

Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Sida's support for the promotion of
gender equality in partner countries
Country Report Bangladesh

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Preface

In 1996, gender equality was established as a goal for Swedish development co-operation, and one year later Sida formulated an Action Programme for promoting gender equality. The Action Programme focuses on a mainstreaming strategy for working towards the gender equality goal. According to such a strategy, gender equality should pervade all development policies, strategies and interventions.

The evaluation deals with gender equality in country strategies and projects. It is based on case studies in Bangladesh, Nicaragua and South Africa. This is the country report for Bangladesh. The country reports for Nicaragua and South Africa are published as Sida Evaluation Reports 02/01:2 and 3. The main report is published as number 02/01 in the same series.

The evaluation is the result of an extended process involving many actors. It rests primarily on contributions from representatives of partner organisations in Bangladesh, and Sida and Embassy staff. The evaluation was carried out by, Cowi Consult, Denmark in co-operation with Goss Gilroy, Canada.

Lessons from the evaluation will be fed into a planned revision of the Action Programme. The evaluation will also form a basis for Sida's reporting to the Swedish Government on the results of efforts to promote gender equality.

Stockholm, January 2002

Stefan Molund
Acting Head of Department for
Evaluation and Internal Audit

The synthesis report and the country reports constituting the Mainstreaming Gender Equality evaluation are listed below:

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|---------|--|
| 02/01 | Mainstreaming Gender Equality – Sida's support for the promotion of gender equality in partner countries |
| 02/01:1 | Mainstreaming Gender Equality – Country Report Bangladesh |
| 02/01:2 | Mainstreaming Gender Equality – Country Report Nicaragua |
| 02/01:3 | Mainstreaming Gender Equality – Country Report South Africa |
| 02/01:4 | Integración de la Perspectiva de Igualdad de Género – Informe de País Nicaragua |

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARISE	Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment, a project of the Ministry of Social Welfare funded by UNDP
ASK	Ain o Shalish Kendro, a Bangladesh legal aid and human rights non-governmental organisation
ASC	Ain Shahayata Committee (Legal Assistance Committee)
BNWLA	Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, one of the largest NGOs in Bangladesh as well as in the world
CBA	Centre Based Approach
CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMC	Centre Management Committee
CRC	Child Rights Convention (of the United Nations)
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DIC	Drop-In Centre
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
DWIN	Development Workers' Information Network
EC	European Commission
EFA	Education for All
ET	Evaluation Team
GAD	Gender and Development
GAT	Gender Analysis Training
GE or g/e	Gender Equality
GO	Government Organisation
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GUK	Gono Unnoyon Kendro, a DWIN member NGO in Gaibandha district
ICC	International Criminal court
LCG	Local Consultative Group (a forum for Government of Bangladesh and its development partners/donors to interact and discuss policy issues. Sub-groups for specific sectors of this forum prepare the background research and position papers for the annual meeting of the Aid Club for Bangladesh)

LCG WAGE	Local Consultative Group Sub-Group on Women's Advancement and Gender Equality
LGC T	Local Gender Consultancy Team (in this document this refers to an assignment STD carried out at DNFE)
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plan
NFE 2	Non-Formal Education (Basic Literacy for Adolescents and adults)
NFE 3	Non-Formal Education (Basic Education for Hard-to-Reach Urban Working Children)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PLCE	Pilot Post-Literacy & Continuing Education Project
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
PNGO	Partner NGOs
PP	Project Proforma
RESP	Rural Employment Service Project (a Sida-funded project in Bangladesh that has been in existence for several years)
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
STD	Steps towards Development
TCG	Trainers Core Group (a network of gender trainers organised by STD)
TLM	Total Literacy Movement
TOT	Training of Trainers
ULTT	Union Level Theatre Team, organised through ASK's popular theatre programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad (Union Council, currently the only operative, locally elected body at sub-national level government in Bangladesh)
VAW	Violence Against Women
VDC	Village Development Committee, a voluntary group of village women leaders developed by some NGOs to initiate and organise special events, such as celebration of Women's Day
WID	Women in Development
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs

Glossary

<i>Ain Shahayata Committees</i>	Legal Assistance Committees
<i>Bari</i>	a compound consisting of a few households sharing a courtyard
<i>Bazaar</i>	market
<i>Char</i>	a sandbar formed by sedimentation action of rivers, often inhabited by the landless poor in Bangladesh
<i>Crore</i>	ten millions (unit of measurement)
<i>Fatwa</i>	a verdict pronounced by Islamic clerics
<i>Gram</i>	village
<i>Haat</i>	periodic village market
<i>Hadiz</i>	Islamic text, based on the Prophet Mohammed's instructions on how to lead a good life
<i>Hilla</i>	intervening marriage, by which a man abdicates responsibilities for a spouse and children; illegal but commonly practised in Bangladesh
<i>Imam</i>	Muslim cleric, sometimes also known as <i>maulana</i> or <i>mullah</i>
<i>Khas land</i>	government-owned land
<i>Lakh</i>	one hundred thousands (unit of measurement)
<i>Mahila Parishad</i>	Women's Council, one of the largest national women's groups in Bangladesh
<i>Mastaan</i>	gangster
<i>Nari</i>	woman
<i>Nari Dibash</i>	Women's Day
<i>Para</i>	a cluster of neighbouring <i>bari</i>
<i>Parishad</i>	council
<i>Pir</i>	Islamic saints, who belong to the mystic tradition of Sufism, believed to be capable of performing miracles. The <i>pirs</i> are known for their role as primary interpreters of the Prophet's original message to the Bengalis, converting whole villages to Islam by incorporating local beliefs and ceremonies dating back to the time of animism, Hinduism and Buddhism

<i>Purdah</i>	literally meaning ‘curtain’, the practice of keeping women from public views in conservative Islamic societies
<i>Salish</i>	village court, traditional rural arbitration system
<i>Samaj</i>	informal social unit above the family in rural areas
<i>Samity</i>	a society, a common name for community-based groups organised by either government or NGOs
<i>Taka</i>	Bangladesh currency, approximately Tk. 56 to 1 USD at the time of writing
<i>Talak</i>	divorce
<i>Thana</i>	same as <i>upazila</i> (see below)
<i>Unnayan</i>	development
<i>Upazila</i>	administrative unit equivalent to a sub-district above union level; named during the Ershad era, known as <i>thana</i> during BNP government, changed back to original by Awami League government

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The evaluation team sincerely thanks all those who took time and trouble to help us with this challenging assignment in Bangladesh. We were grateful to rely on the time and generous participation of officials of ministries and agencies of the Government of Bangladesh as well as the staff of civil society organisations and of individual women and men, boys and girls, in the different intervention sites we were able to visit. Staff at the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka shared their views with the evaluation team and generously followed up with substantive analysis of the conditions under which the small complement of Sida staff work to implement Swedish development co-operation policies in correspondence with Bangladesh policies. Appreciation is also expressed for the role played by the national consultants on the team.

Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2000, Sida commissioned an *Evaluation of Sida's support to development cooperation for the promotion of Gender Equality* with three objectives: 1) to assess how Sida's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in the country strategy process; 2) to assess the strategic and/or practical changes with regards to the promotion of gender equality that interventions supported by Sida have contributed to or may contribute to; and 3) to provide an input to a deeper understanding of the concrete meaning of concepts in interventions supported by Sida (gender equality, empowerment of women, stakeholder participation, strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality and mainstreaming). The evaluation included three country case studies. This report covers Bangladesh, with Nicaragua and South Africa the subjects of separate reports.

The study team assessed gender equality issues in relation to the Country Strategy and analysed four interventions that had been selected for detailed study: Non-formal Education NFE 2 – Literacy for adults and youth (including the pilot programme on continuing education, PLCE), Non-formal Education NFE 3, Literacy for hard to reach, urban, working children, Ain o Shalish Kendro, ASK – Legal aid, and Steps Towards Development, STD – Training on gender and related issues. ASK and STD differ from all other interventions studied in the evaluation in explicitly emphasising gender equality as a core organisational objective.

The country study took place from May 14–June 2, 2001. The evaluation team was composed of Ted Freeman and Sevilla Leowinata of Goss Gilroy, GGI, Canada, Ms. Jowshan A. Rahman and Mirza Najmul Huda, national consultants of Bangladesh assisted by Prabin Behari Barua, and Britha Mikkelsen of COWI, Denmark. Ted Freeman and Britha Mikkelsen shared the role of team leader during the evaluation mission.

The key issues derived from the Terms of Reference for the overall evaluation are:

- To what extent is Sida's mainstreaming strategy reflected in the *country strategy process* for Bangladesh?
- What has been the *gender equality content* of the four interventions, including the *goal* of gender equality as reflected in intervention design and implementation and the use of a *mainstreaming strategy*?
- What is the relationship in each intervention between the pursuit of gender equality as a goal and the need to address *poverty reduction*?

- *Which changes* have occurred in the gender equality situation as a result of the interventions?
- How can the experiences of the four interventions reviewed assist in a deeper understanding of the use and *meaning of concepts* such as gender equality, women's empowerment and practical and strategic changes?

A major aim of the evaluation was to identify lessons for future policy and strategy revision and for the application of these lessons in practical development co-operation.

Data collection methods included 1) extensive document review; 2) interviews with Sida programme staff, intervention staff and consultants; and 3) group discussions and participatory focus groups and workshops with project implementers and primary stakeholders. A series of structured guidelines, concept papers and checklists prepared by the evaluation team prior to the field studies helped to ensure a common approach to the evaluation in all three countries.

The Environment for Gender Equality in Bangladesh

Since its early days as an independent country, the Government of Bangladesh, GoB, has written policies and plans sensitive to the situation of women and their role in society. The overall goal of Bangladesh's current national development agenda is the alleviation of poverty and the reduction of gender differences is seen as an important factor in achieving that overall goal. A range of initiatives is ongoing in an attempt to improve women's access to opportunities for education and training, information, and other resources.

Examples of commitments by the Government of Bangladesh to address the situation of women include:

- The present national five year plan emphasises the promotion of equal sharing of power and decision making between women and men at all levels of society, in recognition of the need for women to be ensured of equal rights.
- The GoB is a signatory to UN conventions on gender such as the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW (with reservations) and a commitment to equal rights for women and men in all spheres is enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh.
- A national policy for women's advancement (NP) was declared by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in 1997. This was translated into a National Action Plan in 1998 as one element in the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action.
- Gender concerns have been incorporated into a number of national sectoral policies.

- Sub-national level co-ordination committees have been established in a number of thanas, e.g. for assessing the situation of violence against women.

In civil society a number of Non Government Organisations, NGOs play the role of advocate of social justice, especially of women, children and the poor.

Despite commitments by government and the parallel work of NGOs in addressing gender inequalities, sex dis-aggregated key human development indicators and gender related indices show persistent and deep gender inequalities, in literacy, health care, asset ownership and income. On the other hand, there has been some progress in women's participation at the local government level and a special initiative has recently been put in place by the government to appoint more women at senior levels of the public service.

At community level, data and popular perception point to an alarming increase in the prevalence and severity of violent acts against women. These acts, frequently reported in the media, include murder for non-payment of dowry, acid throwing, abduction, battering, sexual abuse and trafficking. To a certain extent, at least in popular opinion and in the press and media, there seems to be a violent backlash to the increase in women's visibility and apparent freedom of movement which has accompanied industrial change and the increasing role of women in urban or peri-urban industrial centres.

In view of the continuing relative deprivation of women and their apparent vulnerability to violent repression, the reported positive response of men to the idea of women's empowerment represents a powerful paradox. One explanation may be found in the fact that increased participation by women in economic activities brings irrefutable benefits to the welfare of entire families.

In general terms, indicators of women's relative position in Bangladesh society have slowly improved over the last 20 years for reasons such as improved access to education and to the labour market – despite persistent gender differences.

Interestingly the empowerment of womenfolk is often interpreted by poor people as a class issue where the poor and powerless triumph over the rich and powerful. Thus the achievement of gender equality has the potential to produce a unifying effect for women and men among the poor and powerless. This positive attitude of poor men to an increase in women's empowerment as a form of class advancement is in direct contrast to the conventional belief that gender equality is often a divisive issue for poor men and women.

The Country Strategy and Dialogue on Gender Equality

Sida's development co-operation with Bangladesh currently operates under a Country Strategy developed in 1996 and covering the period January 1997 to December 31, 2001. The development of the 1997–2001 Country Strate-

gy for Bangladesh seems to have been the culmination of a period of intense interest in gender equality and promotion of women's interests and was clearly seen as such at the time. It was also one element in a specific gender equality strategy. The Strategy linked aspects of gender equality to goals and priorities in each of the key sectors of Sida's development co-operation. While somewhat short on the specifics of how gender equality was to be pursued in each major element of Swedish development co-operation, the Strategy did include a very direct statement of the high priority of gender equality in all aspects of Sida co-operation in Bangladesh. On balance, there could not be a more explicit indication from Sida than the 1997–2001 Country Strategy for Bangladesh, of its intent to ensure that programmes supported by Sweden in poverty, health, education, and human rights and democratic development are expected to address issues of gender equality and to have considerations of gender equality mainstreamed into them.

It is the feeling amongst Sida staff that gender equality may be less prominent in future as an explicit goal – or “point of departure” as it was phrased in the 1997–2001 Country Strategy – for Sida's development co-operation than in the previous period. This view holds that gender will be more fully mainstreamed into the actual programme and to the various sub-sectors of co-operation in future but with a somewhat diminished level of visibility.

This seems to be a realistic assumption if one is to go by the draft Country Strategy for 2001–05. It emphasises continuity from the co-operation between Sweden and Bangladesh as well as renewal to accommodate ongoing changes in Bangladesh. It is significant that the draft Country Strategy pays special attention to women and children as a particularly vulnerable group and includes an analysis of both historical and recent changes in discussing equality.

As already noted the climate for promoting gender equality in Bangladesh through development assistance is conducive in terms of supportive legislation and officially stated priorities. However, it is important that the programmes resulting from the Country Strategy include practical measures for mainstreaming gender equality and for continuing gender equality elements of current sector programmes. In this process of moving from the Country Strategy to changes in planned or current programmes, dialogue on gender equality remains a central tool.

Dialogue on Gender Equality between GoB and Sida/Swedish Embassy has developed positively through the different phases of co-operation. This dialogue has been facilitated by GoB placing Gender Equality centrally in key policy documents and by Sida's promotion of the issue in annual negotiations and in relevant fora. However, experience suggests that Sida has also met considerable difficulty in achieving a positive response to gender equality messages and institutional measures, sometimes as a consequence of factors outside a partner agency's control such as staff rotation within the public service. Nonetheless, Sida has persisted in attempting to communicate key

messages on gender equality and has worked to maintain a fairly high public profile concerning the priority of equity issues.

There is a risk in Bangladesh as in other partner countries that preparation of the Country Strategy in the Swedish language through a prolonged internal process, limits the depth and relevance of dialogue between the Swedish Government and key stakeholders in GoB partner agencies.

Gender Mainstreaming

The Evaluation Team assessed gender mainstreaming in the interventions in accordance with the Action Programme's suggested components which include: explicit gender equality goal, gender analysis and sex dis-aggregated data, mainstreaming structures, roles and responsibilities of key actors for gender mainstreaming, ownership, institutional capacity and resources, and capacity building, e.g. gender training. It is important to note that the Evaluation Team did not apply an 'all or nothing' judgement in. Instead, the process was appreciated, which leads to and deepens the integration of a mainstreaming strategy. To capture the mainstreaming process the Team developed a 6-point mainstreaming assessment tool.

Both the NFE 2 and NFE 3 programmes have formulated *gender equality goals* as numeric targets (i.e. 50% women learners, 50% girls and teachers). They recognise the need for targeting women and girls specifically. As long as gender equality goals are limited to a parity of women and men, this does not ensure that deeper inequalities than access to training are addressed. However, there are some indications that gender sensitivity (e.g. discussion on women's rights) has also been considered and introduced in the curriculum contents.

