

Human Rights in Action:

San Francisco's Local Implementation of
The United Nations' Women's Treaty (CEDAW)



City and County of San Francisco
Department on the Status of Women
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*[**Discrimination is any**] distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field.*

—From the UN Convention on the Elimination of
All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

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CEDAW in Action: Local Implementation in the City and County of San Francisco

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inspired by the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and frustrated by the continued inability to get the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified in the U.S. Congress, the women of San Francisco organized a successful effort to adopt a local ordinance reflecting CEDAW principles in 1998.

Now, over 10 years since the passage of this landmark local ordinance, San Francisco women are benefiting from new government programs such as gender-specific programming for women on probation, a system of allocating street artist licenses that no longer disadvantages those with childcare responsibilities, and a biannual audit of appointments to policy bodies by gender, race, and disability. Following a brief background of the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance, this report details the gender analysis methodology that has been applied to City departments, budget cuts, appointed policy bodies, Citywide initiatives, and, finally, the private sector.

While we continue to push the United States Congress to ratify CEDAW, our hope is that other governments will find the tools developed and utilized by San Francisco useful in promoting women's rights throughout the nation and the world.

I. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO'S CEDAW ORDINANCE

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights

for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. In the United States, CEDAW was signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1980, but has languished in the U.S. Senate unratified for years.¹

Energized by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, a group of non-governmental organizations in San Francisco came together to determine how to implement the Beijing Platform for Action locally. This group, led by the Women's Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights, Amnesty International, and the Women's Foundation of California, sought to expand women's rights in San Francisco by lobbying the City government to do what the national government had failed to do – adopt a local law reflecting the principles of CEDAW.

In October 1997, this consortium of community organizations was joined by two local San Francisco commissions, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Commission, as well as the County Board of Supervisors, the local legislative branch. The group convened a public hearing on the local implications of CEDAW.² Testimony at the hearing demonstrated that women and girls continued to face widespread discrimination at work, school, and in the community. In particular, women came forward with disturbing testimony that highlighted the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls. In terms of City services, the hearing also brought to the forefront the need to analyze operations, policies, and programs of City departments to identify discrimination in,



All of the Department on the Status of Women's reports and tools are available at: www.sfgov.org/dosw

This includes:

- *San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance*
- *Gender Analysis Guidelines*
- *Gender Analyses of City Departments and Appointments*
- *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Woman (CEDAW): Highlights 1975-2010*
- *Justice & Courage: A Blueprint for San Francisco's Response to Domestic Violence*

¹ Opposition to CEDAW ratification generally falls along two lines: first that the instrument is redundant of existing laws, and, second that it creates new (and potentially undesirable) reproductive rights.

² San Francisco is both a city and a county. Therefore, the County Board of Supervisors functions also as the City Council. A public hearing involving more than one policy body is highly unusual, and illustrates the cross-cutting nature of women's human rights. The hearing was convened on October 30, 1997 at San Francisco City Hall.

“The Ordinance requires action in the form of preventive and forward thinking measures to ensure that City resources, policies, and actions do not intentionally or unintentionally discriminate against women and girls from any community.”



but not limited to, employment practices, budget allocation, and the provision of direct and indirect services. Finally, testimony identified the need to also implement CEDAW principles in the private sector, including non-profit and for-profit entities. Findings from the public hearing led to the conclusion that adopting the principles of CEDAW on the local level would promote equal access to and equity in many areas including health care, economic development, and educational opportunities for women and girls.

In April 1998, San Francisco became the first municipality in the world to adopt a local ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW.³ With a focus on health care, employment, economic development, educational opportunities, and violence against women and girls, the local CEDAW Ordinance utilizes the United Nations CEDAW definition of discrimination.

This definition differs from the definition of discrimination in United States law, and is instead based on human rights principles:

[Discrimination is any] distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field.⁴

The Ordinance requires action in the form of preventive and forward-thinking measures to ensure that City resources, policies, and actions do not intentionally or unintentionally discriminate

against women and girls from any community. The Commission on the Status of Women, the city body entrusted with ensuring that women and girls have equal economic, social, political, and educational opportunities, was designated as the implementing and monitoring agency of CEDAW in San Francisco.

