'deki kadın haklarına yaklaşımını incelemeye odaklanmıştır. BMKP'nin Türkiye'deki kadın haklarının gerçekleştirilmesindeki rolüne deðinmeden önce, bu tez kadın hakları söyleminin uluslararası arenada ortaya çıkışının Türkiye'ye yansımaları detaylı bir şekilde incelemektedir. Söz konusu inceleme; (1) Kadın haklarının küresel düzeyde ortay çıkışının değerlendirilmesinin (2) Kadın hakları fikrinin ve idrakının Türk toplumunda gelişmesinin (3) Türkiye'de kadın konuları ile ilgili olan yaklaşımının BMKP Türkiye ofisi programlarının desteği ile ortaya çıkan tartışmalar ışığında dönüştürülmesinde yardımcı rol oynamıştır.

Bu bağlamda, söz konusu çalışma BMKP'nin "Kadının Kalkınmaya Olan Katılımını Güçlendirme Ulusal Programı" ve "Yerel Gündem 21" isimli iki programı üzerine odaklanmıştır. Her iki programın da Türkiye'de kadın haklarının farklı düzeylerde geliştirilmesinde ilerici etkisi olmuştur ve bu programlar Türkiye'deki siyasi gündemin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine duyarlı hale getirilmesinde BMKP'nin katkılarını kolaylaştıran kritik bir araçlardır. BMKP tarafından uygulanan kadın hakları ile ilgili programların etkilerinin incelenmesi Türkiye'de konuya ilgili sorunların belirlenmesi ve çözümlerin önerilmesi için büyük öneme sahiptir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Türkiye'de Kadın Hakları, Uluslararası Rejimler, BMKP ve Kadın.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

CEDAW: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

DGSPW: Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

UDHR: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

CESCR: the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

CPCR: the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights

ECOSOC: Economic and Social Council

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CSW: Commission on the Status of Women

UNIFEM : United Nations Development Fund for Women

INSTRAW: United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

NFLS: Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies

DAW: Division for the Advancement of Women

PfA: Platform for Action

HDR: Human Development Report

ICT: Information and Communication technologies

WEDO: Women's Environment and Development Organization

HDI: Human Development Index

GDI: Gender-related Development Index

GEM: Gender Empowerment Measure

HPI: Human Poverty Index

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

SURFs: Sub-regional resource facilities

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

EU: European Union  
BSEC: Black Sea Economic Organization  
NWMs: National Women's Machineries  
LA 21: Local Agenda 21  
LEAP: Linking Eastern Anatolia to Progress  
IULA-EMME : International Union of Local Authorities, Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East region  
NHDR: National Human Development Reports  
NEAP: National Environment Strategy and Action Plan  
NPED: National Programme on Environment and Development  
IDP: Internally Displaced People  
SIS: Turkish Statistical Institute  
UNCED : United Nations Conference on Environment & Development  
WSSD : World Summit on Sustainable Development  
TTF: Thematic Trust Fund

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Objectives of the Study**

While international relations continue to be based on state sovereignty and each state formulates its own political agenda and policies, engagement with international regimes is inevitable in the current conjuncture of the world. Interaction among states is increasingly governed by standards that reflect the emergence of a universal culture. In this regard, the contributions of the United Nations system, which was created as a platform for multilateral dialogue after the Second World War, cannot be overlooked. The main aim of this study is to assess the interplay between international and national processes, particularly with respect to the impact of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the gender equality agenda and realization of women's rights in Turkey. In order to understand the influence of the UNDP as an international organization on national level policy making and the achievement of gender equality and women's rights<sup>1</sup>, it is crucial to review the process of the emergence of the women's rights agenda at both global and national levels.

The United Nations (UN), one of the most effective international organizations in the world, was created in 1945. The UN is committed to the principle of equality of men and women; it aims to establish equality in terms of their dignity and worth as human beings and also in terms of their rights, opportunities, and responsibilities. Tomasevski (1993) states that “in its work for the advancement of women, the entire UN system has dedicated itself to ensuring the universal recognition, in law, of equality of rights between men and women and to

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<sup>1</sup> The term women's rights is used beyond its legal meaning to encompass the full spectrum of women's equal participation in the public sphere.

exploring ways to give women equal opportunities with men to realize their human rights and fundamental freedoms” (p. 98). Lewis (2005) also states that:

(t)he UN should be driving the gender equality agenda since it is the global body with the greatest reach, and everything that underpins UN’s legitimacy is based on the discourse of equality. The Charter of the United Nations<sup>2</sup>, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>3</sup> (UDHR), the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>4</sup> (CESCR), the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights<sup>5</sup> (CPCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),<sup>6</sup> - all refer to equality and fundamental rights (p.112).

According to Tomasevski (1993), the achievements in the UN standard setting with respect to women’s rights can be analyzed under three main topics: “a) the formal affirmation of human rights, b) the prohibition of discrimination, entailing equal opportunities irrespective of sex, and, c) the identification and elimination of the obstacles to the equal exercise of rights by women that are gender-specific” (p. 100).

The UN has a diverse and multiple structures of organs, bodies, and programmes addressing women’s rights issues in most parts of the world. The UN’s human rights instruments create legal obligations for countries that are party to them. They also create roles, functions, and obligations for the agencies and organizations that make up the UN system to respect, to protect, and to promote

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<sup>2</sup> The Charter of the United Nations was signed on 26 June 1945 and was the first step towards the equal rights of men and women. In the preamble discrimination on the basis of sex along with race, language and religion is prohibited. The non-discrimination clause of the UN Charter established a legal basis for the international struggle to affirm women’s rights.

<sup>3</sup> The UDHR adopted by the UN General Assembly, includes the core of universal human rights guarantees to all people. It contains both first-generation civil and political rights and second-generation economic, social, and cultural rights. It was referred to by Eleanor Roosevelt as “a Magna Carta for all mankind”.

<sup>4</sup> The CESCR is a treaty adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1966, and went into force on January 3, 1976. It commits states parties to work toward the granting of economic, social, and cultural rights to individuals.

<sup>5</sup> The CPCR was adopted in 1966 and entered into force on 23 March 1976. The CESCR and the CPCR are both based on UDHR.

<sup>6</sup> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), referred to as the international bill for women, was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. It came into force on 3 September 1981.

the fulfillment of human rights. From these, emerge several human rights-related tasks and functions such as, conducting studies, setting standards, promoting awareness of and implementing those standards, and monitoring progress.

The UNDP is the leading development assistance organization of the UN that focuses on promoting human rights, primarily through support for the development of national capacity and sustainable development activities in the programme countries. All gender-oriented programmes and activities of the UNDP are based on two complementary and critical approaches which are gender mainstreaming<sup>7</sup> and women's empowerment.<sup>8</sup> The UNDP plays an important role in the protection and promotion of women's rights through gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment approaches, both in its country activities and through its participation in national, international and multilateral meetings and conferences. Its programmes are an application of the right to development<sup>9</sup> and address primarily the economic, social, and cultural rights of persons.

In this respect, this study aims to analyze the approach of the UNDP on the enhancement of women's rights in Turkey within the framework of UN agenda on women's rights. It is argued in this study is that the UNDP country programmes serve to facilitate the establishments of linkages between global and national level policy formation on gender equality issues. In this regard it is assumed that the UNDP operations in Turkey particularly in the 1990's have provided major

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<sup>7</sup> The mandate to mainstream a gender perspective into all policy and programmes are based on the 1997 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Agreed Conclusions on gender mainstreaming, which is communicated by the Secretary-Generals' letter of October 1997 to all heads of departments, funds, specialized agencies, programmes and regional commissions of the UN. Documents ingrained in the principles of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and specify the roles and responsibilities of the UN system with respect to gender equality. Gender mainstreaming was defined by ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions as follows; "mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality".

<sup>8</sup> Women's empowerment is a central concept of the Beijing process. Platform for Action is defined as an agenda for empowerment.

<sup>9</sup> Article 1 of Declaration on the Right to Development defines the right to development as an inalienable human right. "All people and nations have a right to share in an economic, social, cultural and political development where all human rights and basic freedom can be fully realized."

impetus for engendering the public agenda in Turkey. This thesis is a descriptive assessment of the UNDP country programme and its implications for gender equality policies and practices in Turkey. It is assumed that such an effort will facilitate an understanding of the basis on which the UNDP formulates its promotion of women's rights in its efforts to engender the political agenda both at national and international levels.

The UNDP's contributions to women's rights and gender equality in Turkey have been recognized by the Turkish Government, non-governmental organizations (henceforth, NGOs), academia and beneficiaries. The UNDP initiated its assistance related to women's issues in 1992 with the launch of the National Programme for Enhancement of Women in Development. Over the years, this umbrella technical assistance programme has supported the capacity of governmental institutions such as the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women as well as other actors such as women's NGO's and independent experts advancing research in gender issues, and also other initiatives such as awareness raising activities, advocacy, and the establishment of international linkages. Since 2001 the UNDP has been gradually adopting gender mainstreaming as its policy to combat gender inequalities in Turkey. The UNDP's work in the area of gender equality and mainstreaming includes three main approaches:

- (a) developing national capacity to integrate gender concerns,
- (b) providing policy advice for advancement of vulnerable populations who are mainly poor women and,
- (c) supporting operational interventions for gender equality.

## **1.2. Description of the Study**

As a result of the second wave feminism and women's movement of the 1970's, gender equality and women's rights have increasingly taken the attention of the international community. Since 1970s, gender related issues have occupied a large place in the agendas of the international forums. Thanks to these

international interventions, rising awareness on gender equality can be considered a pioneering initiative for the realization of women's rights. Ertürk (2005) states that the realization of international human rights norms for every woman around the world depends on and is mediated through domestic processes. She continues, stating "first, there is a need for political will and a commitment, by governments, to remove the obstacles to gender justice. Second, it is also necessary that civil actors are mobilized to demand state accountability for compliance with international norms" (p. 91).

Since 1975, the United Nations has organized four world conferences on women's issues, 1975 in Mexico, 1980 in Copenhagen, 1985 in Nairobi, and 1995 in Beijing. The UN General Assembly also organized two special sessions to review progress in the implementation of Beijing PfA in 2000 and 2005 at the UN Headquarters in New York. Each conference focused on different aspects of women's issues in order to shape the global agenda and encourage the member states to comply in accordance with the international standards. The conferences especially addressed women's subordination and their lack of access to political, economic, educational and other critical resources; they had the aim of making women more aware of their rights and more active at the national and international level. Winslow (1995) maintains that "the UN conferences and forums contributed to the strengthening of both the global women's movement and the more formal governmental and non-governmental infrastructure that could begin to serve as the basis of an international gender equality regime (p.117). Snyder (2006) states that "global feminist movement is deeply rooted in women's movements around the world and the UN in its turn became women's guardian and advocate, the 'unlikely godmother' on whom women have depended to put forward legislation for adoption by all countries, to offer to meet across national and regional borders, to open doors to join discussions of issues that impact their lives" (p. 24).

The sustainability of the realization of global women's movement and rights can only be achieved in a well-established and stable gender equality regime. The

existence of a gender equality regime can be considered as the basis, facilitator and the connective source for all women's rights related issues. According to Kardam (2004), the gender equality regime emerged due to two factors:

- a) The leadership of a global women's movement and its associated non-governmental organizations.
- b) The role of the international organizations (p.4).

The need for the existence of gender equality regime is accepted by national and international actors, but the question is how states arrive at a collective understanding, a consensus on a particular set of norms. Kardam (2004) states that theorists like Peter and Ernst have three assumptions about this question:

First, there is the need for the correlation between international structures and human rights violation. The second assumption builds on the first, and refers to the importance of intersubjectively shared meaning for both regime formation and performance. The third focuses on decision-makers' growing demand for scientific or other supposedly reliable information. It is also important to mention a certain level of international pressure and the desire to avoid embarrassment at an international arena as factors that may prompt state representatives to go along with decisions taken at international conferences. (p. 14).

Tekeli (1990) further points that the more links a state has to international organizations which are sensitive to women's equality, the more progressive policies on women tends to devise (p.46).

As has been mentioned, the main aim of this study is to identify and assess the UNDP's approach to women's rights in Turkey. International organizations that are sensitive to women's equality and women's rights, promote the gender equality and women's rights through their entities, focal points, or departments. They implement the gender equality based approach in every phase of their projects or programmes in which they also have a high level of interaction and cooperation between the non-governmental organizations and government bodies

since they have a high level of dialogue with the non-governmental organizations in the countries where they are represented.

International organizations are also active in shaping the political agenda of the states through international conventions, standards, policies. International organizations that are sensitive to women's rights place a dual pressure on the shoulders of the member states in order to make them implement gender equality regimes. They use international instruments like conventions as an advocacy and a motivating tool for having states comply with gender equality standards. By ratifying a convention, a state commits itself to comply with its obligations. In such a case, states have to behave in accordance with global gender equality norms in order to prevent their exclusion from the international society and protect their image on the international arena. The second pressure is carried out by empowering civil society and raising their consciousness on gender equality norms in order to utilize their influence as pressure groups on governmental bodies. Thus, this dual pressure leads international organizations to be active at international and local level on encouraging the implementation of the gender equality regime.

Turkey actively participated at the different stages of the development of the international gender agenda. In 1983 Turkey returned to "democracy" after a military coup in 1980 and initiated economic liberalization policies. Women's movement in Turkey was influenced by the second feminism wave of the 1970s in the West that was organized around the idea of "the personal is political"<sup>10</sup> during the 1980s. The actors of the Turkish women's movement were mainly women from the leftist university students who had already become politicized and learned to organize. Kardam (2005) states that "the leftist student movement of the 1970s had been crushed by the coup, and many female university students

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<sup>10</sup>When feminists say "the personal is political," they are challenging the liberal conception of the private sphere as power-free. In subjecting private relations to public scrutiny, some worry that this opens the door to government regulation of every precinct of private life. But this interpretation rests on a conflation between the terms "political" and "government." To say that "the personal is political" is to say only that private life is implicated in networks of power, leaving open the question of under what circumstances it is appropriate for government to intervene.

who were active in this movement and had experience in organizing and in social movements, turned their focus to their own experiences “(p. 42).

The international conferences and forums on women’s issues that started in 1975 under the United Nations umbrella also contributed to the acceleration of the women’s movement in Turkey. Many women activists attended these conferences besides government officials. They played a bridging role and shared the good practices they had learned with their counterparts at home. The UN conferences provided the women activists with the international background and support they needed. So they used international commitments as the pressure and advocacy tools on the national authorities.

The main characteristic of this period was that the parameters of domestic violence had changed. According to Arat (2000), “in order to change the parameters of domestic violence, it was necessary for Turkish feminists to propose a new law on domestic violence” (p. 283). They proposed a new law to be signed and approved by the members of the parliament who had been brought up in the traditional patriarchal Turkish society. Besides the women’s movement of 1980s, “*consciousness-raising*” activities and “*empowerment of women*” formed the main characteristics of women’s movement during the 1980s in Turkey. Regarding this matter, it is important to mention the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and came into force in 1981.

CEDAW is the most comprehensive international instrument focusing on every aspect of women’s rights. It has the largest ratification next to the Children Rights Convention. The number of state parties reached 182 in March 2006. Ironically, although CEDAW enjoys a high ratification, it also has high reservations which undermine its implementation. This situation shows the paradox of the international community on gender equality and women’s human rights.

Turkey ratified CEDAW in 1985 but put some reservations as there were some contradictions with the Turkish Civil Code of the time. Those reservations remained intact until the revision of the civil code; Turkey abolished the reservations in 1999 after the preparation of the new civil code. By ratifying the convention, Turkey has become obliged with fulfilling its requirements which include encouraging the establishment of national machineries on women's issues in member states. During this period the first domestic violence law (Law No. 4320, Family Protection Law) passed in 1998 in Turkey. Acar (2005) states that "Family Protection Law influenced by CEDAW in terms of not only the inspiration and ideology that promoted and legitimated women's rights and obliged the state to take action to protect women from violation of their rights" (p. 212).

1990s was the institutionalization period for women's rights through national machineries and women's movement in Turkey. Outputs of the 1980s' women's movement were used to institutionalize the women's issues at national level during the 1990s. During the institutionalization period of gender related issues in Turkey, it is important to mention the creation of a governmental entity "Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women" (henceforth, DGSPW) in 1990 which can be seen as the proof of Turkey's involvement to international developments on women's rights and institutionalization of gender equality issues. The DGSPW was established as a response to Turkey's international obligations, but, unfortunately, it remained a weak entity until its organizational law came into force in 2004, after fourteen years of delay. Besides all the constraints and limitations, the DGSPW played an important role in building gender expertise with donor supports, and it helped the establishment of research centers and active NGOs working in the area of women's rights. Ertürk (1999) states that "the DGSPW accelerated Turkey's active engagement with international gender equality regimes" (p. 180).

The institutionalization period of gender related issues in Turkey in the 1990s was also influenced by the international women's rights regime. The international

conferences and forums on women's issues had an undeniable contribution to the institutionalization of gender related issues in Turkey. The 1985 Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action both defined the rights and obligations of governments and of international and regional organizations on the bases of principles of equality and non-discrimination.

The period since the end of 1990s to the present has been built on the work done in the 1980s and 1990s. The new period includes a growing number of non-governmental and international organizations' participation in women's issues. If we consider each decade as a step towards gender equality, it is possible to state that since the beginning of the 1980s, progress has been observed on women's issues in Turkey. The 1980s can be considered as the wake up period, supported by the second wave feminism of the 1970s in the West which reached Turkey at the beginning of the 1980s. After the gender equality norms and women's issues succeeded and took a great place in Turkey's political agenda, the 1990s served as the second step in the institutionalization of women's issues and gender equality norms. As the second step succeeded during the 1990s, the third step is now on the scene, and it links the results of the previous two decades in order to engender the political agenda and to have the concrete results for advancement of women's rights in Turkey. In order to reach the objectives including gender equality and women's empowerment related to women's rights, some of the advocacy tools used are the projects and programmes that are implemented by international development assistance organizations like the UNDP and non-governmental organizations in Turkey.

### **1.3. Research Procedure**

This research study aims to provide an analysis of the efforts and approach of the UNDP with respect to gender equality, in particular, women's rights in Turkey. As such, it is a descriptive assessment of the UNDP country programme and its implications for gender equality policies and practices in Turkey. It is argued that

since 1980s there has been a significant shift in the international agenda with respect to women's rights through international forums. The internal dynamics of Turkey have been directly affected by such international developments. International conjuncture and pressure by international organizations like the UNDP put the pressure on Turkey and enabled her to accelerate its efforts to realize women's rights and gender equality. In the light of these developments, this study set out to find an answer to the question which could be formulated as "How and in what ways can the approach of the United Nations Development Programme on women's rights in Turkey be identified, particularly within the context of the selected *National Programme for Enhancement of Women in Development (1993-2000)* and the *Local Agenda 21* (1997-...) programmes?".

Descriptive method is used in order to illustrate and study the contributions of the UNDP to women's rights in Turkey and its role in engendering the political agenda descriptively. To that end, this study includes the review of the relevant literature on international women's rights issues and the review of the publications of the UNDP regarding women's rights and development. Interviews conducted with the key people who are working for the UNDP in Turkey are also included. In addition, an analysis of two UNDP gender related programmes in Turkey is conducted as a case study. Descriptive assessment and critical reading were the main procedures used within a feminist framework besides the semi-structured question papers that had been prepared for the interviews. It is assumed that such an effort will facilitate an understanding of the basis on which UNDP formulates its promotion of women's rights in its efforts to engender the political agenda both at national and international levels.

The importance of this study is that it highlights Turkey's engagement with the international arena with respect to human rights in general and women's rights in particular as a result of the affect specific UN programmes, instruments and mechanisms with a special focus on the role of UNDP. As such, this research aims to be a contribution to the documentation of the impact of international organizations –the UNDP in particular- to women's rights. The case study

focusing on three UNDP women's rights and gender equality related programmes is a critical tool for demonstrating the contributions of the UNDP in engendering the political agenda in Turkey. It is believed that analyzing the impacts of the UNDP women's rights related programmes has crucial importance for identifying the gaps and recommending solutions to bridge the gaps.

#### **1.4. Organization of the Thesis**

Following the objectives of the study, chapter two describes the international context related to women's rights in detail. An overview of the appearance and forms of women's rights discourse at the international level is explained which is followed by the analysis of the existence of a gender equality regime. A more detailed categorization of the United Nations agenda on women's rights and gender equality is presented next. Chapter three focuses on the UNDP in general and tries to explain the baseline where the human rights perspectives of the UNDP are stemming from. This is followed by a more comprehensive analysis of the global contributions of the organization regarding women's rights and gender equality. The active role of the UNDP on the Human Development Reports and its scorekeeping and campaigning role for the Millennium Development Goals is also explained in the chapter. Chapter four introduces the UNDP's country strategy in Turkey, and it focuses on the national results of its global activism regarding the Human Development Reports and the Millennium Development Goals. Besides the UNDP's standing point in Turkey, chapter five includes a detailed analysis of two main women's rights related programmes which were selected, namely, *National Programme for Enhancement of Women in Development (1993-2000)* and *Local Agenda 21* (1997-...) in order to identify the UNDP's approach to women's rights in Turkey. The reason why these programmes are selected for a comprehensive analysis is that each of them includes significant implications, motivating factors and steps for the realization of women's rights such as educational programs, research projects, pilot projects, and statistical/publication activities, activities to raise women's awareness on women's rights, efforts to increase women's participation in politics and endeavors to support women as

active agents of the public sphere. All these mentioned efforts have directly or indirectly affected the enhancement of women's rights in Turkey. Finally in the last chapter, an overall assessment of the findings of the study is provided.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE AGENDA FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS: FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL**

The international human rights law is a product of the post-World War II order. The UN Charter<sup>11</sup> recognized in principle the importance of the protection of human rights, and a great range of both general and specific international instruments have since given definition and texture to this commitment (Cook, 1994, p.58). It can be said that the international human rights law, which was developed after the World War II, has expanded the coverage of the traditional international law. According to Berktay (2003), international human rights law which has been developed after the World War II has expanded the context of the traditional international law. Because human rights law helps individuals or groups who do not have access to the international law system in different ways; it provides them with the restitute rights of the international law, and, as a result, it contributes to expanding the state-based discourse of the international law. The focus of the international law shifted from a state-based discourse to a more comprehensive one which also covered individualist perspectives; it was an opportunity for the realization of human rights within the strict system of the international law (p.40).

Cook (1994) states that the development of the international human rights law is often described in terms of “generations”: the “first” generation of rights covers civil and political rights, still regarded by many western commentators as the

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<sup>11</sup> At San Francisco in 1945, four women –representing Brazil, China, the Dominican Republic, and the United States- were among the 160 delegates who signed the United Nations Charter and demanded that its preamble speak explicitly of “equal rights among men and women” rather than “equal rights among men.” With support from forty-two NGOs who were also present as observers, they made sure that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms was without discrimination by “race, sex, condition or creed” (Snyder, 2006).

paradigm against which all newer claims of rights must be measured (Indeed some assert that civil and political rights are the only possible form of international human rights); the “second” generation of rights are economic, social, and cultural rights; and the “third” generation encompasses groups’ or people’s rights, right to self determination, right to social and economic development, right to intergenerational equity and sustainability. In addition to Cook’s description of the development of the international human rights in three generations, Radhika Coommaraswamy<sup>12</sup> has suggested that “sexual rights” may very well be the fourth generation of international human rights; The generational metaphor , however, is controversial because it implies a hierarchy in the development of human rights within the UN system. Western states, once the dominant players in the international community, have typically regarded civil and political rights as the most crucial for international protection. Displaying a different approach, socialist and developing states have usually been the strongest supporters of economic, social, and cultural rights. Groups’ or people’s rights, on the other hand, have been the particular concern of many of the developing nations, indigenous communities, and minorities.

The definitions and developments of these three generations of rights have one common point: they are built on typically male life experiences, and, in their mainstream form, they do not respond to the most pressing risks women face. Until recently, in all areas of the international law, women had been almost entirely excluded from the important human rights forums where standards were defined, monitored, and implemented. All around the world women face inequality; they can not be as active as their male counterparts in working life, and

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<sup>12</sup> Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy is a lawyer from Sri Lanka. She was named as the first United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women in 1994 to a three-year term. She came on the international stage in the early 1990s at a time when the international community had, at last, begun to respond to the worldwide pressure of the women’s movement to confront the injustice, violence, discrimination and marginalisation their sex has suffered just about everywhere on the globe (Matson, 1995, p.16).

they are underrepresented in decision making mechanisms. Although women have been experiencing these inequalities, international women's movement and international forums have made great contributions to the emergence of the international women's rights regime. The UN through intergovernmental processes, various conferences, and forums has been the effective platform in the formation of an international gender equality regime, through engendering the international political agenda for the realization of women's rights.

In order to provide a comprehensive framework on this issue, this chapter will start with women's rights discourses. As the realization of women's rights is bound to the existence of a gender equality regime, different approaches related to gender equality regime will follow. Then the emergence of the UN agenda for women's rights will be presented. Finally, the chapter will end with a review of the issues within the Turkish context.

## **2.1. Women's Rights as Human Rights**

The authority of men which enables them to control women stems mainly from the stereotypical gender roles that are re-produced by men and women within the traditionally patriarchal structure of the human community. This situation promotes women's permanent secondary position within the society; it supports and allows the continuation of the idea which asserts that women should remain under the auspices of the male members of the family, and, subsequently, prevents women to be autonomous individuals. Luce Irigaray's theory, which explains women's bounded position in their society, claims that the patriarchal society puts value on women only to the degree they serve the purpose of commodities of exchange between men. Irigaray (1985) says:

For woman is traditionally a use-value for man, an exchange value among men; in other words, a commodity...Women are marked phallicly by their fathers, husbands, and procurers. And this branding determines their value in sexual commerce. Woman is never anything, but the locus of a more or less competitive exchange between men, including the competition for the possession of mother earth (p.31-32)".

Women's oppressed, controlled, and bounded position, which is tactfully described by Irigaray above, has inspired the emergence of the women's movement.

Although the promotion of human rights is a widely accepted goal and provides a useful framework for preventing gender related abuse, women's rights continue to be violated in various ways despite all the efforts made in this regard, one of such is the Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without the distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." Similarly, in 1993, at the Vienna Conference, women's rights were officially accepted as human rights, and, as Acar (2000) thereby comments, "violations of rights which are committed on the basis of gender are regarded as the violations of human rights" (p. 46-47). This is a crucial point to make because such a discourse may otherwise remain indifferent to the discriminatory activities which are unique to women.