The two NGO interventions, STD and ASK, are distinctly different from those in non-formal education in that they include GE an explicit part of their organisational goals. Hence, they should also be equipped to undertake *gender analysis*.

With gender justice being an integral part of its goal, *ASK* not only analyses gender inequalities and abuse of women's rights, but also implements Gender Equality and monitors trends through the sex dis-aggregated data it collects for routine reporting. Exposure of discriminatory laws as well as illegal application of laws in the form of discriminatory practices are major parts of *ASK*'s work. Despite the centrality of Gender Equality there is scope for a more systematic orientation to gender analysis and application of gender analysis tools among the staff.

The establishment of *STD* was based on a joint recognition by Sida and a group of concerned Bangladeshis that there was a need for support to other institutions – Government Organisations, GOs and NGOs – in the area of gender analysis, working with and institutionalising gender equality goals. *STD* has since developed the tools for gender analysis, which are central in its gender training activities.

The targeting on a 50% participation of women and girls in the NFE 2 and NFE 3 programmes indicate, that some gender considerations have influenced the goal-setting. Gender analysis that could have gone behind the quantitative target and highlighted unequal access and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys seem to be absent.

If gender analysis from the outset was limited, some gender disaggregated information is gathered during implementation at the centres. But the data is not consolidated and analysed at the central level at Directorate for Non-Formal Education, DNFE, in Dhaka where capacity is currently very low after the high staff turn-over.

It should be noted that the evaluation team was not able to secure quantitative *gender dis-aggregated data* on NFE 2 outcomes during repeated visits to DNFE headquarters. There seem to be considerable difficulty with the local and regional compilation of data and its transfer to DNFE headquarters for further compiling and analysis.

In the spirit of Sida's Action Programme the responsibility for mainstreaming gender equality lies with the implementing partner organisations. Sida's role can be characterised as facilitating the promotion of gender equality. The GoB has established *mainstreaming structures*, i.e. mechanisms and bodies at national and thana level with the responsibility to promote and monitor gender equality. It is the impression that there is a long way between these and specific interventions, in which gender mainstreaming structures are generally not established.

The support given by Sida to gender consultancy Technical Assistance for DNFE is a good example, of where *Sida's role as a facilitator* can be traced. The Local Gender Consultancy, LGC of STD, was contracted to promote gender equality in all DNFE's activities, including NFE 2 and NFE 3. A DNFE Gender Focal Point was created by assistance from the LGC. A major activity was "Expertise Development Training" for 20 DNFE officials and for batches of 67 DNFE officials in April-May 2000.

At the level of NFE training centres the establishment of Centre Management Committees, CMCs, may be seen to entail embryonic structure for promoting gender mainstreaming. However, few of the CMCs are active, and gender equality is not seen to be explicitly part of their agenda.

With limited staff resources available at the Embassy Sida's most obvious role seems to relate to its ability to facilitate dialogue and networking between concerned stakeholders in gender equality which will contribute to strengthen institutional capacity. This is also where Sida is seen to have contributed to formation of mainstreaming structures and *capacity building* in the different partner organisations. Sida is well positioned to facilitate between implementing agencies and NGOs and the national machineries and national gender expertise.

Sida has been determined to help *institutionalise gender awareness* and establish mainstreaming structures. This was the justification for starting to support

STD in the first place. Through technical assistance provided by the STD's Local Gender Consultancy to DNFE attempts have been made to identify the gender gaps in the NFE Programme Portfolios, in teachers and Supervisors Guide, and in literacy materials.

The LGC, Technical Assistance gender training in DNFE helped to build capacity for a while. The gender sensitised staff were a resource that could have strengthened institutional capacity and sustained the short-lived gender focal points. In view of staff turn-over and other priorities by DNFE the initiatives have been fragile and suggest that one off gender training is not sufficient to ensure gender equality mainstreaming but needs follow up.

Provision of technical support to the new clause on gender recently agreed among the NFE 3 partners, should also be helpful for more careful monitoring to improve project effectiveness

It seems essential that efforts to strengthen NFE *monitoring* should not only concentrate on improved data collection at field level but on much improved transfer, compiling and reporting of data at headquarters level.

As NFE 2 winds down there are opportunities to transfer Gender Equality lessons to newer programmes in literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. To exploit such opportunities future programmes, which are oriented to skills training and employment must be examined from a Gender Equality perspective if gains made in NFE 2 are to be consolidated.

In relation to the process oriented model of mainstreaming developed by the evaluation team the interventions in non-formal education (NFE2 and NFE3) have achieved a partial level of mainstreaming which could be described best as pro-forma (level two). In some aspects a gender mainstreaming strategy is somewhat institutionalised (level four) in that they have included specific participation targets and have made some effort to monitor gender disaggregated data but have fallen short on implementing a gender equality strategy or monitoring and evaluating changes in Gender Equality.

In contrast, and not surprising given their core mandates, ASK and STD have had a much more explicit commitment to Gender Equality and a higher level of mainstreaming from a process perspective. If NFE 2 and 3 have elements of a level 2 (pro-forma) and level 4 (institutionalised) mainstreaming, ASK and STD represent more of a level 4-5 implementation rate with elements of monitoring and evaluation of mainstreaming gender equality – an area in which opportunities are not fully exploited.

Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality

Sida finds common ground with the Government of Bangladesh in the fact that poverty reduction is the overall objective of their development co-operation and national development policies respectively. This is a useful entry point through which gender equality can be further pursued.

Whether measured as income-consumption deficiencies or as experienced forms of deprivation such as violence, isolation and powerlessness, poverty in Bangladesh has a gender bias. ASK directly targets the synergy between poverty reduction and gender equality, supporting poor women defending their human rights. STD addresses the linkage between poverty and gender equality at a conceptual level in its gender training activities, but has not made this linkage explicit. STD also advocates for gender affirmative action, particularly pointing to women's productive and human resources potentials.

For both NFE 2 and 3, literacy and education are seen as key pathways from poverty. Because of the tendency for poverty to be feminised, an emphasis on female education has been included in GoB national policies. This is a vital focus, but the mass nature of the programme has necessarily detracted from efforts to improve learning quality and to make it more relevant to livelihoods. The two non-formal education programmes would benefit from a more explicit poverty orientation with a gender perspective. The absence of a gender sensitive skills-based programme – and hence a potential for economic returns – has somewhat reduced the perceived relevance of the interventions to the poorest women and men. Plans for the continuing education pilot PLCE component of NFE 2 as well as a future NFE 3 may help to remedy this perception of reduced relevance.

The embassy staff noted at the time of the evaluation mission that they planned to use the PLCE pilot program to gain experience to benefit more viable continuing education programmes with a stronger Gender Equality content. This approach should also provide more information on strengthening the link between continuing education programs and poverty alleviation.

Economic emancipation by poor women and men has also often led to their political emancipation. The somewhat greater say women now have in decision making in the family and in public tends to threaten the status quo. The backlash stemming out of progress women have made on the economic and political fronts is registered most dramatically in violence against women, which is frequently resorted to by those who feel their position threatened. These changes in power relations require sensitive handling on the part of development workers and implementing NGOs.

Stakeholder Participation and Gender Equality

The climate for stakeholder participation in Bangladesh is reported to be changing in connection with debates about decentralisation. A change in this essential approach to addressing the needs and interests of poor women and men is of concern to large sections of civil society. Non-formal education programmes may be particularly important for promoting stakeholder participation and dialogue at different levels. On the other hand, smaller and more flexible interventions like ASK find it easier to adjust their orientation to include changes in strategy and operations for promoting gender equality.

Participation in NFE 2 by primary stakeholders is often largely passive, or at best at a level where the learners serve as informants in occasional surveys. This should not be seen as reflecting a diminished role for NGOs since they play an important role in the delivery of both NFE2 and NFE3. Rather, it should be noted that some NGOs visited by the evaluation team implement programming in NFE2 in such a way that learners play a mainly passive role as the recipients of instruction, with little or no influence on how instruction takes place.

Generally speaking, in the elements of NFE2 implemented by NGOs, the quality of participation by primary stakeholders varies with the background and orientation of the NGOs involved. One factor, which seems to hinder NGOs in investing in participatory methods, is the very low allocation of resources for administration and overhead which limits their ability to experiment.

On the other hand, functional participation is common in Bangladesh because group formation is invariably used to organise new credit schemes, agricultural programs, trades development initiatives and similar community actions. For many NGOs involved in administering NFE2 centres, literacy training can be integrated into other activities in the communities and serves as both a tool for recruitment and a service to be provided to existing members.

In its approach to participation NFE3 benefits from UNICEF's involvement in organising popular participatory workshops. The intervention is reported to have made efforts on consultative participation and even interactive ones with the primary stakeholders.

ASK consults with both primary service users and secondary government stakeholders among its key stakeholders. Both ASK and STD provide frameworks for interactive participation with their primary stakeholders at sub-national levels. Some of these groups are reported to have practised the much higher level of participation represented by self-mobilisation.

Finally, within Sida's country programme in Bangladesh, there are informal exchanges among like-minded Sida partner organisations. For example, ASK and STD occasionally share audio-visual materials or information that they each publish. There are some opportunities for Sida to facilitate more structured linkages between NGOs but even more so between NGOs and government agencies. The experience of DNFE-STD collaboration amply demonstrates the enormous challenge such an effort faces. Nevertheless, in view of the roles government and NGOs will continue to play in the development of Bangladesh, this difficult cross-fertilisation is a worthwhile cause.

Changes in Gender Equality and Other Effects – Including Gender Roles

The NFE literacy training interventions offer opportunities for girls and boys, women and men to interact in safe learning environments. They also offer opportunities for demystifying stereotypes and changing the participants' perceptions of each other and themselves. In addition, they offer a forum for the participants to question and challenge certain manifestations of gender-based behaviours, such as violence against women. Learners report a greater awareness of rights and experience of a form of relational empowerment in making their own decisions to spend what they earn.

Political empowerment is also indicated by the women's reported new awareness of their right to work outside the home, to cast votes for their preferred candidate, and of control over family expenditures.

To what extent lives of new learners have changed as a result of the non-formal education interventions is perceived slightly differently by learners, centre supervisors and NGO management staff. However, everyone agreed that the experience of learning together helps women emerge from isolation, become more aware of their situation and rights, and develop a greater self-confidence.

Improved GE considerations are also particularly important in the pilot PLCE project if the model is to succeed and have a wider influence on the emerging NFE programmes. The pilot PLCE model has a strong potential to assist in addressing women's practical needs.

Sida efforts to promote GE as part of project goals and in capacity building of staff at all levels in DNFE were hampered by problems in staff turnover and a difficult human resource management environment which resulted, in part, from changes in national policy on civil service advancement and mobility. The Local Gender Consultancy group managed, however, to train and motivate a number of DNFE staff in spite of the massive turnover that followed.

The newly developed monitoring, evaluation and reporting system, MER, must also incorporate gender disaggregated data if DNFE is to be successful in tracking even the most basic participation data for women and men. While this data is reported partially in the most recent programme reports, officials at DNFE were careful to point out to the evaluation team that data collection and collation at field level in the centres themselves does not support gender disaggregated reporting.

Work by ASK has apparently contributed to concrete impacts in the reduction of polygamy, early marriage and *hilla* (intervening marriage), oral divorce, wife beating, and dowry incidence rates. All of these changes translate into an improved quality of life for women.

One of the most empowering experiences for women participating in these programmes is the mere fact of escaping isolation and sharing experiences

with other women. It is in such situations that the line between women's practical needs and strategic interests blur. The opportunity for women and girls to assemble with others like them and also with men and boys provides them with access to safe places and to services and opens doors to other mainstream resources and opportunities.

The changes resulting from breaking exclusion of women from most public spheres have affected the traditional gender roles and the relationships between women and men, girls and boys in Bangladesh. It is noteworthy that progress in women's empowerment and achievement of gender equality appears to have a unifying effect for women and men among the poor.

At a strategic level the most significant of ASK's gender mainstreaming achievements may lie in the successes the organisation attains in influencing national laws to be more gender sensitive. ASK's work illustrates meeting certain women's practical needs through legal aid provision, but it is an impact limited to specific women clients and their families. In contrast ASK has also been able to help change the lives of many more women in the country through the legislative changes that they advocate.

The restriction of the right to issue *fatwas* by religious leaders and the recognition of mothers as legal guardians are among the significant milestones in renegotiating the balance of power between all women and men in contemporary Bangladeshi society.

STD is also regarded as having played a catalytic role in raising gender awareness. It has developed into an important multiplier of gender trainers and supplier of supportive resources. There are now 179 local NGOs in 14 districts that are part of STD's Development Workers' Information Network, DWIN.

Another important GE change to note concerns the approach taken by the NGOs in challenging male dominance. The interventions by ASK and STD show that women's economic contributions can be effective arguments in support of changes in gender relations. On the other hand, structural changes in power sharing are extremely slow in emerging. To address the hostility and resistance from the male establishment which often accompanies women's empowerment, efforts are made to specifically target male leaders and community opinion makers for gender education.

These lessons on how effective changes in gender equality have been gradually shaped deserve to be shared and replicated widely. There is an opportunity for Sida to provide a link among its partners, especially with the Government of Bangladesh, which has the power to scale up the replication of effective strategies. Many NGOs, such as those delivering literacy training on behalf of DNFE, have strong links to government as contracted deliverers of services. The challenge is to deepen this relationship so that the experience of NGOs in promoting gender equality feeds back into policy development and program design.

Lessons Learned

- While Sida's Country Strategy for Bangladesh (and the process of its development) has provided an explicit requirement that gender equality should be mainstreamed in interventions supported by Sida, the translation of the strategy into specific interventions requires that gender equality should be strengthened in each of the interventions. As the transition is made to a new Country Strategy for Bangladesh, close consideration will need to be given to how to translate a priority for gender equality into concrete programme design considerations, especially where sectoral approaches are adopted.
- The strong public profile of the Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh with regard to issues relating to equality (including especially, equality for children and youth) can be built on through continued emphasis on issues concerning gender relations and equality for women and girls.
- Sometimes, as in Bangladesh, continued Sida emphasis on equality issues in dialogue with counterparts encounters either active resistance or problems of continuous change and turnover in personnel which tend to weaken its impact. This highlights the fact that dialogue on gender equality is a continuous process with a need to renew its impact on a regular basis and to be tactically sensitive to setbacks and required changes in direction and emphasis.
- If very large interventions in areas such as literacy are to move beyond a simple target rate for women's participation and address issues of gender relations in a mainstreamed approach, the problem of quality assurance in mass participation programming will need to be addressed. The need to keep per capita programme costs low in a programme with millions of participants must be balanced with the need to provide critically important, reasonable quality, gender equality content.
- The innovative attempt to link gender-specific support to local NGOs to Sida supported efforts in non-formal education through the Local Gender Consultancy mechanism represents an important experiment in promoting gender equality linkages across different Sida supported interventions. While it has experienced difficulties specific to the counterpart agency in Bangladesh, it should not be abandoned as a possible model for wider use in Sida supported interventions.
- Experience in Bangladesh suggests a strong correlation between poverty reduction efforts and the promotion of basic legal and human rights. Provision of basic access to the judicial system and a reasonable chance of securing legal redress seem to reduce economic vulnerability for assisted people. There is an opportunity in Bangladesh and elsewhere to explore the links between gender equality, poverty and legal rights.

- One of the most often cited and most significant impacts of establishing participation rate targets for women and girls in literacy programming seems to be the possibility that such participation in a public and social experience can help to overcome the serious problem of isolation and lack of communication among women in some communities. The experience of Bangladesh may prove useful in other countries where social and religious practice isolates women and makes them more vulnerable.
- Programmes directly addressing the legal rights of women and girls and providing them with representation and support can have strong practical and strategic effects. To some extent they may be seen as an important adjunct to an effective mainstreaming strategy.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This draft report presents the results of the field study mission to Bangladesh for the Evaluation of Sida's Support to Development Co-operation for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The evaluation is being carried out for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency by COWI, Denmark, in co-operation with Goss Gilroy Inc. of Ottawa, Canada, and national consultants in Bangladesh.