The Ordinance also calls for a county-wide CEDAW Task Force as an oversight body composed of both governmental and non-governmental representatives. Formed in 1998, the Task Force included government officials from the Commission on the Status of Women, the Human Rights Commission, the Mayor's Budget Office, the Department of Human Resources, and the Board of Supervisors. Non-governmental organizations represented included international human rights, economic development, employment, health care, labor, and anti-violence against women groups.

The objective of the Task Force was to promote the implementation of CEDAW, and to integrate gender equity and human rights principles into all local government operations including budgetary decisions. The first step in this process was the development of the gender analysis tool in 1999, a set of guidelines to assist City departments in implementing CEDAW principles.

To facilitate the work of the Task Force, the Ordinance included budget monies for a consultant to develop the gender analysis guidelines and one staff person at the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, which reports to the Commission on the Status of Women.

Since 1998, implementation of the CEDAW Ordinance has proceeded along two complementary tracks – gender analyses of City departments and Citywide initiatives. These tracks will be discussed in detail in section II.B.⁵

³ CEDAW Ordinance, City and County of San Francisco Municipal Code Administrative Code §12K.1 (2000). The original Ordinance, City and County of San Francisco Ordinance 128-98, was approved on April 13, 1998. It was renumbered and amended by Ordinance 325-00, File No. 001920, approved on December 28, 2000.

⁴ Full text of the Convention is available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>.

⁵ In 2007, the Women's Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights (WILD) released a report analyzing 10 years of San Francisco CEDAW implementation which included the 2 track analysis. Liebowitz, D. (2007). *Respect, protect, fulfill: raising the bar on women's human rights*. San Francisco, California: Women's Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights. Retrieved from: <http://depts.drew.edu/psci/Final%20CEDAW%20SF%20Report.pdf>.

II. GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis provides a framework for examining the cultural, economic, social, and political relations between women and men. Importantly, although the tool is called “gender” analysis, the analysis includes other demographic characteristics that are inextricably linked to gender, such as race, disability, immigration status, and sexual orientation when relevant data is available. The ultimate aim of gender analysis is to institutionalize new ways of thinking about the equitable distribution of government resources and to uphold the human rights of all people.

Gender analysis is designed to be a preventive tool to identify discrimination and, if identified, to remedy that discrimination. In the context of local government, the overall goal of gender analysis is to integrate gender considerations into the daily operations of local agencies so that citizens have equitable access to services, and employees are ensured fairness in the workplace, regardless of gender. When utilizing the tool, government agencies are required to examine their actions, policies, programs, services, and employment practices to ensure that they are non-discriminatory and gender-appropriate, and that they fully serve all communities of women and girls.

A. Summary of Tool

San Francisco’s CEDAW Ordinance requires City departments to analyze operations using the gender analysis guidelines that were developed for the local Ordinance. In particular, the guidelines provide a framework to document and address the differential impact of local government 1) services, 2) employment policies, and 3) budget allocations on women and men.

The focus of the analysis is to examine patterns of gender, race, and other identities in areas such

as who is being served, hired, or awarded funds. Departments are required to gather data, examine the data, and recommend what practices and policies should change to promote gender equity. For those areas requiring improvements, departments identify remedial actions and create timelines for implementation.



Since the enactment of the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance, 7 City departments have undergone gender analyses. Based on the view that critical self-examination is essential for any long-term change, each department conducted a self-analysis, with assistance from Department on the Status of Women staff and Task Force members, using the gender analysis guidelines created by the CEDAW Task Force.

The gender analysis tool consists of 5 steps detailed below.

Step 1: Define Vision and Desired Outcomes

To begin the gender analysis, departments create a vision of their desired outcomes. Departments are asked to identify a target program and its primary purpose, and then to envision what the program would look like if full gender equality and freedom from all forms of discrimination were to be achieved.

Step 2: Collect and Analyze Data

Departments then collect disaggregated data. Disaggregated data is demographic information on the users or beneficiaries of a policy, program, or practice broken down by sex, race, and other identities, such as, but not limited to, immigration status, language, sexual orientation, disability, and age.

“When utilizing the [gender analysis] tool, government agencies are required to examine their actions, policies, programs, services, and employment practices to ensure that they are non-discriminatory and gender-appropriate, and that they fully serve all communities of women and girls.”



Photo by: Libi Wood, San Francisco Department of Public Works

“Analyzing disaggregated data is crucial to identifying discriminatory policies and understanding what steps, if any, need to be taken to ensure the human rights of all clients and employees.”