To better illustrate the inequality women around the world experience, a look at some statistics would be informative. These statistics clearly indicate the dimensions of gender related inequalities which exist in today's world: According to the UNDP report of 2002, all over the world, females are at higher risks to be the victims of torture, starvation, terrorism, and humiliation than their male counterparts. Increasing numbers of women may be joining the workforce around the world, but they earn only around 75 per cent of what men earn (UNDP, 2002, p. 23). Furthermore, of the world's estimated 854 million illiterate adults, 544 million are women. Of the 113 million children not in primary school, 60 per cent are girls. There are an estimated 100 million "missing" women around the world - 50 million in India alone - who would be alive but for infanticide, neglect, or sex (selective abortion). It is also striking that each year more than 500,000 women die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. Worldwide, only 14 per cent of national parliamentarians are women, with little difference between industrial and developing countries and positive exceptions (UNDP 2002, pp.10, 11, 16, and

23). These statistics clearly show that women's rights have not been given their due attention.

According to Bunch (1990)<sup>13</sup> a number of excuses have been offered as to why women's rights have not received the attention they deserve. These are:

- Sex discrimination is too trivial, or not as important, or will come after larger issues of survival that require more serious attention;
- Abuse of women, while regrettable, is a cultural, private, or individual issue and not a political matter requiring state action;
- While appropriate for other action, women's rights are not human rights *per se*; or
- When the abuse of women is recognized, it is considered inevitable or so pervasive that any consideration of it is futile or will overwhelm other human rights questions (p.488).

Bunch correctly argues that there are linkages between women's rights and human rights. She emphasizes the importance of the four basic approaches to linking women's rights to human rights which will be presented next. These approaches are women's rights as political and civil rights, women's rights as socio-economic rights, women's rights and the law, and feminist transformation of human rights

### **2.1.1. Women's Rights as Political and Civil Rights**

Taking women's specific needs into consideration as part of the already recognized "first generation" political and civil liberties is the first approach. This involves both raising the visibility of women who suffer general human rights violations as well as calling attention to particular abuses women encounter because they are female. Documenting the problem of women refugees and developing responsive policies are other illustrations of this approach.

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<sup>13</sup> Charlotte Bunch is an American activist, author and organizer in women's and human rights movement.

The political and civil rights approach is a useful starting point for many human rights groups; by considering women's experiences, these groups can expand their efforts in areas where they are already working. This approach, however, also raises contradictions which reveal the limits of a narrow civil liberties view.

### **2.1.2. Women's Rights as Socio-economic Rights**

This approach owes its origins to the Third World peoples who called for an understanding of socio-economic development as a human rights issue. It includes the particular plight of women with regard to the "second generation" human rights such as the rights to food, shelter, health care, and employment. Reviewing women's rights in the context of socio-economic development is a part of this approach which is favored by those who see the dominant western human rights tradition and the international law as too individualistic, and identify women's oppression as primarily economic. However, this approach has the tendency to reduce women's rights to basic needs which is an important limitation.

### **2.1.3. Women's Rights and the Law**

The creation of new legal mechanisms to encounter sex discrimination characterizes the third approach to women's rights as human rights. These efforts seek to make the existing legal and political institutions work for women and expand states' responsibility in decreasing the instances of women's rights violations. National and local laws which address sex discrimination and violence against women are examples of this approach. These measures allow women to fight for their rights within the legal system. The primary international instrument in this regard is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which will be discussed in section 2.3.3.3.

### **2.1.4. Feminist Transformation of Human Rights**

The fourth approach is transforming the human rights concept from a feminist perspective which helps women's lives to be taken into consideration more

comprehensively. This approach relates women's rights and human rights, looking first at the violations of women's rights and then asking how the human rights concept can be changed to be more responsive to women. The transformational approach has tended to focus mostly on abuses that arise specifically out of gender such as reproductive rights, female sexual slavery, violence against women, and "family crimes" like forced marriage, compulsory heterosexuality, and female mutilation.

All of the approaches mentioned above contain certain aspects of what is necessary to achieve women's right. The recognition of women's rights as human rights can be achieved with the inclusion of all of them into a whole. At this point in the discussion women's rights, it would also be useful to examine closely the existence of gender equality regime which is the legitimating basis for the realization of women's rights.

## **2.2. Existence of a Gender Equality Regime**

International system analysis<sup>14</sup> is an umbrella notion which helps to understand the mechanisms of international regimes and the existence of a gender equality regime as a sub-area of international regimes.<sup>15</sup> Krasner (1983) defines international regimes as follows:

International regimes are implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations. Principles are beliefs of fact,

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<sup>14</sup>The international-system-analysis perspective encompasses theories of the interactions between states and how the number of states and their respective capabilities affect their relations with each other.

<sup>15</sup> David Easton (1953), pioneer of those who applied international system analysis into political science, especially focused on the national political regimes and analyzed stability of various political regimes in the instable world full of changes. Morton Kaplan (1957) applied the system analysis approach into international policy. Kaplan tried to identify the notions and generalizations that were generated in the international arena. According to Kaplan, analyzing international systems means analyzing variables. There are five kinds of variables in the context of international policy: a) The basic variables of the system that describes the general behaviours of international science, b) Structural quality variables of international units, c) The variables that include the rules that change the system, d) The variables related to the skills of international units, and e) The variables related to the degree of knowing the international units' each other. These five variables also have significant contribution in analysing international regimes.

causation, and rectitude. Norms are standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action. Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice (p.2).

As the international gender equality regime is a sub-area of international regimes, it is composed of a set of formal principles, norms, legal rules, and a monitoring mechanism which monitors the compliance of the member states and the development of shared understandings that forms a gender equality discourse (Kardam, 2004, p.90). Variables that help in understanding international systems are also effective for the implementation of all the components stated by Kardam in order to internationalize the gender equality regime. Philips (1995) states, however, that “it is not clear enough whether the norm of general equality would be transmitted to gender equality” (p.115).

In liberal way of thinking, equality is defined on the basis of equality as defined by law; it generalizes individuals but does not consider the inequalities of the classified society. According to Acuner (1999), although capitalism considers individuals as an abstract category, not only does it ignore the individual differences, different capabilities, and needs, but also it does not consider their absolute differences related to their social and economic situations. In other words, solutions which reject the existence of discrimination on the basis of fundamental systematic assumptions promote the reproduction of inequality. Reproduced discrimination and the “imbalance of rights” legitimize the basis for regulating policies which include equal treatment for women, positive discrimination and support, and equal opportunities (p.39). Some countries may implement their gender equality policies on the basis of different aims and conditions. Acuner (1999) assumes that there are some common conditions for gender equality policies to be successful. These are:

- the existence of a cultural and political environment that is compatible with the norm of equality,
- an effective and centralist national mechanism,
- sufficient sources and,

- expertise on the gender equality .

These conditions could be diversified due to the requirements of different countries (p.s45).

Women's rights can be realized through the existence of a gender equality regime which includes the above mentioned conditions in any given society. Thus, gender equality regime is the first step towards realizing women's rights. Kardam (2005) identifies three approaches in determining the existence of gender equality regime: the Formal Approach which consists of principles, norms, rules and decision-making mechanisms; the Behavioral Approach which requires monitoring the compliance of states; and the Cognitive Approach.

### **2.2.1. The Formal Approach: Principles, Norms, Rules and Decision-Making Mechanisms**

According to Keohane (cited in Kardam (2005) p. 9), regimes are agreements in purely formal terms or explicit rules agreed upon by more than one state, and are embodied in treaties or other documents. The formal approach maintains that regimes emerge on the basis of agreements or other mutual enterprises that are recognized by the states.

As an outcome of the recognized agreements or other mutual enterprises, supranational results emerge. In this respect, the commitments of the decision-maker play an active role on the actions of all party states, and they become obliged to comply with the commitments of the decision-maker although sometimes their will works the opposite way. This structure goes beyond the single command of the party states, and supranational decisions could be taken.

Turning to gender equality issues, international gender equality regime could be identified on the basis of the explicit rules that are agreed upon by states and embodied in treaties and other documents. The rules consist of the "*de jure*" part

of the international regimes. They are the tools and motivation factors in promoting the implementation of the principles and norms of an international regime.

Rules, which are the formal necessities of an international regime, are the first step towards achieving an international gender equality regime, but they should be implemented by all participating parties. Otherwise, the “de facto” part of the international regimes would be incomplete. The following approach consists of the “de facto” part of the international regimes.

### **2.2.2. The Behavioral Approach: The Compliance of States**

According to the defenders of the behavioral approach, the existence of an international gender equality regime could be identified by monitoring the behavior of the states. The only way to understand whether a gender equality regime is applied by a state is through reviewing the recognized specific injunctions on gender equality related issues. Within the scope of the behavioral approach, a gender equality perspective would be realized if it is integrated in policy, planning, programming, implementation, and evaluation activities in all areas of states’ competence with a view to promoting empowerment and achieving gender equality regime (UNESCO: 2005).

### **2.2.3. The Cognitive Approach**

According to Kratochwil and Ruggie, (cited in Kardam, 2005, p.13) international regimes can be identified by “intersubjective meaning” and “shared understanding” rather than overt behavior of states. The cognitive framework is formed by an emerging intersubjective consensus at the global level which regards women’s rights as an integral aspect of human rights. It is considered mostly within the existing, gender-based norms and understandings.

States need to apply all three approaches in order to contribute to the establishment of a gender equality regime in their societies. While the components of the formal approach form the first step towards realizing gender equality regime, the outputs of the behavioral approach function as the complementary step in establishing gender equality regime. Such efforts would be more productive if all these steps are taken on the basis of a cognitive framework. In other words, it would be inadequate to talk about the existence of a gender equality regime without the implementation of an integrated version of all the approaches mentioned above.

According to Kardam (2005) the formation of a gender equality regime<sup>16</sup> depends mainly on three factors:

- the leadership of a global women's movement and its associated non-governmental organizations that exercise "structural" and "intellectual" leadership in the codification of gender equality norms and promoting a collective understanding of these norms in alliance with,
- the UN system which provides the forum for agenda setting, negotiation and norm development, accompanied by,
- funding and other types of support of the western governments and their bilateral aid agencies, and western liberal foundations (p.16).

While the formation of a gender equality regime is the first step towards the realization of women's rights, it needs to be supported by political commitment and good governance<sup>17</sup> in order to ensure that the political agenda is engendered.

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<sup>16</sup>Formation of a regime does not always guarantee its application by party states. Therefore, the following variables contribute to maintenance of a new regime: a) the extent of the translation of global gender equality norms into national and local context, b) the need to maintain legitimacy and avoid embarrassment by nation-states at the international level, c) the strength of domestic constituencies, and d) the existence of strong compliance mechanisms.

<sup>17</sup> According to UNDP, governance is defined as: (UNDP:1999) "the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs at all levels. Governance is a neutral concept comprising the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences.... Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent, and accountable. It is also effective and

Whether policy makers can take steps to reduce women's poverty or address gender injustice depends upon the implementation of gender sensitive policies. Signing up international treaties and passing legislation on issues such as women's rights, equal access to education, marital rape, and equal eligibility to credit and property ownership is only a first step. Legislation and policy have to be translated into government directives, budgetary allocations, institutional arrangements, bureaucratic procedures, and monitoring standards. The connection between political commitment and effective policy implementation can be achieved only through good governance. In the recent past, programs of governance reform have received considerable international and national attention (Klasen, 2005).

The achievement of gender equality has become a central goal of good governance since it is not possible to talk about human rights, democracy, or empowerment if half of the population of a country, i.e., women are discriminated against. Governance plays a determining role in the realization of a gender equality regime in a given society while it ensures the voices of the poorest and the most marginal who are mostly women to be heard.<sup>19</sup> Women are marginalized due to the patriarchal gender order and kept dependent.

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equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social, and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society, and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.”

<sup>18</sup> Engendering the political agenda refers to all kinds of efforts whose main objective is to open a place for gender related issues in the political agenda of the states. The term engendering political agenda includes a consciousness about problematic issues that are experienced in different ways by men and women. As women are subordinated and given a secondary position in every sphere of life, it is very crucial to touch upon these facts through official sources in order to alter them. One of the effective ways of altering the gender inequalities is to make them visible in order to attract the attention of the society and raise the awareness on the issue.

<sup>19</sup> Ashworth (1996) argues that there are different levels of governance that are interdependent and equally important determinants of equality between women and men. She states that there are five levels of governance. These are: a) the household or family, b) the community, by which should be understood, for example, the clan, the neighborhood, the workplace, and associations or political parties, c) local government, d) national government, and e) international or global government.

While governance is a neutral concept comprising the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences, it also tries to facilitate the gender equality regime through the rule of law and instruments that are legal and defined. As governance constitutes the potential part of the realization of gender equality regime, engendering the political agenda constitutes the kinetic part of it. The women's movement, which includes lobbying efforts, street demonstrations, and consciousness raising activities within the society, consists of these key elements in order to establish a basis for gender equality. While governance provides the society with a legitimate framework, any initiative related to engendering political agenda can be considered as the accelerating factor of the targeted gender equality regime.

According to Amy Mazur (2002), at least three of the five components of the engendered policy below should be covered in order to be considered as “feminist”:

- the reduction or elimination of gender-based hierarchies, i.e., patriarchy;
- a focus on both the public and the private spheres or an approach that avoids distinctions between the public and the private;
- a focus on both men and women, and,
- ideas that can be readily associated with a recognized feminist group, movement, or individual actor in a particular national context. (p.30-31):

An engendered feminist policy that covers at least three of the above mentioned components is crucial for engendering the political agenda for the realization of women's rights. In the light of the above mentioned processes related to gender equality, it is obvious that the existence of a gender equality regime depends on the social, political, economic, and administrative dynamics of a given national or international conjuncture.

### **2.3. The UN Agenda for Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

The UN has been the most effective international organization as it has been working in close coordination with all member states all over the world; it exerts considerable impact on the member states as they create and organize their national agenda related to gender equality. In this regard, the UN can be referred as the intergovernmental arena where states come together, reach consensus, and make decisions on issues of mutual interest.

Recognizing the UN's capability in this regard, Lewis (2005, p. 112) states that, as being the global body with the greatest reach, the UN should be driving the gender agenda and everything that underpins its legitimacy, based on the discourse of equality which consists of The Charter of the UN (1945), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (1966), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) - all of which refer to equality.

The “equal rights of men and women” clause in the UN Charter established the legal basis for the international struggle to affirm women’s rights. According to Ertürk (2005), the UN at the outset included the norm of non-discrimination on the basis of sex among its basic principles; this has paved the way for the emergence of an international regime, focusing specifically on inequality between women and men, which has persisted through different eras and under diverse political regimes and social formations (p. 93).

Although the UN and its influence have been significantly important, some weaknesses have surfaced in time. According to Stamatopoulou (1995), the weaknesses of the UN and of the international community have been primarily in two areas: At the conceptual level, their failure, until recently to declare all women’s rights concerns as part of international human rights law; and at the operational level, their failure to integrate women’s rights into the mainstream

human rights agenda, thereby marginalizing the issue in terms of monitoring and implementation and in terms of national institution building (p.36).

Inequality between men and women is still an ongoing problem in our world today. As the modern nation state has been formed, inequality between men and women has been one of the problematic categories within the integration process. While women have gained some rights as individual citizens, gender discrimination still exists in every sphere of life. This fact has been the motivating factor for the feminist movements all over the world. Feminist movements had a great effect on “engendering” the political agenda of the states. The UN’s international efforts like the world conferences on women’s issues have helped the women of the world to facilitate their activism. These international efforts played a leading role and motivated women activists. In the meantime, the locations where the world conferences were held became hotspots for the consciousness-raising sections for women activists from all over the world. To use a metaphor to depict the situation, the global became local with revenge.

Over the past quarter century, the UN has organized four world conferences on women’s issues: 1975 in Mexico City, 1980 in Copenhagen, 1985 in Nairobi, and 1995 in Beijing. Each conference marked a different stage of the process that has carried gender equality to the center of global agenda. Kardam (2002) argues that all of these developments point to the existence of a regime:

These conferences have highlighted that women lay behind in virtually all aspects of life (education, health, literacy, access to income, labor market and so on) and established Platforms for Action promoting gender equality. These conferences have also provided a platform for women’s NGOs and global women’s networks to lobby for a gender perspective to be included in development policies and strategies. They have generated cross-cutting coalitions from all classes and economic groups from North and South with an unprecedented and indisputable effect on changing awareness and programs for women in many countries. In the two decades between Mexico City and Beijing, the way women are viewed in the development struggle has changed. Gender equality is embodied in an international legal instrument, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). There is also a set of norms and rules related to gender equality as demonstrated by the various Platforms for Action from a number of conferences signed by states,

together with CEDAW and other regional conventions. States have further established national women's machineries on gender issues (bureaucracies, departments, policies and programs) and some have changed laws and policies to follow up on global commitments (p.411-412).

The UN conferences, combined with the energy of national women's movements, have galvanized understanding, interest, and action concerning the advancement of women around the world. Ertürk (2005) identifies five stages in the promotion of women's rights and gender equality within the work of the UN: (i) the norm of non-discrimination (1945-1965), (ii) integration of women into development (1966-1975), (iii) the Decade for the Advancement of Women (1976-1985), (iv) Empowerment of women (1986-1995), and (v) women's human rights (1996-present). According to Ertürk (2005);

Each phase embodies landmark developments in expanding the boundaries of mainstream approaches to rights and equality. In this process, intellectual as well as grass-roots movements increasingly engaged with the UN decision making bodies, thus linking policy, paradigm, and praxis. As a result, unlike any other UN agenda, the gender equality agenda not only gained a comprehensive outlook but also generated an ownership among women themselves bringing together women of increasingly diverse geographies and interests to the center of international public discourse (p. 94).

All five stages identified by Ertürk have helped to expand the UN agenda for women's rights and gender equality through its entities.

### **2.3.1. The Norm of Non-discrimination (1945-1965)**

During this period women in most part of the world did not play a visible role in public life, and this was a time in which women's participation in all levels of public life was limited. They had limited or no rights in education, access to property, political participation, decision making over matters related to marriage, divorce and child custody in their communities. During this period, women's movement and women's rights related demands concentrated on formal rights to

gain equality. The UN agenda included international instruments on the principle of non-discrimination in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

The UN's contribution and commitment for the advancement of women started in 1945. As the UN is committed to the principle of equality of men and women, meaning equality in their dignity and worth as human beings as well as equality in their rights, opportunities, and responsibilities, in its work for the advancement of women, the entire UN system has dedicated itself to ensuring the universal recognition of equality of rights between men and women. The "equal rights of men and women" clause in the UN Charter established a legal basis for the international struggle to affirm women's human rights (Fraser, 2001, p.5).

On behalf of the all gender equality based activities<sup>20</sup> of the UN, on 21 June 1946, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed to establish a separate body –the Commission on the Status of Women (henceforth, CSW)<sup>21</sup> - to address women's issues.

The main duties of the new commission were to "prepare recommendations and reports to the ECOSOC promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social, and educational fields and to make recommendations on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights" (UN, 1995, p.13).

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<sup>20</sup> Although only eleven of the fifty-one nations represented in the 1946 UN General Assembly had women in their delegations, with the support of women's NGOs, women made their presence known. Early in 1946 Marie Helene LeFaucheur of France introduced an agenda item on the participation of women in UN conferences, which was adopted. Brazil proposed establishing a status of women commission, but the proposal was strongly opposed by the U.S. delegate, Virginia Gildersleeve, a founder of the International Federation of University Women. She argued the U.S. position that such a commission was able to deal with women's questions. Minerva Bernardino of the Dominican Republic (one of four women who signed the UN Charter in 1945) suggested that a committee of the Commission on Human Rights be established to work on women's rights. The New Zealand chair of the (ECOSOC) Organization Committee took up the suggestion, and soon thereafter a Human Rights Sub-Commission on the Status of Women was established. (Fraser, 2001, p.44).

<sup>21</sup> When the Commission on Human Rights, which was the General Assembly committee assigned to prioritize and discuss economic and social matters, was created under the ECOSOC, women were immediately given a subcommission on the status of women. That was not enough. They wanted a commission on their own, and they got it in 1947 even though, it is said, they had to convince the initially unwilling Roosevelt to separate it from the Commission on Human Rights that she chaired. The mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was to promote women's rights and equality by setting standards and formulating international conventions that would change national discriminatory legislation and foster global awareness of women's issues (Snyder, 2006, p.26).

The purpose of the commission was to promote women's rights in all fields of human endeavor. The objective was to elevate the equal rights and human rights status of women, irrespective of nationality, race, language, or religion, in order to achieve equality with men in all fields of human enterprise and to eliminate all discrimination against women in statutory law, legal maxims or rules, or in interpretations of customary law (Galey, 1979, p. 276).

The CSW was established as a separate intergovernmental body in order to identify international standards that will bridge the gender gaps related to women's rights, promote government's applications about the newly identified international standards, put pressure on them for their implementation, raise the awareness of women's rights and build the capacity on combating gender inequality. One of the main focus areas of the CSW was to create a global language and understanding on women's rights.<sup>22</sup>

In 1963 the first tentative steps toward the UN convention on discrimination against women were undertaken. In that year a series of events put a new focus on women in the UN. A General Assembly resolution was adopted, introduced by developing and the Soviet block countries, calling for the CSW to draft a declaration on eliminating discrimination against women (Fraser, 2001, p. 8).

Also in 1963, a new UN Report on the World Social Situation, dealing with housing, population, health, nutrition, education, and social services –all traditional concerns of women– was before the ECOSOC. That year also marked the fifteenth anniversary of the UDHR and saw the Human Rights Commission complete a series of regional seminars on the status of women in family law. In the same year the General Assembly adopted an ECOSOC resolution on women

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<sup>22</sup> In its earlier years several conventions related to women's rights were put forth by the CWS adopted by the General Assembly; Convention for the Suppression of the Trafficking of Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949), The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women (1957),The Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952), and The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age of Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962), and supplementary conventions on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956).

in development, which had originally been submitted by Chile and co-sponsored by numerous other delegations (Fraser, 2001, p.8).

The resolution called on all UN member states, specialized agencies, and nongovernmental organizations to appoint women “to bodies responsible for the preparation of national development plans” and drew attention to the “importance of training women so as to enable them to participate fully in all phases of national development programs.” (Galey, 1995, p.12).

By 1965, thirty governments, fifteen women’s NGOs, and four UN specialized agencies had submitted comments on the proposed declaration. The CSW began drafting the declaration at its 1965 meeting in Tehran. A drafting committee brought forward an eleven article text that began with a definition and condemnation of discrimination, covered virtually all the areas mentioned in the responses submitted, and concluded with an article calling on women’s organizations to educate the public about the declaration’s principles.

### **2.3.2. Integration of Women into Development (1966-1975)**

Post Second World War period was a time that the modernist development strategies for developing states had failed. It was the time for the newly independent nations to emerge on the international arena, and the gap between the rich and poor was getting bigger due to changing conjuncture of the globe. The UN proclaimed the period from 1962 to 1970 as the first Decade for Development<sup>23</sup>. According to Ertürk (2006), global policy concern shifted from economic growth to welfare and equitable redistribution in the first Decade for Development (p.9).

Meanwhile, a second wave of an openly feminist international women’s movement was becoming evident in the late 1960s. Small, informal consciousness

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<sup>23</sup> The first UN Development Decade was launched by the General Assembly in December 1961. It called on all member states to intensify their efforts to mobilize support for measures required to accelerate progress toward self-sustaining economic growth and social advancement in the developing countries. With each developing country setting its own target, the objective would be a minimum annual growth rate of 5% in aggregate national income by the end of the decade.

raising groups, public demonstrations on a variety of issues, and the exchange of information via informal newsletters and privately published studies and reports characterized this movement at local and national levels. Within the United States during the 1970s, the new feminists and traditional women's organizations collaborated to have the U.S. Congress pass numerous new anti-discrimination laws, but they paid no attention to the CSW and little to international affairs in the early 1970s. Traditional NGOs who lobbied the commission were influenced by this new movement, and with the increased dominance of the U.S. press, the new movement gave momentum to, and reinforced, CSW's work.

During 1960s and 1970s the UN membership grew dramatically. While the number of the member states in 1960 was 99, it reached 144 in 1975 with the membership of newly independent states. As the coverage of the UN umbrella expanded, the organization decided to build a new livelihood strategy in order to cover the problematic issues among the member states. There was a big gap between the developed and developing nations, and this situation was effective on the lives of women in those societies. Therefore, the mentioned livelihood strategy focused especially on the role of women in development, both as beneficiaries and as agents of change.

As the global policy concern shifted from economic growth to welfare, the integration of women into development was part of the agenda of the Second United Nations Development Decade<sup>24</sup> (1971-1980) which led to the broadening of the UN gender agenda to include a focus on women and development. The full integration of women in all aspects of development was the first step of the UN gender agenda related to women's rights. Women and development related strategies of the UN especially consisted of issues such as the elimination of discrimination against women, eradication of illiteracy among women, equal pay

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<sup>24</sup> At its 25th session, in 1970, the General Assembly adopted a resolution outlining an international development strategy for the second UN Development Decade—the 1970s. The main objectives of the plan were to promote sustained economic growth, particularly in the developing countries; ensure a higher standard of living, and facilitate the process of narrowing the gap between the developed and developing countries. The General Assembly declared that the developing countries bore primary responsibility for their development but that their efforts would be insufficient without increased financial assistance and more favorable economic and commercial policies on the part of the developed countries.

for equal work, health and maternity protection, and participation of women in all decision making processes.

During the “Integration of Women into Development” phase, the following gains were made: Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1967), dedication of 1975 as the International Women’s Year<sup>25</sup>, and the convening of the First Women’s World Conference in Mexico City in the same year. On 10 December 1974, the General Assembly approved the program for the International Women’s Year, focusing on equality, development, and peace, and proposed to organize an international conference.

The First Women’s World Conference in Mexico City convened on 19 June 1975. Women discussed their common problems at the UN platform by going beyond the national, economic, and cultural borders. For the first time, states defined their approaches on women’s issues, and they recognized that the problems of women who formed half of the world’s population were the problems of the international community.

The main aim of the World Action Plan that was accepted at the First World Conference on Women was defined as “equal rights, development, and peace”. In order to realize the World Action Plan, the UN declared the period between 1976 and 1985 as the “decade for equal rights, development, and peace”. Nine core areas of action including international cooperation and peace, political participation, education, employment, health and nutrition, family, population, accommodation and other (migrants and old women, prostitution and women trafficking etc.) were defined through the World Action Plan.

The following five subjects formed the agenda of the Mexico City Conference:

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<sup>25</sup> In 1972 the UN General Assembly approved what had been a dream of some female delegates when the United Nations was formed – the holding of a world women’s conference. Moreover, 1975 was designated as the International Women’s Year. Mexico City was selected as the site for the Conference and Helvi Sipila, a CSW representative since 1960, was chosen as the Assistant Secretary General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in charge of the year and the conference. Equality, development, and peace were selected as the themes of the conference.

- The objectives and goals of the International Women's Year: present policies and programs
- The involvement of women in strengthening international peace and eliminating racism, apartheid, racial discrimination, colonialism, alien domination, and acquisition of territory by force.
- Current trends and changes in the status and roles of women and men, and major obstacles to be overcome in the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities.
- The integration of women in the development process as equal partners with men.
- Adoption of the World Plan of Action.