The purpose and scope of the evaluation is:

- To assess how Sida's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in the country strategy process;
- To assess the strategic and practical changes with regard to the promotion of gender equality that interventions supported by Sida have contributed to or may contribute to; and
- To provide an input to a deeper understanding of the concrete meaning of concepts in interventions supported by Sida, namely: gender equality, empowerment of women, stakeholder participation, strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality and mainstreaming.

Data for the evaluation come from case studies in Nicaragua, South Africa and Bangladesh, all of which are grounded in interviews with key persons at Sida/Stockholm and with key people who have been involved in Swedish development assistance, in this case to Bangladesh, and in the particular interventions studied.

The evaluation team for Bangladesh was composed of Ted Freeman and Sevilla Leowinata of GGI, Ms. Jowshan A. Rahman and Mirza Najmul Huda, assisted by Prabin Behari Barua of Bangladesh, and Britha Mikkelsen of COWI, Denmark. Ted Freeman and Britha Mikkelsen shared the team-leader position with an overlap of 4 days. Jowshan A. Rahman concentrated on the national context for Gender Equality Issues, Sevilla Leowinata and Prabin Barua were mainly involved with evaluation of ASK and STD, while Mirza N. Huda, Ted Freeman and Britha Mikkelsen concentrated mostly on the Country Strategy, NFE 2 and NFE 3. The country study was undertaken from May 14 to June 2, 2001.

1.1 Scope of the Bangladesh Country Case Study

In contrast with the pre-selection of interventions at the time of preparation of TOR for this Evaluation, the four interventions studied in Bangladesh, within the Democratic Governance and Education sectors, were selected in a slightly different process. The selection was based on scrutiny of a study on Gender Equality in Swedish-supported projects (Sida, Rokeya Khatun, Sept. 2000) commissioned by the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka, which was in process at the time of TOR formulation. Secondly, discussions with staff at Sida led to the selection of four interventions which fulfil the criteria used for selection of interventions for further analysis in this evaluation. These included expected practical or strategic changes regarding GE and potential lessons for Sida support to promote GE in key sectors. The four interventions are:

- NFE 2, Non Formal Education. (Basic Literacy for Adolescents and Adults). The Pilot Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) Project is a sub-component of the NFE 2 projects and is funded with NFE project funds).
- NFE 3: Non Formal Education Project 3 – (Basic Education for Hard-to-Reach Urban Working Children).
- Ain o Shalish Kendro (ASK) – (NGO – Training on Human Rights)
- Steps Towards Development (STD) – (NGO – Training on gender and related issues)

The Bangladesh study is slightly different from both the Nicaragua and South Africa studies in one aspect: The two interventions for human rights and democratic governance are implemented through two NGOs, Ain o Shalish Kendro (ASK) and Steps Towards Development (STD), both of which place a strong emphasis on gender equality (GE). Both have GE as an explicit and key part of their organisation goals. In the case of ASK, Sida “bought into” a mature programme that has been built over the years with a strong GE focus on Human Rights and Social Justice concerns.

STD, on the other hand, was born as a manifestation of a shared interest between Sida and a group of young social activists who saw a need for creating a service organisation devoted primarily to the promotion and institutionalisation of gender analysis. Thus the question of mainstreaming was considered by the ET not only in terms of how GE had been incorporated in various stages of the project cycle, but also on what strategies had been used and how well each organisation had succeeded in achieving its own goal.

Two other interventions, NFE 2 – basic literacy for adolescents and adults, which also includes an ongoing Pilot Project on Post-Literacy and Continuing Education, and NFE 3 – basic education for hard to reach urban working children were chosen for study. These two projects are representative of the extensive support Sweden has provided to non-formal education in Bangladesh.

The evaluation aims to draw out lessons for future policy and strategy revisions and for the application of these lessons in practical development co-operation, rather than focusing on retrospective accountability in a narrow sense. Therefore, the evaluation team has tried to focus on the lessons that have been learned, identification of missed opportunities – where relevant, and on the opportunities for Sida in continuing co-operation with its partners. In keeping with this approach, the evaluation team has located its assessment of progress towards Sida’s gender equality goal in a wider context that includes:

- National policies and machinery for promotion of gender equality;
- The national and local historical and political contexts;
- Relationships among government and public institutions, civil society organisations and ordinary citizens who are the intended beneficiaries of most interventions; and
- Inter-linkages between Sida’s gender equality goal and the overarching goal of poverty reduction

The key issues covered by the Bangladesh field mission are drawn directly from the Terms of Reference for the overall study (*Evaluation of Sida’s Support to Development Cooperation for the Promotion of Gender Equality*) and from supplementary meetings and discussions between the evaluation team members, Sida, Embassy staff and the project authority. These key issues may be summarised as follows:

1. To what extent is Sida’s mainstreaming strategy reflected in the *country strategy process* for Bangladesh?
 - a. What has been the quality of the gender analysis in the country strategy process;
 - b. To what extent and how is gender equality promoted in the dialogue with the partner country during the process?
2. What has been the *gender equality content* of the four chosen Sida supported interventions in Bangladesh? More specifically:
 - a. To what extent have the interventions focused on gender equality as a priority? Is the goal of gender equality reflected in the design and implementation (and evaluation and monitoring) of the interventions? What obstacles are present which could prevent the interventions from addressing gender equality? What opportunities are present?
 - b. What evidence exists of the use of a mainstreaming strategy for including gender equality as a goal of the interventions?
3. What is the relationship in each intervention between the pursuit of gender equality as a goal and the need to *address poverty reduction*? Is there any conflict between gender equality and poverty reduction goals in the intervention? Are there real or potential synergies?

4. What has been the overall level of *stakeholder participation* in the intervention as it relates to the question of gender equality? What are the obstacles and opportunities for stakeholder participation in the area of gender equality?
5. *Which changes* have occurred in the gender equality situation in Bangladesh as a result of the interventions? To what extent have there been changes meeting the practical gender needs of women and/or in advancing their strategic gender interests?
 - a. Have the interventions had a positive effect on women's empowerment?
 - b. Have they addressed, and/or led to changes in male roles and in conceptions of masculinities?
6. How can the experience of the Bangladesh country strategy and the four interventions reviewed assist in a deeper understanding of the use and meaning of the *concepts* of:
 - a. Gender equality;
 - b. Empowerment of women;
 - c. Stakeholder participation;
 - d. Strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality;
 - e. Mainstreaming; and,
 - f. Male roles and masculinities.

In attempting to address these evaluation issues, the evaluation team was guided by the outcome of the Inception Workshop carried out in Stockholm in early March. The participants in the workshop emphasised the need to balance a retrospective and prescriptive approach to the evaluation. In addition the Bangladesh study built on experience gained in the preceding Nicaragua and South Africa studies. As a result, the Bangladesh team has tried to develop lessons learned which will contribute to realising future opportunities for supporting gender equality rather than shedding light only on past performance.

1.2 Analytical Dimensions of the Key Evaluation Issues

In order to provide a more concrete background to the analysis, which follows in the report, it is useful to briefly outline some of the ways in which the evaluation team framed its analysis of key issues within the context of Sida's programme and of conditions in Bangladesh.

1.2.1 Dialogue on Gender Equality

The Terms of Reference for the evaluation emphasised the importance of a dialogue on gender equality between the Government of Sweden and host

governments in order to ensure shared commitment to this important goal. In addition, the discussions between the evaluation team members and staff at Sida headquarters in Stockholm and Embassy representatives pointed out the way the dialogue on gender equality may supplement specific gender equality actions in bilateral interventions. In essence, a number of Sida officers reminded team members that what happens outside of specific interventions in the form of dialogue may be as important as what takes place within the interventions.

In order to adequately assess the issue of dialogue and its use in promoting gender equality, the Bangladesh study team examined different types of dialogue:

1. Direct government-to-government dialogue on gender equality between the Governments of Sweden (represented by the Swedish Embassy and its staff) and the Government of Bangladesh but outside the dimensions of specific interventions.
2. Formal and informal dialogue with different stakeholders on gender equality within the context of specific interventions using the four case study interventions as test cases; and,
3. Dialogue between Sida and specific civil society organisations.

1.2.2 Defining Gender Equality Goals

As indicated in the Action Programme for implementing Sida's Gender Equality Strategy, equality between men and women represents a goal of Swedish Development Co-operation with mainstreaming selected as the defining strategy for achieving that goal. In light of this fact, the evaluation team needed to establish a reasonable level of expectations when examining the four interventions for goals in gender equality. Given the fact that Sida's Action Programme for Promoting Equality Between Women and Men in Partner Countries (with its constituent Policy and Action Plan) was officially published in April 1997 and was pre-dated by a considerable body of Sida-published work on gender equality¹, it seems reasonable that Sida supported development co-operation interventions developed in the 1990s would exhibit some formal commitment to gender equality goals.

It was important for the team to establish which goals in gender equality should be reflected in the design or implementation of an intervention. As pointed out in the *Inception Report* prepared during the first phase of this evaluation, Sida's *Action Programme for Promoting Equality Between Men and Women in Partner Countries* provides a working definition of gender equality:

Equality between women and men refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality is not a women's issue but should concern and engage men as well as women. Equality does not

¹ For example, *Gender Equality in Development Co-operation; Taking the Next Step*, Sida 1995; *Gender Equality Experience and Results Analysis Exercises*, Beth Worniuk for Sida, 1996 *Mainstreaming: A Strategy for Achieving Equality Between Men and Women*, 1996.

mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Equality includes both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The quantitative aspect concerns the equal distribution of women and men in all areas of society. The qualitative aspects refer to the need to give equal weight to the knowledge, experience and values of both women and men as a means of enriching and directing all areas of societal development. Equality between men and women is seen as both a human rights issue and a pre-condition for and indicator of sustainable people centred development.

In short, an attempt to address gender equality should consider and deal with:

- Socially defined roles and expectations;
- Changes in gender relations;
- Variables over time and geography;
- Power and inequality;
- Institutions, and,
- Multidimensional links to economic, political and social interactions.

This characterisation of gender equality in terms of a fairly complex set of relations between men and women was of critical importance to the analysis carried out by the evaluation team since it meant that simple targeted levels of participation by women can only be seen as a first step in formulating gender equality goals, since they often may not represent an effort to address inequalities in gender relation or the factors that sustain them.

1.2.3 Mainstreaming

Sida's Action Programme includes a set of mainstreaming components that constitute a mainstreaming strategy, such as gender equality goals, gender analysis and gender dis-aggregated data, mainstreaming structures, roles and responsibility of actors, ownership, institutional capacity and resources and capacity building. The evaluation team based its assessment on tracking these components, appreciating that mainstreaming of gender equality is not an 'all or nothing' condition. In addition to these the evaluation team also developed a six-point classification system to assess the level of mainstreaming in a given intervention. The scale was structured as follows:

1. *Zero* mainstreaming which is quite self-explanatory and implies either no mention of gender equality or an obviously superficial reference;
2. *Pro Forma* mainstreaming meaning a merely token sentence or paragraph is found in project design documents with no evidence that it effected the structure or activities of the intervention;
3. *Integrated* mainstreaming meaning that a systematic gender analysis was done but there is little or no evidence that it effected project design;

4. *Institutionalised* mainstreaming meaning that the findings of the gender analysis were evident in some aspects of intervention design;
5. *Implemented* mainstreaming meaning that the intervention went ahead and implemented the gender equality changes suggested by the gender analysis; and,
6. *Monitored and evaluated* mainstreaming meaning that systems for monitoring and evaluating the interventions gathered the necessary data and conducted the appropriate analysis to report on the gender equality results of the intervention.

Importantly, this scale represents a process model of mainstreaming and attempts to identify how and where considerations of gender equality should inform the project identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation cycle in major bilateral interventions supported by Sida.

1.2.4 Poverty and Gender Equality

A key issue for this evaluation concerns the extent to which there may be synergies and complementarities in efforts to reduce gender inequality and efforts to reduce poverty. Another aspect of the same issue is the extent that the goal of gender equality may conflict with Sida's overarching objective of poverty reduction.

Where interventions did focus on poverty, the question becomes how much is known about the different ways in which men and women and boys and girls are experiencing poverty, e.g. as measurable "income/consumption poverty" as well as experienced deprivation and vulnerability. Finally, the team focused on whether efforts to address poverty would be improved or hampered in their effectiveness where gender equality considerations are built into the interventions.

1.2.5 Stakeholder Participation and Gender Equality

The Inception Report to this evaluation proposed that participation of stakeholders in the design, development, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes in development co-operation could be assessed using a modified scale which ranks stakeholder participation across seven different levels:

1. Passive Participation (as recipients of information);
2. Participation in information giving;
3. Participation by consultation;
4. Participation for material incentives;
5. Functional participation (forming groups to meet pre-determined project objectives);

6. Interactive participation (participation in joint analysis leading to action plans and the formation of new local institutions);
7. Self-Mobilisation (taking initiatives independent of external institutions).

The inception report also emphasised that stakeholder participation should be examined from the perspective of at least three groups:

- *Primary stakeholders* are those who will be directly or ultimately affected by the intervention, either positively or negatively;
- *Secondary stakeholders* are intermediaries such as implementing organisations, or other individuals, persons, groups or institutions involved in an intervention (including funders);
- *Key stakeholders* are those of the primary and secondary stakeholders who can significantly affect or influence an intervention either positively or negatively.

The challenge for the evaluation team was to establish the level of primary stakeholder participation in the intervention (regardless of gender concerns) and to identify the extent to which women and men (and youth and children) could be seen as participating in ways that promoted gender equality.

1.2.6 Changes in Gender Equality

The Evaluation team asked what changes in gender equality have occurred as a result of the four interventions, or rather what changes in gender equality have occurred with a contribution from these four interventions among other factors?

In examining gender equality changes related to the four interventions, the evaluation team looked at four different aspects of gender equality:

- a) What qualitative and quantitative changes in gender equality can be linked to the interventions or to situations and discourses, which the interventions have contributed to?
- b) Have the interventions had a positive effect on women's empowerment?
- c) Have the interventions identified or had implications for a need for changes in male roles and the definition of masculinities and have they contributed to such changes?
- d) Have the interventions contributed to improvements in meeting women's practical needs and advancing their strategic interests?

In the absence of a sector or intervention specific baseline analysis of gender conditions relative to each intervention, the team relied mainly on observed and reported differences among women and men project beneficiaries to assess the type and level of gender equality changes associated with each intervention.

The Bangladesh team also focused on different dimensions of the reported changes in gender equality associated with the four interventions. These included:

Empowerment

The *Inception Report* discusses some of the characteristics of women's empowerment found to be particularly relevant in assessing the changes brought about in some relation to the four interventions examined in Bangladesh:

- Empowerment is not something that can be done to people, rather women need to be the agents of their own empowerment. Outsiders and outside organisations can help create the conditions favourable to women's empowerment;
- Empowerment can occur at the personal, relational and collective level where it has different meanings.
 - *Personal* empowerment involves developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity. It involves undoing the effects of internalised oppression;
 - *Relational* empowerment involves developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and the decisions made within it;
 - *Collective* empowerment occurs when individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact than each could have had on their own.

In addition, the evaluation team felt that empowerment included important elements of knowledge, self awareness, and self esteem for women (whether personal or collective) and that it required not only knowledge of the rights of women but some means – addressed within or outside the intervention – to put that knowledge into practice.

