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Panel

**Financing for gender equality
and the empowerment of women**

Written statement*

submitted by

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Introduction

1. Private-public partnerships are increasingly addressing some of the world's most challenging partnerships. At the United Nations Foundation (UN Foundation) we have worked in over 122 partnerships to further the United Nations and its causes. Founded in 1998 with Ted Turner's historic gift of 1 billion dollars, the UN Foundation has brought together the following private sector and UN agencies to find innovative solutions to: promote entrepreneurship among low-income populations with Expedia and UNDP and UNESCO, provide long-term solutions to manage disasters with the Vodafone Group, WFP and WHO; and reconnect tsunami victims with water systems along with Coca-Cola and UNDP. Over and over, we see that the private sector is increasingly coupling its business case – or inherent corporate value – to engaging in development issues.

2. The role of gender equity presents a potentially compelling business case to the private sector which sees the value of women as employees as well as contributors to overall economic growth – both of which are critical for business to flourish. To date, corporate investment in gender equity programming has been on the program side – financing vocation training, creating codes of conduct, providing capital for business development. The potential to draw the private sector in as a partner for gender equity mainstreaming – e.g. assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, programs or policies, -- requires a cohesive business case to corporations that particularly those working in developing countries.

Coalition on Adolescent Girls

3. One potential model for those of us concerned with gender mainstreaming to consider vis a vis attracting private sector funding is the Coalition for Adolescent Girls. The Coalition is a public-private partnership between the UN Foundation, Nike Foundation and over 30 other non-governmental organizations including six UN agencies that will advocate for mainstream positioning of adolescent girls in global policy and programming. Currently adolescent girls are coupled within the youth category – in which boys receiving roughly 80% of all development programming resources. The Coalition for Adolescent girls is a \$1.25 million dollar initiative that will invest in developing the empirical case for more favorable policy and additional resources from public and private sectors. The UN Foundation has a long-standing commitment to adolescent girls providing more than 45 million in program funding to strengthen UN agencies programming and coordination in the area. The Nike Foundation articulates having commitment to give back to countries where it manufactures and has built its statement of purpose on advancing the status of adolescent girls. The Coalition is creating the case for investing in adolescent girls education, economic opportunity, health and ending child marriage as a way to end poverty.

4. While both Nike and UN Foundations are committed to the issue we have realized that others non-traditional actors like corporations are not because for two reasons. First, no one has made a coherent empirical case for adolescent girls – the twelve year old girl. We plan to launch an empirically based Call to Action in 2008 allowing us to seek further

funding from the private sector that will learn of the business case not exclusively morale one for investing in girls. Second, no one has presented an overall plan for systemic change, e.g. adolescent girls mainstreaming, in the public sphere. The Coalition's Call to Action, completed in consultation with multi-lateral and national/regional public agencies, will consider the investment in systemic change that needs to take place for girls to be on the mainstream development agenda.

5. In terms of making the case for the corporate sector, the Coalition sees their will be great interest around the economic opportunity case for adolescent girls-- one of the four principle areas of research the Coalition is undertaking. The Coalition will completed a full assessment both analytically and from a literature/program review perspective to get a sense of the resources and programming that is currently being directed towards the economic potential for girls as well as the gap that needs financing. Also the analysis will include best practices and recommendations to mainstream programming at a country level as well as multi-lateral level.

Public-Private Sector Financing for Gender Mainstreaming.

6. As we all know, financing for gender equality interventions needs to come from a range of sources:

7. Government/domestic resources are particularly important for gender equality because they signal that a country is committed to achieving gender equality and has taken "ownership" of the problem. Government resources ensure longer-term sustainability for those interventions and activities that are needed to create the type of fundamental transformation in the way that societies conceive of and organize men's and women's roles and responsibilities.

8. Donor resources are can be quite important to jump-start the allocation of domestic resources for gender-equality interventions and are important for meeting the initial financing gap in low-income countries.

9. The private sector also has a role to play in reinforcing further gender equity in the field:

- a. Create jobs for young women and improve productivity through training and skill development;
- b. Partner with public agencies to mobilize additional resources for gender equality interventions;
- c. As corporate partners making foreign direct investment in developing countries to advocate at both the country level and in donor agencies for gender mainstreaming to be linked to flows of funding across all sectors. Corporate investors can be powerful voices at the government level
- d. Be a leader among various players in role modeling "good practice" by adhere to high standards of corporate governance and citizenship;

- e. Implement and enforce core labor standards, decent jobs throughout the supply chain, equal opportunity policies, comparable worth policies, endorsing value statements such as the Calvert Women's Principles;
- f. Devote corporate philanthropy to gender equality interventions – with a particular focus on the next generation programs -- supporting girls' savings clubs, financial literacy programs, non-sexist vocational training programs, and life skills/livelihoods programs.

Recommendations to Promote Increased Private Sector Financing of Gender Mainstreaming

10. Beyond the more immediate role the private sector can play as described above, the following research identified at UNICEF should be positioned as defining a cohesive business case for gender equity:

11. Enrolment, school attendance and literacy: While there are significant data disaggregated by sex on school enrolment, sex-disaggregated data on literacy and school attendance are available for only 112 and 96 countries, respectively. Efforts to compile and release sex-disaggregated data on female completion rates at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education must also be strengthened.

12. Labor force, unemployment and occupational distribution: Just over half the world's 204 countries and territories provided sex-disaggregated data on these fundamental areas of work, with only 105 providing data on occupational segregation by sex.

13. Wage statistics: This is a vital area where discrimination affects women and their children, and yet just under half (52) of the 108 countries or territories that reported wage data were also able to provide desegregation by sex. Europe and Asia account for almost three quarters of these countries.

14. Informal employment: Even with an internationally agreed-upon definition of informal employment, only 60 countries have produced data on informal employment, and in many cases these statistics are not fully comparable.

15. Unpaid work and time use: Since 1995, 67 countries or areas have conducted time-use surveys, with the vast majority in CEE/CIS and South and East Asia. Only seven countries in Africa and three in South America have collected such data.

Conclusion

16. To date, corporations have been rewarded for a more programmatic approach to supporting development as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility or philanthropy. Only recently have corporations begun to consider cautiously how and if it can support the development infrastructure – e.g. engaging directly with the public sector and understanding how policies and program monies are tied to ensure efficiency. Therefore,

we must develop a strong business case for the issue as well as be able to articulate how programming will ultimately benefit from thoughtful gender mainstreaming. Therefore we should keep in mind the following:

17. New work on macroeconomics shows that in many instances, economic development policies formulated without gender awareness would not only worsen gender inequalities, but also make it harder to achieve macroeconomic goals such as growth. There are also instances where growth may be achieved at the expense of gender equality. To attract private sector financing for gender mainstreaming the field must quantify the potential value of gender mainstreaming to the private sector and under which scenarios it is positive – promoting those.

18. While adequate resources alone will not achieve gender equality, knowing both the specific interventions and their costs creates the conditions for the fundamental transformation that is required to achieve gender equality. Transformation of social norms and patriarchal structures can begin through policies, interventions, and projects that have adequate funding. Thus, the gender needs assessment, and associated financing gap analyses should be seen as critical tools for generating resources—and perhaps even leadership and political will—for gender equality and women’s empowerment.