Following the conference, in order to establish international mechanisms, The UN set up the “United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)” and the “United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)” in 1976. The priority areas of action for UNIFEM, which aimed to produce solutions for abolishing the inequality between men and women and to empower women, were to encourage women to participate in every level of programming and implementation of development. Besides this, INSTRAW focused on the research and training activities through which women's consciousness could be raised and they could be rescued from being the subordinated members of the community. Turkey realized the decision, which was taken at the 1975 conference, after the establishment of the national mechanisms in 1991, by establishing the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women (DGSPW).

### **2.3.3. The Decade for the Advancement of Women (1976-1985)**

The UN Assembly proclaimed the years between 1976 and 1985 as the “United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, and Peace.” It was assumed as an institution-building decade. The main idea which was promoted through the decade was that development was not possible without the full participation of women in every sphere of life. Ertürk (2005) states:

The 1976-1985 period was devoted to effective and sustainable national, regional, and international action to implement the outcomes of the Mexico Conference, particularly the goals of equality and the full integration of women in the development process and in the promotion of world peace (p.96).

To that end, during this period, two UN entities - UNIFEM and INSTRAW - were founded in 1976. There were three main events that were instrumental in shaping the period: the adoption of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Second and the Third World Conferences on women, in 1980 in Copenhagen and in 1985 in Nairobi.

#### **2.3.3.1. UN Second World Conference on Women (The Copenhagen Conference in 1980)**

The Second World Conference on Women was held on 14-30 July 1980 in Copenhagen. The objectives of the conference were twofold: to review the progress in the implementation of the objectives of the Mexico City Conference and to update the 1975 World Plan of Action.

The conference was held in the framework of three areas of concern for women: employment, health, and education. These issues were considered as the specific steps in order to reach the broader goals which were gender equality, development, and peace.

In the Second World Women Conference, it was concluded that the rate of progress on the improvement of the status of women had been very slow. At the Copenhagen Conference, it was stated that equality could be realized not only

through the implementation of legal instruments, but also through the implementation of equality for the rights and responsibilities; Equality could be achieved when men and women have the same opportunity to benefit from development and to participate in it as active agents. Recommendations that were made addressed problems faced in implementing the goals of the Mexico Conference.

An action plan was made to break the obstacles, to accelerate and to increase the effect of the actions to be done in the second half of the decade. The Copenhagen Program for Action called for stronger national measures to ensure women's ownership and control of property, improvements in women's rights to inheritance, child custody, domestic violence, and nationality. At the end of the Second World Conference on Women, it was generally considered that women's issues had a considerable place in the global agenda, and it was not possible for them to be separated from it.

#### **2.3.3.2. UN Third World Conference on Women (The Nairobi Conference in 1985)**

Since the UN Decade on Women was over in 1985, governments and women's NGOs from all over the world came together in Nairobi in order to review the achievements of 1975 conference, to identify the obstacles, and to prepare an action plan which would provide assistance to reach the objectives of 1975, which had not yet been met, until the year 2000. When the UN Decade for Women started in 1975, it was assumed that world trade growth, increase in money flows and technological developments would assist the existence of sustainable development, and this situation would lead to more participation by the women of developing countries in every sphere of life. The Nairobi Conference was held at a time in which all these above mentioned assumptions had turned up blank. During the Decade for Women (1975-1986), income inequality had increased greatly, and many of the developing countries of that period experienced economic crisis, and there was a serious armament between the two blocks of the cold war. This situation was a serious obstacle for women because a great part of the countries'

income was being allocated for armament. As a result of all these developments, during the decade for women, the positive atmosphere came to an end. Poverty became one of the most important women's problems. Feminization of poverty appeared in the international agenda.

Political polarizations between poor and rich countries and between the socialist and capitalist systems discourses and conflicts affected the conference as well. In the outcome document of the conference named the "Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies" (NFLS), various problems of women of both developed countries and developing countries were defined and new strategies to overcome these problems were identified. In the NFLS, the necessity of participation of women in all levels of decision-making mechanisms was stressed. The NFLS offered guidelines for national measures to promote women's participation in efforts to promote peace and education for peace. After the Nairobi Conference, the ECOSOC upgraded the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in 1988. The DAW became the central body for the women's related issues within the UN. While one of the main activities of the DAW was to monitor and implement the NFLS, it worked as data and communication focal point for the national machineries for the advancement of women in member states. (Pietila and Vickers, 1990).

### **2.3.3.3. CEDAW 1979**

In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted and came into force in 1981. The CEDAW has been defined as an international bill of rights for women<sup>26</sup>. The convention set out a legal basis for the achievement of internationally accepted principles and norms regarding women's rights. It came into being as women's rights regime following an intergovernmental logic, but international, national,

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<sup>26</sup> Zwingel traces the development of the CEDAW within four different contexts. The first one is the intergovernmental context of its creation, which is predominantly shaped by secular western notions on gender equality and states' interests in maintaining their sovereignty. The second is the context of the UN as the international organization, which initially created unfavorable conditions for the functioning of the CEDAW committee, but later enabled the substantial strengthening of the monitoring body. The third perspective moves to the national contexts. It discusses how state institutions translate their obligations under the CEDAW into domestic policies. The fourth is the transnational, predominantly non-governmental activism that connects the global norms enshrined in the CEDAW with local women's interests and national policy development (2005:402).

and sub-national activists have started to transform it into a transnational implementation network of women's rights (Zwingel, 2005, p. 416).

The CEDAW enjoys the highest ratification after the Children Rights Convention. The number of the state parties was 185 as of December 2006. Ironically, the CEDAW also has the highest reservations. This situation shows a paradox of the international public opinion on gender equality and women's human rights.<sup>27</sup> According to Acar (1997), the most important function of the CEDAW is that it enables state parties to establish a symbolic linkage with the part of the contemporary world that is defined as "modern", "democratic", or "civilized" (p.30).

The convention comprised of 30 articles and an introduction which defined the meaning of discrimination against women and constituted an action plan to end this discrimination. The CEDAW defined discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which had the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field, and set up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

Since the CEDAW, women's rights have been more seriously observed and considered by international associations: ".....CEDAW provided a detailed commentary on the implications of violence against women for the specific rights guaranteed to all women under the women's convention, such as life, protection against ill-treatment, liberty, security, health, just and favorable conditions of

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<sup>27</sup> Acar (2000) emphasizes that for many state parties, especially developing countries or countries in the process of structural change or countries in which political regimes are shaped by highly conservative religious or cultural suppressions, entitling all women's human rights that they have pledged to their citizens in the agreement, and virtually the exercising of these rights by women without being subject to sexuality-based discrimination are yet rather out-of reach goals. In order to reach these goals, for most of the states, besides social and cultural obstacles, inconvenient economic conditions are also an important factor (p. 14).

work, and equality in the family and equal protection of the law" (Tomasevski, 1993, p. 91).

By accepting the Convention, in order to end discrimination against women in all forms, states commit themselves to undertake a series of measures which are:

- To incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal systems, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women,
- To establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination,
- To ensure the elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

The Convention forms a sound basis for guaranteeing women to have equal opportunities like the right to vote and be elected, education, employment, and health in political and social spheres in order to raise the awareness on equality between men and women. Signatory states accept to take necessary precautions including legal and contemporary special precautions. As a result of that, women can gain all human rights and freedoms in theory. But, Acar (1997) states that;

It is more problematic to implement both general human rights and especially women's human rights in order to introduce the second generation of rights. In contrast to political rights, social and economical rights' being considered by governments as a "condition" rather than a "right" has been an important factor in the delay of development in human rights in general and especially in women's rights. Because there is no possibility of changing economical and social rights with laws, transformation in these fields has the tendency of explaining it by factors that exclude governments' "optional" behaviors: This limits the power of international agreements correspondence in these fields (p.30).

The CEDAW is the only convention which defines the family relations and gender roles. It focuses also on culture and traditions and protects the productive rights of women. By ratifying the convention, the party states accept to implement

not only the legal obligations of the convention, but also to report the precautions and actions that they have taken to the CEDAW committee every four years.

The implementation of the Convention is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Committee's primary mandate is to monitor the progress made for women in signatory states. The Committee holds three meetings annually and reviews national reports submitted by state parties within one year of ratification or accession, and thereafter in every four years. Government representatives present the reports to the Committee, covering the national action taken to improve the situation of women. The CEDAW experts comment on the report through discussions with government officials. The committee also receives information from the non-governmental organizations and prepares alternative reports. On the basis of the review, the committee submits final comments and may suggest areas for further action for the state party. The Committee can also make general recommendations on any women related issue.

#### **2.3.4. Empowerment of women (1986-1995)**

As a result of the effective work of the women's organizations during the UN Decade for Women, partnership between the national and international stakeholders was formed. Women's activism reached an international level and had a great impact on engendering the political agenda of the international community. It put the pressure on the international community through various new regional networks as a result of the effect of the UN conferences on women issues. The international conferences on women issues conducted by the UN promoted participation of numerous women from all over the world in order to shape and legitimize international feminism. The main aim of the conferences was to have a consensus and a common understanding on the global feminism to be implemented in different parts of the globe. As Ertürk (2005) states;

By the end of the decade, as evidenced at the Nairobi Conference, women came together, in ever increasing numbers and orientations, with the conviction that through the empowerment of women, the patriarchal

gender order could be changed. Thanks to the efforts of the international women's movement, violence against women, a subject grossly overlooked in the UN gender agenda, started making its way into public debate (p.96).

The World Human Rights Conference<sup>28</sup> that was held in June 1993 in Vienna was a milestone for the international women's movement: The Human Rights Bill that was approved in 1948 emphasized the violations in the public sphere, but it did not mention the violations that arose from the reason of women's being women. In the Human Rights Bill, the approach was not the equality of men and women; moreover, it closed its eyes to the violations in the private sphere. In fact, women had been subjected to many human rights violations like not letting them to go to school, marriage under compulsion, and not letting them to work. Thus, most of the women were out of the scope of the prevention precautions that the Human Rights Bill brought. This has been defined as humanity crime.

During the conference, the issue of violence against women was fully identified as a human rights concern. The slogan of the conference was "Women's rights are human rights." In the conference, it was approved that "The human rights of women and girl children is an indivisible, inseparable, and indispensable piece of the universal human rights." After this conference, the UN General Assembly adopted the "Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women" in December 1993. This report was the first document that specially focused on the violence against women. In 1994, it was decided to assign a special reporter for the "violence against women issue" in the UN Human Rights Commission and for women's rights to be included in the UN human rights mechanisms. This was followed by the Fourth World Conference on Women which was organized in Beijing in 1995.

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<sup>28</sup> By the help of the 1993 United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, the Center for Women's Global Leadership helped to form an international movement of women called the Global Campaign for Women's Human rights in an effort to bring gender-specific violations of women's human rights to the forefront of international human rights discourse. (Bunch, 1995:171)

#### **2.3.4.1. The Beijing Conference and Platform for Action, 1995**

The Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing<sup>29</sup> in 1995. At the conference, it was stated that women's rights were a global human rights issue. At the end of the conference, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted by 189 countries. During the conference, it was highlighted that women's rights were human rights, and the governments of all party states were called for action to stop violence against women. Another flagged issue at the conference was the definition of violence against women in armed conflicts as a crime against humanity. The conference also put pressure on the participating governments to have them promote gender equality and develop gender equality based strategies within their policies and programs. It was also determined at the Beijing Conference that many of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies had not been achieved. Therefore, twelve priority areas of action were identified for an agenda for women's empowerment, which was called the Platform for Action, (henceforth, PfA), and governments, the international community, and civil society, including NGOs and the private sector were called to take strategic action in these 12 critical areas of concern which were:

- *Poverty* (The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women),
- *Education* (Inequalities and inadequacies and equal access to education and training),
- *Health* (Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services),
- *Violence* (Violence against women),
- *Armed Conflict* (The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation),
- *Economy* (Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources),
- *Power* (Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels),

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<sup>29</sup> 17.000 representatives attended the official conference from 189 countries. With the NGO forums, the Beijing Conference was crucial as it gathered nearly 30.000 people together.

- *Institutional Mechanisms* (Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women),
- *Human Rights* (Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women),
- *Media* (Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media),
- *Environment* (Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment),
- *The Girl Child* (Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child).

The PfA, being different from other UN documents, identified the detailed necessities after conducting rapid situation analysis of every critical issue. The PfA also defined the stakeholders (governments, international organizations, private sector, and alike) for the implementation of the solutions on those critical issues. For the first time, governments made binding commitments on the amendments of their national policies. They prepared national plans in order to show how they would implement the decisions of the platform.

### **2.3.5. Women's Human Rights (1996-Present)**

Since the beginning of the “women's human rights” period, the concept of women's human rights has taken an expanding place in the agenda of the international community. According to Ertürk (2005);

After the Beijing Conference, where human rights were accepted as one of the critical areas of concern requiring special attention, the human rights discourse increasingly embraced all other critical areas of concern. The Platform for Action (PfA) adopted at the Beijing Conference acknowledged that the full enjoyment of all human rights is an integral dimension of women's empowerment and an end in itself (p.96).

### **2.3.5.1. The Optional CEDAW Protocol, 1999**

In 1999 the General Assembly of the UN adopted an Optional Protocol to the CEDAW. It is stated in the Optional Protocol that individual women or groups of women may bring complaints regarding sex and gender-based discrimination to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, only when all national remedies have been exhausted. The Committee may also conduct inquiries into grave or systematic violations of the Conventions. As Acar (1998) emphasizes “this protocol is a motivating tool for the party states to implement the CEDAW as it stands for an efficient monitoring process. The optional protocol is also active in opening new control and monitoring strategies like application for individual complaints and investigations” (p.31).

### **2.3.5.2. Special Sessions of General Assembly: Beijing +5 and Beijing +10**

The 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing and the regional preparatory meetings for that conference reaffirmed the conclusions of the Vienna Conference and put women's human rights even more firmly on the world agenda. In fact, gender representation in politics was one of the many topics that the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly touched upon. Under the title "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development, and Peace for the Twenty-first Century", the five-day meeting reviewed the Beijing Declaration and the PfA adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Delegates agreed that, while progress had been made towards the full implementation of the goals set out in Beijing, barriers still remained. Thus, the final outcome document, containing the Political Declaration and "Further Actions and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" was adopted at this special session.

According to their order of priority, the critical areas of concern for the Beijing conference were the burden of poverty on women, unequal access to education and training, health care, violence against women, the problems of armed conflicts, economic inequalities, inequality of power and decision making,

insufficient mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, lack of respect and protection of women's human rights, stereotyping of women, and inequality in communications, especially the media and the environment (Fraser, 2001, p.58).

In the 1995 Beijing conference on women, the PfA, which stood as a milestone for their advancement in the twenty-first century, was adopted. In the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session in June 2000, member states agreed to "assess regularly further implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, with a view to bringing together all parties involved in 2005 to assess progress and consider new initiatives, as appropriate, ten years after the adoption of the Beijing PfA". In 2005, the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and the PfA of the Fourth World Conference on Women were done during the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Prevention of all kinds of discrimination against women was one of the core issues discussed during the 10-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and the PfA. The general objective of the meeting was to review and analyze the progress since the declaration of Beijing PfA in 1995. The main subjects of discussion during the meeting included the enhancement of women's status, prevention of trafficking in human beings, and supporting women's initiatives. Besides that, the women's NGOs and activist women, who participated in the meeting, underlined the ongoing violence and discrimination against women by giving examples from their local realities and tried to include the subjects of violence and discrimination against women into the outcome report of the meeting. The harm of the on-going internal and global conflicts was mentioned as women and children were the most vulnerable populations.

The commission also called on governments to conclude bilateral, sub-regional, regional, and international agreements to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, and to adopt specific measures aimed at

reducing demand, as appropriate, to complement the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. On indigenous women, the Commission recommended that Governments, intergovernmental agencies, the private sector, and the civil society adopt measures that ensured the full and effective participation of indigenous women in the implementation, follow-up work, and monitoring of the Beijing PfA.

## **2.4. Women's Rights in Turkey**

### **2.4.1. The Historical Context of Women's Rights in Turkey**

Turkey, with a predominantly Muslim population, is the only secular state in the Muslim world. The secular nature of the state is the result of a unique reformation made in the 1920s. With the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, improving the status of Turkish women and creating a new republican woman image turned out to be pivotal issue. Women's rights were considered as the indicators of the Turkish modernization, and they had a major place in agenda of the new republican regime.

Ayata (2001) refers to these developments as westernization which started in 1923, adding that:

the content of westernization has not only been economic and political, but also cultural, where the role of women within the society has assumed significance as a symbol of progress toward this endeavor. The core achievements that led to full citizenship for women, abolition of polygamy, equal rights in divorce and inheritance, and the granting of all civic equalities including political rights to women, were recognized as major accomplishments (p.157).

However, such efforts did not start after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Before the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, there was a women's movement which came into existence in the late period of the Ottoman Empire and continued in the early years of the Turkish Republic. Although the republic

period reforms are considered as the unique source of equality between Turkish men and women in the public sphere, the contributions of the pre-republican Feminism on the progress of the status of the Ottoman-Turkish women should also be considered;

After the Turkish War of Independence, Turkish women initiated their efforts in order to gain political rights. They established a political party named “Women’s Public Party” which was banned in 1923. Afterwards, the Women’s Union of Turkey was founded in 1924, and its director was Nezihe Muhittin<sup>30</sup> until 1927. The Women’s Union especially fought for the women’s political rights and its contribution can not be ignored regarding the adaptation of the Turkish Civil Law in 1926.

After the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the discourse concerning the improvements in the status of women in society focused solely on the contributions of the Kemalist Reforms. Until 1980s, Turkish women were very proud of the republican reforms which gave them equal rights. According to Arat (1994), during the 1970s when Turkish politics became increasingly fragmented and polarized, “women were politicized along with men, but their political activism was restricted to some involvement in leftist groups. Women began to organize and question the adequacy of the Kemalist reforms” (p.243). 1980s was a striking turning point for the Turkish political history. The army intervened in politics in September 12, 1980. The 1982 Constitution was a considerable strike for civil society, as many of the activities of the civil society were restricted. 1980s were also the times when the Second Wave feminism<sup>31</sup> started to affect Turkey. The women activist members of the civil society of 1970s had learned to

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<sup>30</sup> Nezihe Muhittin was one of the leading woman activists who took part in the various activities conducted under the umbrella of the Ottoman-Turkish Feminism. Muhittin participated in the foundation of diverse women’s associations. She was an efficient social worker. Besides her activism, Muhittin was also one of the eminent literary figures of the time. She contributed to the formation of the new woman image as she wrote various short stories, articles, and novellas all of which touched upon the crucial issues of Ottoman-Turkish womanhood.

<sup>31</sup> Second Wave Feminism is one of the periods of the feminist thought that generally focused on the independence and enhancement of political activities to improve women’s rights. It also supported women’s full participation into social and economic life besides considering reproductive rights of women (Ferree and Hess, 1995:152)

organize, but, after the military coup, they had been isolated by their male counterparts. As a result of this exclusion, they started to question their position within the patriarchal society.<sup>32</sup>

#### **2.4.2. Institutionalization of Women's Rights**

In addition to bringing the Second Wave Feminism to Turkey, the 1980s also contributed greatly to the internationalization of women's issues at the intergovernmental level. In parallel with the happenings at the international arena, the CEDAW was ratified by Turkish Parliament in 1985 with a few reservations due to some contradictions it had with the Turkish Civil Code. These reservations remained until the revision of the civil code. After the revision of the Turkish Civil Code, Turkey abolished the reservations in 1999.

The Turkish Civil Code of 1926 was translated and adopted from the Swiss Civil Code. It included several discriminatory situations for women including inequality between spouses; the husband was defined as the head of the family and decision-maker over the choice of the domicile and the issues regarding the children. In time, the European Union Accession period and Turkey's commitments to the CEDAW were two major motivating factors that prepared a legitimate background for the revision of the civil code, and the new Turkish Civil Code was approved by the Turkish Parliament on 22 November 2001 and came into force on 1 January 2001. The new law includes 1030 articles, focusing on important provisions to the family law, and amends the Civil Code of 1926. It abolished the supremacy of men in marriage and established the full equality of men and women in the family.

One of the significant contributions of the CEDAW related to institutionalization of women's issues in Turkey was that the CEDAW required national mechanisms

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<sup>32</sup> According to Ayata, at that time, the Turkish feminist movement split into two components: the women's rights organizations which held their deeply-rooted trust within the Kemalist secular ideology, and the "new feminists", whose more radical questioning of patriarchy, was bringing new criticisms and perspectives imported from Europe and the United States (2001:159)

within the state apparatus to record the problems of women, to enhance women's rights, and to ensure equality. After the ratification of the CEDAW, the Turkish mechanism, which is called the Department General on the Problems and Status of Women (henceforth, DGPSW), was created as a governmental agency<sup>33</sup>. As cited in Kardam and Ertürk (1999), the DGSPW, as the national mechanism for women's affairs, was to adopt policies concerning women, in cooperation and coordination with governmental and non-governmental organizations and local administrators, and to establish a network of cooperation and collaboration among government and non-governmental and other national and international institutions for information flow and activities for coordination purposes (p.179).

As discussed earlier the four world conferences on women organized by the UN helped to build a regional, national, and international framework for the enhancement of women's rights. Women's associations and NGOs were very excited about the Beijing meeting. The Turkish government fully supported the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the PfA. It identified education, health, and employment as priority areas and committed itself to reach the following goals by the year 2000:

- Reducing maternal mortality %50,
- Reducing child mortality %50,
- Increasing the literacy ratio of women to %100, (%22.4 of women are still illiterate in Turkey)
- Empowering national mechanisms, (DGPSW was established in 1990.
- Abolishing the reservations of the Convention of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women, (Reservations were abolished in 1999) and
- Change in the duration of compulsory education from 5 years to 8 years

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<sup>33</sup> As the expertise in the area of women's issues was fairly limited, international fund managers and international development assistance organizations like the UNDP directed monies, sources and expertise.

A national program was prepared for the implementation of the platform within this context: In 1997 compulsory education was increased from 5 to 8 years. Following the Beijing meeting, Turkey ratified the CEDAW Optional Protocol on 8 September 2000, and it came into force on 30 July 2002.

Women's organizations in Turkey had started to get prepared for the review meeting of the Fourth World Conference on Women. It became obvious during the meeting that the effects of globalization on women globally and nationally should be in the agenda of the civil society. For the first time in history, forced marriage and honor crimes were included in an international declaration, and the definition of violence against women was expanded. In the outcome report, honor crimes, forced marriage, and rape within the marriage were included in the definition of violence against women. In the report, it was also stated that

- equality between women and men would be the part of all plans, programs, and policies;
- necessary precautions would be taken in order to prevent exploitation of women's labor as a result of traditional gender roles;
- development of working conditions for women working in agriculture and in unregistered economy would be initiated;
- obstacles that prevented women from being equal subjects of the decision-making mechanisms would be abolished; and
- necessary sources for developing a plan and strategy in order to achieve the targeted issues would be built.

In this chapter, the basic concepts regarding women's rights and the emergence of the UN Gender Agenda were explained in a logical flow. The next chapter will focus on the United Nations Development Program (henceforth, the UNDP) as an international development organization and its contributions to women's rights globally.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **UNDP'S GLOBAL OUTREACH and ITS APPROACH to WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

#### **3.1. UNDP: A Global Outreach**

The UNDP is the UN's global network and the largest multilateral source of development assistance in the world. It could be described as the UN's global development network that advocates change and connects countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. The UNDP was established in 1965 to unify the operations of the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund, both of which continued as separate components of the UNDP until full unification in 1971. The UNDP is a major source of technical assistance in developing countries, with most of its grants being in the form of consultants' services, equipment, and fellowships for advanced study abroad. Thousands of projects including resource planning, training institutes, the application of modern technology to development, and the building of economic and social infrastructure are supported by the UNDP. It also administers the UN special purpose funds for resource exploration, combating desertification, technology development and volunteers, and it works with the UN-associated agencies involved in development activities. The organization also provides expert advice and grants support to developing countries. It is funded by voluntary contributions from the UN member states. Its headquarters is located in New York City. The

organization has country offices in 166 countries<sup>34</sup> where it works with local governments to meet development challenges, develop local capacity, and to help them find their own solutions to global and national development challenges. Additionally, the UNDP works internationally to help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)<sup>35</sup>. To accomplish the MDGs and encourage global development, the UNDP focuses on poverty reduction, combating HIV/AIDS, democratic governance, energy and environment, and crisis prevention and recovery. The UNDP network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach these goals. The UNDP also encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women in all of its programs.

Furthermore, the UNDP publishes an annual Human Development Report<sup>36</sup> (henceforth, HDR) to measure and analyze developmental progress of the

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<sup>34</sup> UNDP member countries are Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia, and, Herzegovina, , Botswana, , Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina, Faso, Burundi, , Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada (bilateral, partner), Cape, Verde, Central, African, Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa, Rica, Congo, (Democratic Republic of), Congo, (Republic of), Côte, d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, (Nordic Office), Djibouti, Dominican, Republic, , Ecuador, Egypt, El, Salvador, Eritrea, , Ethiopia, , Fiji, France (bilateral partner), Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan (Liaison Office), Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea (Republic of), UN administered province of Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Macedonia, FYR, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (bilateral, partner), Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, (Nordic Office), Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russian, Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao, Tome, and, Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovak Republic, Somalia, South Africa, Sri, Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, (Nordic Office), Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

<sup>35</sup> The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges. The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. MDGs are Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women; Goal 4: Reduce child mortality Goal 5: Improve maternal health; Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability; and Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development. More information on MDGs and the UNDP's role will be presented later in this chapter.

<sup>36</sup> UNDP Human Development Reports (HDRs) contain substantive data on most development indicators. The reports rank every country each year in areas such as per capita income, literacy, life expectancy and respect for women's rights. The goal is to put people back at the centre of the development process. (<http://hdr.undp.org>). More information on HDRs will be presented later in this chapter.

countries. The annual HDR, commissioned by the UNDP, focuses the global debate on key development issues, provides new measurement tools and innovative analysis. Additionally, the UNDP publishes regional national human development reports.<sup>37</sup>

In each country office, the UNDP resident representative also serves as the resident coordinator of the development activities for the UN system as a whole. Through such coordination, the UNDP seeks to ensure the most effective use of the UN and international aid resources.

### **3.2. UNDP and Human Rights Perspective**

Since the early 1990s human rights have played an important role in international development cooperation. The global conferences held by the UN have highlighted the crucial links between the three key goals of the UN Charter: peace, development, and human rights. At the same time, increased importance has been given to linking development and human rights. Development is a comprehensive process directed towards the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

All human rights - economic, social, cultural, civil and political - are inseparable parts of the sustainable human development process. As the UNDP is an international development assistance organization, it has three main areas of action with respect to human rights which are:

- To provide support for institutions and governance, with an emphasis on building the human rights capacity of these institutions and providing direct support to human rights institutions,
- To develop a human rights approach to sustainable human development,

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<sup>37</sup> The UNDP has helped more than 120 developing countries produce their own national human development reports. The reports provide a basis for informed local debate about priorities and policies, and they also help donor governments measure the impact of their financial aid and communicate the difference the financial aid makes in direct beneficiaries and donor governments.