Disaggregated data is first examined to ensure that programs are non-discriminatory and meet the needs of all communities of women and girls. Often this data is not readily available, so the initial step can entail immediately creating procedures to obtain it. Next, the data is studied to identify trends and gaps in services or impacts. The gaps between women/girls and men/

boys (and other demographic groups) for the selected program are analyzed for the underlying causes of gender discrimination or other inequities that are not apparent from a cursory examination. This is to ensure that programs and policies do not have any discriminatory impact.

Analyzing disaggregated data is critical to identifying discriminatory policies and to understanding what steps, if any, need to be taken to ensure the human rights of all residents, customers, and employees are upheld.

Step 3: Develop Options

Based on the previous analysis of trends and policies, Step 3 focuses on the identification of strategies to best meet the needs of residents, customers, and employees and to eliminate discrimination based on stereotypes. Departments are asked to identify successful practices currently employed and areas needing improvement. For areas needing improvement, departments research best practices in these areas, keeping in mind the department's mission as well as the needs of both women and men. Creativity is necessary to develop a range of options to address discrimination.

Step 4: Prioritize Strategies and Create an Action Plan

In Step 4, departments must evaluate and prioritize the strategy options from Step 3 and

create an action plan. Options can be analyzed using an assessment of strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats. Strategies may include:

- Continuing or creating a best practice to ensure gender equality
- Changing or eliminating questionable practices
- Creating or improving disaggregated data collection methods.

Once the options have been prioritized, departments create an action plan with deliverables, deadlines, and action items assigned to specific people to guide them in moving towards their vision of eliminating discrimination.

Step 5: Develop a Monitoring Mechanism

It is not enough to develop an action plan. It is critical to monitor the implementation of that plan and to make adjustments to deliverables, deadlines, and action owners, where appropriate.

For the City and County of San Francisco post-gender analysis monitoring was originally conducted by the CEDAW Task Force. The Task Force expired after 5 years, so monitoring is now performed by the Commission on the Status of Women. Reporting occurs in open meetings and is recorded and documented on a public website.

B. Gender Analyses of City Departments and Commission Appointments

Between 1999 and 2009, the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women conducted gender analyses of 7 City departments, as well as 2 analyses of appointments to City policy bodies. Below are highlights of the gender analyses. These



are followed by 3 case studies: 1) the gender analysis of the Department of the Environment, 2) gender budgeting, and 3) the gender analysis of commissions, boards, and task forces.

1. Summary of Gender Analyses of 7 City Departments

In 1999, the CEDAW Task Force selected 2 departments to undergo the first gender analyses:

- The Department of Public Works was selected for its large size, non-traditional employment opportunities for women, and provision of public infrastructure services such as street construction and building design.
- The Juvenile Probation Department, which serves youth in the criminal justice system and operates Juvenile Hall, provided an opportunity to examine service provision to an increasing population of young women involved in the criminal justice system.

First and foremost, the very process of conducting a CEDAW gender analysis created a new awareness of gender-related issues at both departments. Most departmental personnel were not only receptive to the analysis as a proactive approach to eliminating discrimination, but some staff members, on their own initiative, began to change the way they evaluated their policies and programs to serve all persons more effectively.

Top management at the Juvenile Probation Department stated that the gender analysis had a decisive impact on agency operations by helping promote gender-specific services for girls at Juvenile Hall. A specific “Girls Unit” was later created in Juvenile Hall to provide gender-specific, trauma-focused services for girls whose needs, it was found, were not being addressed by programming that was originally created for boys. Through the gender analysis, staff at the Department of Public Works acknowledged

that service delivery impacts women and men differently. For example, women’s safety at night depended on such factors as the number and the placement of streetlights in the City. It was pointed out that a lack of curb cuts on sidewalk corners impacted women disproportionately. Curb cuts facilitate the work of caregivers to the very young in strollers as well as to the elderly or disabled who are wheelchair bound. These caregivers are commonly women. Staff also recognized the need to make specific efforts to recruit women into non-traditional employment positions.

After completing these 2 gender analyses, the CEDAW Task Force reviewed carefully which 5 new departments would follow best on the work of the previous 2 departments. The new departments chosen for gender analyses are described below.