Strategic and Practical Changes in Gender Equality

In addressing this question, the team was guided by the definitions of practical and strategic needs and interests presented in the *Inception Report* which defined the two categories as follows:

Practical gender needs and changes

Practical gender needs derive from daily living conditions and the prevailing gender roles of women and men. Therefore, women and men – when consulted separately – will often identify different practical needs, for example women for an easily accessible water source and men for roads. Because practical gender needs are related to daily living conditions and to women's and men's need to meet their basic welfare requirements, they are quite easily perceived and articulated. Because practical needs are embedded in the existing gender-based division of labour, women and men may agree on the changes but realising these needs may still be problematic.

Strategic gender interests and changes

Strategic gender interests are related to power structures and derive from the subordinated position of women in relation to men. Strategic gender interests exist at several levels, for example women's lack of voice within the household, women's lack of influence on decision making in government and lack of recognition and value placed on unpaid household work in national accounts. Strategic gender changes are related to strengthening women's position in society in relation to men. These changes include women's increasing consciousness of their subordination, increasing their opportunities for choice and self-determination, and organising together to bring about transformation of their own position and of the prevailing social order in which they live. Strategic gender interests and changes are, therefore, highly contested.

While the analytical separation of practical and strategic changes is valid, it is important to realise that in reality the two aspects often appear simultaneously.

1.3 Methodology

The methodologies used by each country case study team have been largely identical with important operational variations to deal with the specific operational context of the Sida programme of co-operation in each country. These methodologies were reviewed in meetings with Sida staff in Stockholm in early March 2001 and adjusted to take account of their observations. The methodologies and their application were refined in a team workshop over two days with participation with at least three members of each country study team. Further, lessons on application of methods and tools in Nicaragua were collated and informed the South Africa and Bangladesh studies.

The basic methodological steps in the Bangladesh country case study were as follows:

1. A structured review of Sida documents on the Bangladesh country strategy and programme and on the four interventions prepared from documents provided by the Department for Evaluation and Internal Audit and the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka resulting in preparation of a documents review summary with information on gender equality relevant to each intervention.
2. Interviews with Sida personnel in Stockholm (including consultants where appropriate) with knowledge of either the evolution of the Bangladesh country strategy and approach or of the four interventions chosen for review.
3. Preparation of draft study object grids for each of the four interventions and for the country strategy. The study object grids provide a matrix of the key issues (in short form); the specific sub-questions associate with those issues; key data sources and the methods to be used in addressing the issues and sub-issues. The study object grids are presented in annex 6.

4. In developing and refining the study object grids, team members were guided by concept papers and sector-specific prompt sheets developed during the inception phase of the study.
5. Prior to arrival of the international members of the study team, national consultants conducted preliminary stakeholder interviews and contacted key project co-ordinators and organised, as much as possible, key informant interviews, workshops, and other evaluation contacts.
6. The evaluation team's understanding of current issues of Gender Equality in Bangladesh was derived from content analysis of current news and media archives over a period of the last half-year and information gathered during the field mission. Visits were undertaken to a number of intervention sites within and outside Dhaka, and salient themes were cross-referenced during key informant interviews, meetings and group discussions.
7. During the evaluation mission, members of the study team met and conducted single and group interviews with a wide range of key stakeholders, participants and beneficiaries of the four interventions as well as with Sida staff at the embassy and with project co-ordinators. Annex 3 and 4 provide the team's itinerary and a list of the people interviewed by team members. In addition, team members gathered copies of recent evaluations and reviewed newer project documents not available at Sida headquarters. Wherever they were available (from interviews or documents), team members gathered gender relevant indicators for Bangladesh in general and data on the gender equality effects of the interventions in particular. Accessibility of gender disaggregated data, least time series, is limited. Annex 2, which builds on available data, is an elaboration of the national context for gender equity issues.
8. To the extent possible, study team members conducted a series of more structured workshops and participatory consultations with women, men and youth participants and beneficiaries associated with each of the four interventions.
9. In contacts with primary stakeholders, evaluation team members were able on a number of occasions to carry out a limited form of SWOT analysis workshop focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of efforts and opportunities to address gender equality in the four interventions examined.
10. In the third week of the field study, team members met and prepared detailed briefings on the preliminary findings and conclusions of the study relating to each of the interventions. These were presented in a series of four debriefing discussions/workshops with stakeholders from each of the four interventions carried out over a two-day period in Dhaka.
11. A study mission de-briefing and discussion of overall findings and conclusions was carried out with Swedish Embassy staff which elicited valuable comments and corrections.

12. Results of the country case study were compiled by team members and consolidated in this report.

The assessments of gender equality changes between the four interventions in Bangladesh had a slightly different focus since gender equality was centrally placed in the mandate and objectives of the two interventions, ASK and STD. Hence the evaluation questions to these two interventions concerned more of the HOW than WHETHER the gender equality goal was integrated and mainstreamed. In the NFE interventions, which had literacy as their primary mandate, the questions were balanced more on whether gender equality was integrated and on opportunities for mainstreaming gender equality.

The assessment of four interventions in Bangladesh is illustrative, – if not scientifically representative, – of important programmes for cooperation between GOB and Sida in areas where mainstreaming of GE could be expected.

Chapter 2

Gender Equality – Country Context in Bangladesh

2.1 Basic Gender Equality Indicators

A detailed description of the prevailing situation and key aspects of gender equality in Bangladesh national development on the social, economic and political fronts is provided in Annex 2 to this report. This section highlights some of elements of the national context beginning with a presentation of key gender equality data.

Bangladesh at a Glance – Figures and Statistics²

GNP per capita:	US\$ 350 (1998) (cf. US\$ 279 in 1990)
GDP per capita:	US\$ 282 (1998)
Population:	126 million, 75% live in rural areas (1999)
Population density:	855 per square kilometre (1998)
Population below poverty line (with an intake of 2,100–2,200 calories per day)	60 million people
Population of poorest (consuming less than 1,805 calories per day)	nearly 40 million people (1998)

² *A cautionary note:* these statistics and figures are indicative and should be read with caution. Their main source was the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), as cited in the national context document prepared by J.A. Rahman, the Sida Country Analysis (January 2001), and the BBS's current website. It was observed that varying figures were presented in the BBS publications, some of which were based on different surveys, while others were contained in the same publication. The inconsistency was noted also by Sven Cederroth of the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies who authored Sida's *BANGLADESH APPROACHING THE 21ST CENTURY* (1995), who said that:

“When surveying the books, articles and statistical data on which the information provided in this report is based it was found that the statistics provided often differed and sometimes considerably so.” (p. 1); and Styrbjorn Gustavsson, a Swedish educationist who conducted extensive field work himself in evaluating the Universal Primary Education Projects in late 1980s. Gustavsson wrote in his informative book entitled *PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH: FOR WHOM?* (Dhaka, University Press Limited, 1990) that:

“Statistical inconsistencies are not only very rarely accounted for in all the relevant reports, but there is also a total lack of questioning of data or even relating data from various sources with one another. There is an apparent lack of a critical professional atmosphere which may turn statistics into no more than ideological political arguments.” (p. 19). (He lists a whole page of reasons that illuminate why reliability and validity of educational statistics remain an unabated problem in Bangladesh.)

Percentage of youths under 15 years	45 per cent
between ages 10–15	23 per cent (1999)
Percentage of safe drinking water use	about 76 per cent (1999)
Population at risk from arsenic contamination in ground water	24 million (1999)
Population potentially at risk from arsenocosis	21 million (1999)
Population using hygienic latrines (sanitary/water seal/pit)	40 per cent (1997).
Percentage of female-headed households	15 per cent (1998)

Table 2.1: Bangladesh at a Glance – Figures and Statistics

	Female	Male	Date
Population Ratio	100	105.8	1999
Life Expectancy	57.6 years	58.1 years	1996
Average per capita food intake	874 gram (adult)	1,047 gram (adult)	1998
Earning ratio by heads of household	60	100	1998
Labour force participation	21.3 million	34.7 million	1998
Participation rate in public sector labour force	9% ³	91%	1998
Literacy rate	41.5 percent	50.6 percent	1998
Mean age at first marriage⁴	20.2 years	27.6 years	
Fertility rate	2.98		1998
Maternal mortality rate	4.3 per 1000 live births ⁵		1998
Abortion rate (per annum)	800,000 cases ⁶		1998
Elected Members of Parliament	7 (2%) ⁷	300 (98%)	1996
Union Parishad representation⁸	12,958 ⁹	31,333	1996
Cabinet level representation	15% ¹⁰	85%	2000
Representation in judiciary	8% of judges	92% of judges	2000
Representation in state law enforcement agencies	1% of police force	99% of police force	2000

³ Quota is set at 25% (10% for gazetted and 15% for non-gazetted posts)

⁴ These figure are questionable because other statements within the original document say between “nearly half” and “60%” of the girls in the country are married before the age of 18.

⁵ (14% of all maternal mortality cases are known to be caused by violence)

⁶ Only 10% of those is estimated to be safe abortions. Nearly 50% of tetanus cases among women are due to septic abortion.

⁷ (36 were nominated by political parties)

⁸ The Union Council is currently the lowest level of local government whose members are directly elected at the grassroots level

⁹ (12,828 women were elected to the 13,437 seats reserved for women, based on the formula of 3 female reserved seats and 7 openly contested seats per Union Council. A total number of 20 and 110 women were elected as chairpersons and members in the open seats.)

¹⁰ Two of the four women ministers held strategic positions.

2.2 National Commitments to Equal Rights of Women and Men

2.2.1 International Pledges

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in November 1984¹¹. It also subsequently endorsed the 1985 Nairobi Forward Looking Strategy and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990.

The GoB also endorsed, without any reservation, the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) in 1995. Other relevant international/regional declarations to which the GoB extends its commitment and support include:

- ILO Agreements related to equal rights for women in labour conditions, equal pay, and maternity facilities
- Education for All (EFA), Jomtien, 1990
- Declaration and Action Program of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993
- Declaration and Action Program of the World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995
- South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), Decade for the Girl Child 1999–2000.

2.2.2 National Plans, Policies and Institutional Machineries

A commitment to equal rights for women and men in all spheres of the state and of public life is enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh [Article-28(2)]. However, there remain contradictions between this commitment and other elements of law as a result of pre-existing legislation in such areas as property and inheritance rights for women relative to men. There is also a critical necessity to translate the various legal measures and policy commitments into practical terms, thereby achieving a positive impact on the lives of women and girls in Bangladesh.

Besides the overall National Policy for Advancement of Women, gender concerns have also been incorporated into a number of sectoral policies.

¹¹ [with reservations expressed for Articles 2: Policy measures, 13(a): Rights to family benefits, 16.1(c): same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution, and (f): rights and responsibilities on guardianship of children. The reason cited was “conflict with Sharia law based on the Holy Qur’an and Sunna”. The reservations on Articles 13 (a) and 16.1 (f) were later withdrawn.]

2.2.3 National Machinery for Promoting Gender Equality

Beside the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), a number of institutional mechanisms were put in place to implement of the National Action Plan and the various gender equity strategies. They include:

A. National Council for Women's Development (NCWD)

This forty-four-member council was set up to ensure women's participation in socio-economic development work. The NCWD is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes ministers, senior bureaucrats and Members of the Parliament; members of Planning Commission and a number of reputed women in civil society. Its mandate was to formulate rules and regulations for the development work of different ministries, divisions and other agencies as well as co-ordinate their implementation.

B. Parliamentary Standing Committee for Women and Children Affairs

The ten-member Parliamentary Standing Committee was established to review the activities of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA). The committee meets once a month under the chair of a Member Parliament (MP).

C. Women's Development Implementation and Evaluation Committee

In order to monitor the programme implementation by related sectors as stipulated in the NAP, the committee was formed under the chair of the Minister, MoWCA. Its members include Secretary/Joint Secretary level officials of the MoWCA, sectoral ministries, implementing agencies and selected representatives of civil society.

D. WID Focal Points (WFPs)

A broad network of national WID Focal Points was established in 1990 to ensure incorporation of gender concerns in the sectoral programmes of the line ministries. To strengthen this mechanism at the operational level, Associate WFPs were also appointed since 1999. So far forty-seven ministries/agencies have designated WFPs including the Associate-WFPs.

E. District and Thana Co-ordination Committees

To provide outreach support to the central government mechanisms, sub-national level co-ordination committees were established in each of the 64 districts and 460 thanas. Responsibilities of these committees include monitoring implementation of gender equality efforts by the various sectoral agencies and assessing the situation of violence against women.

An Institutional Review of GoB's WID capability identified several gaps. A major concern was the limited understanding of the requirements of a gender-mainstreaming approach to promote women's advancement among government agencies and line ministries. Gender issues were not being addressed cross-sectorally. Sectoral Women's programmes were often marginalised and

implemented in an isolated manner. The Institutional Review noted that it is important for all the agencies and ministries to appreciate that the task of facilitating women's development is not only the responsibility of the MoWCA.

2.2.4 Civil Society

Bangladesh is well known for its non-governmental organisations (NGOs), some of which are among the largest or most famous in the world.

Notable contributions have been made by NGOs especially in the area of women's empowerment. After Beijing, some of the NGOs and women's organisations took up some programmes on critical areas of concerns. A major concentration was on the areas of human rights, violence against women, trafficking in women and children, migrant labourers, women and health, gender training, women and poverty.

Advocacy and community involvement/participation have seen some effective strategies adopted by the NGOs in their efforts to redress gender disparity issues. For example, the community-based non-formal schools of BRAC are known the world over. Currently 9.5 million poor people in Bangladesh have access to micro-credit services through the programmes run by Grameen Bank, BRAC, Proshika and other NGOs. Of these about 85 per cent are women.

The progressive media has also become a significant champion of gender equality and social justice. Many cases concerning human rights violation draw public attention because of the light shed on them by the media. Some corrective measures leading to positive changes have been made possible through such high-profile media exposures that lead to public pressure.

Successful partnerships between government and civil society have been found to be an effective strategy for achieving the gender equity goals.

A key feature of NGO activity in Bangladesh has been the parallel delivery of services in education, health, water, and other key areas by a broad system of NGOs working often in a program structure developed by government. This provider client relationship sometimes facilitates and sometimes limits the influence, which NGOs may have on national policy and programmes.

2.3 Gender Equality in Bangladesh

Gender disaggregated key human development indicators show that in Bangladesh, women, including adolescent girls and the girl child, are significantly worse off than men in practically every aspect of human life. Bangladesh has been ranked 140th in the world in terms of a gender-related index based on gender gaps in literacy, education, health care, asset ownership and income. It is one of the few countries in the world where there are fewer women than men (100 women to every 105.8 men) and in which women have lower life expectancy than men (57.6 years for women and 58.1 years for men in 1996).

Although the country understandably prides itself in having achieved gender parity in primary education enrolment and attendance, dropout rates for girls remain high especially as they move up the education ladder. Rural residents are often worse off than their urban counterparts in educational achievement.

Around half of the girls in Bangladesh are married before the legal age of 18 while the maternal mortality rate is 4.3 per 1000 live births.

Recent trends of increasing landlessness among small farmers have meant an increase of urban migration from rural areas. Many women are finding themselves in the position of having to earn a living without the benefit of any preparation. Most women work in the low-paying informal sector, such as domestic service, handicrafts, brick breaking, and road construction.

The dire situation of women is further exacerbated by high incidence of mental, physical and sexual harassment and violence against them, both in the domestic and the public spheres.

A new act for prevention of the repression of women and children passed by the Parliament in the year 2000 designates more severe punishments for such violent acts, and, for the first time in Bangladesh history, includes rape as a crime.

One of the most fundamental structural imbalances between women and men is manifested in decision-making power in both family and public lives.

Despite the fact that the leaders of both national political parties are women, women are rarely represented in public forums. In addition, women do not enjoy the same autonomy as men when they participate in political process. Co-option, nomination, and indirect elections are the general practice for women entering the political arena, as contrasted with the men's entry into the same structure. Women are mostly excluded from the mainstream activities of political parties.