- To contribute to the human rights policy dialogue and UN conference follow up. (UNDP, 1998, p.4)

Discourses of human rights and sustainable development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The 2000 HDR has a special focus on monitoring development from a human rights perspective. According to Ertürk (2006), the 2000 HDR highlights the benefits of the human rights approach in following ways:

The human rights approach a) lends moral legitimacy and the principle of social justice to the objectives of development, thereby, helping shift the priority to the most deprived and excluded, b) links development to the idea that others have duties to facilitate and enhance development, thereby, invoking accountability, culpability, and responsibility, c) draws attention to the fact that development benefits are entitlements and not charity or welfare, thereby, restoring the dignity of human person, and, d) enables the assessment of the extent to which institutions and social norms in place provide security to the human development achievements, thereby, ensuring sustainability to human security (p.7).

While the main objective of sustainable development is to eliminate poverty, promote dignity and rights, and provide equitable opportunities for all through good governance, it also works for the realization of all human rights including economic, social, cultural, civil, and political<sup>38</sup>. Human rights and sustainable development are complementarily linked to each other as the UN Working Group on the Right to Development (October 1995) states:

The right to development<sup>39</sup> is multidimensional, integrated, dynamic, and progressive. Its realization involves the full observance of economic, social,

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<sup>38</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which provided a framework for the realization of human rights, was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. The Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966) and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1966) played a facilitating role through the formalization of the principles of the UDHR into international law.

<sup>39</sup> The concept “right to development” emerged in 1981 within the context of the Organization for African Unity and the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights. Since the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development in 1986, the concept has become increasingly popularized and incorporated into policies of many developing states and project designs of the international donor community. The “right to development” agenda, which was primarily motivated by the need to promote fair economic and trade relations between developing and developed nations, became established as a state-centric approach. As a result, despite the fact that the declaration specifies the human person as the central subject of development, states have tended to use the right to development to depoliticize people’s demands by subordinating them to state interests, which often means efficiency and growth models of development (Ertürk, 2006, p.6). The concept of right to development is particularly important for women’s rights.

cultural, civil, and political rights. It further embraces the different concepts of development of all development sectors, namely, sustainable development, human development, and the concepts of indivisibility, interdependence, and universality of all human rights....Realization of the right to development is the responsibility of all actors in development, within the international community, within states at both the national and international levels, within the agencies of the United Nations system.

The UN is the main international organ promoting international peace, security, development, and human rights. With the UN Charter, the international community recognizes that all human beings have equal and inalienable rights. While the UN is one of the core international bodies in the promotion of human rights; states, other international and national development organizations, civil society, and international human rights instruments contribute to create the international human rights framework. Human rights instruments were mainly advocated by civil society, but they were developed and adopted by member states at intergovernmental platforms. The members of the UN are obliged to comply with the commitments and legal obligations of the UN's international human rights instruments. These international human rights instruments are also effective in shaping and defining the roles, functions, and obligations of the party states and UN agencies.

The UNDP - the leading agency of the UN system - has an important role in the protection and promotion of human rights. The UNDP report titled "Integrating Human Rights with Sustainable Development" (1998) indicates that the UNDP's desire for the implementation of international human rights standards can be seen in both the UNDP's country level activities and through its participation in national, international, and multilateral meetings and conferences. Its program addresses primarily the economic, social, and cultural rights of citizens. The UNDP has a human rights-based framework in its antipoverty and pro-sustainable human development work. Several UNDP development strategies have particular relevance for human rights (UNDP, 1998, p.8). These are:

- Sustainable human development programming with a focus on eliminating poverty

- Targeting disadvantaged or excluded groups (women, children, minorities, migrant workers, people with HIV/AIDS), thereby, linking social justice, discrimination, and development.
- Promoting partnership with NGOs and civil society organizations (including social and political advocacy groups), thereby, encouraging people's participation at all stages of program initiation, formulation, design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Addressing governance issues (such as corruption, the rule of law, participation, democratization, and accountability) in which human rights have been integral but, all too often, not explicitly spelled out.
- Strengthening institutions of governance and developing human rights capacity within such institutions.

As the UNDP's core work is defined within the framework of sustainable development programming<sup>40</sup>, it is active in four main areas, all of which have human rights aspect. These areas, which will be discussed below, are eliminating poverty and sustaining livelihoods, promoting the advancement of women, protecting and generating the environment, and building capacity for good governance.

### **3.2.1. Eliminating poverty and sustaining livelihoods**

The UNDP's Program is an application of the right to development through eradication of poverty. The promotion of human rights and the eradication of poverty are mutually supportive goals. In fact, poverty is one form of human

<sup>40</sup> There are five aspects to sustainable human development - all affecting the lives of the poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups: a)*Empowerment* - The expansion of men and women's capabilities and choices increases their ability to exercise those choices free of hunger, want, and deprivation. It also increases their opportunity to participate in, or endorse, decision-making affecting their lives, b)*Co-operation* - With a sense of belonging, important for personal fulfillment, well-being, and a sense of purpose and meaning, human development is concerned with the ways in which people work together and interact, c)*Equity* - The expansion of capabilities and opportunities means more than income - it also means equity, such as an educational system to which everybody should have access, d)*Sustainability* - The needs of this generation must be met without compromising the right of future generations to be free of poverty and deprivation and to exercise their basic capabilities, e)*Security* - Particularly the security of livelihood. People need to be freed from threats, such as disease or repression and from sudden harmful disruptions in their lives. (UNDP, 1997).

rights violation. Poverty elimination is one of the main UNDP goals and a part of its sustainable human development paradigm. As Speth (1998) states, there are three entry points that represent the base for the UNDP's support for human rights that enable freedom from poverty in all its manifestations:

Firstly, the UNDP supports the right to development through its anti-poverty strategies by focusing upon disadvantaged groups in society. In this regard, the UNDP projects, through resource allocation and capacity building, aim to meet the needs of ethnic minorities by supporting participatory approaches to policy formulation for rural services. This participatory approach takes into account the social and economic context in which the different minority groups live, recognizing and respecting differences in culture, language, social behavior, and organization. The UNDP projects also contribute to improving community extension services such as credit and savings and to empower minority groups to participate in social life. The second area of interaction between human rights and poverty eradication programs lies in support to peace-building. Special human rights strategies are needed for countries in political and economic crisis. The third entry point for the UNDP in the integration of human rights and sustainable human development is in support to democratization and the institutions of good governance (UNDP, 1998, p.5).

### **3.2.2. Promoting the advancement of women**

Women's rights are human rights, but the realization of women's rights could be possible only through various and specific protections and policies. To reach a sustainable development level for the advancement of women, the importance of legal instruments should not be ignored. Gender equality sensitive legal instruments are the key elements to be used towards states in the realization of women's rights; they motivate women's legal rights that can enhance women's living conditions by legislating against gender bias in employment, discrimination in pay and incentives, and violence and harassment.

Legislation can also increase women's capabilities by giving them property and inheritance rights, better access to credit and other productive resources, and increased political participation and representation. The UNDP's sustainable development efforts,

which aim to eliminate discrimination against women, are also directly linked to legislative efforts of the states through various programs like the following:

- Reforming legal systems and outlawing discrimination in employment, education, family affairs, land rights, credit services, and other entitlements.
- Redressing the effects of past discrimination.
- Educating and empowering women and enabling their effective participation in development.

As Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the UN, stated in the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization in 1995, the UNDP has assisted many program countries in the preparation of their participation at global forums. Through the resident coordinator system<sup>41</sup>, the UNDP has contributed at the national level to preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women; Several reports on the status of women were prepared for the conference, most of them based on gender analysis and the collection of disaggregated data. The UNDP has also facilitated dialogue in each country among the organizations of Government, the UN, and the civil society. The UNDP has also started to integrate the broader concept of gender in the programming process since the beginning of the 1990s. The government of Turkey, for example, launched a program for the enhancement of women's participation in the nation's development in 1993, with support from the UNDP.

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<sup>41</sup> The UN Resident Coordinator System, which is managed by the [UNDP](#), is aimed at strengthening coordination among the UN Agencies, to achieve a better focus and enhance the impact of their activities. With a separate budget (funded by the UNDP) and a specific work plan (with joint/collaborative activities) the Resident Coordinator System works to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operational activities of all the different UN Agencies at the country level. More information on the UNDP's stewardship of the resident coordinator system may be found at <http://www.un.ro/coordinator.html>

### **3.2.3. Protecting and generating the environment**

Protecting and generating the environment is also relevant to ensuring human rights. Protected environments through legal and practical instruments can help people maintain their lives and livelihood strategies. The UNDP is active in protecting and generating environments within its programs and strategies. According to Wilson and Anderson, although the UNDP has adopted an overall policy on human rights, there is not a policy or a systematic program that explicitly addresses the correlation of human rights with the energy and environment practice area. This is a significant gap. As part of the UN, the UNDP is bound by the UN Charter obligation to respect, protect, and promote human rights. Owing to this reason, linking human rights and environment is at the heart of the UNDP's work in energy and environment since this will lead to greater impact in improving "Human Development" (UNDP, 2005, p.40).

### **3.2.4. Building capacity for good governance**

As capacity building for good governance is one of the four main areas of the UNDP, within the framework of sustainable development, like human rights, governance has a strategic effect on each of the UNDP's other main areas of work. According to the UNDP (1999), good governance is defined as "participatory, transparent, and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources."

The UNDP is effective in governance programs and works in close relation with the core stakeholders which are the state, the private sector, and the civil society in order to promote sustainable development.

### **3.3. UNDP's Approach to Gender Equality and Women's Rights**

There have been strong commitments made by the international community regarding gender equality, empowerment of women and women's rights at all UN conferences of the 1990's. These commitments put the pressure on the UN member states' shoulders in order to accelerate the implementation of the PfA. It is significant to mention that all priorities of the PfA including poverty, conflict and recovery situations, human rights, the impact of macro-economic policy and globalization, HIV-AIDS, and access to information and communications technologies are in accordance with the UNDP practice areas.

All these commitments should be converted into concrete policies that support and promote women's demonstrated capacity to cope with poverty, exercise leadership, sustain fragile ecosystems, and create community support mechanisms that can provide basic services. Moreover, the pursuit of gender equality should not be limited to increasing the number of women or integrating more women into mainstream development. It should also include analysis and transformation of the laws, institutions, structures, and behaviors that underpin gender inequalities (UNDP, 2001, p.2).

While the UNDP has the above mentioned commitments as its core agenda subjects, its actions should be based on a systematically constructed gender equality point of view. According to Kittay (1999), the basic non-discrimination approach to equality, which underpins most countries' policies on gender equality, derives from a principle that addresses all manner of grounds for discrimination, e.g. sex, race, ethnicity, religion, HIV-status, etc. This approach implicitly postulates a comparator as the norm to be matched in respect to some socially valuable measure, e.g. civil rights, access to employment, pay, etc. In other words, if X is not treated like Y -- the implicit norm -- in respect of Z -- say, pay -- then a legal problem arises and X is ultimately entitled to go to court to sort it out. Such formal equality, or "equality as sameness", is based on the assumption that it is both possible and sufficient to make people equal in some socially valued respect(s) regardless of who they are and where they stand in other respects (p.6).

As an international development organization, one of the main strategies of the UNDP is to help countries apply the international commitments, which were defined through international mechanisms and global conferences, for women's rights and empowerment to their national and local conditions. As Yeşim Oruç - the UNDP project manager- states, the UNDP, in general, conducts its policies and programs on the basis of two complementary and critical approaches in order to achieve gender equality and help to realization of human rights. These approaches are gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

**Mainstreaming gender**, as defined by ECOSOC in the 1997 Agreed Conclusions, is “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

While gender mainstreaming forms the basis (the UN in general and the UNDP in particular) for all programs and activities, there are some criticisms which assert that gender mainstreaming is not effective and realistic in our gender-inequality based world. These criticisms are based on the view that patriarchal national and international grounds cannot be overlapped through gender mainstreaming without bridging the gender gap and bringing women at the same level with men's. According to Lewis (2005), “gender mainstreaming might work if we had what the sports and financial instruments call a “level playing field,” that is to say, if there were real equity and equality between women and men, then gender mainstreaming becomes a way of maintaining that equality. But when you start from such gross inequality, mainstreaming simply entrenches the disparities. Hence, there is a need for a totally separate vehicle to carry women's rights forward until that hallowed day when equality is achieved”(p.126). Despite the

criticisms regarding gender mainstreaming, this study focuses on the benefits, achievements, and numerous opportunities that the UNDP has in order to work for the advancement and benefit of women.

**Women's empowerment**, which is the second approach, is the starting point of human development. As human development is one of the areas of action of the UNDP, it is not possible to talk about human development without women's empowerment while women consist of the half of the world's population. Human development is defined as "a process of enlarging people's choices," and it can not occur when the choices of half of humanity are restricted. Targeted actions aimed at empowering women and righting gender inequalities in the social and economic spheres, as well as in terms of civil and political rights, must be taken alongside efforts to engender the development process" (UNDP, 2002).

The UNDP's policy note on Gender Equality (2002) also states that "there are two complementary approaches to achieve gender equality: mainstreaming gender and promoting women's empowerment.<sup>42</sup> Both are critical. Women's empowerment is central to human development. Targeted actions aimed at empowering women and righting gender inequities in the social and economic spheres, as well as in terms of civil and political rights, must be taken alongside efforts to engender the development process. Gender mainstreaming means being deliberate in giving visibility and support to women's contributions rather than making the assumption that women will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions. Policies and programs that ignore different impacts on gender groups are often gender-blind, potentially harmful for human development. Gender mainstreaming requires a focus on results to improve the well-being of poor women." Gender mainstreaming is one of the most important commitments of the UNDP. All the programs that the UNDP conducts should be gender based as gender equality is a core commitment of the UNDP. Realization of human development and human rights can not be possible without full gender equality based efforts by the

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<sup>42</sup> Women's empowerment is a central concept of the Beijing process, too. Platform for Action is defined as an agenda for empowerment.

international and national community. As stated in the “UNDP’s policy note on Gender Equality (2002),” when development is not “en-gendered,” it is “endangered”.

As the UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş stated during his speech on the International Women’s Day on March 08, 2006, “despite the successes regarding the realization of gender equality and women’s rights, however, progress toward the goal of gender equality and women’s empowerment still trails conspicuously behind. The sad truth remains that seventy percent of the 130 million children who are out of school are girls. Women account for two-thirds of the 960 million adults in the world who cannot read, which greatly impedes their ability to participate in the political process. With notable exceptions, such as the Nordic countries, women are too often absent from parliaments, making up, on average, only 16 percent of parliamentarians world-wide. If women do not have power equal to men, they will remain behind. That is the bottom line. For this reason, the UNDP is committed to working with its partners to empower women at all levels of the decision-making process.”

Gender-based discrimination, violence, under representation in politics, unequal access to resources, unequal employment strategies, and lack of access to basic services, shape, diffuse, and promote inequality between men and women. While women are discriminated and subordinated in the public sphere, this situation affects the development of the society where women are ignored and their energy and contributions are not utilized in the community. It would not be wrong to assume that, the more women are empowered, the more the human development level will increase. The UNDP’s agenda regarding the activities to fight against gender inequalities are based on three-pronged approach: (i) Develop capacity - both in country and in house- to integrate gender concerns in the six practice areas<sup>43</sup>; (ii) Provide policy advice that is both pro-poor and pro-women; and (iii)

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<sup>43</sup> More information on the six practice areas of gender mainstreaming will follow in this chapter.

Support stand-alone operational interventions for gender equality in collaboration with the UNIFEM<sup>44</sup>.

Specific entry points for the UNDP include sex-disaggregated MDG monitoring at the country level, gender-sensitive budgeting, reducing the incidence of HIV among vulnerable women, incorporating gender dimensions into macro-economic policies and trade negotiations, and linking women's empowerment to democratic governance, decentralization, and civil society participation. Capacity development includes sensitization, training, knowledge sharing, networking, and twinning (UNDP, 2002).

### **3.3.1. Impact Areas of UNDP on Gender Equality and Women's Rights**

As policies, strategies, and programs of the UNDP are all gender-based, gender mainstreaming is one of the core approaches of the organization. Awareness raising trainings on gender equality and women's rights have been conducted by the organization. There are also many tools, resources, and documentation related to the UNDP's agenda on gender equality and women's rights that are accessible online.

The UNDP is active on gender equality and women's rights in four areas; through the integration of gender into six practice areas, through its work as scorekeeper and champion for the MDGs, through its stewardship of the resident co-coordinator system, and through the organization's effective tool, namely the Human Development Report and the National Human Development Reports (UNDP, 2002).

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<sup>44</sup> The UNIFEM is the Women's Fund for Development at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of women's human rights at the centre of all of its efforts, the UNIFEM focuses its activities on four strategic areas: (1) reducing feminized poverty, (2) ending violence against women, (3) reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and (4) achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war. More information is available at <http://www.unifem.org/>

### **3.3.1.1. Six practice areas of gender mainstreaming**

Gender equality and women's rights have long taken their places in the UNDP's agenda; the organization offers numerous opportunities for work for the advancement and benefit of women. While, one of the most significant impact areas of the UNDP is gender mainstreaming, this approach is applied in six different practice areas, which are democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environment, information and communication technologies (ICT), and HIV/AIDS.

#### **3.3.1.1.1. Democratic governance**

The purpose of the democratic governance activity is to assist community organizations to become effective development tools in targeted local government entities. Effective democratic governance also aims at strengthening community organizations' capacity to influence public decision-makers in the planning of development activities. According to Nussbaum, an account of women's governance in economic institutions that did not take account of their role in democratic politics at the national, regional, and local levels would be both incomplete and obtuse. Women's groups and social movements have also been very important in gaining access for women to formal political institutions. The new understanding of governance focuses on issues of politics, accountability, the relationship between politics and civil society, and decentralization (UNDP, 2003, pp.4-5).

Women's full participation into decision-making mechanisms is a prerequisite of good governance. Although national and international commitments promote women's rights, women are still underrepresented in formal decision-making mechanisms. Therefore, the UNDP has taken an active role in promoting and supporting the participation of women into decision-making structures.

The UNDP has a key role to play in promoting legislative, electoral, and judicial reforms to ensure that women's rights are protected in law and in practice, in

enhancing women's participation in the democratic process through decentralization and the bolstering of local governance, in tapping the potential of information and communication technologies as a tool for women's political empowerment, in integrating women's rights into national development strategies, and in bringing women's voices into the national dialogue (UNDP, 2002).

### **3.3.1.1.2. Poverty reduction**

Poverty and gender discrimination are bound to each other, and gender discrimination is one of the accelerating factors of the increasing feminization of poverty. Two thirds of the world's population who are illiterate are women. The unequal division of sources between men and women also has impact on the poverty of women.

The UNDP is increasingly supporting gender-sensitive budgeting initiatives to promote equitable distribution of resources, particularly, to reach the poor and the vulnerable, the majority of whom are women. For instance, a program to integrate gender equality in sectoral, economic, and social policies was conducted by the UNDP in Turkey. Similar programs were also undertaken in Morocco, Mauritius, and Viet Nam.

As Sperth (1998) states, the UNDP is also active in linking the promotion of women's rights with efforts to eradicate poverty.<sup>45</sup> The goal is to improve community life by giving people greater control over their resources and ambitions. This involves enhancing women's traditional roles, building capacity to initiate similar projects in the future, and broadening the opportunities for resource mobilization in towns and villages (p.5).

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<sup>45</sup> As the UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş stated during his speech on the International Women's Day on March 08, 2006 that; "The fight against poverty is not a campaign of charity – it is a mission of empowerment. This is especially true as regards women, given that, of the world's one billion poorest people, three-fifths are women and girls. Gender equality and women's empowerment- as set out in the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals- is, therefore, crucial to development".

### **3.3.1.3. Crisis prevention and recovery**

Women are affected twice during and after crisis situations by being individuals and being women. According to the International Organization for Migration, 80 per cent of the world's 35 million refugees and displaced persons are women and children. They are the subjects of violence and exploitation during and after the crisis periods. They are at high risk and open to any kinds of exploitation and vulnerable.

However, women are the warriors of broken families and effective leaders in peace processes<sup>46</sup>. Crises can break down social barriers and loosen traditional holds on power, thus providing windows of opportunity for the reconstruction of a more just society and the formation of new structures and laws that promote women's political, economic, social, and cultural rights. The UNDP is active in countries undergoing a transition period; In particular, the organization can accelerate the dynamism for social change, engage national stakeholders, especially local women's associations, in the planning and execution of institutional reforms to empower women, respect their human rights, and promote gender equality. Promoting gender equality and raising awareness about women's rights are the UNDP's core approaches that lie behind its activities. The UNDP assists local women's associations in order to build cooperation with governments and create a common understanding on women's problems. (UNDP, 2002, p.11).

Nakaya (2003) states that to ensure that women and their "common agenda" are represented at the peace table, the UN, regional organizations, donors, and civil

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<sup>46</sup> According to Nakaya (2003), the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding is increasingly emphasized in multilateral policy discourse. Following the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, which called for increased participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels, the UN Security Council adopted, in October 2000, its first resolution focusing on the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security (SC/RES/1325/2000). In November 2000, the European Parliament adopted a similar resolution encouraging women's participation in conflict resolution.

Security Council Resolution 1325 calls for (1) an increased representation of women in decision-making related to peace and security, including UN peace operations; (2) the better protection of women and girls under the international humanitarian and human rights laws; and (3) special attention to women in the pursuit of post-war justice, disarmament and demobilization, and repatriation and reintegration of refugees. In the follow-up, two major studies are being prepared to enhance the understanding of critical issues facing women in conflict and postconflict situations. The UN Division for the Advancement of Women is leading the secretary-general's study on women, peace, and security while the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has commissioned independent experts' assessments of the impact of armed conflict on women and the role of women in peace-building (p.459).

society alike are increasingly supporting conflict resolution training and informal dialogues for women, and brokering their participation in official negotiations. Owing to such external interventions, women were made party to official negotiations in Burundi (2000), Afghanistan (2001-2002), and the Inter-Congolese Dialogues (2001-2002). Through these forums, women's groups have proposed issues that they wish to see incorporated in peace agreements. Their proposals often include statutory guarantee of women's rights and equal treatment; a minimum 30 percent quota for women in decision-making processes; special measures ensuring the safe return and reintegration of displaced women; women's rights to property ownership and inheritance; and the end of impunity to the perpetrators of gender-based crimes. In Burundi, Northern Ireland, and Guatemala, women have managed to incorporate some of these proposals into final peace agreements, making each more progressive and inclusive of political commitments toward women. While Nakaya touches upon the importance of the participation of women at the peace table, Ertürk (2006) comments on making generalizations on women's role in peace building processes:

Lessons learned shows that achievement of gender equality, development, and peace requires changing behavior and value hierarchies that sustain exploitation, oppression, hostilities, and conflict. It is within this context that there is a merit in exploring women's participation in decision-making and in integrating a gender perspective into peace and security issues as this may increase the possibility of reinforcing value systems that favor peaceful solutions. It is, however, important not to fall into an essentialist argument that women are, by nature, peaceful. There is enough evidence by now to support the thesis that gender identities and integration of women's experiences and perspectives into public discourse can contribute to achieving sustainable peace and security (p.11).

#### **3.3.1.1.4. Energy and environment**

Linkages between natural resource management and gender mainstreaming were one of the main subjects of the UN conferences of the 1990s. It is pointed out by the Copenhagen Declaration of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development that "women carry a disproportionate share of the problems of coping with poverty, social disintegration, unemployment, environmental degradation, and the effects of war." The Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 referred to women's

multiple roles in the management and use of natural resources as providers of sustenance for their families and communities, and as environmental managers and decision-makers.

According to the UNDP (2003), as a result of continuous research and advocacy, it is now better accepted by policy makers and development practitioners that:

- Women the world over play a key role in the management of natural resources –water, energy, forests, biodiversity, and soil.
- Rural women possess considerable expertise with regard to the environments they live in.
- At the grassroots level, there are many success stories of women organizing to protect or clean up their local environment and to promote the sustainable us of natural resources (p.29).

As poor women and children are more vulnerable, they are affected by environmental hazards more seriously. The increasingly natural disasters (cyclones, hurricanes, floods, landslides) brought on by climate changes are also impacting women more negatively than men. Women and girls disproportionately suffer the consequences of poor energy services (UNDP, 2003, p.30). As energy and environment is one out of the six gender mainstreaming areas of the UNDP, the organization published a documentation named “Generating Opportunities: Case Studies on Energy and Women<sup>47</sup>,” which includes strategies and new program opportunities in order to accelerate women’s access to most of the energy services.

Moreover, regarding environment and promoting women’s equality, the UNDP needs to develop more systematic strategies for bringing the voices and views of women into the creation of national strategies for sustainable development, ensure that women are involved in participatory resource planning, and strengthen policy

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<sup>47</sup>The report by UNDP “Generating Opportunities: Case Studies on Energy and Women” can be viewed at [http://www.undp.org/energy/publications/2001/files\\_2001a/Generating\\_opp\\_full.pdf](http://www.undp.org/energy/publications/2001/files_2001a/Generating_opp_full.pdf)

and regulatory frameworks to protect and enlarge poor women's access to natural resources and regarding energy. It is active in shifting the focus from energy supply to the provision of energy services. More critically, through its governance work, the UNDP needs to address the strategic issues of land tenure, inheritance rights, resource allocation, and accountable, transparent local governance (UNDP, 2003, p.34).

### **3.3.1.1.5. Information and Communication technologies (ICT)**

In our globalizing world, knowledge is the real power for human development and "information and communication technologies" are the basic tools that provide human beings with the necessary sources and networks in order to become more empowered. People who are able to access to ICT have chance to be aware of the happenings all around the world. They can take active roles in decision-making mechanisms, and they can manipulate the events happening around them by the knowledge and consciousness that they gain through ICT. These technologies provide a great source for women's empowerment if women have access to them.

As stated by Barrett, Court, Ginkel and Velasquez (2002), information technology has made possible a free and unfettered global flow of information and ideas. This appears to have contributed to the further expansion of democracy, the growth of civil society, and an increase in transparency and accountability. These gains have, however, not benefited most of the world's poor (p.64). As the most of the world population who are poor, vulnerable, and at risk are women and children, although the technologies have improved, the poor women and children still can not benefit from them. If more women have access to ICT, they will be more conscious of their rights. They will take more places in decision-making mechanisms, and they will be represented more in the public spheres. Unfortunately, as was mentioned, women's opportunities to access ICT are less than men. Limited access to ICT is an obstacle for women's empowerment.