- Adult Probation Department:** This department provides services for and monitors individuals on probation. Workplace flexibility issues came to the forefront of the analysis. The department found that after a new telecommuting policy was instituted to the 18-member investigations unit, it became one of the most productive units. It was clear that telecommuting, or the ability to have flexibility in work location, helped retain and recruit staff because it made it easier for those with caretaking responsibilities to manage their work and family lives. This program thus helped both the employees and the Department create an efficient and productive work environment. This information led the Department to expand the telecommuting and flexible work policies option for its employees.⁶
- Arts Commission:** The Arts Commission champions the arts in San Francisco by funding large-scale public art installations as well as small community-based projects. One Commission program, the San Francisco



⁶ Adult Probation Department (2001). *Gender analysis recommendations 2001*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=20416. See also Liebowitz, (2007), p.8.



Street Artists program, provides economic opportunities for small-scale artists by allocating space on city streets where they can sell their work. Securing these spaces is an enormously competitive process. After several failed attempts to allocate spaces in a fair and transparent manner, the Arts Commission implemented a lottery system designed by the street artists themselves. However, it later became clear that the rule that artists had to appear at the daily lottery in person at 8:30 in the morning made it difficult for those artists with childcare responsibilities to participate, thereby reducing their chances of getting a good location. In response, the Arts Commission changed the lottery process to allow an artist to send a proxy.⁷ This change was made to eliminate the inadvertent disadvantage faced by women with children, yet it helped a range of other people including men with children and devout Jews who were unable to attend the lottery on Saturday mornings.⁸

c) **Rent Stabilization Board:** The Rent Stabilization Board is responsible for mediating disputes between renters and landlords in San Francisco. The gender analysis revealed that the Rent Stabilization Board did not have adequate data about who they were serving. While staff members collected basic data about the landlords and tenants who used their services, such as where they lived and the



Photo by: Libi Wood, San Francisco Department of Public Works

type of petition being filed, they did not collect voluntary data on the gender or race of their clients. Without this information, they could not determine who was, and more importantly who was not, using these services and how best to meet client needs. As a result of this process, the Rent Stabilization Board changed the evaluation form given to clients so that staff would have this information, thereby ensuring that services are meeting the needs of diverse communities.⁹

- d) **Department of the Environment:** See Case Study below.
- e) **Department on the Status of Women:** The Department on the Status of Women promotes equitable treatment and the advancement of women and girls throughout San Francisco through policies, legislation, and programs, both within City and County government and in the private sector.

Since its inception in 1975, the Department has had a primary focus on freedom from violence for women and girls. As part of this focus, the Department administers the Violence Against Women Prevention & Intervention (VAW) Grants Program which today distributes over \$2.7 million in public funds to community-based agencies for comprehensive services for women survivors of violence and their families. Part of the gender analysis reviewed service data disaggregated by gender, race, home language, and identity. The data is collected on a quarterly basis from the over 20 Partner Agencies who receive funds to provide direct services to clients. The analysis revealed that the Partner Agencies were regularly outperforming their stated goals and served a diverse group of women, men, and children. Every major San Francisco racial and ethnic group was represented in the

⁷ The San Francisco Arts Commission (2000). *The San Francisco Arts Commission gender analysis 2000*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=20417.

⁸ Liebowitz (2007), p. 6.

⁹ Liebowitz (2007), p. 8. The San Francisco Rent Stabilization Board (2000). *Rent Board gender analysis 2000*. Retrieved from <http://www.sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=122>.

data. Also reflected in the data was significant service provision to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community and Middle Eastern populations, both identified as priority populations in a needs assessment.¹⁰ This analysis was useful to ensure that the Department's VAW Grants Program continued address to the needs of diverse women and girls in San Francisco.

2. Case Study: The Department of the Environment

The Department of the Environment works to improve, enhance, and preserve the present and future environment of San Francisco. The Department conducted a gender analysis in 2001, just 5 years after the Department was first created.¹¹

When the agency first participated in the gender analysis, the staff was small (13 full-time employees), but has now grown to almost 70 staff members. Since the gender analysis was done when the Department was relatively new, the findings greatly influenced the establishment of policies and procedures for the burgeoning department. According to Department staff, the agency implemented a host of programs and systems in response to the gender analysis that are now a permanent part of its culture and operations.