A variety of approaches to address gender equality issues are now seen among development co-operation programmes in Bangladesh. One approach is sector-specific. This is exemplified by efforts to get girls to attend and stay in schools in the education sector. For example, UNICEF supports a number of programmes that advocate for the education of the girl-child. A Food for Education programme (initially funded by USAID and the World Bank) and a Female Secondary Stipend Program (being funded by the Asian Development Bank) use material incentives to stimulate interest for families to send their daughters to school. European Commission-funded Program to Motivate, Train and Employ Female Teachers in Rural Secondary Schools attempts to encourage more girls in rural areas to enter into secondary schools by increasing availability of women teachers in the rural schools.

A second approach is systemic. A number of development interventions are designed to assist GoB with gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes. For example, the UNDP Technical Assistance through Gender Facility and Institutional Support for the Implementation of the National Ac-

tion Plan (for the Advancement of Women) aims at raising awareness among line ministries that gender and development is not the responsibility of only the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. The CIDA-supported Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality also works with a number of key ministries to integrate gender perspectives in planning and monitoring their sectoral programmes. Some members of the LCG WAGE (Local Consultative Group, Sub-group on Women's Advancement and Gender Equality), including the governments of Netherlands and Norway and the World Bank, are supporting an initiative to incorporate a gender perspective in the national budget.

A third approach underscores regional networking and co-operation. There is a recognition that certain issues are trans-national in nature. For example, to address trafficking of women and children and HIV/AIDS, require collaborations beyond national boundaries. Hence current UNICEF health awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS, and efforts to address VAW (supported by Danida) and trafficking (supported by NORAD, USAID, among others) include a South-Asia-wide regional aspect in their strategies.

2.4 Current Issues in Gender Equality

2.4.1 Women's Political Participation

There has been some visible progress in women's participation at the local government level. A major breakthrough was the enactment of a law for direct election to reserved seats for women in all the three-tiers of the local government¹².

There has been improvement in representation by women in central government. In the recent past cabinet women's total participation was about 15 per cent. Two of the four women ministers held strategic portfolios. However, despite a quota for women in public service (set at 10 per cent for gazetted and 15 per cent for non-gazetted posts) only 9 per cent of civil servants are women. A special initiative has recently been started by the government to appoint more women at senior levels of the public service.

A lively debate is taking place around increasing the number of reserved seats for women in the Parliament from 30 to 64, to represent all the districts. An equally strong demand is raised by women's organisations to fill these seats through direct election rather than selection by the majority party in Parliament.

¹² (namely the *zilla*/district, *upazila*/sub-district and union levels. However only the Union *Parishad* functions as a local government. The other tiers, which exist in theory, have yet to be activated by Parliament.)

2.4.2 Violence Against Women

Current events in Bangladesh point to an alarming picture of increase in the rate of violent acts against women. These acts include murder for non-payment of dowry, acid throwing, abduction, battering, sexual abuse, and trafficking. This is disconcerting in view of the considerable efforts that have been put in place to advocate against such crimes. Neither sensitisation to the issues nor tougher laws seem to have served as deterrents to the violence. It seems clear that part of this increase is attributable to the increase in number of incidents being reported both by the media and by the victims or their families.

However, there is serious concern on the part of human rights activists that ineffectual enforcement of tough laws actually encourages criminals. It demonstrates to them how easily they can get away with their crimes.

The complexity of legal procedures and poor professional competence on the part of the law enforcement agents to deal with cases of violence against women undermine the effectiveness of legislation aimed at combating violence. Similarly, the indifference of police officials and their negligence in enforcing the law are vital constraints that need to be improved before positive results can be expected.

2.4.3 The Role of Men

Women's empowerment in Bangladesh is generally perceived positively by male members in the community. Acceptance of increased participation by women in economic activities and protection of their rights seem to be based on the fact that they bring irrefutable benefits to the welfare of entire families.

Interestingly, the victory for womenfolk often seems to become more of a class issue where the poor and powerless triumph over the rich and powerful, than a gender issue. Therefore the achievement of gender equality can have a unifying effect for women and men among the poor and powerless.

Development workers have begun to recognise the risks of backlash associated with changing gender relations, and particularly, the role of men. Many sensitisation efforts are now aimed at encouraging men to be equal partners in terms of a new way of sharing responsibilities. Significantly, there is a growing perspective of creative collaboration. Examples include the targeting of influential people who would conventionally be classified as conservative elements in the community, to help champion the cause of gender equality.

2.5 Conclusion

Gender equality, particularly economic emancipation of women, is seen as an important part of the overall government goal of poverty alleviation and national development in Bangladesh. In spite of the positive aspects of offi-

cial policy level rhetoric, implementation falls far short of what is required to produce the changes envisioned in the various plans.

There is a general tendency for formal statements of policy and pledges of programme action to go unsupported by the necessary follow through with resources and actions. The national machinery set up to deal with gender issues is by and large void of power. There is also a major gap between the enactment and enforcement of laws. Although there is wide agreement on GE principles at a policy level between GoB and its development partners, including Sida, the shared understanding seems to remain isolated to a small circle of proponents.

Development in Bangladesh over the last decades has seen NGOs often playing the role of policy and program innovators. The Sida GE strategy, applied through a two-pronged channel touching both the government and NGOs, holds significant potentials for making important contributions to the improvement of the lives of millions of Bangladeshi women, men and children.

Chapter 3

The Country Strategy for Bangladesh and Dialogue on Gender Equality

3.1 The Development and Content of the Current Country Strategy

Sida's development co-operation with Bangladesh currently operates under a Country Strategy developed in 1996 and covering the period January 1997 to December 31, 2001.¹³

Interviews with Sida staff currently posted in Stockholm who were based in the Embassy in Dhaka in the relevant period, and with other members of the Asia Department, indicate that the development of the Bangladesh Country Strategy for 1997–2001 coincided with a period of very high interest and enthusiasm in the Embassy and in the Department for a strong gender equality focus or component in the Bangladesh programme. This was apparently related, to some extent, to the high profile of gender equality as a priority for Swedish development co-operation generated during the development of the gender equality policy and action programme. It also seems to have resulted from personal interest and concern about the harsh realities experienced by the majority of women and many men belonging to the poorest sections of the Bangladesh society. Enthusiasm for the priority given to gender equality on the part of Sida staff involved in the process was another factor. Some of those involved have described the Bangladesh Country Strategy as “ground breaking” or “pioneering” in terms of its comprehensive attention to gender equality.

It is important to recognise that the 1997 Country Strategy document does not represent the first point of record for Sida's approach to gender equality in Bangladesh. In April 1996, the Embassy prepared an “Action Plan for Gender” which was described in a memo as an input to the development of the corporate Sida Action Plan. The memo referred to four key components to the Sida gender equality strategy for Bangladesh:

¹³ *Country Cooperation Strategy Bangladesh: January 1, 1997–December 31, 2001*. Asia Department, Sida.

1. Promoting gender equality in ongoing development programmes;
2. Training activities;
3. Policy dialogue, donor-GOB co-ordination on follow-up to Beijing; and,
4. Special support to NGOs working with promotion of women's rights.

In describing how these four elements of a gender equality strategy were to be combined and made operational, the memo noted some specific needs and some of the responsive measures Sida planned to participate in. For example:

- a) The need for timely and very high quality gender analysis and gender expertise during the project and programme planning process which could be met by combining local expertise with access to assistance from recognised international consultants.
- b) The need to build local capacity and knowledge which was being addressed by linking a local NGO with international trainers and providing it with funds for training of trainers with both NGOs and government.
- c) Participation by Sida in a multi-donor review of institutional structures and competence in gender as one element in the response to Beijing and of a dialogue with government.

In addition to describing the gender equality strategy for Sida in Bangladesh, the memorandum notes that the Embassy would give “special emphasis on gender equality and the role of women in Bangladesh in the Country Assistance Strategy that will be prepared during 1996”.¹⁴

Not surprisingly, given the results of the evaluation team's interviews with former embassy staff and the indications in the memo referred to above, the 1997–2001 Sida Country Co-operation Strategy for Bangladesh is very direct in its focus on gender equality as a key priority. The situation analysis section of the Strategy carries the title *General considerations on future Swedish development co-operation*. It begins immediately by noting the situation of women in Bangladesh and linking it directly to questions of equality:

“Women in Bangladesh are in an extremely vulnerable situation. Greater equality is a prerequisite for poverty reduction. If this is to be achieved it is essential that women are given a stronger position in society – socially, economically, and legally.”

The section goes on to emphasise the need for improved women's representation in decision making positions, the need for greater inputs to the neglected area of reproductive health, the role of education in delaying marriage, etc. Perhaps most pointedly the Strategy links the planning of Swedish development assistance to efforts to improve gender equality:

¹⁴ *Memorandum: Action Plan for Gender*, Britt F. Hagström, Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka, April 1996.

"It is proposed that *the equality aspect shall be the point of departure* in the planning of Swedish assistance. Equality should be given greater importance in the sector programmes, in the policy dialogue with Bangladesh and other donors, as well as through strategic inputs via the Government and local NGOs. Support should also be given for the work on methods for developing basic strategies to integrate these aspects in development activities in Bangladesh. A national action plan for the work in equality is currently being drawn up in accordance with the guidelines from the Beijing Conference."

Significantly, the Country Strategy for 1997–2001 goes beyond the statement of a priority for improving conditions of women and addressing equality by not confining gender equality as a goal to a specific sector or programmes. Rather, gender equality or elements of gender equality, are woven in throughout the sectoral priorities of the Strategy in ways which they were not in the other countries studied. Examples can be cited from the overall objectives of the Strategy and from each of the key sectors of Swedish co-operation.

Overall Objectives

"The main objective of Swedish development co-operation with Bangladesh is to improve the living conditions of poor people, especially women and children. Swedish aid shall be concentrated to a few specific areas and shall be of high quality.

Equality issues shall be the point of departure for the planning and organisation of Swedish development assistance."

Health

"Aims: Improvements in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Target Group: Poor people, especially women and children.

.....the point of departure for Swedish participation is the intentions agreed upon by the countries of the world in the Cairo and Beijing documents: the right of women and girls to sexual and reproductive health."

Education

"Special activities which stimulate the attendance of girls and women in education programmes should be given priority. The content of educational programmes should be reviewed, among other things, in accordance with the recommendations of the Beijing Conference."

Human Rights and Democracy

"Democracy and human rights are supported in the sector programmes. In addition, special projects will be initiated. The promotion of women's rights should be given priority."

It is striking just how often the 1997–2001 Country Strategy document refers to the Beijing Conference and its action programme and follow up. Clearly, the Conference was seen as a strategic anchor for planning and for dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh. The section of the Strategy dealing with the priorities of the Government of Bangladesh simply states that the

government is giving high priority to the development of women and notes that the GOB had expressed its intention to revitalise the National Council for Women in Development.

In summary, the development of the 1997–2001 Country Strategy for Bangladesh seems to have been the culmination of a period of intense interest in gender equality and promotion of women's interest and was clearly seen as such at the time. It was also one element in a specific gender equality strategy. Finally, the Strategy linked aspects of gender equality to goals and priorities in each of the key sectors of Sida's development co-operation (poverty, health, education, human rights). While somewhat short on the specifics of how gender equality was to be pursued in each major element of Swedish development co-operation, the Strategy did include a very direct statement of the high priority of gender equality in all aspects of Sida co-operation in Bangladesh.

3.1.1 The Experience of Implementing the 1997–2001 Strategy

The level of success achieved by Sida (and Bangladesh) in implementing the very high priority for gender equality indicated by the Country Strategy is a matter of some debate. The sections which follow dealing with the four interventions studied by the evaluation team provide some indication of the successes and the challenges experienced in trying to put the Strategy into practice.

There is clearly a body of opinion among some Sida staff interviewed in Dhaka and in Stockholm that the Strategy was appropriate to its time in making the commitment to gender equality and improvements in the conditions of women a very explicit and public priority for Swedish development co-operation in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the same persons wonder if such a high profile was really practical and sustainable in the longer term given the apparent "pro forma" commitment of the Government of Bangladesh and the inevitability that gender equality questions would have to share space with other issues in the dialogue between Sida and the GOB. Not all embassy staff are knowledgeable about Sida GE policy or have been trained in gender analysis. They argue that a more realistic approach would involve allowing the gender equality priority to be pursued at the intervention level through less visible but more "mainstreamed" set of activities.

It is important that this not be read as a direct criticism of the original strategy on the part of the persons interviewed. They accept fully the necessity of the very direct way in which the Country Strategy addressed gender equality. On the other hand they wonder just how one can make gender equality the "point of departure" for planning Swedish development assistance in Bangladesh.

On balance, one thing is very clear from the 1997–2001 Country Strategy for Bangladesh: there could not be a more explicit indication from Sida of its intent to ensure that programmes supported by Sweden in poverty, health, education, and human rights and democratic development are expected to

address issues of gender equality and to have considerations of gender equality mainstreamed in to them.

3.1.2 The Development of the Country Strategy 2001–2005

Sida's Country Strategy for development co-operation with Bangladesh for the period 2001–2005 is currently in Draft form, in Swedish language only¹⁵. The Swedish Embassy in Dhaka at the time of the Evaluation was awaiting action on the draft Country Strategy from Stockholm.

The Country Strategy draft is based on the experience of implementing the current strategy and, inter alia, on a series of preparatory analytical documents shared with the evaluation team. These have included:

- *Country Analysis: Bangladesh, January 2001*. Asia Department, Sida;
- *Bangladesh Approaching the 21st Century*, Sven Cederroth, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Published by Asia Department, Sida;
- *Development Co-operation with Bangladesh: Semi-Annual Report, April to September 2000*, Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka.

In discussing how these documents, and the experience of the past four years, were influencing the treatment of gender equality in the proposed 2001 to 2005 Country Strategy, current Embassy staff emphasised their strong belief that gender equality may be less prominent as an explicit goal, priority and “point of departure” for Sida's development co-operation but that it will be more fully mainstreamed into the actual programme and to the various sub-sectors of co-operation. This seems to be a realistic assumption if one is to go by the draft Country Strategy.

The draft Country Strategy emphasises continuity from the co-operation between Sweden and Bangladesh since Bangladesh' independence and the Country Strategy which is coming to and end in 2001 as well as renewal which accommodates the changes Bangladesh is undergoing. The overall objective for the co-operation shall be improved livelihoods for the country's poor people ‘with special emphasis on women and children’. This shall be pursued through assistance to create conditions for development in the health and education sectors. The co-operation also intends to continue the support to local governance, democracy and economic development, prioritising areas, which lead to increased decentralisation, local economic development and respects for human rights.

It is significant that the draft Country Strategy pays special attention to women – and children – as a particular vulnerable group and includes the historical and recent changes in discussing equality. Women's position in Bangladesh has slowly improved over the last 20 years for a number of reasons such

¹ Landstrategi Bangladesh 2001–2005, Draft, Sida, 4 May 2001 was available to the evaluation team only after completion of the country visit June 2001.

as better education and better access for women to the labour market. But traditional, patriarchal views on men and women are still predominant. Thus, despite improvements in health and education, social and economic discrimination against women prevails. There are signs that violence against women is on the increase. A reason is suggested to be the ongoing social and economic changes in the country, which create tension between individuals and groups in addition to poverty and a limited concern about equality issues in general.

The proposed future co-operation between Sweden and Bangladesh emphasises continuity from lessons learnt in the current areas of co-operation. It retains an explicit attention to gender equality often linked to poverty reduction. The most important constraints seem to be at two levels: 1) the national Bangladesh level: “It is assumed that the situation in Bangladesh will continue to be characterised by weak political leadership, inefficient management and corruption, which may retard economic development and thus jeopardise the conditions for more efficient poverty reduction”. 2) Secondly, “resource limitations at the Embassy hamper expansion of a broader co-operation between Sweden and Bangladesh” (ibid.) The first of these constraints may best be addressed by Sida in cooperation with other donors and in dialogue with the Bangladesh Government, while the second is a question of resources and responsibilities between the different stakeholders.