The UNDP plays a crucial role in conducting gender sensitive policies and programs that promote women's empowerment in order to make them access to

such networks. For instance, the UNDP supported a project in Lithuania involving five regional cyber centers, which reach out to women's organizations and develop training modules, an ICT handbook, and a portal site with digital library, a database of women's groups, mailing lists, and a search engine. According to the UNDP (2003), without strategic, targeted actions, women will continue to be disproportionately represented among the "information poor", and the great potential of ICTs to promote women's equality and empowerment will go unrealized. There are four main issues regarding this: the first one is that ICT is considered as a uniquely male industry. Women are underrepresented among ICT users and are nearly absent as substantive producers of information technology. The second point is the persisting education gap. According to the World Bank (1999), there are nearly one billion people who cannot read or write; Two-thirds of those are women. The third point is the feminization of poverty and rural life. As more women than men are poor, cost is a barrier to ICT access and use. The last point is gender roles and responsibilities. Different socialization, double burden on women and girls leaves little time for learning skills. Cultural norms, even personal safety concerns, may make it difficult for women to attend training courses (p.26).

### **3.3.1.1.6. HIV/AIDS**

HIV/AIDS is one of the biggest barriers for sustainable human development. The vulnerability of women and young girls is the pioneer motivating factor for the spread of HIV/AIDS in the world today. They are not able to protect themselves as they do not have access to power and means for safe sexual relations. The Declaration of Commitment, adopted by acclamation at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001, argues for the need to address HIV/AIDS by strengthening respect for human rights, especially rights of women and children. Resolution 14 states that "gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS."

According to the UNDP, a growing portion of people living with HIV/AIDS are women. While people who live with HIV/AIDS are excluded from the community, stigmatized and discriminated, women with HIV/AIDS are excluded and discriminated twice: First, they are excluded for being a women. The second reason for their exclusion is that they are people living with HIV/AIDS. As HIV/AIDS is considered as a threat to development, organizations like the UNDP have made this a priority area for their own programming, over and above the contribution made through UNAIDS (UNDP is one of eight co-sponsors). The UNDP's policy on HIV/AIDS underscores that women are particularly vulnerable to infection, that they play a key role in prevention, and that they carry much of the burden as caretakers and breadwinners (UNDP, 2003, p.23). The UNDP is supporting the development of multisectoral poverty reduction strategies to address the economic and social impact of HIV/AIDS at the individual, community, and national levels through a gender lens. It assists in developing national capacity to create and implement gender-sensitive national strategies, to translate them into the national budget, and to conduct public information campaigns, and, within that, the formulation of anti-discriminatory legislation (UNDP, 2002, p.13).

### **3.3.1.2. Scorekeeping and campaigning for the Millennium Development Goals**

*“There is no time to lose if we are to reach the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015. Only by investing in the world’s women can we expect to get there.”*

*-Kofi Annan*

*Secretary General of the United Nations*

The commitments and targets established at the world summits of the 1990s prepared the background and a global partnership for the Millennium Development Goals (Henceforth, MDGs). In September 2000, heads of states and representatives of the governments of 191 countries met at the United Nations World Summit and adopted the Millennium Declaration. The declaration focuses

on the central concerns of the international community including peace, security, development, environmental sustainability, human rights, and democracy. As stated by the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO); the declaration was packed with positive language about people's needs for the new millennium and about women's centrality in development processes. Through the declaration, governments commit themselves "to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger, and disease, and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable." The Declaration also highlights "the equal rights and opportunities of women and men" and encourages countries "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)" (2003, p.2).

These objectives are known as the MDGs which include eight overall objectives and related targets and indicators that require to be achieved over the 25-year period from 1990 to 2015. The MDGs include:

1. Halving extreme poverty and hunger,
2. Achieving universal primary education,
3. Promoting gender equality,
4. Reducing under-five mortality by two-thirds,
5. Reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters,
6. Reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB,
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability, and,
8. Developing a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.

Seager and Toepfer (2005) states that; Goal 3 calls for the promotion of equality and empowerment of women. It is recognized that this is central for the achievement of the other MDGs. Attempting to achieve the MDGs without promoting gender equality would raise the costs and decrease the likelihood of achieving the other goals (p.32). Equality between women and men is the core goal of the human development. The UNDP is committed to making gender

equality a reality, not only because it is moral, but also it is a way to promote well-being for all. As the third goal of the MDGs is to promote gender equality, the gender equality mentioned in the MDGs firstly focuses on achieving universal primary education and reducing maternal mortality. All MDGs have critical gender dimensions. The UNDP also focuses on the global consideration and financial resources on the gender dimensions of human development.

The Secretary General is mandated to report annually on the progress towards the MDGs to the UN General Assembly. Additionally, most signatories to the Millennium Declaration are preparing country-level MDG reports (henceforth, MDGRs), which are potentially a mechanism for regular tracking of progress and monitoring<sup>48</sup> towards the attainment of targets (UNDP, 2003, p.1). In order to challenge the political commitments about the basic development goals, it is crucial to report and monitor the progress and implementation of the MDGs at national and international levels. The UNDP acts as the scorekeeper and campaigner for the MDGs. It works with a wide range of partners to help create coalitions for change to support the goals at global, regional, and national levels, to benchmark progress towards them, and to help countries to build the institutional capacity, policies, and programs needed to achieve the MDGs. The UNDP works with the whole UN system, and in many cases, with the World Bank and the International Monetary Found (IMF), to support the MDGRs for every developing country. They also highlight where countries are on track to meet the goals, and where urgent efforts are needed (UNDP, 2002, p.4). The MDGs provide a framework for the entire UN system to work coherently together toward

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<sup>48</sup> While the Secretary General's annual reports and MDGRs play a monitoring role for the realization of the MDGs, there are some criticisms regarding the monitoring process and the feasibility of the MDGs. According to Vandemoortele (2003), monitoring can be done at different levels, from global to local. The level of assessment would influence the outcome regarding the feasibility of the MDGs. If the MDGs appear feasible at the global level, it does not necessarily imply that they will be feasible in all nations or at all locations. Averages are commonly used at each level to measure MDG progress. While they give a good sense of overall progress, averages can be misleading. The failure to understand that the average is an abstraction from reality can lead to unwarranted conclusions that are based on deduction from abstractions, not on real observations. A good assessment of progress towards the MDG must, therefore, go beyond averages and aggregates. For instance, average household income is very much an abstraction for women who have little or no control over how it is spent; it may exist in the mind of economists, but it does not necessarily correspond to the reality faced by millions of poor women (p.125).

a common end. The UNDP's global development network in 166 countries is uniquely positioned to help advocate for change, connect countries to knowledge and resources, and coordinate broader efforts at country level. The UNDP's work on the MDGs is guided by the UN Core Strategy<sup>49</sup> on the MDGs and focuses on:

**Campaigning and mobilization:** Supporting advocacy for the MDGs and working with partners to mobilize the commitments and capabilities of broad segments of society to build awareness on the MDGs;

**Analysis:** Researching and sharing best strategies for meeting the MDGs in terms of innovative practices, policy, and institutional reforms, means of policy implementation, and evaluation of financing options;

**Monitoring:** Helping countries report advancement towards the MDGs and track progress;

**Operational activities:** Goal-driven assistance to support governments to tailor MDGs to local circumstances and challenges; address key constraints to progress on the MDGs.

### **3.3.1.3. UNDP's stewardship of the resident coordinator system**

The UNDP acts as the coordinating entity of the UN body at the country level. The organization itself hosts and manages the resident coordinator system. Through these roles, the UNDP has the opportunity to have a gender sensitive manipulating impact on the UN's operational activities. The UNDP's stewardship of the resident coordinator system gives the organization the responsibility to promote gender mainstreaming systematically not only through its own programs, but also through the work of the UN Country Team (UNDP, 2002).

### **3.3.1.4. Human Development Reports**

The UNDP respects sovereignty, including non-democratic male-privileged sovereignty. Under previous leadership, the UNDP proclaimed itself pro-poor, pro-environment,

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<sup>49</sup> [http://www.undp.org/mdg/core\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.undp.org/mdg/core_strategy.pdf)

pro-women and pro-jobs, the rhetoric for which emerged in speeches on its website

(<http://www.undp.org>). As stated by Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002), “countries vary in the extent to which they are accountable to women” (p.103).

The Human Development Report<sup>50</sup> (henceforth, HDR) was first launched in 1990 in order to make people think of the economic, political, and advocacy related issues. The main aim of the work was to conduct an evaluation and analysis of the people’s long-term development trends and recommend solutions for the future efforts in order to bridge the development gaps. The annual UNDP HDRs consistently highlight gender, reprinting year after year that human development can only occur when it is ‘engendered’ (beautifully phrased, but as another ‘en’ word, the meaning is potentially cloudy). The HDR features a Human Development Index (henceforth, HDI), based on income, education, and life expectancy to rank order countries. In recent years, the HDI has disaggregated data by gender, an adjustment that usually reduces country rank. Expert knowledge like this can provide organized women with data to strengthen advocacy claims for change. Analyses like these make gender inequality visible, which has brought criticism from the UN member states. As a result, the UNDP has been forced to distance itself organizationally from the report. This is one more illustration of the reality that the “UNDP speaks with many voices” (Razavi and Miller, 1995. p. 23-26).

Since the first Report, four new composite indices for human development have been developed — the Human Development Index, the Gender-related Development Index, the Gender Empowerment Measure, and the Human Poverty Index.

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<sup>50</sup> The Human Development Report is an independent report. It is commissioned by the UNDP and is the product of a selected team of leading scholars, development practitioners, and members of the Human Development Report Office of the UNDP. The teams were led by Mahbub ul Haq and Inge Kaul from 1990 till 1994; by Mahbub ul Haq and Sakiko Fukuda-Parr in 1995, by Richard Jolly and Sakiko Fukuda-Parr from 1996 till 2000, and by Sakiko Fukuda-Parr with Nancy Birdsall from 2001 till 2003. In 2004, after 10 years as the Lead Author, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr was followed by Kevin Watkins, the current Lead Author and Director of the Human Development Report Office. The Report is translated into more than a dozen languages and launched in more than 100 countries annually.

The HDI<sup>51</sup> is a summary composite index that measures a country's average achievements in three basic aspects of human development: longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Although the HDI is a superior indicator of economic welfare than GDP per capita and is used globally, there are some criticisms regarding the feasibility of it. As stated by Ghoose, Roy, and Tisdell (2001), the HDI provides no indication of the distribution of HDI regionally, between the rural and urban populations, and according to gender, and other social characteristics. It is possible for GDP per capita and HDI to increase and for such inequalities to grow (p.1).

The Gender-related Development Index (GDI)<sup>52</sup>) is a composite indicator that measures the average achievement of a population in the same dimensions as the HDI while adjusting for gender inequalities in the level of achievement in the three basic aspects of human development. It uses the same variables as the HDI, disaggregated by gender.

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite indicator that captures gender inequality in three key areas:

- Political participation and decision-making, as measured by women's and men's percentage shares of parliamentary seats;
- Economic participation and decision-making power, as measured by two indicators – women's and men's percentage shares of positions as legislators, senior officials and managers and women's and men's percentage shares of professional and technical positions;
- Power over economic resources, as measured by women's and men's estimated earned income (PPP US\$).

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<sup>51</sup> As stated by Mazumdar (2003); the HDI was introduced by the UNDP in 1990. For the first four years, the UNDP used the maximum and minimum values of the data series to standardize the variables. In 1994 the procedure of standardization was modified with the introduction of arbitrary fixed minimum and maximum values for each variable. Both methods have merits and demerits (p.1).

<sup>52</sup> According to Ghoose, Roy and Tisdell (2003), the GDI attempts to at least take account of changes in gender inequality but it does not go much further than this – it does not, for example, incorporate information about changes in GDI regionally (p.1).

Poverty has traditionally been measured by the rate of lack of income - but this is far too narrow a definition. Human poverty is a concept that captures the many dimensions of poverty that exist in both poor and rich countries - it is the denial of choices and opportunities for living a life one has reason to value. The Human Poverty Index for Developing Countries (HPI-1) measures human deprivations in the same three aspects of human development as the HDI (longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living). The Human Poverty Index for Selected High-Income OECD Countries (HPI-2) includes social exclusion in addition to the three dimensions in HPI-1.

In 1995 the UNDP conducted a detailed analysis for measuring gender discrimination through the GDI and GEM in its Human Development Report. Today country offices are increasingly using the National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) while identifying their national agendas for action. It is also assumed by the NHDRs that in order to advance gender equality, special attention should be paid to the relation between development issues and gender equality.

### **3.3.2. Resources for supporting gender equality**

Different types of resources have been used by the UNDP to support and assist staff in gender equality. Below are these resources supplied by the UNDP which are the Global Knowledge Network, the Gender Program Team, Thematic Trust Fund, the UNIFEM, and different tools and publications.

#### **3.3.2.1. Global Knowledge Network**

The Global Knowledge Network is comprised of 400 people, 134 gender focal points in the country offices, and 20 United Nations Volunteer gender specialists (UNVs). This network has an electronic link with the UNIFEM Regional Program Directors. For this network to work properly, a support team should do many things to facilitate the Global Knowledge Network's difficulties. This team, which provides support to gender policy advisers based in the sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs) and in country offices, is called the Gender Program Team.

### **3.3.2.2. Gender Program Team**

This team is a mentor for the UNDP on gender equality issues. The UNDP policies and programs related to all gender and women issues like gender equality and women's empowerment are guided by the Gender Program Team. This team always struggles for people to grasp the idea behind gender equality and promotes the core objective of gender equality across local offices, practice areas, and through existing UN inter-agency networks. The team struggles to synchronize the different levels of the organization on the gender equality.

### **3.3.2. 3. Thematic Trust Fund**

The Thematic Trust Fund is sensitive to gender related staff in different areas and domains in different regions and countries. It keeps eye on all the gender equality activities and struggles to transmit the experience gained in the past activities in different regions. The scope of the fund to support such initiatives is both global both regional. The Thematic Trust Fund supports national capacity building through four major service lines which are en-gendering policy, en-gendering legal frameworks, en-gendering institutions and en-gendering indicators and methodologies.

### **3.3.2. 4. UNIFEM**

The UNIFEM<sup>53</sup> is the women's fund in the UN. For this reason, it is very important for the health of the projects and activities. The construction of correlation between women issues and other issues is also in the scope of the UNIFEM. The funds that the UNIFEM supply is vital for the implementation phase, for current projects and for projects to be accomplished. As Parpart, Rai and Staudt state, the UNDP claims a partnership with the UNIFEM, the UN

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<sup>53</sup> The UNIFEM provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of women's human rights at the centre of all of its efforts, the UNIFEM focuses its activities on four strategic areas: (1) reducing feminized poverty, (2) ending violence against women, (3) reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and (4) achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war.

Voluntary Fund for Women, which moved toward 'mainstreaming' initiatives soon after the 1985 women's conference on women. The UNIFEM makes its interest prominent in funding activities with the potential to transform power relations and mainstream gender in public policy. Other similar units include the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), with its focus on training, and Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), a high-level policy unit that supports the UN's longstanding Committee on the Status of Women with its appointees from member states (UNDP, 2002, p.103). These women's rights organizations including UNIFEM, INSTRAW and DAW from different parts of the world use internet technology to link organizations, to conduct on-line discussions on women's rights issues, to provide a virtual resource centre to support advocacy, education and research, and to share information on national, regional and international events.

There is a unique partnership between the UNDP and the UNIFEM. The former benefits from the latter's innovative approaches in addressing the feminization of poverty, applying gender analysis to national and local budgets, and monitoring progress in implementing the gender dimensions of the MDGs (UNDP, 2002, p.15).

### **3.3.2.5. Tools and publications**

The resource materials on different platforms like the web, books etc. are important to align the knowledge level for different stakeholders. Nowadays, internet is the easiest way to share knowledge. The UNDP utilizes this fact in the profit of gender equality. Numerous resources can be reached at the UNDP gender site: <http://www.undp.org/gender/resources>. The UNIFEM web site also has rich content and resources. The link for these resources is [www.unifem.undp.org/resour.htm](http://www.unifem.undp.org/resour.htm)

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **UNDP in TURKEY**

*“UNDP is an organization, which has always stood at the frontlines of the battle against poverty and has been a leader in fighting for the rights of all people to live in freedom and dignity.”*

*Kemal Derviṣ  
UNDP Administrator*

#### **4.1. UNDP and Turkey: A Longstanding Partnership**

Turkey has a critical geographical, political, historical, and cultural importance in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. While it is considered as the developing part of the West, it is also considered as the developed part of the East and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC)<sup>54</sup> region. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Turkey has had numerous initiatives as a political and economic power in its region. It has been a member of the UN, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) <sup>55</sup>, and the North Atlantic Treaty

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<sup>54</sup> On 25 June 1992, the heads of state and government of eleven countries including Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine signed in Istanbul the Summit Declaration and the Bosphorus Statement giving birth to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). It came into force as a unique and promising model of multilateral political and economic initiative aimed at fostering interaction and harmony among the member states, as well as ensuring peace, stability and prosperity, encouraging friendly and good-neighborly relations in the Black Sea region. With its Charter's going into force on May 1, 1999, BSEC acquired international legal identity and was transformed into a full-fledged regional economic organization: Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. Turkey - within the most of the member states of the BSEC organization- is the most developed one with its geographical, political, historical, and cultural coverage, so it is considered as the land of opportunities and attraction.

<sup>55</sup> The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organization of those developed countries that accept the principles of representative democracy and a free market economy. It originated in 1948 as the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), led by Frenchman Robert Marjolin, to help administer the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe after World War II. Later, its membership was extended to non-European states, and in 1960 it was reformed into the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Turkey joined OECD on July 13, 1948.

Organization (NATO)<sup>56</sup>. Turkey is currently struggling within the European Union (EU) accession process. Turkey has gradually been focusing on the major human development challenges since World War II which was the motivating factor for the international human rights law and instruments that expanded the coverage of the traditional international law. As Kardam (2000) states, the UN agencies, as well as bilateral donors such as Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, and Sweden, and more recently the European Commission have been especially focusing on gender equality related programs and projects in Turkey and all over the world. As donor programs concentrate more and more on building democracy, civil society, and greater participation, projects to build capacities of women's NGOs, to promote women's political leadership and participation, and to promote women's human rights are becoming more commonplace (p.20). While Kardam (1995) mentions the external accelerating factors of the recent common agenda for women's rights, Goetz mentions the two-sided situation of the recent gender equality agenda. According to Goetz (1995), establishments of many of the national women's machineries were motivated by international pressure like forums and conferences, and as states would not want to be excluded from the international arena, they initiated some commitments due to the international pressure in order to avoid embarrassment. As states did not deeply plan the establishment of the national women's machineries (henceforth, NWMs), these newly founded institutions needed donor agencies' funding to survive. While unplanned transition brought the mentioned difficulties, it had positive reflections too. International donor agencies played a facilitating role for gender issues to take place in public and political agendas by building connections between women's NGOs and NWMs (p.14).

For more than 50 years, the UNDP Turkey has been working in close partnership with the Turkish Government and several national and international stakeholders including NGOs, academics, and the private sector members. The UNDP has a

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<sup>56</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), also called the North Atlantic Alliance, the Atlantic Alliance or the Western Alliance, is an international organization for collective security established in 1949, in support of the North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington, DC, on April 4, 1949. Its headquarters are located in Brussels, Belgium. Turkey joined NATO on February 18, 1952.

great support regarding Turkey's agenda for EU accession. The UNDP Turkey aims to find practical solutions to Turkey's development challenges and manages projects together with the Turkish government and other partners. Since 1986 it has implemented over 80 programs across the country.

The UNDP's strategy for 2006-2010, formulated with and agreed by the Turkish government, deals with several areas including capacity building for democratic governance, action, and advocacy for poverty reduction, environment and sustainable development, emphasizing the role of women, private sector, capacity development, and information and communication technology in its policies and programs.

To achieve progress in these areas, the UNDP seeks to establish partnership with the central government, local administrations, civil society, academia, and private sector to strengthen its contributions to Turkey's development. The UNDP works closely with ministries to support the efficient implementation of the development projects. The UNDP also collaborates with other UN agencies present in Turkey to maximize the impact of the UN's activities in the country, including joint projects on women, youth, internally displaced persons, and the MDGs.

The UNDP Turkey is based in Ankara, with project offices in Istanbul, Erzurum, Adiyaman, Mardin, Diyarbakır, and Şanlıurfa through which it implements projects with non-governmental organizations, women and youth groups, the business community, universities, and regional and local administrations to directly address the development issues in these regions. Most recently, in 2005 the UNDP established a Project Office in Istanbul, specifically, to cooperate with the private sector and to support its contributions to Turkey's development goals such as poverty reduction, democratic governance, and improvement of environmental sustainability.

In addition to the programs and projects, the UNDP produces National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) on a regular basis. The last NHDR<sup>57</sup> was published at the beginning of 2005 and focused on the Information and Communication Technology. With the NHDR, a National Human Development Index which has indicators regarding Turkey's development level in each of its provinces was also prepared. The UNDP also prepares policy papers on issues such as New Poverty, and Women's Entrepreneurship and co-produces reports with other UN agencies on subjects like honor killings in Turkey.

#### **4.1.1. UNDP contributions to human development results in Turkey**

The UNDP's focus and working strategy in Turkey can be categorized within five main human development themes which are governance, regional disparities and poverty, environment and energy, disaster, emergency response, and preparedness, and gender and women's rights.

##### **4.1.1.1. Governance**

The governance system of Turkey has been centralized with strong national bureaucracy due to the historical roots from a centralized, strong country. The local institutions have been weak in terms of authority due to this centralized structure. With the motivating force of EU membership, the government has noticed the importance of reforms and the cooperation among other external institutions except government institutions. This cooperation is seen as critical for the modernization of the structure of the state.

Most of the EU assistance programs aim to achieve the flow of money (indirectly prosperity, as an outcome at the end of the program) and the devolution of power to local government institutions. The NGOs and external agencies have

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<sup>57</sup>The NHDRs have been published almost every two years. The UNDP Turkey chooses a different theme each time. The 2004 NHDR, launched in early January 2005, was on "Information and Communication Technologies." The National Human Development Report 2005 can be reached at <http://www.UNDP.org.tr/publicationsDocuments/NHDR2004engfinal.pdf>

implemented numerous projects. The UNDP was among one of the first external agencies in Turkey. One of the reference programs of the UNDP which is a concrete example of aiming to de-centralize the structure of the state by strengthening local government institutions, is the Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) Program<sup>58</sup>. The UNDP has also been included in programs and projects that are related to the other perspectives of governance like e-government, capacity building for the South, certain human rights initiatives, and macroeconomic and structural reforms. The UNDP's support and contributions to GAP and LEAP (Linking Eastern Anatolia to Progress) programs is also significant.

#### **4.1.1.2. Regional disparities and poverty**

In the early 1990s, poverty and income distribution were not on the agenda of the UNDP and the Turkish Government. Due to the UNDP's emphasis on human rights and human development, they began to rise on the agenda in the late 1990s. In addition to this, poverty and income distribution injustice have entered in the scope of the MDGs. The NHDRs released by the UNDP in 2001 and the HDI had strong arguments to convince the Turkish government to declare poverty and regional disparities explicitly. The government also noticed the income disparities and mentioned poverty reduction in official documents. This goal is stated explicitly in the 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Development Plan which reads: "The main principle is to implement economic and social policies in harmony, which are aimed at increasing economic growth, eliminating absolute poverty, alleviating relative poverty, and approximating the income of the poor segments to an average welfare level" (UNDP, 2000, p.111).

The 2001 economic crisis has been a catalyst in the process of fighting poverty and disparities. Unemployment has aroused on the national agenda since then.

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<sup>58</sup> A project entitled the "Promotion and Development of Local Agenda 21 in Turkey" was developed with the initiative of the International Union of Local Authorities, Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East region (IULA-EMME) in order to support the local authorities in Turkey, commencing their respective Local Agenda 21 processes, particularly following the Habitat II Conference. This project, conducted with the support of the UNDP, was launched in late 1997 and completed as of the termination of the past century, following an implementation period of about two years. More information about Local Agenda 21 will be presented later.

Currently, poverty reduction is an important development goal for Turkey. The diagnosis of poverty reduction, made by the UNDP, is a good contribution and a good point to start to improve the current conditions.

#### **4.1.1.3. Environment and energy**

Environment issues were not considered until Turkey hit high population rates which caused an increase in the energy consumption. As every sector of business runs on energy, the locomotive force of the economy is based on this concept. The sustainable development issues have been in the worldwide agenda for some time; and, as usual, a few years after they began to be discussed at the international level, the same concerns have started to take place in Turkey's agenda. Environmental strategies were included, for the first time, in Turkey's 6<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Development Plan for the period from 1991 to 1995. In the 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Development Plan, the sustainable development notion and strategy took place. In the 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Development Plan, it was stated that sustainable development in every aspect would be achieved only through an integrated approach, which included protecting human health, the ecological equilibrium, cultural, historical, and aesthetic assets in economic and social development. This integrated approach was the key factor for the success of sustainable development.

The concrete contributions of the UNDP in this regard are the National Environment Strategy and Action Plan<sup>59</sup> (NEAP) in 1998 (The World Bank also worked on the NEAP with the UNDP) and the National Program on Environment and Development (NPED) - included under the framework of this program are the Support for the Convention on Climate Change and The National Initiative to Combat Desertification.

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<sup>59</sup>National Environment Strategy and Action Plan (NEAP) can be reached at  
<http://unescap.org/stat/envstat/neap-turkey.pdf>

#### **4.1.1.4. Disaster, emergency response, and preparedness**

Earthquakes, floods, refugees from the southeast border, internally displaced people (IDP), and natural or artificial disasters have been ordinary and recurring situations for Turkey. If this is the case, then it must be managed in a very well organized pattern. The UNDP has been responsive to emergency and disaster situations like earthquakes, floods, and the like; Its contribution is invaluable as the lives of people are saved.

#### **4.1.1.5. Gender and Women's Rights**

Turkey stands as one of the pioneer countries where gender equality especially within the legal framework dates back to the 1930s. Women were granted full voting rights in 1934 as an output of the state feminism<sup>60</sup> of the Republic era. Although the first initiatives towards gender equality and women's rights were conducted in the early 1930s, the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1986 provided Turkey with the establishment of the national machinery (the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women) for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights at national and international levels. Since then, Turkey has increased its initiatives and efforts on gender equality and women's rights through legal reforms in order to eliminate discrimination against women, reduce women's rights violations and domestic violence, and feminization of poverty. Turkey has implemented numerous legal reforms in order to achieve gender equality in a considerably short period. But, the indicator of the real progress is the level of implementation: *de jure* part is the first step towards the realization of women's rights and gender equality; *de facto* is necessary for implementation. In

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<sup>60</sup> As part of a social experiment designed to create a modern, westernized society out of a mostly rural, conservative population, the Turkish state, founded in 1923, gave women rights which were radical for the time. However, these reforms by the "feminist" state did not evolve as a result of demands originating within the society, but were imposed from above. The state's ideal of the modern Republican woman left out the majority of women beyond a small urbanized elite. Furthermore, state feminism did not concern itself with what happened behind closed doors, but focused on expanding women's public roles. Nevertheless, these dramatic reforms have expanded the realm of possibilities for Turkish women of all classes and allowed the development of a more individualist feminism. The debates continue, but Turkey is one of the most important success stories of women's empowerment in the early twentieth century (White, 2003:145) Kandiyoti argues that women in Turkey were "emancipated but unliberated" in the aftermath of the reforms initiated by the founding fathers of the Republic (1987).

the Turkish case, like in other parts of the world, behavioral change takes time and requires the consideration of the community. Turkey is still away from the “should be” situation in terms of basic development indicators like gender empowerment measurement and women’s participation in decision-making mechanisms.