The following are some of the highlights from the original gender analysis and the 2009 update the Department of the Environment presented to the Commission on the Status of Women:

- **Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Employees:**

- The Department surveyed all employees in order to get feedback about issues of concern. This process revealed that many

employees wanted the opportunity to provide direct feedback about all aspects of Departmental functions. Now the Department's leadership conducts annual staff surveys and responds directly to comments made during their annual staff retreat.¹²

- Many Department positions are non-traditional jobs for women and minorities. When the original gender analysis was conducted, women held 33% of professional positions, while the labor pool data showed that the available labor pool of women professionals in these relevant areas was 48%. The Department also only had one person of color in a professional level position. In February 2009, the Department reported significant increases in the number of women and minority employees. Out of 68 employees, 69% were women and 39% were minorities. These numbers reflect expanded recruitment efforts to ensure that women and minorities are part of the applicant pool.¹³

- **Grants:** The CEDAW gender analysis led the Department to start analyzing grants in a more holistic way. In addition to examining whether a grant achieves the agency's environmental goals, staff also now looks at which communities and individuals receive grant monies dispersed by the Department in order to ensure equitable distribution of public monies across diverse communities. The Department reviews who holds leadership positions at grantee organizations and who is hired with monies granted by the Department.¹⁴ The Department is also, for the first time, working with the City's Economic and Workforce Development agency to place low income individuals in training positions for non-traditional jobs.¹⁵

“[The Department of the Environment] implemented a host of programs and systems in response to the gender analysis that are now a permanent part of its culture and operations.”

¹⁰ Price, J., Lee, S., & Szkupinski Quiroga, S. (2000). *Violence against women and girls: meeting the needs of survivors*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=19977.

¹¹ The San Francisco Department of the Environment (2001). *Department of the Environment gender analysis 2001*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=20442.

¹² Liebowitz (2007), pp. 6-7.

¹³ Department of the Environment Gender Analysis Update. Presentation by David Assmann, Deputy Director, San Francisco Department of the Environment to the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women (February 25, 2009).

¹⁴ Liebowitz (2007), pp. 6-7.

¹⁵ Department of the Environment Gender Analysis Update (February 25, 2009).

“San Francisco is the first local government in the United States to utilize the gender budgeting framework.”

Photo by: Libi Wood, San Francisco Department of Public Works



- **Flexible Work Policies:**
 - When the Department began its CEDAW review, senior managers were also considering whether to adopt an “Emergency Ride Home” program to encourage use of alternative transportation (e.g., carpooling, public transit, bicycling, and walking) in the City.¹⁶ This program provides a free or low-cost ride home in cases of emergency for any employee working in San Francisco who used an alternative form of transportation to get to work that day. The gender analysis findings helped provide the justification and impetus for the program by noting that it would greatly benefit those with caregiving responsibilities (predominantly women).¹⁷ As of 2009, the Department’s program has expanded significantly, and the agency now assists private sector companies throughout San Francisco in creating similar programs.¹⁸
 - The Department also offers 2 popular flex-time programs. The 9/80 program allows employees to choose to work eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day in a 2 week period so that they can have the tenth day off. The Department’s flex-time program allows employees to begin their work days any time between 6:30 and 9:30 a.m. As of February 2009, 51 of the 68 employees used the 9/80 program and 42 employees used the flex-time program. The Department has found that these various scheduling options have increased employee productivity.¹⁹

The Department of the Environment used the gender analysis tool and its findings to not only create individual programs and policies to improve the lives of employees and constituents, but also to create a culture of gender equality and freedom from discriminatory practices that has continued to expand as the Department grows.

3. Case Study: Gender Analysis of Budget Cuts

As part of the CEDAW Ordinance, gender analysis is also being applied on a Citywide basis to the City budget through a gender responsive budgeting initiative. Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) examines the impact of budgeting decisions and the policies underlying them to ensure that the needs of all people from different backgrounds and social groups are being met. Internationally, over 45 countries have undertaken GRB initiatives at the national and/or sub-national levels of government. GRB reviews budget allocations for biases that can arise because a person is male or female, and considers disadvantage suffered as a result of ethnicity, poverty status, immigration, disability, age, or other demographic characteristics.



San Francisco is the first local government in the United States to utilize the gender budgeting framework. San Francisco’s foray into gender budgeting began in 2003 when the County Board of Supervisors, facing a severe budget crisis, became concerned about the possibility of budget cuts having a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations. The Board asked all City departments to assess the impact of proposed budget cuts on employment and services to the public, disaggregated by gender, race and other identities. Based on the gender analyses, the departments were able to analyze the disparate impact of budget cuts and anticipate potentially discriminatory effects before they took place. Departments reported that reduced services indicated that a number of programs primarily serving women, children, immigrants,

¹⁶ More information on the program can be found on the San Francisco Emergency Ride Home website: <http://www.sferh.org/>.