3.2 Dialogue on Gender Equality

As noted by Embassy staff in Dhaka, dialogue at both the policy and operational levels represents one of the key tools available to Sida to ensure that its development co-operation programme makes an important contribution to gender equality. Indeed, the April 1996 memo on a gender equality strategy for Sida in Bangladesh named policy dialogue as one of the four key instruments available for promoting GE.

The overall development goals in the Draft Country Strategy 2001–2005 are Poverty Reduction, local governance, democracy and economic development. “A particular focus shall be put on poor women’s opportunities to participate actively in social and economic development of their society”. Dialogue is given a particular emphasis, and a new role for Sweden is envisaged: Sweden shall participate in dialogue at a strategic, general level about sector programme support, while others may take the responsibility for direct, technical assistance. This stance may be related to the resource limitations, which will be effected in withdrawal of personnel from the Embassy in Dhaka. It is recognised that engagement in policy and strategic dialogue requires special capabilities.

In general dialogue in partnership between Sweden and Bangladeshi stakeholders is given a central place in the Draft Country Strategy – also dialogue focused on gender equality: “Dialogue must be enhanced in areas which have high priority for an intensified co-operation, e.g. poverty reduction, *gender*

equality, HIV/Aids, economic development and democracy and human rights”.

Further: “*Gender Equality*: The co-operation shall prioritise gender equality. A gender equality analysis with action plan shall be prepared annually and be followed up”.

However, it is also recognised that strong institutional opposition against changes is close under the surface in Bangladesh and may jeopardise the intentions and assumptions in the Swedish Country Strategy. Studies and other activities, which can support the Swedish role in dialogue, are suggested. These may take the form of intensified relations between Sweden and Bangladesh in areas such as research, culture, trade and investments.

The following sections briefly examine Sida’s experience in dialogue on gender equality under the three headings of:

- a) policy dialogue with the Government and donors;
- b) operational dialogue on gender equality goals and methods within bilateral interventions and;
- c) dialogue with civil society organisations.

3.2.1 Dialogue with Government and Donors

The 1996 gender equality strategy memorandum and the current (1997 to 2001) Country Strategy for Bangladesh both place considerable emphasis on the use of policy dialogue between the governments of Sweden and Bangladesh as a means of supporting gender equality. The draft strategy, for example, notes:

“A national plan for the work with equality is currently being drawn up in accordance with the guidelines from the Beijing conference. The follow-up of the plan, for example with regard to the legal rights of women, an area already supported by Sweden, should be taken up in the policy dialogue with Bangladesh, and in the form of current projects”.

The review of documents available to the evaluation team relating to the Embassy’s regular contacts with the Government of Bangladesh through such forums as the annual meetings on the Country Framework and periodic reviews of the specific interventions indicates that gender equality issues are regularly discussed and recorded on the agenda. These discussions of gender equality issues and goals seem to be covered most often when there are specific goals for participation levels for women and girls in the interventions concerned (for example in NFE 2 and NFE 3).

Concerning dialogue about the Country Strategy document it is evident that the preparation of the document in Swedish language hampers a more succinct dialogue.

At a general level there has been convergence between the policies of Government of Bangladesh and Government of Sweden in the attention to gender equality in policy and plan documents. The Government of Bangladesh has been receptive to the overall message of the importance of gender equality in the development co-operation programme and is able to point to its own policy statements, priorities and organisational structures as a response. With reference to more specific gender equality aspects of specific interventions, as noted in chapter 4, some ministries and departments of the Government of Bangladesh have not been able to follow through on plans and strategies relating to gender equality.

With regard to dialogue with other donors, Sida staff have been active in discussions with donors and multilateral agencies that provide support to specific programmes and interventions they have in common. For example, UNICEF staff involved in the literacy programme for hard to reach children noted that they had a constructive ongoing dialogue with Sida on how to better target the programme to youth including, especially girls. Similarly, DFID staff reported good co-operation with Sida on gender equality issues relating to NFE 3. Norwegian Embassy staff also noted a strong common understanding with Swedish Embassy staff, in relation to their joint support for NFE 2 and Ain o Shalish Kendro, as well as participation in the Local Consultative Group Sub-group on the Advancement of Women in Development.

Representatives of other donor agencies did report a perception of reduced Sida staff involvement in working group meetings and discussions focused on gender equality issues – a phenomenon they linked to reductions in Embassy staff numbers. These comments were made mainly in reference to Sida participation in the LCG Subgroup on WID/Gender Equality.

3.2.2 Dialogue with Civil Society

There are two major aspects of Sida's dialogue with civil society in Bangladesh, which relate directly to the issue of promoting gender equality. The first of these concerns general and public interventions, statements and publications on behalf of the Swedish Embassy which tend to support the need for the people and government of Bangladesh (in co-operation with external support) to address key social issues of equality. Interviews with Sida staff persons and a review of Embassy memoranda, newspaper stories, and formal published speeches of the Ambassador from the period 2000/2001 indicate that the Embassy has maintained a high public profile in advocating around issues of equality in Bangladesh in the recent past.

The Ambassador has been active in addressing public events such as the opening of a women's hostel, special showings by women artists, the inauguration of documentary films and the 9th International Conference on Safe Communities. In these addresses he has regularly emphasised the importance of overcoming inequities suffered by women and children in Bangladesh. Other embassy staff have played an active role in gender fora with other do-

nors and agencies. Often the window for addressing equality issues seems to have been the situation of children and youth, and this has almost always included some reference to the special situation of girl children and women in Bangladesh.

A second aspect of dialogue with civil society on gender equality concerns Sida's continued support of NGOs very active in the promotion of gender equality and of women (and youth's) human rights. In particular, the evaluation team was able to verify that Sida's ongoing support of ASK and Steps Towards Development (STD) continues to be seen by NGOs and donors alike as an ongoing contribution to the dialogue on gender equality taking place through civil society in Bangladesh.

3.2.3 Dialogue in the Context of Specific Bilateral Interventions

Embassy and Sida staff continue to take part in an ongoing dialogue on gender equality priorities, goals, measures and evaluations with their counterparts in bilateral interventions such as NFE 2 and NFE 3 in the area, for example, of literacy and basic education. This dialogue is not always successful in that there can be considerable bureaucratic inertia and at least "passive" resistance to adjusting the goals and operational aspects of large programmes in order to better respond to gender equality needs (see the findings relating to NFE 2 and NFE 3).

Nonetheless the quality, frequency and intent of dialogue on gender equality seems quite substantive. There are a number of indications of the significant content of this dialogue, which can be provided using the example of NFE 2 as a more or less typical Sida supported intervention in Bangladesh. These examples include:

- The reference to gender equality goals in agendas for regular meetings between Sida and the DNFE on progress and goals achievement in NFE 2 and NFE 3;
- Training of over 60 staff of the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) on gender equality and basic gender analysis carried out by the Local Gender Consultancy with support by Sida;
- Establishment of a gender focal point working group within DNFE (later discontinued due to a widespread transfer of DNFE staff) with the support of the Local Gender Consultancy;
- Development and acceptance of a draft Gender Strategy for DNFE; and
- *An Assessment of Gender Equity: Under Non Formal Education Project 2 of the DNFE.* The Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), a national NGO, was recruited by DNFE for this study with support provided by Sida. The study was published in draft form on March 19, 2001.

It has been difficult to maintain the momentum of many of the results of the Local Gender Consultancy due to the very high levels of staff turnover in

DNFE and an apparent disagreement about approach, if not failure of interest, on the part of the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED). Nevertheless, by first developing the training and consultancy capacity of STD and then linking that capacity to DNFE through the Local Gender Consultancy, Sida has tried in a fairly innovative way to extend its dialogue on gender equality and to give it added substance over time.

It is of some methodological interest whether one views the work of the Local Gender Consultancy as an innovative attempt at mainstreaming (institutionalising gender equality within a key partner agency, establishing a strategic approach, monitoring and evaluating gender equality results) or as a form of extended dialogue. Either way, Sida can be said to have used the facilities of its Non-Government partners in Bangladesh as one means of deepening its interaction on gender equality with a key partner (DNFE) in the context of a specific bilateral intervention.

3.3 Summary Findings – Country Strategy and Dialogue

- The first Country Strategy kept a high profile in gender equality, taking this as the point of departure. The development of the 1997–2001 Country Strategy was the culmination of a period of intense interest in promotion of gender equality. The draft of the forthcoming 2001–2005 Country Strategy retains an explicit attention to gender equality often linked to poverty reduction, and pays special attention to women – and children – as a particularly vulnerable group. Significant constraints on the side of the Bangladesh Government and resource limitations at the embassy are also identified.
- At a general level there has been convergence between the policies of Bangladesh and Sweden in the attention to gender equality in policy and plan documents. The GoB has policy statements, priorities and organisational structures in support of human rights and gender equality, which facilitates Sida's identification of entry points for dialogue on its country strategy and development cooperation programme. Constraints on gender equality dialogue are largely in terms of capacity.
- It will be critically important that the programming efforts which will translate the priorities of the Country Strategy into modifications in the interventions themselves contain practical measures for ensuring that sector programmes (in health and education) include explicit strategies for mainstreaming gender equality (and for continuing gender equality elements of current sector programmes).
- Dialogue on GE between GoB and Sida/Swedish Embassy has developed positively through the different phases of co-operation. The dialogue has been facilitated by GoB placing GE centrally in key policy documents. The Swedish draft Country Strategy 2001–2005 for Bangladesh

also repeats dialogue as an important tool but recognises a number of constraints such as weak political management and lack of transparency and accountability.

- The Swedish Embassy/Sida has used its access to public forums to promote equity issues relating to women and children and has followed through in its dialogue with civil society and with partners in substantive and innovative ways.
- Sida staff is known by other donors for being active in advocacy for gender equality in dialogue with government partners and with bilateral and multilateral agencies and civil society.
- Experience suggests that Sida has also met considerable resistance to gender equality messages and institutional measures, sometimes as a consequence of factors outside a partner agency's control such as staff rotation within the public service. Nonetheless, Sida has persisted in attempting to communicate key messages on gender equality and has worked to maintain a fairly high public profile concerning the priority of equity issues.
- There is a risk in Bangladesh as in other partner countries that preparation of the Country Strategy in the Swedish language through a prolonged internal process, limits the depth and relevance of dialogue between the Swedish Government and key stakeholders in GoB partner agencies. This may come about, in part, because of the need to retain the Country Strategy document as a statement of the development cooperation plans of the Government of Sweden but, nonetheless, language and translation issues can hinder the depth of dialogue on gender and other issues.
- Studies and other activities, which can support the Swedish role in dialogue, are suggested. These may take the form of intensified relations between Sweden and Bangladesh in areas such as research, culture, trade and investments.

Chapter 4

Mainstreaming Gender Equality – Four Interventions in Bangladesh

This chapter presents the findings of the evaluation concerning reflection of gender equality goals and mainstreaming in the four specific interventions studied. The assessment is undertaken in relation to the key issues and evaluation study objects, which were introduced in chapter 1. Reference is also made to the Study Object Grids, Annex 6. Before discussing the evaluation findings it is useful to briefly summarise the main characteristics of each of the four interventions.

4.1 Summaries of the Four Interventions

The Non-Formal Education Project-2 (NFE 2), of 5 years duration, 1996–2001 has the main objective to provide Non-Formal Education to illiterate children, adolescents and adults.

The target group of the NFE-2 is 6.1 mil. and covers the whole range 11–45 years, 50% of the beneficiaries being female illiterates, and each age group with a specific programme.

The project is being implemented by the Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) through government agencies, NGOs and CBOs.

The total cost of the project was estimated at US \$ 64 million (equivalent to SEK 490 million) including Swedish contribution of US \$ 20 million (equivalent to SEK 150 million). Total disbursement of Sida's contribution till March 2001 amounted to SEK 92.2 million, including technical assistance (TA) costs. Other co-financiers with Sida to the project are GOB and Norway.

The following are the three main approaches:

- 1) Total Literacy Movement (TLM), a volunteer-based approach involving the surrounding community, offering in “learning centres” a six-month literacy and a three-month post literacy programme; implemented by the local government machinery.

- 2) Centre-based programme through NGOs with a one year programme (literacy and post literacy) for adults and two-year (literacy and post literacy) for adults and adolescents.
- 3) Distribution of free textbooks to voluntary and philanthropic organisations.

This evaluation has concentrated on the Centre Based Approach and on the Pilot PLCE Project.

The *Pilot Project of NFE2 on Post-Literacy & Continuing Education (PLCE)* completed in March 2001 was delivered through 23 NGOs. The participants in the PLCE are “neo literate” persons who participate in a further 3 months of post literacy training and 6 months of continuing education with an occupational focus – i.e. needs based skills training that should be related to market demands.

Sida has been providing Technical Assistance including local consultancy on gender for the NFE 2 and NFE 3 projects in the areas of monitoring, PLCE, and human resources development.

The NFE 3 programme for Hard to Reach urban, working children is undertaken by the Government¹⁶ with assistance from UNICEF, Sida and DFID to provide 351,000 hard to reach urban working children with basic non-formal education including basic literacy, numeracy and broader life skills. Special attention is given to children at risk, i.e. girls and children in hazardous and exploitative child labour. Girls are particularly targeted as one of the most at risk groups due to their vulnerability to exploitation and traditional constraints to their education. The aim is that a minimum of 50% of the learners will be girls. The NFE 3 project is the first of its kind to be conducted by the GOB. Therefore, although it is not called a pilot project it is considered to be so.

Ain o Shalish Kendro (ASK) was set up as a human rights and legal aid resource centre in 1986 by a group of Bangladeshi lawyers, journalists, and social development workers. ASK has grown to be one of the most influential voices on legal reforms in Bangladesh.

The organisation provides direct legal aid services and at the same time raises public awareness and presses for reform of discriminatory and repressive laws at the national level.

Legal aid is considered the most important program of ASK. The organisation provides free legal aid to the disenfranchised, particularly poor women, workers and working children to enable them to negotiate their rights. Forms of aid consist of legal counselling, mediation, and litigation. These services are provided through the legal clinics cum drop-in centres in Dhaka and a selected set of 5 districts¹⁷. ASK refers its clients to other specialised organisations that provide assistance for more permanent housing and longer term medical care.

¹⁶ Yet, GoB has not signed the ILO charter on children working in hazardous occupations.

¹⁷ (the first set of districts is purposely chosen for their proximity to Dhaka to allow for close monitoring.)

In 1996, the Swedish Embassy invited ASK to write a concept paper on human rights issues in Bangladesh. Sida funding began in 1997. Core funding is now provided by a consortium of donors.

Steps Towards Development (Steps/STD) was established by a group of young development workers from different NGOs working on information and communication in November 1993. Sida has taken on the role of its sole financier since 1994 up to now.

STD's goal is

"... to institutionalise gender (*sic*) in the governmental and non-governmental development agencies through specific gender planning and integrating interventions for reducing gender inequality in development areas."

STD distributes its personnel under 4 substantive components beside administration: 1) training, 2) materials development and policy advocacy, 3) audio-visual, 4) Development Workers Information Network, under which a documentation and resource centre and a research unit also operate. The organisation develops training modules and materials to deliver regular gender analysis training, as well as sector- or issue-specific training related to gender and development, on demand. It also publishes information on CEDAW, the Platform for Action, etc., a journal for development practitioners with GAD contents, and campaign materials.

As part of its attempt to institutionalise gender analysis into development agencies, STD has also initiated a Gender Trainers' Core Group consisting of representatives from GOs, NGOs.

4.2 Gender Mainstreaming

An explicit gender equality goal is a key component of the mainstreaming strategy as it is set out in Sida's Action Programme. Other components are gender analysis with gender dis-aggregated data, mainstreaming structures, roles and responsibilities of key actors for gender mainstreaming, ownership, institutional capacity and resources, and capacity building, e.g. gender training. All of these are important for mainstreaming gender equality goals in interventions. The evaluation team also developed a 6-point mainstreaming assessment tool (see section 1.2.3), which was supposed to capture the mainstreaming process.