In Turkey, women are still underrepresented in the parliament; domestic violence is still one of the main women’s right violations; women’s education opportunities are still limited, especially in the eastern part of the country, employment level is still not at the optimum level, and most of the women are still living in their private spheres. Progress is still underestimated by the expanding socio-economic inequalities. In spite of the achievements that have been made, recent surveys show that there is still much to be done in strengthening the advancement of women in both the public and private spheres.

While there is still much to be done in strengthening the national machinery for the advancement of women in both the public and private spheres, Turkey's potential to make great strides in the years ahead is clear, given the goodwill of the state as well as the determination of academic and civil society organizations. Advocacy, awareness, and resources appear to be the key while public attention to issues of violence against women, including domestic violence, honor killings, and trafficking is limited. Women are often restrained in exercising their rights fully or are unaware of the scope of their rights; Organizations working to protect the rights of women need more support; and collaborative efforts between government (local and national), NGO's, labor market partners, media and private co-operations in the area of women's rights are virtually needed.

The UNDP is one of the active players of the promotion of women’s rights and gender equality through its projects and programs in Turkey. It is very efficient in defining and engendering the political agenda of the state. The UNDP’s support and contributions to gender equality and women’s rights in Turkey have been acknowledged by the Turkish government, non-governmental organizations,

private sector, academicians, and all beneficiaries. The UNDP's assistance emerged with the launch of the National Program for the Enhancement of Women Integration in Development<sup>61</sup> in 1992. Since then, the UNDP Turkey has been very active in capacity building and raising awareness of the government offices and civil society. It has played a significant role in the establishment of the national machinery on women's rights (the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women) as well as of promoting independent experts to advance research in gender studies, advocacy and support for NGOs, and the establishment of international linkages and stakeholders' networks.

The UNDP has also been very active in the area of gender mainstreaming in its programs since 2001 in order to fight gender inequalities and reduce women's rights violations in Turkey. Promoting gender equality is an inseparable component of the UNDP Turkey's ongoing programs; It implements its programs in three main focus areas, which are democratic governance, poverty reduction, and energy and environment.

Recognizing the fact that gender equality is an essential consideration in human rights and development, the UN system in Turkey has identified women's and children's rights as one of the top three areas of focus for 2006-2010, and the UNDP is an active player in this joint UN process, identifying initiatives throughout its programming that aims to strengthen women's participation in social, economic, and political life through participation in elections, city councils, entrepreneurship and microfinance, and raise awareness on key issues facing women. To achieve this goal, the UNDP is supporting a number of specific projects including;

- Contributing resources and coordinating activities in a joint UN Gender Project which focuses on women's social and economic rights in six pilot provinces,

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<sup>61</sup> The National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development was a UNDP project launched in 1992. It was an "umbrella" technical assistance program. It ended in 2003 and helped the government develop human, technical, and financial resources to enable Turkey to improve and enact gender strategies. More information about the program will be presented later.

- Supporting members of Turkey's Grand National Assembly to advocate for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- Focusing on training and advocacy related to women in politics in advance of the 2007 elections,
- Supporting Women's Councils through the Local Agenda 21 process, including networking among women's councils in Turkey and abroad,
- Identifying and addressing issues related to the MDG 3 on gender equality by localizing the MDGs and action plans throughout the country,
- Supporting women's economic empowerment through the Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Development project in Southeastern Anatolia, Reduction of Socio-Economic Disparities in the GAP Region, and Linking Eastern Anatolia to Progress,
- Supporting access to finance for women through advocacy and actions related to microfinance,
- Providing training to disadvantaged youth, including women, on internet communication and technology to increase their access to information,
- Encouraging the participation of women in projects designed to protect natural resources, including the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Project as well as the partnership with the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline,
- Developing a Gender Equality Handbook for the UNDP's projects and partners to ensure that gender issues are incorporated into the existing and future development projects.

#### **4.1.2. Turkey's Human Development Performance**

Although Turkey has shown significant improvements in certain spheres (e.g. infant mortality), its overall HDI performance has been somewhat erratic. For instance, its economic –or more specifically, GDP- growth for the last half a century has been slower than those of many countries which had more or less similar per capita incomes at the start of the post-war period. From a long term

perspective, Turkey's GDP per capita annual growth rate between 1975 and 2001 was 2.0%.

In recent decades, Turkey has achieved a dramatic reduction in infant mortality rates: from 150 per 1000 live births in 1970 to 35 in 2001. But that is still too high in comparison with countries with similar income levels and HDI rankings. According to HDI scores since 1960s, it is observed that the rate of increase in these scores slowed down in the 1990s. There is even a decrease from 2000 to 2001; this is due to the sharp decrease in GDP in 2001. According to the Human Development Report of 2006, Turkey's rank is 92 among 177 countries for which data are reported. According to the Global Human Development Report published by the UNDP in 2006<sup>62</sup>, Turkey ranks 72<sup>nd</sup> out of 177 countries on the Gender Empowerment Measure which is based on indicators related to participation and decision-making in political and economic life. For example, only 4.4% of the parliament seats are held by women, and women's labor force participation is 26%. While education is considered a key that expands children's awareness of their rights and opportunities, net enrolment of girls in secondary education is only 42%. Other social issues that continue to face women include domestic violence, and, in the most extreme form, honor killings.

#### **4.1.3. MDGs and Turkey**

Turkey started the process for the preparation of the MDG Report (MDGR) in June 2003. In this report, all of the eight MDGs and targets have been analyzed for Turkey, and their feasibility has been conducted, focusing on their correlation with other targets. In the light of the MDGR Turkey 2005, the targets, methods used in their calculation, and the recent situation in Turkey have been identified; the possible near future devilment related issues have been stated due to the given situation. The gaps and shortcomings have also been identified, and tools and expectations in order to bridge the gaps have been highlighted.

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<sup>62</sup> The Global Human Development Report published by the UNDP in 2006 can be reached at <http://hdr.TheUNDP.org/hdr2006/report.cfm>

As stated by the MDGR Turkey 2005, the next MDG report will play a crucial role in the advocacy and policy advice role of the UNDP as it works with the UN and the government partners to identify the disparities shown through disaggregated statistics on issues related to poverty, gender, environment, and education and address them.

Turkey's progress on achieving the MDGs is fairly rapid. Turkey has been very active especially in the areas of reducing gender gap and child mortality besides reaching MDGs, such as Goal 2 (universal primary education), Goal 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis), Goal 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability), and Goal 8 (developing partnership for development). Unfortunately, besides these positive developments, it doesn't seem likely for Turkey to achieve all the MDGs by 2015, because it faces difficulties in achieving some MDGs, particularly Goal 1 (eradication of poverty and hunger), Goal 3 (gender inequality), Goal 4 (child mortality), and Goal 5 (maternal mortality).

Finally, it is necessary for Turkey to double check its human development strategies, especially, in some particular areas such as girls' education and health in order to better achieve the MDGs. Also, according to the MDGR Turkey 2005, in order to reach Goal 3, which is promoting gender equality and empowering women, gender disparity has to be eliminated at all levels of education no later than 2015.

Turkey's national development priorities are embedded in the ongoing reform processes and reflect the commitments made by world leaders at the Millennium Declaration adopted at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000. Turkey recognizes that the Millennium Declaration is a strong framework for development which makes a real and measurable difference in the lives of people by calling for significant reductions in poverty and disparity by 2015. By pursuing this global framework, Turkey will continue on a firm path towards sustainable and equitable development for all while successfully accessing the European Union.

Turkey's first MDG Report<sup>63</sup>, released in June 2005, was prepared under the overall coordination of the Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Under-secretariat of the State Planning Organization, with technical support from the UN agencies in Turkey, including the UNDP. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared a further analysis through a participatory process which involved the representatives from public and private institutions and civil society, and this was presented to the UN Summit in New York in September 2005.

These initial analyses highlight that Turkey, overall, is well on the way to meet and even exceed the goals by 2015. At the same time, behind this overall picture, lie particular challenges which include;

- Eradication of Poverty and Hunger (Goal 1)
- Gender Equality (Goal 3)
- Child Mortality (Goal 4)
- Maternal Mortality (Goal 5)

Furthermore, the report highlights that while the overall indicators are positive, as has been mentioned, Turkey still faces the challenge of addressing regional and gender disparities with regard to poverty, education, and health. According to the first MDGR, statistics underline these significant difficulties encountered in Turkey, one of which is women's being unable to exercise their right to education until the late 1990s. The reasons for this situation at the primary education level have been analyzed in the literature: The causes were identified as problems and limitations stemming from economic constraints, cultural norms, religious beliefs, and the structural aspects of national education (2005, p.32).

The Goal 3 section of the report called "promote gender equality and empower women" stands for the target 4 which is defined as follows; "Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and, at all

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<sup>63</sup> Turkey's first MDG Report can be reached at [http://www.UNDP.org.tr/publicationsDocuments/6161-Turkey\\_MDG\\_Report.pdf](http://www.UNDP.org.tr/publicationsDocuments/6161-Turkey_MDG_Report.pdf)

levels of education, no later than 2015.” Target 4 is aimed to be reached through four identified indicators which are the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary, and tertiary education; the ratio of literate women to men in the 15-24 age group; the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament.

The UNDP, with all UN agencies in Turkey, is supporting Turkey’s efforts to meet the MDGs. The UNDP’s work in areas such as local administration reform, poverty reduction, environment, and promoting women’s rights assist the government and all other national stakeholders to integrate the MDGs into national planning, program implementation, and reform efforts that ultimately will contribute to Turkey’s achievements of the MDGs and overcoming the regional and gender disparities. The UNDP is also supporting a process to raise awareness and start a discussion among the general public and policy-makers to localize the government’s commitments to the MDGs by advocating the prioritization of the MDGs through action and initiatives at the local level.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ANALYSIS OF TWO UNDP-TURKEY PROJECTS**

In this chapter, two UNDP's projects will be analyzed in detail to assess the reflections of the UNDP's initiative in Turkey in terms of engendering, defining, and diffusing the political agenda. The two selected projects are the National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development (1993-2000) and Local Agenda 21 (1997-Present). There are three reasons to select these projects for a deeper analysis: First, these two projects demonstrate that the UNDP has been very active particularly since 1990s because it has been influenced by the international development of women's rights. Second, these projects demonstrate that the UNDP's programs can be considered as motivating factors for the realization of women's rights in Turkey. Third, through these selected projects, the UNDP, which is one of the core international development assistance organizations in Turkey, has contributed to enhancement of women's rights by affecting, convincing, and organizing the national stakeholders within the scope of international developments in women's rights.

#### **5.1. National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project (1993-2000)**

The advancement of women has been one of the core themes of the UNDP. According to Mr. Alfredo Witschi-Cestari, who was the UNDP Resident Representative from 1996 to 2001, there are several reasons for the UNDP to deal with realization of women's rights and empowerment. These reasons are: First, the UNDP believes that women are at the heart of development. Women prove this when they assume their traditional roles as the backbone of their own

families. They increasingly prove this every day in the work place as well through their industry, productivity, creativity, and management capabilities, and, above all, through their unique commitment and dedication. Thus, they show how governance can be enhanced by women's participation in all decision-making processes. Second, although much remains to be done, women's contribution to Turkey's development has markedly increased both quantitatively and qualitatively over the last 30 years. Third, the leadership of the UNDP's partners, the DGSPW and the State Ministry for Women, Family, and Social Services is remarkable. This joint effort has yielded a most effective co-operation with other government offices, NGOs, and a wealth of grassroots groups (2000, p.4).

As the UNDP mainly dealing with poverty elimination, job creation, and sustainable development, the advancement of women is essential for the achievement of all objectives of the organization. The UNDP works for equality for women and men through all of its projects and programs. These areas cover vital concerns for women such as education for all, environment, human rights, population and economic development, social development, urban living, and shelter.

Within this context, National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project which was an "umbrella" technical assistance program was launched in Turkey by the UNDP in 1992. This project helped government to develop human, technical, and financial resources in order to enable Turkey to improve and enact its gender strategies (UNDP, 2004, p.51). The project, which was executed from 1993 to 2000, was a joint program of the DGSPW and the UNDP. As defined in the outcome document prepared by the UNDP Turkey and the DGSPW, in support of the overall aims of enhancing women's status, the project had the following priority objectives:

- Integration of women's problems in national development and sectoral plans with a view to developing policies for women's enhanced participation in development,

- Creation of a gender disaggregated database in support of policy development geared towards enhancing women's participation in development,
- Strengthening the national machinery (DGSPW) in order to enhance effectiveness of activities for improving women's legal, economic, and social status and for monitoring such activities,
- Development of gender sensitive human resources through education and training programs,
- Support to research and pilot projects by and on non-governmental and volunteer women's organizations.

In addition to the above mentioned areas, the project also aimed at;

- Compilation and dissemination of research and publications on women,
- Preparation of guides and bulletins for creating effective information networks among and between organizations,
- Documenting all project activities and outputs (2000, p.9).

As the project emphasized the strengthening of coordination and collaboration between the government and women's NGOs, it accelerated the effectiveness of the national women's machinery – the DGSPW- through its activities during its seven years of implementation. The CEDAW and the Turkey's responsibilities related to it were the major motivating factors for the establishment of the project. Nevin Şenol, who worked as the deputy national coordinator for the project from 1993 to 1994, states that the main aim of the project was institutional structuring regarding the enhancement of women throughout all relevant government entities. The project especially focused on strengthening the internal capacity of the DGSPW as it was the national machinery for women without an organizational law. The project enabled the DGSPW to continue its operational activities although it did not have the organizational law (interview on 01.06.2006).

According to the project outcome document, activities of the project are classified under four main groups: education programs, research projects, pilot projects, and statistical/publication activities. Under each category, specific activities are articulated in details by the UNDP Turkey and the DGSPW in 2000. The main categories and the specific achievements reported in the outcome document will be presented below. A general assessment of the achievements regarding women's rights will be presented next.

### **5.1.1. Education Programs**

Protocols were established with national universities to enhance human resources which were gender sensitive and equated with knowledge and expertise. With a view to supporting training and seminar programs at the national and regional levels in realization of these aims, several protocols with academic institutions have been concluded.

As per these protocols, several graduate programs were established at METU Gender and Women Studies Graduated Program, Ankara University Women Studies Center (KASAUM), Istanbul University Women's Education and Research Center (KAUM), and Çukurova University Women's Studies Center (KADAUM).

Within this context, the Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Program was established at METU in 1994. The program aimed to support research in gender roles and women's studies as well as gender education. The program also aimed to provided expert training to members of different academic disciplines who will staff the relevant units of public and private agencies; and to contribute to the enhancement of public awareness and sensitivity towards gender. Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Program, which offers a two year interdisciplinary curriculum, aims to examine the issues of knowledge, society, and gender within a feminist perspective in order to contribute towards an understanding of the social position of women and the inequality between women and men with a primary focus on the case of Turkey. In this regard, the program has a three-fold mission:

*education, research, and advocacy.* In addition, the program endeavors to actualize the following five goals:

- To contribute to the development of education and research on issues of gender and women's studies both theoretically and empirically.
- To contribute to the creation of public awareness and sensitivity on the concept of gender, the field of women's studies, and the social position and problems of women in society.
- To contribute to the process of building mental constructs that are compatible with the notions of women's empowerment and equality between women and men.
- To sponsor the institutional and policy oriented initiatives towards the creation of gender sensitivity both on and off campus.
- To benefit from and contribute to global developments in the area of education, research, and advocacy on gender issues.

As such, in its essence, the mission of the Gender and Women's Studies Program emanates from a transformative vision of society. In order to contribute towards social change, the program aims at linking three areas of activity and their related institutions. These areas are (i) *production of knowledge* (academic institutions); (ii) *practice implementations* (women's movement and NGOs), and (iii) *policy formation* (local, national and international decision making bodies). Within this context, the education and research activities of the Gender and Women's Studies Program of METU aims, on one hand, to critically examine the existing theory/knowledge in terms of their implications for policy and practice, and, on the other hand, serve as an active agent of change through establishing a feedback system between its activities and those of other relevant actors.

The protocol on "Development and Support of Education and Training Activities for Women" was signed in 1993. As per the protocol, the academic personnel of the program prepared some 35 items of training material. In addition, a project entitled "Visual Material Workshop for Gender Sensitization" commenced during the 1996-97 academic year. Guided by the overarching principle of "For Women

and With Women,” monthly workshops were held for the benefit of degree students, political parties, syndicates, and representatives of volunteer women’s organizations, with a view to creating gender awareness at the social level. The “For Women and With Women” workshops aimed to sensitize and inform people from various occupational and institutional backgrounds and to promote networking and partnership among those working on women’s issues.

At the Ankara University Women’s Studies Center (KASAUM), in addition to the activities of the center, the short term training programs which are presented below were conducted. The goals were to strengthen women’s solidarity against discrimination and to sensitize institutions and organizations (such as parties and syndicates) towards gender discrimination.

Training programs which aimed to enhance sensitivity towards women’s problems, within the framework of the training programs, were conducted at the women’s commissions of political parties. Underlying those programs were the conviction that the factors working against women, both in the legal field and in application, may be eradicated through women’s enhanced representation in politics, and raising women’s awareness on the difficulties faced in their effective participation in politics..

In the training programs conducted with the syndicates, the female membership of syndicates in the fields, where women are concentrated such as education, health, tourism, were identified as priority target beneficiaries. The main goal in conducting the training programs which focused primarily on women and labor was to promote women’s enhanced representation in syndicate management so as to enable them to better confront gender-based discrimination at the work place.

These programs also entailed subject focus on women’s problems and cover issues such as gender based discrimination in law and equitable solutions as well as representation of women in the mass media and day-to-day economic difficulties faced by women.

The KASAUM also developed a new program entitled “Self Help Against Discrimination” which was based on the recognition that condensed training programs crammed various subjects into the short time available, and, therefore, prevented active participation. The program viewed training “not as providing information, but, rather as a transformative process”. The aim was to inform women of the tools and methods they could develop to overcome and solve the personal and social impediments in political arena. This was aimed to be achieved by enhancing women’s skills for problem identification, self-expression, and initiative taking. The program was first implemented in 1996. Due to the program’s perceived contribution to team work, problem identification, target setting, and its impact on transforming relations among women, the program was implemented with several syndicates and political parties.

The KASAUM has also conducted a “women strengthening” program for the benefit of the DGSPW professional staff. Training was provided on the history of the women’s movement, sexism, reassessment of public policy for women, the international women’s movement, national experiences, empathy development, and communication, as well as on legal terminology and project preparation.

Furthermore, the center prepared a training program, titled “Our Friend at the Police Station” which was targeted at civil servants. The program was intended to initiate institutional transformation against discrimination. It aimed at sensitizing police officers who served women victims of domestic violence. The program also dealt with the intimidating image of the police institution and police stations held by victims of domestic violence, who feared soliciting police help. Evaluation of the program, which was attended by some 93 police commissioners and officers of the Ankara Security Directorate, revealed that such programs would not have operational impact unless they were accompanied by institutional restructuring of the police force. Furthermore, without increasing the number of support mechanisms and institutions, sensitization on domestic violence was not proven to affect significant transformation.

The KASAUM has also prepared educational booklets for use in short term training programs such as “Political Life and Policies for Support to Women”, “Sexism in the Media”, and “Education against Sexism.”

The Istanbul University Women’s Research and Education Center (KAUM) designed and implemented training programs for women employed by political parties, following a protocol signed on March 9, 1995. In this framework, training programs were provided to women employed by the district representations of CHP, ANAP and DYP. The training content covered the situation of women in politics, legal rights of women, the importance of association, methods for solving economic problems, and women’s rights. Speech training was also included in the program, with a view to supporting the beneficiaries’ effective participation in politics. As per the referred protocol, training programs were implemented with the civil society organizations as well. A training program entitled “The Social Status of Women and the Womanhood” was implemented with the Ümraniye Women’s Center, with the Zeytinburnu, Bakirköy, Osmaniye branches of the Association in Support of Contemporary Living, and with the Gaziosmanpasa Women’s Foundation for Culture and Solidarity. This training covered the subject of women in Republican Turkey, human rights of women, women’s health, women’s legal rights, women and labor, and democratic institutions. A total of 344 women from civil society organizations and political parties participated in the program.

A protocol was signed on April 5, 1996 with another important institution, namely, the Çukurova University Women’s Studies Center (KADAUM), provisioning short-term training. The center conducted a training program on “Women and Hot House Farming” for the benefit of rural women in Adana, a province home to increasing levels of urban migration. The training programs were implemented in the villages of Kaldırımlı of Yumurtalık, Bahçe of Karataş, and Dokuztekne, Yeşilköy and Sarımazi of Ceyhan. The program provided training not only in hothouse farming and soil use, but also in family planning, mother child health, environmental problems, entrepreneurship, and credits. The

center also implements training programs for women in several political parties, syndicates, and volunteer women's organizations.

Education programmes implemented under this project prepared the basis for the enhancement of women as the overall aim of the project was institutional structuring regarding women's issues. They played a vital role through formal and informal education and enlightenment strategies they established. The strategic goal of such initiatives and enlightenment was to enable individuals women in particular to see the big picture, to ask the awkward questions and most importantly to provide the answers. Why are women discriminated against and exploited? Who benefits from this and how can it be ended? What structures and mechanisms sustain this discrimination and how can they be nullified?

In order to understand the basis of gender inequality it is vital to appreciate the contributions of these education programmes as they established the framework to understand all institutionalised discrimination and inequality is to facilitate the exploitation of allegedly unequal persons. This is the basis of racism, slavery and all discrimination based on colour, language group, nationality, religion, class - or gender. Just like the myth of racial superiority, the myth of male superiority has been woven to serve one purpose - that of exploitation. Exploitation can manifest itself in many forms: economic exploitation for slavery or cheap labour in the home or in factories; political exploitation which denies the exploited their full rights to political participation; social exploitation which suppresses and ignores the views, opinions and aspirations of the exploited.

Through the academic units and trainings human resource capacity started to be built within the international context of women's rights. Thanks to all education programmes implemented under this project while they opened the doors of public sphere for trained and women's rights sensitive members who will be the defenders of women's rights and issues in Turkey. These defenders are the potential trainers of the young generation who need to be conscious on women's issues. Progress can only be reached through an established and systematical

experience and knowledge sharing platforms, so the above mentioned education programmes were one of the major steps towards this progress.

### **5.1.2. Research Projects**

Some 17 research projects have been supported under the National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development. Research is often described as an active and systematic process of inquiry aimed at discovering, interpreting, assessing, and revising facts. This intellectual investigation is the inevitable source of production of knowledge of events, behaviors, theories, facts, and figures which make practical applications possible. The research projects conducted under the National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project were the main source of data gathering and sharing regarding the women's status within the society in Turkey. They also collaborated with the Turkish academia with the goal to foster multidisciplinary research projects that bring together researchers, advocates and practitioners interested in violence prevention, intervention, reproductive rights of women and women's economic empowerment. All of the collaborations would enable not only the academia but also the civil society to build its current program areas in ways that address the intersection of a comprehensive range of women's human rights issues: violence, reproductive rights, economic equality, education, health care, political participation, and others.

The completed research projects were the crucial tools through the identification of the ongoing situation and problems regarding women's rights. So they played a facilitating role for the establishment of the future solutions for the identified problematic areas. The research reports which are detailed in the Appendix A are available for public use and reference at the DGSPW Documentation Center.

### **5.1.3. Pilot Projects**

According to Nevin Şenol, one of the main contributions of the national program was related to its flexibility. As the program was flexible, it provided funding for

the activities of many women's NGOs with the intention to empower them (interview on 01.06.2006). As a result of this, many pilot projects under the national program were conducted by several women's NGOs like Women's Solidarity Foundation, Foundation for the Support of Women's Work, and the like. While the research projects under the national program helped the identification and analysis of the problematic areas regarding women's issues in Turkey, under the pilot projects women of specific districts were provided with support in order to empower them economically in public life. That's the reason why these pilot projects were really efficient initiatives as they included more women into the economic life in order to empower their status and raise their awareness regarding their rights and capabilities.

These projects aimed to stimulate enterprise creation by women and to develop a "women entrepreneurs' network culture" in Turkey. They were aimed to be based on the known needs of nascent and potential women entrepreneurs, in which the principal was a "specifically feminist approach" guaranteeing the largest number of projects completed and a better success rate of enterprise creation. These pilot projects tried to start up an enterprise creation as transmitting and implementing the best practices and experiences. They encouraged the independence of women of resources in order to eternalise the action while they encourage the transmission of competences, knowledge, methodology and pedagogic tools to the women of resources, allowing them to become trainers and, in turn, encourage the birth of new generations of women of resources, mentors and actors in the identified network.

#### **5.1.4. Statistics and Publication Activities**

Under the overall objective to support women's participation on development, cooperation with the Turkish Statistics Institution was established in order to prepare a sex disaggregated database which should become a planning instrument for policy development in this regard. As per the protocol signed between the SIS and the DGSPW, the process for the establishment of a department for "Social Structure and Women Indicators" was speeded up. Technical equipment

procurement to support the creation of a gender disaggregated database commenced. As per the protocol provisions, the database was designed, and it is presently being transmitted into a computerized electronic environment. The SIS has also realized the following activities towards compiling the available data to generate gender based indicators: Basic Statistics on Women, Turkey 1978 -1993, (Working Document, Turkish and English); Women in Turkey through the 1990's (Working Document, Turkish and English); Women in Statistics, Turkey 1995, (Brochure, within the framework of preparation for the 4th World Conference on Women, DGSPW with UNICEF cooperation).

Statistics and publications were the last category of activities within the national programme. Education programmes prepared the basic background regarding women's issues; research projects identified the gaps and problematic areas; pilot projects provided women with some livelihood strategies and economic empowerment; statistics and publications focused on the sustainability of the contributions of the national programme. Regarding statistics, the establishment of the gender disaggregated database which is updated periodically, under the State Institute of Statistics (SIS) was the main indicator of this sustainability. Publications and all the printed materials consisted the media outreach activities and the public awareness part of the programme. Publications were also crucial for the effectiveness of the project as the more people become aware of the women's rights and issues, the more women's rights would be realized.

#### **5.1.5. National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project and its Impact over the Enhancement of Women's Rights in Turkey**

The National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project was launched in 1993. It was the leading initiative that appeared in Turkey's political agenda as a reflection of the international commitments of the 1990s, especially the principles of the CEDAW and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, for the institutionalization of women's rights and empowerment within the Turkish community. As the state Minister of the

period, Mr. Hasan Gemici highlighted, the program aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of the national machinery besides supporting voluntary and civil organizations' efforts in promoting women's participation in the development process which was one of the main rights of women (UNDP, 2000, p.4). The program helped the Turkish government and the civil society establish a systematical basis for the enhancement of women's rights. One of the biggest contributions of the program could be considered as the establishment of the Gender and Women's Studies centers at several universities which provided the Turkish society with a legitimate source to expand the awareness on women's rights within the academia. This has been a great challenge for Turkey in the area of women's rights because these centers have been the sources where the women's rights defenders, the young educated women of Turkey in particular, are trained.