¹⁷ Liebowitz (2007), p. 7.

¹⁸ Department of the Environment Gender Analysis Update (February 25, 2009).

¹⁹ Department of the Environment Gender Analysis Update (February 25, 2009).

and seniors would be impacted. In addition, officials in the responding departments gained exposure on how to use the gender analysis tool proactively, address discrimination in advance, and create policy plans based on critical data and strategies.²⁰

San Francisco expanded this work in 2008 when the Department on the Status of Women conducted a GRB training for the Mayor's budget staff. After this training, the Mayor's Budget Office decided to take the first steps toward incorporating gender budgeting into the annual budget guidelines. In Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the office surveyed all City departments to determine their policies and practices for data collection and how data is utilized in the development of programs and policies. This represented a step in moving towards creating gender-based budgeting to improve the City's ability to meet the needs of diverse communities.²¹

In February 2010, the Department on the Status of Women and the Mayor's office jointly published the report *Gender Responsive Budgeting: A Path to Accountability and Data-Based Policy-Making*. The report highlighted some departmental best practices in data collection. For example, the public library system uses disaggregated data as the basis for creating special and ongoing services such as providing more Chinese language material in neighborhoods with high concentrations of Chinese speakers. Many departments did not have disaggregated data collection practices in place, so recommendations included forming a working group to create a plan for using disaggregated data to enhance performance-based and gender responsive budgeting, and provide benchmarks for measuring progress based on gender, race, and other characteristics.

4. Gender Analysis of Commissions, Boards, and Task Forces

In San Francisco, Commissions, Boards, and Task Forces are appointed by the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to create, implement, and/or monitor government policies and priorities. These policy bodies meet regularly and in public to maximize transparency and public input. For example, the 5-member Fire Commission, appointed by the Mayor, governs the Fire Department by setting policy priorities and approving an annual budget. The Fire Commission meets twice a month in open meetings where members of the public are welcome to provide comment on each agenda item before a vote is taken.

These entities not only help the legislative and executive branches create public policy around a certain issue, they are also stepping stones for further leadership positions, including elected office. Therefore, it is important that a diverse array of people serve on these bodies to ensure that all San Franciscans and their concerns are represented in policy-making and to create a diverse leadership pipeline in the City.

In 2007, community-based organizations working on women's issues were interested in learning about how many women served on these appointed bodies. The Department on the Status of Women conducted an analysis and found that the numbers of men and women on these entities were relatively equal overall. It was noted, however, that bodies with larger mandates and budgets had more men serving on them.²²

In 2008, the City Charter (the local constitution) was amended by a vote of the people to encourage the appointment of more women, minorities, and people with disabilities to Commissions and other policy bodies. The Department on



²⁰ City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors (June 2003). Resolution 0249-03, Summary of CEDAW Gender Analysis of Budget. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/dosw/programs/CEDAW/Gender_Analysis_Reports/Departments%20Summary%20Budget%20Cuts6-17-03.doc.

²¹ In 2007, Department staff conducted a training on gender budgeting and gender analysis for Fulton County (Georgia) government staff. For information on Fulton County's innovative Gender Equality Initiative, visit: <http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/departments/147-gender-equality-project>.

²² The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women (2007). *Gender analysis of commissions, boards, and task forces 2007*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/dosw/programs/CEDAW/documents/GenderAnalysisofCommissions2007.pdf>.



Photo by: Libi Wood, San Francisco
Department of Public Works

the Status of Women is now tasked with conducting a gender analysis every two years to inform the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the demographics of appointments. The Commission released the first official *Gender Analysis of San Francisco Commissions and Boards* in August 2009. This analysis included an examination of race and disability status as well as the gender of appointees in order to provide a more detailed view of appointed bodies, and the disparities existing within and among them.²³

III. CITYWIDE INITIATIVES

Over the past 10 years, the CEDAW Task Force and the Commission on the Status of Women have initiated a host of citywide initiatives to support a holistic implementation of CEDAW in San Francisco. Summaries of several such initiatives are included below, followed by a more detailed examination of a major project, the San Francisco Gender Equality Principles Initiative.