However, given that the Action Programme is of relatively new date (1997), the assessment is not a question of an 'all or nothing' approach. It is rather about steps being taken, and about constraints and opportunities for applying the relevant components in the given contexts in which the particular interventions are situated and develop over time.

The components of mainstreaming have been vital for the study and they are used to structure the evaluation team's assessments of the interventions in the following sections.

4.2.1 Explicit Gender Equality Goals

The assessments of the gender equality goal which follow ask whether and how the gender equality goal was mainstreamed and how gender equality was introduced and interpreted in the four interventions.

The *NFE 2 Literacy for Adolescents and Adults Programme* includes a target that a minimum of 50% of learners must be women. NGOs involved in CBA (centre based approach) report that DNFE has not communicated any other gender equality goals.

A factor which facilitates reaching the target of 50/50 pct. women and men is the fact that women's centre activities are scheduled in the earlier part of the day and are well attended while men's activities later in the evening are not. Women have their own classes (learning centres) with women instructors.

The NFE 2 curriculum for teaching literacy includes elements on women and children's rights. The elements were, however, quite brief and mixed in with a significant volume of important information on village life, health, hygiene, environmental care, etc.

Interestingly, while most of the NGOs run separate male and female centres under the PLCE programme, some are integrated with males and females in the same group but receiving different training. The most important point is that the programme as such does not have either a gender mainstreaming strategy or gender equality goals but that individual NGOs and their staff sometimes integrate gender equality goals into the projects.

Observed elements of gender equality targets in the pilot *PLCE* include:

- the minimum participation rate of 40% women target;
- the provision by some NGOs of opportunities for women and girls to take vocational training in non-traditional roles and skills;
- the encouragement of women and girls in business skills and their involvement in micro-enterprise;
- some gender equality content to the post-literacy component of the training including some sub-modules on women's rights and on family planning;
- development of group identity and a sense of self-empowerment for women and girls who participate.

There is no direct mention of gender equality goals and mainstreaming in the Project Proforma (PP) for the *NFE 3 Literacy Training for Hard to Reach Children programme*. The 50% plus target for girls and women teachers, and mixed learning centres for boys and girls, however, illustrate an element of gender mainstreaming. The implementation also indicates a number of implied gender equality goals as noted below, that may lead to gender mainstreaming in the project cycle:

- Overcoming the isolation of girls and young women.
- Improving knowledge of the rights of young women and young men.
- Linking literacy training to post literacy and to skill training for employment, etc.
- Provision for the development of gender guidelines and capacity to undertake gender analysis.

Women and children's rights content is reported as present in the curriculum and supplementary material used in the project. UNICEF has provided material on child and youth rights, including material on rights of young women.

As time has passed the output benefits of NFE 3 have been rephrased, and the Plans and Budget for 2000–2001 phrases output benefit no. 5: “Increased involvement of girls will help develop a literate & skilled women force, providing for increased opportunities for the families, help overcome exploitation and discrimination of girls and contribute toward gender equity.”

Gender equity is one of the key elements in *ASK*'s goal along with justice and human rights. *ASK* sees gender equity as a fundamental principle that is part and parcel of a human rights issue – and a broader concept than gender equality. In both its roles as a direct legal assistance provider for the poor and a pressure group to counter human rights violation, the primary focus of the organisation's work is on GE.

Steps Towards Development, STD envisions as its goal the practice of GE in government and non-governmental institutions. It wants to develop a model of gender-sensitive organisations and community. It also wants to see an increase in effective and equitable participation of men and women from all the generations at all levels of development initiatives (Project Proposal, February 2000).

4.2.2 Gender Analysis

All interventions are supposed to rest on some degree of gender analysis. What this consists of cannot always be traced as in the NFE programmes, for example. The targeting on a 50% participation of women and girls in the programmes indicate, that some gender considerations have influenced the programme objectives. Gender analysis that goes beyond the quantitative target and highlighted unequal access and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys seem to be absent.

If gender analysis from the outset was limited, some gender disaggregated information is gathered during implementation at the centres. But the data is not consolidated and analysed at the central level at DNFE in Dhaka where capacity is currently very low after the high staff turn-over.

It should be noted that the evaluation team was not able to secure quantitative sex disaggregated data on NFE 2 outcomes during repeated visits to

DNFE headquarters. There seem to be considerable difficulty with the local and regional compilation of data and its transfer to DNFE headquarters for further compiling and analysis.

Like in NFE 2 as a whole, gender equality of the *Pilot Project on Continuing Education, PLCE*, seems to have been a target that at least 40% of participants should be women and girls. The individual NGOs participating in the programme may or may not have gender equality policies and/or goals which they attempt to implement under the programme. For example, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) reported its own gender policy and strategy which it tries to implement under the PLCE by assisting girls and women to choose non-traditional vocational training where there seems to be a market for it. Since the programme does not include a process of market assessment to select vocations to offer participants this information comes through trainers and the NGO staff. Some NGOs did, however, carry out rudimentary gender sensitive market surveys. These were seen as not adequate to project needs, which is a major lesson from the PLCE.

The elements of gender equality mainstreaming in PLCE are dispersed throughout the programme and are not brought together in a recognisable gender mainstreaming strategy but they are not insignificant either. The notable weaknesses in mainstreaming are lack of a gender analysis and gender strategy for the programme as a whole (although some NGOs have examined the markets and skills training available for participants from a gender equality perspective).

Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) and DNFE have approved (March 2001) a strengthened monitoring structure for basic literacy (6 month course) to be piloted in one district – Rajbari, under the NFE 2 project until its completion. This is to be implemented by the NFE-TA team in collaboration with DNFE. Preliminary work on this pilot approach to strengthened monitoring has begun. The model is based on DNFE's existing monitoring structure and adds qualitative elements to the very quantitative monitoring structure already in place.

Gender equality of the NFE 3 Hard to Reach Urban Working Children programme was expressed as a quantitative target, based on limited gender analysis.

'Baseline' surveys by teachers were/are undertaken of about 100 working children for recruitment of 30 learners for each NFE 3 Centre, half of whom should be girls, and half of them boys. The surveys address girls' and boys' social and working situation, but the data is not systematically recorded. Hence it is neither used for monitoring nor follow up.

The weak monitoring and data management capacity in DNFE undercuts efforts to identify, gather and analyse gender disaggregated data and to document changes in girls' and boys' opportunities in the NFE3 programme, not least in the post training opportunities for girls and boys derived from participation in the programme. However, it is important to note that there is an

agreement to implement a small-scale pilot on post-training activities during the remainder of the project.

With gender justice being an integral part of its goal, *ASK* not only analyses gender inequalities and abuse of women's rights, but also implements GE and monitors trends through the gender-dissaggregated data it collects for routine reporting. Exposure of discriminatory laws as well as illegal application of laws in the form of discriminatory practices are major parts of *ASK*'s work.

ASK has integrated gender equality as a basic perspective of human rights and uses training and staff recruitment as important measures in its work. *ASK* sees the conventionally disadvantaged, particularly women and children of poor families, as its primary clients. Few of its staff have had formal gender analysis training, however. *ASK* appears to attract staff who believe in social justice principles, including GE. New staff members are introduced to gender issues through practical experience. For example, most of *ASK*'s legal aid cases deal with gender-based violence and other forms of abuse in the family and society. Advocacy efforts expose gender-based discrimination in the laws, which is ground for lobbying for legal reform. Only one of the top managers (director of training) received gender analysis training (GAT) through a separate Sida-supported initiative for the Asia region. *ASK* executives agree with the ET that a more systematic orientation to gender analysis among the staff, and application of gender analysis tools, should be attempted.

The establishment of *STD* was based on a joint recognition by Sida and a group of concerned Bangladeshis that there was a need for support to other institutions – GOs and NGOs – in the area of gender analysis and working with gender equality goals. *STD* has since developed the tools for gender analysis, which are central in its gender training activities.

4.2.3 Mainstreaming Structures and Roles and Responsibilities for Gender Mainstreaming

In the spirit of Sida's Action Programme the responsibility for mainstreaming gender equality rests with the cooperating partners, and ultimately with the government. Section 2.2.2 elaborated on the policies and plans and institutional machineries at national and Thana levels in Bangladesh, which have as their mandate to promote and monitor gender equality. It is the impression that there is a long way between national and regional gender mainstreaming structures and specific interventions in which mainstreaming mechanisms are not established. The evaluation team looked for evidence of relevant mechanisms and structures to promote – and monitor – gender equality and changes at the intervention level. It also tried to locate roles and responsibilities in promoting gender equality.

The support given by Sida to gender consultancy TA for DNFE is a good example, of where Sida's role as a facilitator can be traced. The Local Gender Consultancy, LGC of *STD*, was contracted to promote gender equality in all DNFE's activities, including NFE 2 and NFE 3. A DNFE Gender Focal Point

was created by assistance from the LGC. A major activity was “Expertise Development Training” for 20 DNFE officials and for batches of 67 DNFE officials in April–May 2000.

At the level of NFE training centres the establishment of Centre Management Committees may be seen to entail embryonic structure for promoting gender mainstreaming. However, few of the CMCs are active, and gender equality is not seen to be explicitly part of their agenda.

A different example of the division of roles and responsibilities is from the STD network of NGOs. Heads of organisations to which STD trainees belong perceive the gender sensitisation process as useful to the work of the organisation. Results of application of the tools and GE principles by strong NGOs show some encouraging promise. The work of the DWIN member NGO in Gaibandha, Gono Unnoyon Kendro (GUK), is a noteworthy example. GUK has been able to integrate GE principles, including developing affirmative action, in all aspects of its work, ranging from disaster management to a gender-sensitive staff recruitment and promotion policy. GUK has developed collaborative strategies in working with local elites, government administrators and departmental officials while upholding firmly its commitment to working for the poorest. The respect for the good work that the organisation does among GUK’s stakeholder groups seems to play a key role in GUK’s ability to influence a gradual change in attitudes and behaviours towards the roles of women and men in the communities where it works.

It is the impression of the evaluation team, that staff at the Swedish Embassy has a good understanding of its optimal role as a facilitator in promoting gender equality rather than attempting the impossible role of implementing interventions.

4.2.4 Institutional Capacity and Ownership

One of the efforts Sida is undertaking is to support the building of institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming. As already mentioned there is evidence of ongoing efforts by Sida to sponsor and support DNFE with measures to improve the gender equality content of the programme, e.g. the local gender consultancy team’s work including the gender analysis training of DNFE staff, the establishment of the now defunct gender focal point in DNFE and the drafting of a gender strategy.

The LGC/STD team worked with DNFE from August 1999 to May 2000. At the time of the team’s evaluation visit in May 2001 the LGC/STD team was not working for DNFE, apparently because PMED had not extended the contract despite DNFE’s request that it do so.

Sida has also supported other GE efforts, which could help to build institutional capacity in the longer run, such as the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) gender equality evaluation. Learning from evaluations is one way of strengthening the institutional capacity for gender analysis and promotion of

gender equality, in particular if the capacity for monitoring and evaluation is built up 'in-house'. However, monitoring deficiencies are common in all of the partner organisations. Monitoring deficiencies in DNFE, for example, make it difficult to track GE efforts and results, which Sida is now helping to remedy through support to a revised monitoring system.

It is difficult to generalise as to the extent of gender mainstreaming in the PLCE component of NFE 2 since the gender equality content can vary considerably from one NGO to the next. One could argue that mainstreaming is not necessary in a pilot programme, but experimentation with gender mainstreaming during the pilot phase should support a fuller implementation during the full phase of the programme. Thus it is important that the pilot PLCE takes operational steps to gather the results of different experiments in gender equality mainstreaming so they can influence later stages of programming.

Dialogue between the GOB and donors to *NFE 3* resulted in the following clause on gender: "The target group will need to be monitored from a gender perspective with adequate provision for the development of gender guidelines and capacity to undertake gender analysis at DNFE at the policy, planning, implementation and monitoring levels. It is recommended that if required, sufficient social development consultancy with an emphasis on gender, be included in the TA package to address this" (Final copy of the minutes of the appraisal wrap-up meeting on NFE 3, 25 March 1997). The clause has been pursued through the provision of Technical Assistance in Gender, but institutionalisation of gender analysis capacity has not taken place.

In congruence with NFE 2, Sida efforts to support GE in NFE 3 have included support of the Local Gender Consultancy Team (LGCT), its work on gender training of DNFE staff and on the development of a Gender Strategy and Gender Indicators. None of the latter two have been implemented by DNFE for reasons already mentioned, i.e. transfers of key gender staff and the non-extension of the LGC team contract as already mentioned.

Within the organisation *ASK*'s recruitment policy aims at a gender-balanced staff composition, with priorities given to women. Gender issues are woven into its human rights advocacy and legal awareness training as a matter of fact.

With a goal to institutionalise a gender-sensitive perspective in government and non-governmental institutions, *STD* uses training and networking as means to influence other organisations. It publishes selected sex-disaggregated data of the national statistics. Recently it has also developed and distributed a 3-page monitoring checklist for its DWIN members to identify gender gaps within their own organisations and programmes (called "Checklist to measure the network's position").

It is not surprising that the two NGOs, which have gender equality goals in their mandate, also have an institutional capacity for gender analysis and mainstreaming. However, in order to maintain institutional memory – not to mention being ahead of developments – continuous boosting is required, e.g. in the form of staff training and networking, even within the NGOs.

4.2.5 Capacity Building and Resources

The most common way to strengthen institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming, including gender analysis and other components, is through gender training. ASK and STD through their core activities of gender training and counselling, generate funds which can be used for internal gender training. Other partners have to find resources in their internal budgets.

There are considerable ongoing efforts by Sida to inject gender equality concerns and goals and to support that partners train staff and evaluate against gender equality goals. This is where Sida support to DNFE for example has been important in terms of resources.

Sida efforts to support GE were first introduced through support of the Local Gender Consultancy Team (LGCT) and its work on gender training of DNFE staff and on the development of a Gender Strategy and Gender indicators. During workshops gender gaps were identified in different documents including the Project Proforma, Teachers' and Supervisors' Guide and other Literacy Materials. Identified gaps were for example that gender issues needed to be addressed in such areas as discrimination against girl-children, the importance of girls' education and women's rights – in Teachers' and Supervisors' Guide.

Considerable motivational and gender training work of DNFE staff has been undertaken by support from Sida for the sake of strengthening the gender perspective in the NFE programmes. Massive staff turnover in DNFE indicates that of some 67 officers attending training in gender equality given by STD's Local Gender Consultancy, only two are still in service with DNFE.

The Swedish Embassy has tried to intervene in support of STD continuing work with gender training for NFE until the completion of both NFE 2 and NFE 3 projects. However, as noted earlier, there have been difficulties in extending the LGC Team contract and this work was not ongoing at the time of the team's evaluation visit in May 2001.

Instability of DNFE staff due to rotation, relative lack of specialised expertise in DNFE and a tendency to focus on new and well-funded projects (e.g. World Bank project on continuing education) makes training efforts difficult to sustain.

A monitoring framework developed in the NFE 2 pilot project has the potential to influence monitoring systems for continuing education projects as these are developed and implemented. It is known that the TA who drafted the M & E programme was alerted to the opportunity for incorporating gender perspectives and the draft was subjected to critical gender analysis. But whether the results are incorporated in the final M & E system is not known.

STD provides gender analysis training (GAT) and Training of Trainers (TOT) to other development workers. Its training services are in high demand among local NGOs and projects, making the training unit a significant contributor to STD's self-generated revenues. Gender analysis and planning

courses offered by STD to its paying clients usually include tools to identify gender issues at various stages of a project cycle and to monitor change.