According to Seyhan Aydinligil, the program was the first initiative in the field of women's rights. It included not only the government institutions, but also the NGOs within a participatory framework, by encouraging them to be the active agents of the formulation of the program. The program was also crucial because it challenged the dialogue between the government and civil society members. The UNDP Turkey played a leader and facilitator role during the cooperation building period. The DGSPW, which is the national women's machinery, was established in 1990, but it did not have an organizational law, which in turn limited the active involvement of the organization into the women's issues in Turkey. The DGSPW's participation into women's issues was made possible by donor funding.

Another significant contribution of the program was that it provided a clear concept of women's policy which did not exist despite the efforts of the 1990s regarding the CEDAW. The program also enabled all related stakeholders to understand that women's problem was not indeed the problem of development. As an initiative, the program not only carried the global policies regarding women and equality, but also accelerated the establishment of national policies women's

rights and empowerment. Through this program, the UNDP Turkey has always kept women's rights, equality, and empowerment related issues on the agenda, and it played a bridging role for carrying the global women and equality related principles and commitment to the national context. The UNDP has kept the national agenda alive and sensitive for women's issues (interview on 31.05.2006).

The programme has been a crucial actor in order to conceptionalize the push and pull factors of the women's problems and issues as they had been the products of stereotyped and traditional gender roles within the society. The programme took up the gender inequality exercise -which is still being experienced in Turkey- from a critical point of view and tried to engender the perception regarding women's issues through opening education programmes, conducting researches, implementing pilot projects and publicizing documentations. It is significant that the programme considered the women's rights and issues not a matter of development but a matter of being unconsciousness and insensitive on women's rights and gender equality. This situation was closely linked to the patriarchal structure of the society, structured laws and governmental bodies and the gender inequality.

Although the national program was the leading initiative of 1990s in the field of women's rights in Turkey, unfortunately, some constraints were experienced. The project was funded by the UNDP and the Turkish Government, but was implemented through a comprehensive involvement of the DGSPW staff, NGOs, academicians, and the core project unit which consisted of people who worked for the project at the DGSPW. Through the implementation period of the project, the DGSPW did not have an organizational law that would support the directorate financially. Therefore, there arose a contradictory situation which needed an external support. Turkey had complied with requirements of the World Conferences on Women and established a national women's machinery which was the de jure part of the situation, but, the de facto part was experiencing a huge gap because the lack of funding that would make the machinery effective. During this stage, the UNDP, as an international development assistance organization,

launched the national program in close cooperation with the Turkish government. According to Deniz Ögetürk, who is a member of DGSPW, another constraint was that program did not have a follow up period, and, even it was a very comprehensive and long-term project, there weren't enough reports or documents related to it. The main reason of this problem was that the staff who worked under the project were changed a lot, and the monitoring mechanism of the project was not established well (interview on 01.09.2006).

## **5.2. Local Agenda 21**

### **5.2.1. Strengthening Local Government**

During the 1992 Rio Earth Summit “the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,” “sustainable development<sup>64</sup>” was accepted and approved as the common goal of humanity, an integrated framework of shared values, principles, actions, and a global action plan, dealing with environmental and development problems, titled “Agenda 21” was endorsed. Agenda 21 is a comprehensive global action plan and a new partnership including social, economic, and environmental sustainable development strategies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Emre Alp, the National coordinator of LA 21 program in Turkey, this approach is crucial while it states that the fundamental prerequisite for achieving global sustainable development is to involve all “major groups” and ensure broad public participation, with a view towards establishing effective partnerships at all levels, and moving towards sustainable local communities (2005, p.13). Agenda 21 focuses on the today’s problems and aims at supporting the world’s agenda for future challenges. All these mentioned points have the common goal of global consensus and political commitment regarding development and cooperation.

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<sup>64</sup> The concept of sustainability introduced by the 1972 Stockholm Conference, interlocking environment and development, as well as introducing a new understanding of human-centered sustainable development. The concept of “sustainable development” is accepted as the common target of 21st century and has been endorsed by the UN member states. The definition of this term in the [Brundtland Report](#) is quite well known: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The full text of the [Brundtland Report](#) can be downloaded as a scanned copy of the UN General Assembly document A/42/427.

Agenda 21 document<sup>65</sup> consists of 40 chapters, encompassing the basis of action, objectives, activities, and cost evaluation in relation to priority topics, grouped under the following four sections:

Section I. Social and economic dimensions cover Chapters 2-8 (Including pertinent chapters on demography, poverty, and human settlements that prepared the ground for the subsequent UN conferences in Cairo 1994, Copenhagen 1995, and Istanbul 1996).

Section II. Conservation and management of resources for development cover Chapters 9-22 (Including, *inter alia*, protection of the atmosphere, combating deforestation, managing fragile ecosystems, conservation of biological diversity, and protection of the marine environment.)

Section III. Strengthening the role of major groups covers Chapters 23-32 (Including women<sup>66</sup>, culminating in the UN conference in Beijing 1995, children

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<sup>65</sup>Agenda 21 document titled “Environment and Development Agenda” can be reached at <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.Print.asp?DocumentID=52&ArticleID=>

<sup>66</sup> The following objectives under the “Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development” were proposed for national Governments by Agenda 21: (a) To implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, particularly with regard to women's participation in national ecosystem management and control of environment degradation; (b) To increase the proportion of women decision makers, planners, technical advisers, managers and extension workers in environment and development fields; (c) To consider developing and issuing a strategy of changes necessary to eliminate constitutional, legal, administrative, cultural, behavioral, social and economic obstacles to women's full participation in sustainable development and in public life by the year 2000; (d) To establish by the year 1995 mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the implementation and impact of development and environment policies and programs on women and to ensure their contributions and benefits; (e) To assess, review, revise, and implement, where appropriate, curricula and other educational material, with a view to promoting the dissemination to both men and women of gender-relevant knowledge and valuation of women's roles through formal and non-formal education, as well as through training institutions, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations; (f) To formulate and implement clear governmental policies and national guidelines, strategies and plans for the achievement of equality in all aspects of society, including the promotion of women's literacy, education, training, nutrition and health and their participation in key decision-making positions and in management of the environment, particularly as it pertains to their access to resources, by facilitating better access to all forms of credit, particularly in the informal sector, taking measures towards ensuring women's access to property rights as well as agricultural inputs and implements; (g) To implement, as a matter of urgency, in accordance with country-specific conditions, measures to ensure that women and men have the same right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and have access to information, education and means, as appropriate, to enable them to exercise this right in keeping with their freedom, dignity and personally held values; (h) To consider adopting, strengthening and enforcing legislation prohibiting violence against women and to take all necessary administrative, social, and educational measures to eliminate violence against women in all its forms.

and youth, NGOs, local authorities, workers and trade unions, businesses and industry, and others.)

Section IV. Means of implementation cover Chapters 33-40 (Including, *inter alia*, financial resources and mechanisms, technology transfer, capacity-building, education, public awareness training, and information for decision-making.)

It is the celebrated Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 that calls upon local authorities in every country “to undertake a consultative process with their populations and achieve a consensus on Local Agenda 21 for their communities.” Besides this, the chapter also includes three main objectives:

First, the international community is urged to initiate a consultative process aimed at increasing the cooperation between local authorities. Second, the associations of local authorities are urged to increase levels of cooperation and coordination. Third, local authorities are called upon to augment the role of women and youth in the decision-making, planning, and implementation processes. The target years given as deadlines to realize these objectives are already left behind. On the other hand, the imperative need to continuously nurture and augment the rather modest achievements in relation to these objectives will apparently perforate deep into the twenty-first century.

While Chapter 28 of the Agenda 21 calls for the establishment of local institutions for localizing and implementing the goals agreed through the Agenda 21 process, Local Agenda 21 pertains to the development and implementation of local sustainable development action plans with a long-term perspective, based upon a consultative process and effective partnership of local stakeholders. According to Emre Alp, Local Agenda 21 is a participatory, multi-sectoral process to achieve the goals of Agenda 21 at local level through the preparation and implementation of long-term, strategic action plans that address priority local sustainable development concerns (2005, p.19). This is an enormous task for local authorities since they are provided with the mandate of translating the

global concerns of Agenda 21 to concrete action at the local level. The Local Agenda 21 process includes comprehensive strategies from building a capacity at the local level to encompassing long and short-term goals. The process is also expected to produce local action plans based on the present dynamics of the targeted community. The expected action plans have to be a product of consensus, and they required to involve public participation. These action plans would also reflect the determination and commitment of local stakeholders/partners to confront the challenges and shape their future. An essential component in the process is to develop indicators of sustainable development, including social, economic, and environmental indicators as well as indicators to manifest the level of commitment of local stakeholders. The Local Agenda 21 process needs to be complemented by continuous monitoring, evaluation and feedback, sustaining the consensus-building and participatory process.

### **5.2.2. Local Agenda 21 and Implementation in Turkey**

With the launch of the Local Agenda 21 mandate in 1992, a significant number of local authorities from all over the world took concrete steps toward the development of their own local action plans. In Turkey, the International Union of Local Authorities, Section for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East region (IULA-EMME), which is a non-profit membership organization of municipalities and associations of local authorities, launched a project titled “Promotion and Development of Local Agenda 21s in Turkey” with the support and under the auspices of the UNDP Turkey and Capacity 21<sup>67</sup>. This project, conducted with the support of the UNDP, was launched in late 1997 and completed in 1999, following an implementation period of about two years. Building upon the achievements of this project, the project entitled “Implementing Local Agenda 21s in Turkey,” was designed as the second phase

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<sup>67</sup>Capacity 21 was launched at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment & Development (UNCED) and worked with developing countries and countries in transition to find the best ways to achieve sustainable development and meet the goals of [Agenda 21](#). It was guided through its development with a mid term evaluation conducted in May 1995 entitled [Capacity 21 Monitoring And Reporting Strategy](#). Now it is largely a legacy initiative being built upon by Capacity 2015.

of the above-mentioned project, and it is also being coordinated by the IULA-EMME and conducted under the auspices of the UNDP. The project entitled “Localizing Millennium Development Goals and WSSD Plan of Implementation through the Turkey Local Agenda 21 Governance Network” was designed as the third phase of the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey. The third phase aims at institutionalizing LA-21 processes and mechanisms at local and national levels through campaigns and capacity building initiatives and launching a Local Agenda 21 Small Grants Program to promote and substantiate the MDGs and WSSD Plan of Implementation at local level. The project has a very comprehensive website<sup>68</sup> which is updated periodically, providing information on all phases, objectives, activities, and achievements. As stated by Emre Alp, the Local Agenda 21 implementations in Turkey were selected by the UNDP in 2001 as one of the most successful cases in the world. The letter by the UNDP, dated November 1, 2001, addressed to the Prime Minister, underlines the “excellent performance” of the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey (2003, p.5).

As briefly explained above, the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey has a comprehensive area of action from social and economic dimensions to strengthening the role of major groups like women. Within the scope of the mentioned comprehensive approach, this study aims at analyzing the contribution of the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey regarding the realization of women’s rights.

#### **5.2.2.1. Phase 1: Promotion of Development of Local Agenda 21's in Turkey (1997-1999)**

The purpose of the first phase project of the Local Agenda 21 in Turkey was to have local authorities foster a participatory, multi-sectoral process to achieve the goals of Agenda 21 at the local level through the preparation and implementation of long-term, strategic action plans that address priority local sustainable development concerns via their commitment to Local Agenda 21. According to

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<sup>68</sup> <http://www.la21turkey.net/>

Yeşim Oruç, the program manager at the UNDP Turkey, the first phase of the project kept a low profile in order to provide the local stakeholders with a long-term digested basis for the implementations of future (Interview 26.05.2006). The two main objectives of the project were to promote Local Agenda 21 and its implications for local governance at the national level and to establish consultative mechanisms in pilot cities which would foster a local participatory planning process. In this context, the first objective pertained to the replicability and expansion of Local Agenda 21 at the national level, whereas the second objective focused on the activities to be conducted at the local level in pilot cities. The project was coordinated by the IULA-EMME. The UNDP's multi-faceted support constituted an outstanding example of "global partnership" between the UN agencies and local actors<sup>69</sup>. The project was implemented from September 1997 to December 1999.

According to the UNDP, through the two-year implementation period, the main achievements of the first phase were as follows:

- A general awareness and appreciation of Local Agenda 21 were developed in Turkey, and the project implementation manifested a growing demand as well as a potential for expanding this movement in the country. The project activities were welcomed and supported by central and local authorities. The Decree on Agenda 21 issued by the Ministry of Interior constituted a significant step in securing the legal and institutional sustainability of Local Agenda 21 initiative.

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<sup>69</sup> Local partners of the project initially included the following municipalities corresponding to nine pilot cities: Metropolitan municipalities of Bursa, Izmir and Antalya, and the municipalities of Adiyaman, Ağrı, Çanakkale, Gölbaşı (Ankara), Harran (Şanlıurfa) and Trabzon. Following the project revision in October 1999, fourteen new local authorities were included in the project as partners: Metropolitan municipalities of Diyarbakır, Gaziantep and İzmit, the municipalities of Afyon, Aliağa (İzmir), Burdur, Çatalca (İstanbul), Çeşme (İzmir), Çorum, Foça (İzmir), Kaş (Antalya), Kızılkalesi (İçel), Zonguldak, and the Special Provincial Administration of Kastamonu. In addition to these 23 cities, the municipalities of Denizli, İznik (Bursa) and Silivri (İstanbul) joined the project, to be subsequently included as formal partners. Partners included the Union of Aegean Municipalities, the Union of GAP Municipalities, the Union of Mediterranean Municipalities, the Union of Eastern Black Sea Municipalities, and the Union of Municipalities of the Marmara Region.

- A continuous series of awareness-raising and training programs were held, geared particularly towards the NGOs and other local stakeholders.
- City-wide consultative mechanisms (City Councils and other platforms) as well as working groups and special task forces were constituted from amongst the different types of local actors and citizens in a significant number of cities.
- The project activities reflected the emphasis of Agenda 21 on women and youth. Women Platforms, which were established in a number of cities, worked towards promoting the active involvement of women in urban life and incorporating gender issues in local decision-making processes. In conjunction with their active involvement with Local Agenda 21 Secretariats, the women acted as the driving force behind all successfully-conducted Local Agenda 21 processes. This achievement was the core initiative for more involvement of women in future activities of the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey.
- On the other hand, the continuous series of youth forums, organized since the commencement of the project, paved the way for the establishment of Youth Councils in a significant number of pilot cities. Organization of public meetings under the umbrella of the Local Agenda 21 in neighborhood communities became a widespread practice. In a large number of partner cities, special councils and task forces were established for the children, elderly, and the disabled.
- Local Agenda 21 Secretariats were established in project partner cities to coordinate respective Local Agenda 21 processes. Their outstanding performance constituted the driving force behind the nation-wide success of the project.
- A significant contribution by partner local authorities to support their respective Local Agenda 21 processes was the allocation of prestigious

detached buildings to serve as “Local Agenda 21 Houses” in the majority of pilot cities.

- Basic material on Local Agenda 21 was prepared, printed and circulated, including the quarterly Project Newsletter and the “Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide.”
- Reports on the description of the existing situation in each partner city, which reflected the existing state of social, economic, and environmental development were completed in the majority of cities.
- The preparation of Local Agenda 21 action plans and the identification of priority demonstration projects, addressing local sustainable development issues were programmed for the continuation project.

#### **5.2.2.2. Phase 2: Implementing Local Agenda 21 in Turkey (2000-2001)**

Building on the current achievements of the first phase of the Local Agenda 21 program, a continuation project entitled “Implementing Local Agenda 21s in Turkey” was prepared by the IULA-EMME, to be conducted with the financial and institutional support of the UNDP Turkey and Capacity 21. The second phase activities were conducted from January 2000 to end of 2001. Purpose of the second phase was to strengthen local “governance” by ensuring that civil society participated in decision-making and influenced local investment. The project had five objectives: First, increasing the number of local authorities engaging in Local Agenda 21 and envisaging the promotion and development of participatory processes in new partner cities; Second, preparation of local action plans in new partner cities and the implementation of these plans in partner cities from the first phase; Third, launching of campaigns to inform the public, as well as publicizing the process abroad to increase international support; Fourth, ensuring that the Local Agenda 21 process received long term sustained support; and fifth,

enabling the Local Agenda 21 to play a facilitating role within the recovery and reconstruction process of the Marmara earthquake.

As the project was coordinated by the IULA-EMME, the UNDP's support to the project constituted an outstanding example of “global partnership” between the UN agencies and local actors<sup>70</sup>. During the first phase, respective processes were launched in a total of 23 cities. The number went up to 48 during the second phase.

According to the UNDP, through the two-year implementation period, the main achievements of the first phase were as follows:

- Respective activities in partner cities that launched their Local Agenda 21 processes were far from being constrained within the boundaries of a predetermined model, but conducted via apparently different structures and methods, reflecting the particular characteristics, values, and priorities of each city.
- Displaying colorful differences, each more impressive than the other, the city councils or similar platforms, which were established particularly with the initiative of the project partner metropolitan cities, functioned as effective participatory mechanisms, bringing together the representatives of different institutions around common goals and objectives on a regular basis. Similar mechanisms also functioned as effectively and impressively

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<sup>70</sup> Marmara Region: Adapazari Metropolitan Municipality, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, Izmit Metropolitan Municipality, Çanakkale Municipality, Yalova Municipality, Babaeski Municipality, Değirmendere (Kocaeli) Municipality, İznik (Bursa) Municipality, Orhangazi (Bursa) Municipality, Silivri (İstanbul) Municipality, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Edirne Special Provincial Administration, Gebze (Kocaeli) Municipality; Aegean Region: Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, Afyon Municipality, Kütahya Municipality, Muğla Municipality, Alağa (İzmir) Municipality, Çeşme (İzmir) Municipality, Foça (İzmir) Municipality, Ödemiş (İzmir) Municipality, Aydın Municipality, Denizli Municipality, Kuşadası (Aydın) Municipality; Mediterranean Region: Adana Metropolitan Municipality, Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality, Burdur Municipality, Yalvaç (İsparta) Municipality, Antalya Municipality, Tarsus (İçel) Municipality; Central Anatolia Region: Nevşehir Special Provincial Administration, Ürgüp (Nevşehir) Municipality, Yenimahalle (Ankara Metropolitan District) Municipality; Black Sea Region: Samsun Metropolitan Municipality, Kastamonu Special Provincial Administration, Bolu Municipality, Çorum Municipality, Zonguldak Municipality; East Anatolia Region: Ağrı Municipality, Malatya Municipality, Van Municipality, Doğu Beyazıt (Ağrı) Municipality, Kars Municipality; SouthEast Anatolia Region: Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, Mardin Municipality, Harran (Şanlıurfa) Municipality, Yayalak (Şanlıurfa) Municipality. Other partners include the Union of Mediterranean Municipalities, the Union of Eastern Black Sea Municipalities, the Union of Aegean Municipalities, the Union of GAP Municipalities, and the Union of Municipalities of the Marmara Region.

in many other partner cities of differing sizes and characteristics. Measures to ensure the adequate representation of all partners in these platforms, to develop methods for overcoming the unbalanced representation between individual participants and representatives of organizations, and to secure the representation of unorganized groups as well as the working groups continued to be developed.

- The Working Groups or “caucus” established in project partner cities continued to function as a primary mechanism for channeling the dynamic enthusiasm of the volunteers from all sectors and all groups to the priority areas of concern of the respective city. Special attention was devoted to ensure the effective participation of the women and the youth in these groups, to secure the adequate representation of disadvantaged community groups, and to establish coordination amongst the deployed working groups.
- Organization of public meetings under the umbrella of Local Agenda 21 in neighborhood communities started to become a widespread practice. A notable development in this respect was the establishment of “community centers” with the initiative of a number of municipalities. Strongly facing the challenge of being the first of their kind, these neighborhood-level centers, which were established with the support of those municipalities prioritizing the neighborhoods, displayed successful case studies of municipalities reaching out to their communities via their community education programs, health facilities, cultural activities, and other services.
- Implementation in Turkey, as well as in the whole world, manifested that the success and sustainability of Local Agenda 21 depended on the active involvement of women and youth in the process. An increasing number of Women Platforms continued to work towards promoting the active involvement of women in urban life. Special emphasis was placed upon incorporating the gender issues in local governance and the visualization

of gender equality in shaping the future. On the other hand, the Youth Councils, which were established in the majority of project partner cities, constituted the driving force behind the Local Agenda 21 processes. The youth were determined not only to be the successors, but also the architects of the future.

- In a large number of partner cities, special councils and task forces were established for the elderly, children, and the disabled. The emphasis of the project partners on policies and practices, which geared toward the physically and mentally handicapped, the elderly (“senior citizens”), and vulnerable children, manifested that local authorities were increasingly becoming conscious of the protection and expansion of urban rights.
- The preparation and publication of a spectrum of materials on the Local Agenda 21 process continued along unbroken lines. The numerous reports and other publications prepared by project partners documented the level of progress in the respective Local Agenda 21 processes in partner cities.
- The preparation of local action plans and the identification of priority demonstration projects addressing local sustainable development issues continued in partner cities. Many cities had already started to implement their priority projects developed under the umbrella of Local Agenda 21.
- The significant contributions by partner local authorities to support their respective Local Agenda 21 processes paved the way for the establishment of “Local Agenda 21 Houses” in the majority of partner cities to serve their communities, which continued to function as a venue for local partners to meet and collaborate.

### **5.2.2.3. Phase 3: Localizing Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation through the Turkey Local Agenda 21 Governance Network (2002-Present)**

The Earth Summit was followed by the Millennium Summit and WSSD, which both pursued and enriched the goals of Agenda 21. At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, world leaders agreed on an ambitious agenda: In addition to declaring their support for freedom, democracy, and human rights, they set eight goals referred to as the “Millennium Development Goals” for development and poverty eradication to be achieved by the year 2015. The goals have already been mentioned before in this study and are abbreviated as MDGs. To refresh memory, the eight goals are presented once again: Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education, Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women, Goal 4: Reduce child mortality, Goal 5: Improve maternal health, Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability, and Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

Building upon the successes of many local level sustainable development initiatives in the past decade, the global community recognized that the progress towards the MDGs would be determined first and foremost by progress at the local level and local actors would need national and global support to develop the capacities they needed to make them happen. The WSSD, which convened in September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, also identified good local governance as the primary means for achieving sustainable development. The WSSD Plan of Implementation<sup>71</sup> underlines the importance of participatory

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<sup>71</sup> Through paragraphs 164-168 and 170, the Plan of Implementation specifically calls for (i) promoting the establishment and/or enhancement of sustainable development councils and/or coordination structures at the national and local levels which would provide a platform for multi-stakeholder participation; (ii) promotion (at the national and local levels) of cross-sectoral approaches in the formulation of strategies and plans for sustainable development, such as where applicable, poverty reduction strategies, encouraging participatory approaches, developing management and implementation capacity, including mainstreaming a gender perspective in all those activities; (iii) enhancing the role and capacity of local authorities as well as local stakeholders in implementing Agenda 21 and outcomes of the Summit and in strengthening the continuing support for Local Agenda 21 programs and associated initiatives and partnerships; (iv) promoting and supporting youth participation in programs and activities related to sustainable development, through, for

processes and partnerships for decision-making as well as the role of women and youth in sustainable development.

Building on the achievements of the second phase of the Local Agenda 21 Program, a continuation project entitled “Localizing MDGs and the WSSD Plan of Implementation through the Turkey Local Agenda 21 Governance Network ” was prepared by the IULA-EMME, to be conducted with the financial and institutional support of the UNDP Turkey and Capacity 21 as the third phase of Local Agenda 21 in Turkey. Partners of the program, included the local authorities, local participatory platforms, and relevant central administrations who devoted considerable time and effort to ensuring the sustainability of the local participatory platforms and also the legitimacy of the LA-21 process at the national level. This project had two main targets and some sub-targets as follows;

1. Institutionalizing LA-21 processes and mechanisms at the local and national levels through campaigns and capacity building initiatives which include launching a specific and focused campaign to promote increased support to and “ownership” of LA-21 by the Grand National Assembly and the Government; launching a specific and focused campaign prior to local elections to increase the awareness of the candidates for local elections on LA-21; renewal of the formal endorsement of respective LA-21 process & mechanisms by the new Municipal Councils subsequent to local elections; promoting the institutionalization of LA-21 Women & Youth Networks at the national level; and structured/focused training for operationalizing good local governance principles, built upon accumulated experience.
2. Launching a Local Agenda 21 Small Grants Program to promote and substantiate the MDGs and WSSD Plan of Implementation at the local level which included the designing of the Local Agenda 21 Small Grants Program; implementing the LA-21 Small Grants Program; and promoting partnerships for expanding the LA-21 Small Grants Program.

The above mentioned targets are supposed to be achieved through the main beneficiaries who are the members of the Local Agenda 21 platforms in 50 cities, involving the local authorities as well as a variety of civil society organizations,

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example, supporting local youth councils or their equivalents, and by encouraging their establishment where they do not exist.

academia, and the private sector. All the objectives are being conducted through the Local Agenda 21 Program level institutions which are:

- The IULA-EMME, which is a non-profit membership organization of local authorities and national and inter-regional associations of local authorities of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. The IULA-EMME is the Executing Agency of the Local Agenda 21 Program and is thus responsible for the overall program coordination and monitoring.
- LA-21 City Councils, which are unique to the Turkish context, are the only mechanism of the governance that manage to bring together the central government, the local government and civil society within a collaborative framework of partnerships. The central government and municipal representation constitute about one-third of the city councils, with the remaining two-thirds, consisting of representatives of civil society organizations. City councils prepare and endorse their own working principles, or statutes, and function accordingly. They constitute the democratic platforms where development priorities and pressing problems of the city are identified and discussed.
- LA-21 Working Groups, which in conjunction with city councils, focus on priority issues of the LA-21 processes. They currently function with the active participation of volunteers from different sectors and backgrounds. The majority of partner cities have between 10-20 working groups. In relatively large partner cities, each group generally consists of between 40 and 80 people. Women comprise one-third, and youth comprise about one-fifth of the working group constituents.
- LA-21 Women's Platforms: Women's organizations have joined forces with platforms and councils at the local level, which has helped raise awareness of gender issues. The special e-group on women has turned out to be a major channel of communication and networking. Multi-purpose

women's centers are being put into service in various parts of the country. According to Emre Alp, the Local Agenda 21 Women's platforms are the most suitable platform to realize at local level the provisions concerning women, delineated in action plans adopted in global summits extending from Rio to Johannesburg, in particular Agenda 21 and Beijing Platform of Action, as well as in other international documents, in particular the UN Millennium Declaration and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). (2005,p.84)

- LA-21 Youth Councils: Youth councils have already been established in the majority of partner cities, and increased numbers of youth centers would be operational. Special youth programs have been launched in various partner cities to accommodate the needs of the youth.
- LA-21 General Secretariats: In all partner cities, LA-21 general secretariats have been established to coordinate activities. The Secretary Generals play a key role in the overall performance and success of the LA-21 processes. In over half of partner cities, LA-21 secretary generals and/or deputies are women. In relatively large cities, the secretary generals are elected to the post by city councils. In a few large cities and particularly the smaller cities, the secretary generals are designated by respective mayors, often from among senior municipal officials.