A. Examples of Citywide Initiatives

- **Work-Life Balance Study:** Following the gender analysis of City departments, the CEDAW Task Force conducted a study of employees' needs in the area of work-life balance – how to manage work, family, and personal responsibilities.²⁴ This 2001 study highlighted best practices in such areas as flexible schedules, telecommuting, and care-giving referral services, and had the lasting effect of raising the visibility of these issues in City government. This, in turn, facilitated specific policy changes not only within individual departments but also citywide, such as new telecommuting policies and a measure to enable elected officials with family caregiving responsibilities to participate in legislative business, including voting, by telephone. San Francisco's generous and expansive paid parental leave policy was also a landmark measure that came out of this study.²⁵

- **A Report on Girls in San Francisco: Benchmarks for the Future:** In 2003, the Commission on the Status of Women utilized the CEDAW approach to examine the status of girls in San Francisco. Prior to the publication of this report, most data about issues facing youth were purportedly gender-neutral. The report was the first local government publication to focus on girls' issues and concerns based on disaggregated gender and race data.²⁶ The report, for example, documented the disproportionately high percentages of African American girls in the juvenile justice and foster care systems where gender-specific services were scarce. Findings such as these illustrate the power of disaggregated data to reveal the disproportionate impacts of policy decisions and funding, or lack thereof, on certain populations. This report established important benchmarks to be monitored for improvement in meeting the specific needs of San Francisco girls.

- **Recruitment of Women in Non-Traditional Fields Brochure:** Despite laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment in the workplace and measures to promote the recruitment of women, they continue to be underrepresented in traditionally male-dominated occupations such as construction and engineering. To counter this trend, the Department on the Status of Women created a brochure detailing recruitment strategies and resources compiled from a list of organizations focused on increasing the number of women in non-traditional occupational areas.²⁷

B. The San Francisco Gender Equality Principles Initiative

San Francisco's CEDAW Ordinance states that "there is a need to work toward implementing the principles of CEDAW in the private sector."²⁸ It also calls for gender analysis of private entities to the

²³ The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women (2009). *Gender analysis of San Francisco commissions and boards 2009*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/dosw/programs/CEDAW/documents/GenderAnalysisOfCommissions2009_REV_09.09.09.pdf.

²⁴ The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women (2001). *Work-life policies & practices survey report*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=66182.

²⁵ This legislation went to the voters as Ballot Proposition I and passed in November 2002. See *Compensation during Parental Leave, City and County of San Francisco Municipal Code, A8.365 (2002)*. Retrieved from: http://library.municode.com/HTML/14130/level1/AA.html#AA_AA8.365.

²⁶ The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women (April 2003). *A report on girls in San Francisco: benchmarks for the future*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_index.asp?id=16976.

²⁷ The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women. (n.d.). *Recruitment of women in non-traditional fields*. Retrieved from http://www.sfgov.org/site/dosw_page.asp?id=69794.

extent permitted by the law.²⁹ The first 10 years of CEDAW implementation in San Francisco focused on assessing and improving gender equality within government entities. As the City approached the 10th anniversary of the CEDAW Ordinance, the Department on the Status of Women decided to focus its efforts on promoting CEDAW principles in the private sector through the San Francisco Gender Equality Principles Initiative (GEP Initiative). The GEP Initiative is a partnership between the Department on the Status of Women, Calvert Group, Ltd., one of the largest families of socially responsible mutual funds in the United States, and Verité, an international labor and human rights monitoring organization.

The GEP Initiative is a groundbreaking program that helps companies around the world achieve greater gender equality and build more productive workplaces through practical implementation of the Gender Equality Principles (GEP). The GEP are a set of aspirational principles focusing on 7 fundamental gender equality issue areas:

- *Employment and Compensation*
- *Work-Life Balance and Career Development*
- *Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence*
- *Management and Governance*
- *Business, Supply Chain, and Marketing Practices*
- *Civic and Community Engagement*
- *Transparency and Accountability*

The GEP Initiative provides companies with practical standards, tools, and resources that can be used to improve gender equality from the factory floor to the boardroom.

In 2008-2009, the initial year of the project, 18 of the San Francisco Bay Area's largest companies and nonprofits joined the GEP Initiative, including Deloitte, IBM, McKesson, Charles Schwab, and Symantec.

Between 2008-2010 the GEP Initiative hosted quarterly roundtables, each one focused on a different principle, to foster peer-to-peer discussion between companies on best practices and challenges related to promoting gender equality. The companies worked with the GEP Initiative partners to create self assessment tools and compile resources to help private sector companies implement innovative policies and practices related to gender equality.