The UNDP in Turkey has been cooperating with its national partners and Local Agenda 21 Program level institutions in the promotion of good local governance principles. The UNDP will ensure that this project closely cooperates with the Thematic Trust Fund (TTF) project entitled "Establishing a Sustainable Network to Promote Local Democratic Governance in Turkey" which was launched in February 2003, as well as other UNDP programs targeting women and youth.

#### **5.2.2.4. Local Agenda 21 and its Impacts over the Enhancement of Women's Rights in Turkey**

Seyhan Aydınligil,<sup>72</sup> who has fifteen years of experience with the UNDP Turkey as a project manager, points out that although the Local Agenda 21 Program did not start within the scope of women's involvement, during its implementation process, it has increasingly been including women's issues, especially the ones related to local governance and political participation. And the project has produced an open and participatory atmosphere where women's issues and problems can be included in local agendas (interview on 31.05.2006). The vital role of women in sustainable development is reflected in the Local Agenda 21 processes within the Local Agenda 21 Program of Turkey. The Women Platforms/Councils in project partner cities are carrying out their activities, geared towards increasing the participation of women in urban life and gender mainstreaming in local decision-making processes. As Emre Alp argues, it can be considered that women, playing an active role in the participatory platforms and in voluntary work encompassing all aspects of local governance, constitute the driving force behind the successful implementations in all cities engaged in the Local Agenda 21 processes.

The mere targeting of a broader participation would not be sufficient to transform the women's platform into a "council," which implies a more structured base of representation and membership. In this context, the question of who should be the constituents of the women's councils should be addressed in conjunction with other questions such as how to reach out to women from relatively disadvantaged sections of the city, and, in particular, to the unorganized women, how to come under a joint umbrella with the civil society organizations engaged in women-related activities, and how to capacitate the councils to ensure the performance of their anticipated functions (2005, p. 84). According to interview conducted on May 26.,2006 with Yeşim Oruç, project manager of the Local Agenda 21 at the

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<sup>72</sup> Seyhan Aydınligil is a faculty member at the Department of Sociology at METU and has fifteen years of experience with the UNDP Turkey as a project manager.

UNDP Turkey, the reflections of the Local Agenda 21 over women's rights are as follows:

"The local agenda 21 has followed the double strategy of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. The local agenda 21 is essentially a national program of national networks, civil society networks and civil society platforms at local level and national networks. Local level civil society platforms and national networks influence local government decision-making. So through the Local Agenda 21 program which started in 1997, we have supported the establishment of city councils where the civil society advises and pressures local government to take decisions and to take action on certain local level problems. So, it is a very locally embedded project. Here our double-edged strategy has been to ensure that the gender issues are within the agenda of the city councils just because something democratic does not necessarily mean that women's issues are going to be right in front of the agenda. We have got this through, sharing with city councils, the works of European city councils, the works of other progressive publications. But, we have also applied the women's empowerment aspect of this by ensuring that women receive separate fundings, separate support within the city council structure to set up the women councils so we're using women's empowerment for gender mainstreaming. We have supported women to be empowered, to increase their capacity, to be engaged with the city councils, to be engaged with the municipalities, and to be engaged with local governments. We have tried to empower them and speak out to have their voices heard so that gender issues are equally mainstreamed into the works of the city councils. This would be the summary of how the local agenda 21 has dealt with the issue of women's rights, empowerment, and gender mainstreaming. Decentralized local governance was the ultimate objective of the Local Agenda 21 program. And, here, we definitely sought to engender the local platforms of engagements and politics and policies that local platforms of civil society action".

There are 62 local administration units under the umbrella of the Local Agenda 21 Program in Turkey since 1997. The number of women's units like councils and platforms is 36.

The local Agenda 21 Program provides local administrations with a specific area of action for women. The local administrations, in other words, stakeholders who participate in the program, whether organized or not, are supposed to develop and implement programs that would enable women to participate in the local bodies of

decision-making, planning, and implementation within the framework of MDGs and Local Agenda 21 objectives.

In city councils and similar platforms, the feeble representation of women is a reflection of the situation at the national level. In such platforms, the small number of women in the parliamentarians of the province, governor, elected local administrators, and neighborhood heads result in the consequent under-representation of women. Women are mainly involved in such platforms as municipal assembly members or as representatives of NGOs, working groups, or women platforms. Attempts are continuing to improve this situation, without necessarily waiting for structural reforms. Local Agenda 21 has an important potential that would enable women to be closely involved with decision-making mechanisms as citizens who have different experiences, needs, specific problems, and perspectives. But, it is absolutely necessary to create an environment where local experiences are openly shared. The responsibilities of local administrations related to women, particularly women's legal rights regarding local administrations, should be reviewed for the realization of short and long term goals of the program.

Despite their under-representation in city-wide platforms, it is observed that women play a critical role in the success of the cities prominent in the Local Agenda 21 process, particularly via their active involvement in working groups and other voluntary activities. It is remarkable that many of the Local Agenda 21 General Secretaries are women in many of the project partner cities or they have a critical role in the coordination of these processes.

According to the draft report titled "Local Policies Towards Gender Equality" prepared by KA-DER<sup>73</sup>, in order to transform women's participation into local administrations quantitatively and qualitatively, Local Agenda 21 should consider the below mentioned points:

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<sup>73</sup> Ka-Der ([Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates](#)) is an NGO that was founded in March 1997 to promote the equal representation of women by election or appointment at all levels of the decision-making process in Turkey.

- Women's councils should be encouraged to prepare "women's strategic plan" in order to increase women's efficient participation into the preparation process of urban strategic plan.
- There should be an organized workshop which would remind the participants that the strategic action plan is an initiative which is a basis for women to be aware of their existence as public subjects.
- Pilot case studies should be conducted with the aim of the identification of local problems, and the result document need to be shared with all the women's councils.
- Annual Women's festivals need to be reorganized in order to be platforms of discussion.
- New strategies need to be developed to have more women from metropolitans to be involved.
- City councils need to be monitored by women's councils regularly.

Local Agenda 21, through all these initiatives mentioned above, would help the gender equality strategy to be internalized by local and national perspectives. (2006, p.15).

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

This study has focused on analyzing the UNDP's approach to women's rights, with a particular focus on Turkey. Before discussing the role of the UNDP in Turkey regarding the realization of women's rights, the emergence of the women's discourse within the international arena and its repercussions in Turkey have been introduced and discussed in detail. Such a beginning facilitated the conceptualization of (1) the evolution of the emergence of women's rights at global level, (2) the spread of the idea and perception of 'women's rights' in Turkish society, and (3) the transformation of the Turkish context related to women's issues in the light of the discussions that emerged through the support of the UNDP Turkey.

In order to provide a theoretical background, international agenda on women's rights from global to local has been identified and analyzed. The emergence of women's rights within the agenda of United Nations is provided in detail, as the main aim of the study is to analyze the UNDP's approach to women's rights, particularly, in Turkey. The study has reviewed and highlighted the basic concepts, concerns and discourses, and evaluated the impact of the international organizations in shaping and diffusing the political agenda of the country where they act in, in order to identify and prove the contributions of the UNDP to women's rights in Turkey, especially on engendering the political agenda. This evaluation has demonstrated that the 1980s were the era that prepared a theoretical and ideological basis for the realization of women's rights and gender equality, and that the 1990s were the era when women's rights and gender equality became more visible on the international agenda which accelerated the work of the states

on gender equality and women's rights related issues. Since 1990s gender equality regime and women's rights discourses have been institutionalized and become widespread. Besides the pressure that was carried out by the international community, it is also important to mention the women's movement that has had a great impact on engendering the political agenda through lobbying efforts, street demonstrations, and using mass media and international mechanisms.

Subsequent to the theoretical background, the UNDP's global efforts and activism in the area of women's rights and gender equality have been examined in detail. The UNDP's general areas of action and their relation to gender equality and women's rights and the two main approaches of all UNDP projects, namely, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming, have been analyzed.

To keep the logical flow of the study, the UNDP and its main area of work in Turkey has then been assessed. The UNDP in Turkey is one of the important international development assistance organizations that takes active part in the engendering the political agenda of Turkey, both as a facilitator of various women's issues and as a bridge between global and local realities. The UNDP's contribution to women's rights has been effective through its programs, and there are many different stakeholders which include the government, NGOs, and academia partners. The huge network of the UNDP enables the organization to think and read the Turkish political agenda critically and find solutions in order to bridge the gaps in the most productive ways. It is important to mention the evaluation of the process of the emergence of the international gender equality regime while the UNDP has accelerated its efforts on gender and women's rights issues as a result of the interaction with the international gender equality regime all over the world, in particular, in Turkey.,

This is the reason why the UNDP's area of work and activism, particularly after the 1990s, has enabled a comprehensive understanding of the essentials of gender equality and women's rights in Turkey. In the light of debate issues of the global discourse of women's rights and the UNDP's understanding of the realization of

women's rights, a critical reading of the UNDP's works have been done with the aim of detecting the implications of the UNDP regarding the conceptualization of women's rights.

A comprehensive assessment of the feminist implications of the UNDP in Turkey included the two projects: National Program for the Enhancement of Women's Integration in Development Project (1993-2000) and Local Agenda 21: Strengthening Local Government (1997- ). Descriptive assessment and critical reading were the main procedures used within a feminist framework besides the semi-structured question papers that had been prepared for the interviews. The interviews with the activist members of the UNDP provided not only specific information concerning gender equality and women's rights related programs of the UNDP, but, it also ensured a quantity of data on the background of the UNDP in Turkey.

Through assessment of these projects, it is observed that the UNDP has been very active in shaping, defining, and engendering the political agenda in Turkey, and it has been the defender of women's rights which include equal educational, economic, and political rights with men. The most important outcome and contribution of the UNDP to gender equality regime and women's rights in Turkey is that the organization has always kept the gender equality regime and women's rights issues as one of the most important objectives in all its programs. The organization has never dropped the gender equality related discourse from its agenda. Consequently, this situation has contributed to the formation of a common understanding on the gender equality regime and women's rights in Turkey.

The findings of the research verified the research thesis that the UNDP, as a development assistance organization, has contributed to women's human rights and gender equality regime, and it has engendered the political agenda through its programs in Turkey. Among its contributions are the establishment of the national machinery (GDSPW), women's centers in different universities in order

to contribute to the institutionalization of the gender equality and women's rights discourses, awareness raising activities on gender and women's rights, efforts on breaking down the traditional centralistic structure of the local governments and initiatives in order to decentralize the local governments, evaluation of poverty, empowerment, governance, energy and environment, and information technologies with respect to gender equality and women's rights. As a result, these efforts have created an intensive pressure on Turkey, and all discussions related to gender equality regime have been carried out to international agenda.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APEENDIX A: ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF WOMEN'S INTEGRATION IN DEVELOPMENT**

#### **1. Research Projects**

"Deconstructing Newspaper Messages on Violence Against Women" by Prof. Dr. Aysel Aziz in 1993. The study aims to demonstrate the methodologies with which violence against women is commonly reported in the printed media.

"Bibliography of Publications about and by Women" project implemented by the Foundation of Women's Library and Information Center in December 1993, resulted in a compilation and bibliography of all books and publications on and by women through 1955-1990.

"Women's Oral History" project implemented by the Foundation of the Women's Library and Information Center aimed at identifying methodologies for better understanding the history of women living in turkey and at training researchers in oral history. Interview held with 18 women born before 1923 constitute important documents for women's history in Turkey.

"Monitoring and Archiving Reports on Women in the Media" project is implemented by the Foundation of the Women's Library and Information Center. The project studied, through systematic survey of a multiplicity of press and TV media organs, the impact of the changing political environment following the 27 March 1994 elections on the lives of women.

“Situation Analysis of Village Tourism and its Impact on Women and Development” was conducted under the overall supervision of Dr. Yakin

Ertuk in the village of Yassihoyuk, Polathi. The analysis aimed at assessing the impact of tourism on this region's economic and socio-cultural life and identifying how this village's tourism potential could be utilized for the benefit of its women. The situation analysis obtained in the research project may be put to use for future implementations. The findings also constitute framework policy recommendations for training of women in home economics and tourism; and, promoting local handicraft.

"Women Entrepreneurs in Small Establishments in the Tourism Sector" conducted by Prof. Dr. Nilgun Celebi of Ankara University Sociology Department. Study targeted Bodrum, Gumbet and aimed at identifying the role differentiation in family hotel operations, souvenir manufacturing, laundry operations, fruit vendors and subcontracted manufacturing etc. The study concluded that women entrepreneurs in Bodrum assume equal roles in enterprise management.

"Study on Women Owners of Small Enterprises" conducted under the supervision of Dr. Yildiz Ecevit of the Middle East Technical University. The study aimed at identifying the labor conditions of women entrepreneurs and the pull and push factors, supporting and impeding women entrepreneurs. The study sought analyze the impact of entrepreneurship on the family and social status of women. It presents an overview of women's activities in operating and expanding an enterprise. 20 women entrepreneurs from varying business sectors in Ankara were covered by the study. The study provided the theoretical framework for work in this field and yielded a "woman entrepreneur profile" which will provide the basis of future work in this regard.

"The Profile of Women Trade Unionists in Turkey" is a research jointly conducted by Yol-Is Syndicate, Advisor Seyhan Erdogan, and Dr. Gulay Toksoz of the Ankara University, Faculty of Political Science. The study is based on questionnaire surveys held at the Women Unionists Congress held in September 1995 and in depth interviews with a selected group among the

Congress participants. The research findings provide information on the obstacles faced by women unionist and prescribe measures for promoting unionization among women.

"Family, Marriage and the Relationship between the Socio-Cultural Environment and Women's Criminality/ A Sociological Study of Rehabilitation in Prison" is a filed research covering women convicts in some 71 prisons across Turkey, conducted by Dr. Tulin Icli of the Hacettepe University Sociology of Department. The study establishes linkages between violence suffered by women and women's criminality, and aims to find the socio-cultural or economic causes of the violence suffered by women and to identify other reasons accounting for women criminality. The study also investigates the type and scope of rehabilitation works in prisons and opens debate on the adequacy and effectiveness of present rehabilitation policies.

"There are Women..." is a documentary film – prepared by Ceren Promotions – reporting the transition of women since the Ottoman Tanzimat period. Screened at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing, this film was supported in order to compile comprehensive visual material on women's history in Turkey.

"The Display" is the second documentary film supported under the project. It investigates gender discrimination in the work environments of sales assistants. This short film was realized by the students of Ankara University Faculty of Communications under the overall supervision of Dr. Eser Koker.

"Women's Solidarity Nets in Patriarchal Societies" is a research study conducted by Dr. Feride Acar and Dr. Isenbike Togan of Middle East Technical University. The study centralized the concept of patriarchy as the key issue informing social association. The study aims to demonstrate the existence and resilience of solidarity nets among women in patriarchal societies. In other words, the women centered net of relations formed by women in other spheres of the social and the personal lives constitute the

focus of this study. In this light, the period during which solidarity between and among women and the forms of this solidarity are demonstrated through stages of a woman's life: childhood, youth, marriage, and motherhood.

"Migrant Societies and Women's Identities" is a study conducted under the overall supervision of Dr. Ayse Ayata of Middle East Technical University. It aims to identify the impact of migration on women from several migrant groups in Ankara and to assess how these women perceive urban life and adapt to it. The study assessed the new relationships formed through the rural to urban migration process and the interaction between women of different ethnic and religious groups through this process. In addition, the study also investigates the expectations of migrant women from their own communities. The project concentrates primarily on how ethnic ties compound patriarchal ideologies. 150 women from the Cerkez, Laz and Alevite groups participated in the sampling.

"The Impact of Technological Advances on Women's Employment in Industry" is a research study conducted by Dr. Hacer Ansal of the Istanbul Technical University, focusing on the textile and electronics industries; and, assessing the impact of technical innovations on women's employment and on the evolving sexist ideologies governing women's employment.

"Family Structures and the Role of Women" was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mehmet Ecevit of Middle East Technical University. Within the limitations of specific assumptions, the study investigates labor use (domestic and paid), socialization of domestic labor, demographics, family circles, patriarchal institutions, class, urban dynamics and socialization processes. The study covers urban families with salaries or services incomes.

"Study of Time Utilization" was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Zehra Kasnakoglu of Middle east Technical University. The study aims to investigate the differences between the amount of time women give to domestic production and non-productive activities. The study notes that the

former (women's domestic activities, including cooking, cleaning, child care and education, home repairs etc.) are not recorded nor taken into consideration in national accounts. The study was based on a sampling, whereby time slots allocated for domestic production and non-productive activities were studied on a gender basis, taking in to account the education, age, occupation and other socio-economic specificities of the sample households. The study demonstrated that there are significant disparities between the time allocated by women to non-productive activities is much less and divided compare to the time slots given to non productive activities by men.

"Migrant Women, their Expectations and Adaptation Problems" commenced its activities in December 1999 by the Mersin University Women's Research Center (MER-KAM). The project is implemented in the metropolitan center of the Icel province, Mersin which has been home to an influx of migration in recent years. The findings compiled on the subject of migrant women will then be utilized as background material for the implementation projects planned by this Center, developed in cooperation with the provincial and local authorities and civil society organization and targeting migrant women.

## **2. Pilot Projects**

"Women's Labor Kitchen": Under this project implemented by the Women's Solidarity Foundation, a "Labor Kitchen" has been supported in the Bahcelievler district of Ankara where women residents of Shelter Homes (also operated by this Foundation) have been provided with income generation opportunities, whereby they prepared and commercially market home made food stuffs, such as jam, pickles, dried vegetables and soups and other dried food stuffs. The Kitchen also generates income for the running of the Shelter Homes.

"Black Pepper Natural Food Store": This project is piloted by the Foundation for the Support of Women's Work and aims at creating a center where the natural food stuffs processed by low income women in urban peripheries and

by rural Anatolian women can be marketed. The project utilized the skills and handicrafts of rural women from Artvin, Tokat, Kastamonu, Gaziantep and Mugla provinces and created incomes for them. The Store began its commercial operation on 30 November 1995. In addition to natural food stuffs like olives, olive oil, dried fruit, vegetables, fruit purees, tomato paste, molasses, jams, corn bread, herbs and spices, the Black Pepper Natural Food Store also markets authentic and less common food stuffs of local flavor. Poor urban women contribute to the efforts with packaging activities and derive income from marketing home made jam, pickle etc. The Black Pepper Store also provides training to interested women who wish to start up income generation activities.

“Project for Income Generation Skills in Peri-urban Gecekondu Areas”: The project was implemented by the Istanbul University Women’s and Education Center. The project targets women and girls in peri-urban areas who have not had educational opportunities and who have no access to economic assets and instruments. The project aims at simultaneously creating skills (for using some key textile processing machinery, mass production of ready to wear garments etc.) Over 160 beneficiaries in the program received training in using sewing machines, over-lock etc. as well as attending seminars on health, nutrition, self confidence, legal rights, human rights, women rights, democracy and the gains of the Republic.

“Project for Women’s Handicrafts”: This project is implemented to cover the Izmir province. The project began in January 1997 and is implemented by the Aegean Women’s Solidarity Foundation. A sales center has been opened up to provide a marketing channel for the handicrafts support under the project. The women participating in the project have also benefited from training in family planning, mother child health care, credit access, legal status and their legal rights.

“Pilot Project in Support of Productivity of Paid Domestic Labor”: This project was implemented under the supervision of Dr. Belkis Kumbetoglu and

Dr. Inci User in 1997 and aimed at giving an organizational structure to the low income, informal, non-sustainable labor of women working under informal contracts in manufacturing (on piecemeal basis) or in domestic services. On a pilot scale, the project sought to rationalize the in house production/manufacturing labor of women and to provide social security to women working in such fields as well as to make women's labor more equitable in terms of income gained.

“Weaving Workshop Project”: The project, implemented by the Philanthropist Association, aims to provide sustainable income generation activities to the women from Cukurca and Uzundere districts of Hakkari who have migrated to Van province. With this aim in view, a carpet weaving workshop has been supported in the Bostanici Yalim Erez district of Van and began operations in November 1997. 180 women have benefited from this workshop operation as of September 1998.

“Carpet Weaving Project”: Under this program initiated by the Sanliufa Social Solidarity and Assistance Foundation, a carpet weaving workshop has been established whereby income generation for women has been targeted. The project began in May 1998 and also provides training on legal rights, the environment, health and other social issues.

“Poultry Breeding Project”: This project began implementation in September 1998 by the Aegean University Women’s Studies Center. The project aims at training women in Izmir and its peripheric areas in poultry breeding. The training content also entailed awareness programs in legal rights, domestic violence, democracy and other social issues.

“Toy Production – An Alternative Income generation Area for Women”: The project which began in September 1998 is implemented by the Foundation for the Support of Women’s Work. In the implementation area of Istanbul, some 100 women are being targeted and provided training after which they shall attain sustainable income opportunities in toy production. The toy will be

produced primarily with recycled material. In addition to toys, some material for pre-school education purposes will also be produced. By ensuring international marketing mechanisms for the products, the aim is to ensure a sustainable source of income for the target beneficiaries.

“Aydineller Project”: This project began in October 1998, in the Umurlu rural district of Aydin and is initiated by the Aydineller cooperative. The project aims at sustainable income generation for women by integrating their productivity in an organized collective production process. A Training and Production center was supported by the project. The center has been envisioned to become a venue where women can collectively use the production machinery and tools and receive training which allows for specialization. The center is also a display venue for the products.

“Support to Women’s Economic Development”: This project has been inaugurated by the Mother and Child Health Foundation of Turkey in the province of Batman. The project supports income generation training as well as course on mother and child health and family planning. Of project participants, 20 have already gained employment. The project cooperates with the Multi Purpose Community Centers (CATOM – established by the Southeast Anatolia Regional Administration) and the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHCEK) in Batman province.

“The Culture House for Women”: This project was established by the Foundation of Contemporary Women and Youth in March 1998 in the Tuzlucayir district of Mamak. The Culture House premises include a library, a cafeteria and sports facilities, as well as conference and theater auditoriums. The center provides legal and psychological counseling services as well as occupational skills training. In addition, the “Women’s Empowerment Training Program” was supported. This training program included discussions with lecturers and representatives from state agencies, local governments, civil society organizations and universities, followed by visits to the relevant agencies, municipalities, district governments, shelter homes and child care

centers. Also through the project, women were taken to the cinema and plays and on city tours.

### **3. Pilot Projects Targeting the Earthquake Area**

In response to the 17 August 1999 Marmara Earthquakes, the following pilot projects targeting women in the disaster area were supported:

“Izmit Rehabilitation Center”: The project commenced activities in Izmit on 6 September 1999 by the Women’s for Human Rights Project. The center services 400 children and adults per days and transports volunteers to man the center on 3-4 day rotation basis. The project will develop training for volunteers and thereby ensure continued staffing of the center by trained volunteers for outreach services.

“Degirmendere Women’s Support Center”: This project commenced in December 1999 and is carried out by the World Academy for Local Government and Democracy Foundation and local governments. The project is implemented in the Kocaeli/Degirmendere district. It supports legal and psychological counseling for the women victims of the 17 August earthquake and aims at developing a local government crisis management plan which considers the gender perspective in rescue, aid, and services delivery in disaster situations. Following focused training of a group of local women, it is envisioned that larger target beneficiaries will be reached. The project will also include legal and medical counseling, psychological support as well as gender training for local governments.

“Skills Training and Handicrafts Promotion for Women Victims of the Earthquake”: the project is to be realized by the Republican Women’s Association in the Adapazari Emirdag tent city. It aims to provide incomes for tent city women and to inform them on their social, political and legal rights. The Association has set up 4 tents as premises for income generation in response to the demand by women. In these tents, women will be able to

produce handicrafts, while at the same time receive information on their legal rights and other social issues. Their products will then be displayed and marketed in metropolitan cities.

#### **4. Statistics**

The SIS has also realized the following activities towards compiling the available data to generate gender based indicators:

Basic Statistics on Women, Turkey 1978 -1993, (Working Document, Turkish and English)

Women in Turkey through the 1990's (Working Document, Turkish and English)

Women in Statistics, Turkey 1995, (Brochure, within the framework of preparation for the 4th World Conference on Women, DGSPW with UNICEF cooperation).

#### **5. Publications**

The research projects supported under the program and published by the DGSPW are as follows:

"Media, Violence and Women: Deconstruction of the Media Messages on Violence Towards Women," Dr. Aysel Aziz, Ankara University.

"Impact of Technological Advancements on Women in Industry," Hacer Ansal, Istanbul Technical University.

"Women Entrepreneurs in Small Enterprises in the Tourism Sector," Dr. Nilgun Celebi, Ankara University.

Educational materials prepared by KASAUM:

"A Few Things We Know About Men and Women", Aksu Bora, Ankara University

"Political Life and Policies for Supporting Women," Dr. Serpil Sancar Usur /Ankara University

"Sexism in Media," Nilufer Timisi / Ankara University

In addition the following have been supported under the program:

Brochure entitled "We have Rights!" by the Project for Women's Rights are Human Rights.

“Women’s Bulletin” and the “Women’s Bulletin 8 March World Women’s Day Special Edition” through 1995 as communication network disseminating the activities of voluntary organizations and as well as relaying the information received at the DGSPW from various channels.

“8 March Special Edition” of the “Southeast Anatolia Project Bulletin”.

Brochure detailing the activities of the DGSPW and containing information on 3B (the Information Application Bank) for distribution at the Izmir international Fair.

Report book entitled “Transitions in Women’s Labor and Employment in the Global Market: The Case of Turkey” compiling the proceeding of the Symposium on Customs Union and Its Impacts in Women’s Labor and Employment, organized on February 21, 1997 in Istanbul, jointly by the DGSPW and the Human Resource Development Foundation.

Organization of panel on 30 September – 3 October 1998 and preparation of poster on “Women’s Literature and Women Writers of the Republican Era” on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary Celebrations of the foundation of the Republic.

KAZETE – women's newspaper has been supported. KAZETE targets the Izmir region and documents and promotes the women's associations and organizations in this area to support women's efforts at establishing a women's platform and a woman's agenda and to strengthen interaction among women's organizations.

The Women's Training Booklet of the Association in Support of Contemporary Life was printed.

A playground tent was procured in Adapazari in the aftermath of the 17 August earthquake for the benefit of the women and children victims. Support was provided the activities of this child center under the coordination of the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.