The GEP are based on the Calvert Women's Principles.³⁰ These 2 documents form the basis of the Women's Empowerment Principles, a set of global women's principles that are being developed by the United Nations Global Compact.³¹ They have also influenced the Gender in Sustainability Reporting Guide of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).³²

C. Addressing Violence Against Women

Each year, the San Francisco Police Department receives over 4,000 cases of domestic violence, and yet studies estimate that only 1/3 of all domestic violence cases are ever reported.³³ Gender-based violence is a clear violation of women's human rights, and the Commission on the Status of Women takes a comprehensive approach to addressing it by funding direct services to survivors and also initiating policy reforms in the system's response to this pervasive crime.

Direct Services: The Commission has funded domestic violence services since 1980, when it awarded its first grant of \$75,000 to a domestic violence shelter. Today, with a total allocation of \$2.7 million, the Commission funds 3 confidential shelters and over 30 programs providing crisis intervention, legal services, case management, transitional housing, and prevention education.



For more information on the GEP Initiative and to access the GEP self-assessment tool and resources visit: www.genderprinciples.org

²⁸ CEDAW Ordinance, City and County of San Francisco Municipal Code Administrative Code §12K.1(c) (1998).

²⁹ CEDAW Ordinance, City and County of San Francisco Municipal Code Administrative Code §12K.4 (1998).

³⁰ More information on the Calvert Women's Principles can be found at <http://www.calvert.com/womensprinciples.html>

³¹ More information on this initiative can be found at: http://www.unglobalcompact.org/issues/human_rights/5March2009_ToolsAndResources.html

³² International Finance Corporation (IFC) & Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (October 26, 2009). *Embedding gender in sustainability reporting - a practitioner's guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.ifc.org/gender>.

³³ Shields, J. (2006). *I tried to stop them: children's exposure to domestic violence in San Francisco*. San Francisco, California: ETR Associates.



Programs address domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in a variety of San Francisco communities, including Arab, African American, Asian Pacific Islander, and Latina populations; immigrant women; homeless women; lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women; and school-aged youth.

Justice and Courage Project: Through the Justice & Courage Project, hundreds of policy reforms have been implemented throughout the criminal justice system. For example, stalking is now coded by 911 emergency response call-takers where, until 2009, these incidents were uncategorized. New training programs have been developed to 1) expand knowledge of community-based resources for survivors, 2) better understand a victim's perspective, and 3) enhance language abilities among speakers of Chinese and Spanish among criminal justice personnel.

Family Violence Council: The Family Violence Council addresses family violence across the lifespan by bringing together advocates working against child abuse, domestic violence, and elder abuse on a quarterly basis. The Council documents the rates of family violence in the City, and proposes policy reforms to improve the criminal justice, social service, and community-based intervention system.

Human Trafficking: The San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking, launched in January 2010, comprises a diverse array of community-based organizations and government agencies dedicated to eliminating modern day slavery from San Francisco. The Collaborative builds public awareness of the problem, monitors legislation, tracks trafficking-related data, and creates a forum for alignment of survivor services and law enforcement efforts.

In this multi-faceted approach, San Francisco has

created new and innovative programs, policies, and tools to combat violence against women.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This report was created to share CEDAW implementation policies and practices developed by the City and County of San Francisco government since the local CEDAW Ordinance was adopted in 1998.

As the first municipality in the world to adopt CEDAW on a local level, San Francisco has spent over years creating and honing tools, policies, and best practices for implementation. This process has given birth to models to promote gender equality that can be used by local, regional, and national governments everywhere, including the gender analysis guidelines for assessment, recommendations, and implementation; the CEDAW Task Force for advocacy and oversight; and the San Francisco Gender Equality Principles Initiative for engaging the private sector.

The Department and Commission on the Status of Women have found that CEDAW has been beneficial for opening the eyes of both local government and community members to the fact that discrimination against women still exists, while providing proactive, concrete tools, and processes with which to address gender equality issues.

The ultimate goal of the CEDAW approach is government accountability. While the United Nations CEDAW Treaty operates at the international level, the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance brings accountability for gender equity into the hallways, conference rooms, sidewalks, and streets of local county government. It is our hope that governments everywhere can utilize the San Francisco experience to improve the lives of women and girls in their nations and around the world.

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Barbara Kaufman, Former President, San Francisco Board of Supervisors

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