Some of the early STD documentations mention adoption of Sida's GE goal and policy. Currently STD trains others in gender analysis with a set of modules that is based mostly on the Harvard framework¹⁸, combined with some other theories such as those by Caroline Moser and gender analysis thinkers at the Institute for Development Studies at Sussex.

STD also uses training as a vital tool for introducing gender equity/equality (See section 4.2.1). STD tailors its publications and Gender Analysis Training materials to different stakeholder groups. For example, it uses official policies of the government and commitments made to various UN conventions, such as CEDAW, as entry tools in seminars and training to raise gender awareness among government agencies. It also draws from development vocabulary of women's potentials in social, political and economic development, abundant in official GoB policy statements. It also often uses case studies to illustrate specific GE concepts in its training.

In summary it has now been documented that there are signs of gender equality goals and mainstreaming in all the four interventions studied, but also that the components are sometimes embryonic only. It is therefore pertinent to turn to an analysis of constraints and opportunities for gender equality mainstreaming.

4.3 Lessons on Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Gender Equality Goals

The contention of the assessment was that a critical step in promoting gender equality is an explicit gender equality goal within a given intervention. Without an explicit gender equality goal, it is difficult to develop the mainstreaming strategy and apply relevant components for promoting gender equality. One might question this assumption based on the grounds that such gender equality goals might represent an artificial "add on" component to the project or programme and thus substitute for a deeper process of gender analysis.

On the other hand, the evaluation team feels that the presence of an explicit GE goal in an intervention enhances the possibility that the programme will genuinely impact on the unequal relations between women and men which may prevail in a given sector or area of operation. Equally important, the absence of gender equality goals contributes to a situation in which monitoring, evaluation and other learning and accountability tools are not used to address the gender equality contribution of the intervention. As a result, the intervention may miss opportunities, which arise over its life cycle to make alterations in programme design and operations so that gender equality im-

¹⁸ (i.e. with gender differentials in terms of access to and control over resources as key concepts)

pacts and effects are increased. The evaluation team members do not contend that gender equality goals over-ride other priorities, only that the intervention should recognise where and if a contribution to gender equality can and should be a goal.

It is clear that *ASK and STD* as interventions have an inherent advantage in this area in that promotion of gender equality represents a core organisational value. On the other hand, NFE2 and NFE3 have been assessed by the evaluation team not in comparison to ASK and STD but in relation to the expectation that mainstreaming as a strategy requires some expression of gender equality goals in all Sida supported interventions.

Both of the *NFE interventions* have *GE goals* setting numeric targets (i.e. 50% women learners, 50% girls and teachers). They recognise the need for targeting women and girls specifically. There are some indications that gender sensitivity (e.g. discussion on women's and children's rights) has also been considered and introduced in the curriculum contents mixed with other social/community issues. However, there does not appear to be uniformity in their interpretation among service deliverers in the learning centres.

The 50% plus targets for women learners and women's learning centres (with women teachers) of the NFE 2 does have the advantage of contributing to a numerical gender equality target to which Sida and the GoB authorities as well as the participating NGOs have agreed.

Emphasis on quantitative targets such as the massive goal of covering 36 million illiterate persons with different NFE programmes means that cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and even the quality of training efforts tends to suffer.

Both NFE 2 and 3 have been credited with helping girls and women break isolation, improve their knowledge about rights, and introduce them to skills development. The mixed learning centres for boys and girls also contribute to mainstreaming by breaking down gender stereotypes.

As with NFE 2, a strong emphasis in NFE 3 on quantitative targets combined with weak monitoring and an apparent lack of data has made it very difficult to emphasise quality and crosscutting issues such as gender equality.

Obstacles to promoting gender equality in the pilot post literacy programme were observed to be:

- lack of an overall gender mainstreaming strategy for the PLCE;
- problems in the choice of vocational training for women learners in that some of the traditional vocations to which women learners are streamed (such as needle point work) are extremely low paid;
- problems in getting market acceptance of women in some more lucrative and traditionally male trades.

While there is a fair understanding of the relevance of gender equality mainstreaming in the pilot programme it suffers from the same main constraint as the other non-formal education programme supported by Sida, i.e. the weak institutional capacity for promoting gender equality.

Gender Analysis

Understandably the massive number of quantitative targets to be reached almost certainly pre-empts any attention to qualitative details. Although some NGOs have examined the markets and skills training available for participants from a gender equality perspective, the limited gender analysis and gender strategy for the *NFE programmes* as a whole prevent the interventions from achieving their fullest potentials.

On the other hand, it is essential that gender analysis and gender equality goals be made more explicit in both NFE programmes (and within DNFE) if mainstreaming as a strategy is to go beyond a pro-forma level. This is true despite the fact that the pilot *PLCE* program provides some basis for improving the GE focus of programmes under development and despite the fact that some NGOs involved in centre based learning have considerable experience and orientation toward gender equality.

The in-depth experimentation through the pilot *PLCE* component of NFE 2 and the development of a new monitoring, evaluation and reporting system (*MER*) present good opportunities to test out the benefits of in-depth gender analyses in improving programme effectiveness. These are potentially valuable inputs for new NFE projects.

There is clearly an opportunity for a more systematic review of the actual teaching aids used in the NFE learning centres (some of which are common and some of which vary among the learning centres visited) to see how gender equality messages have been, or should be integrated. This was not possible during the evaluation team's visits to the learning centres, which verified the presence of some g/e content but did not provide evidence of a systematic approach to its development and integration.

Many of the local NGOs see GE as one of the dimensions in social development. Local community members tend to interpret the idea as women and men working together, particularly in the sense of women's ability to earn income for the family.

Interestingly, *ASK* did not conduct any specific or focused gender analyses either for its programme design or the organisation. Following discussions with the evaluation team, *ASK* management staff are open to the merit of formalising their gender analysis and training the staff in how to conduct gender analysis. This would enhance the dissemination and sharing of experience in promoting mainstreaming of gender equality.

Mainstreaming Structures, Roles and Responsibilities

With limited staff resources available at the Embassy Sida's most obvious role seems to relate to its ability to facilitate dialogue and networking between concerned stakeholders in gender equality which will contribute to strengthen institutional capacity. This is also where Sida is seen to have contributed to formation of mainstreaming structures in the different partner organisations. Sida is well positioned to facilitate between implementing agencies and NGOs and the national machineries and national gender expertise.

At a more concrete level, formation of Center Management Committees, CMCs with representatives of guardians – male and female – at the NFE Centres may be seen as a step towards mainstreaming structures. The evaluation team met with a few active CMCs, but it is reported that the CMCs only in a few cases are active, even more so with a gender balanced composition of members. There are opportunities to be pursued in this area.

Institutional Capacity and Capacity Building

Sida has been determined to help institutionalise gender awareness and establish mainstreaming structures. Through technical assistance provided by the Local Gender Consultancy to DNFE attempts have been made to identify the gender gaps in the project proforma (PP), teachers and Supervisors Guide, as well as literacy materials. The absence of an explicit and well-defined GE goal in the PP and GoB monitoring and learning frameworks makes it difficult to challenge resistance – which may be a result of in-capacity – that stalled progress of those efforts in DNFE and in the field. The LGC/TA gender training in DNFE helped to build capacity for a while. The gender sensitised staff were a resource that could have strengthened institutional capacity and sustained the short-lived gender focal points. In view of staff turn-over and other priorities by DNFE the initiatives have been fragile and suggest that one off gender training is not sufficient to ensure gender equality mainstreaming but needs follow up.

Provision of technical support to the new clause on gender recently agreed among the NFE 3 partners, should also be helpful for more careful monitoring to improve project effectiveness

It seems essential that efforts to strengthen NFE monitoring should not only concentrate on improved data collection at field level but on much improved transfer, compiling and reporting of data at headquarters level¹⁹.

¹⁹ The DNFE does provide limited gender disaggregated data as reported by the Embassy in Dhaka. The semi-annual review dated 10-12-01 for NFE2 reports that in seventeen districts and 23 upazilas there were 6777 male centres and 6933 female centres, each with 30 learners. There is no data available on attainment levels by gender. There is still considerable work to be done on improving data quality and reliability as well as the scope of information provided. Sida continues to support piloting of strengthened monitoring of NFE in Rajbari district which includes qualitative aspects from a gender perspective.

As NFE 2 winds down there are opportunities to transfer GE lessons to newer programmes in literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. To exploit such opportunities future programmes, which are oriented to skills training and employment must be examined from a GE perspective if gains made in NFE 2 are to be consolidated.

The two NGO interventions are distinctly different in their orientation to gender equality in that promoting GE is an explicit part of their organisational goals. For *ASK*, gender justice and women's rights are fundamental human rights. Not only is GE introduced through routine programme activities, but changes are also monitored through the periodic collection of gender disaggregated data. A gender-conscious recruitment and personnel policy within the organisation signals, how seriously the GE principle is regarded within the organisation.

Given those measures, gender mainstreaming in the *ASK* interventions can be considered as both implemented and institutionalised in correspondence with the evaluation team's assessment scale (section 1.2.3). The most significant of *ASK*'s gender mainstreaming achievements, however, may lie in the successes the organisation attains in influencing changes of national laws to be more gender sensitive.

Like *ASK*, *STD* sets an explicit GE goal for itself in its staff recruitment policy and in the development of a model for gender-sensitive organisations and communities that could make development initiatives more participatory, equitable, and effective.

STD introduces GE perspectives through its gender training and publication of government policies and commitments to international agreements. Because it does not work at the community level directly, *STD* monitors the GE practices of its partner NGOs. Through the dialogue with members of *DWIN*, *STD* is in a position to draw many lessons from the grassroots. For example, it can learn from *GUK*'s work strategies to overcome resistance or hostility to GE by some representatives of the power elite.

Although it purports to "institutionalise gender" in government and non-governmental organisations, the non-extension of the contract of the LGC TA for *DNFE* suggests that new strategies need to be found in order for *STD* to influence systemic change.

There is an opportunity to continue work of *STD*'s Local Gender Consulting Team as other elements of NFE programming go forward provided *PMED* support can be fully shouldered.

In summary, and in relation to the process oriented model of mainstreaming developed by the evaluation team and described in the methodology section 1.2.3, the interventions in non-formal education (*NFE2* and *NFE3*) have achieved a partial level of mainstreaming which could be described best as pro-forma (level two). In some aspects a gender mainstreaming strategy is somewhat institutionalised (level four) in that they have included specific par-

ticipation targets and have made some effort to monitor gender disaggregated data but have fallen short on implementing a gender equality strategy or monitoring and evaluating changes in GE.

In contrast, and not surprising given their core mandates, ASK and STD have had a much more explicit commitment to GE and a higher level of mainstreaming from a process perspective. If NFE 2 and 3 have elements of a level 2 (pro-forma) and level 4 (institutionalised) mainstreaming, ASK and STD represent more of a level 4–5 implementation rate with elements of monitoring and evaluation of mainstreaming gender equality – an area in which opportunities are not fully exploited.

Chapter 5

Poverty Reduction and the Goal of Gender Equality

5.1 Analysis of Links and Synergies

In GoB policy documents as well as in the discourse of Bangladesh development community at large, poverty reduction is seen as an overall goal, with gender equality being a priority area as a vehicle to address that goal. Although there is a fair amount of discussion on a rights-based approach at the moment, the poverty goal seems to still underlie the demands for rights of conventionally disadvantaged groups to participate in development processes. At the community level, a poverty focus has been a useful entry point through which gender inequality and its economic consequences are introduced. – At policy level there is good correspondence between GoB's and Sida's Poverty reduction goal.

NFE 2:

Obvious links are noted by NGO staff involved in the NFE 2 programme, between illiteracy and poverty. Girls and women, most commonly illiterate, often do not receive primary education because of family preference and the belief that boys' education is crucial to family economic survival. When women attend NFE literacy centres this happens most often because their attendance may not have a cash cost in lost earnings for families/guardians.

The traditional part of the programme promotes basic literacy and numeracy and has a 50% participation target for women and girls and does not have an intrinsic anti-poverty character other than the basic understanding that literacy is one key aspect of attaining employment and combating poverty. Evidence in evaluations and in discussions with NGOs delivering NFE 2 and with participants strongly suggests that gender equality can be linked to poverty alleviation in a positive way through the programme, but that will first require a more explicit poverty reduction orientation for the programme as a whole. This was one of the intentions of the pilot project component PLCE of NFE 2.

Lack of links between literacy training and skills development or income possibilities of the NFE 2 approach is repeatedly mentioned.

Evaluations, interviews with NGOs, and interviews with participants indicate two key aspects to the question of gender equality and poverty in NFE 2: 1) Literacy training alone seems to leave the newly literate without new options for livelihoods and 2) Lack of skills training may discourage poor women especially from taking literacy training. Many of those interviewed made the point that these two observations are relevant for non-formal education in general including NFE1 and NFE4.

Confining the scope of NFE programmes to a literacy focus would limit their capacity to promote gender equality since poor women in particular find it difficult to transform very basic literacy skills to income earning activities or other empowering activities. It is a difficult balance of the NFE 2 programme.

The repeated observation is that there are opportunities in moving to a basic education philosophy, which links literacy and numeracy training to skills development for income generation purposes. This is no simple transformation, however, and requires a much better understanding of the constraints to attendance for women and men respectively. Understanding the causes of constraints is a vital basis for better attuning training to poverty reduction and women and men's gender needs.

A possible transformation to integration of literacy and skills training may however run into problems in terms of unit costs as basic skills training costs are much higher than for literacy. Another constraint is lack of capacity for skills based training, which is sufficiently differentiated between women's and men's interests.

The more focused, experimental phase of the Pilot PLCE programme extension which was in its formative stages in May of 2001 will provide an important opportunity to develop models of post-literacy and continuing education which more directly focus on poverty alleviation.

NFE 2 – Pilot PLCE:

Clearly, of all the work examined in Bangladesh by the evaluation team, this sub-component of the NFE 2 programme is the most directly linked to poverty alleviation and places gender equality issues and attempts to address poverty in close juxtaposition. The fact that women participate in PLCE at a fairly high rate (most NGOs report more than half of their centres are for women) and the critical link between post literacy and continuing education and subsequent income and employment combine to make it essential that women and girls genuinely benefit from the programme and its successors. Since women tend to be over-represented among the poor in Bangladesh they make a critically important target group for poverty alleviation.

A weakness in the programme from a poverty alleviation standpoint concerns the fact that many of the NGOs delivering the programme have clearly chosen participants who are already among "their" target group members

and may be benefiting from other programmes and projects implemented by the same NGO. In many cases the villages in which NGOs are providing services appear relatively prosperous within the districts visited. The learners may well represent relatively well off rural residents.

On the other hand, the fact that many NGOs delivering the programme also are able to provide technical assistance, small scale credit and participation in small scale public works to learners represents a strength in that it helps to link learners to forms of economic and social support which may be essential if they are to capitalise on the skills they have learned.

NFE 3:

The content of the NFE 3 programme for hard to reach urban working children is strictly literacy and numeracy training. To the degree this includes awareness raising about children's, youth's and women's rights to equal opportunities for access to social services, education and knowledge, participation and inclusion, there is scope for talking about links and synergies in the programme between gender equality and poverty reduction – (non-income poverty as well as experienced forms of deprivation).

The project objectives indicate that literacy as well as broader life skills would be provided to the hard to reach urban children. But the PP did not include any component to attain the broader life skills, which might prompt better employment opportunities – hence contribute to poverty reduction through income. However, it has been agreed between the GOB and the donors supporting the NFE 3 project that a small scale piloting of post-training activities, including skills training would be carried out during the remainder of the project.

Considering that the target groups come from poverty-stricken families there is scope to link the poverty reduction and gender equality goals in the programme through skills based training and choices of skills/trades, which will help girls to earn an income.

Lack of skills based training has meant that guardians of girls (and boys) are likely to – and often do – discourage participation, as basic literacy is unlikely to lead to income and employment opportunities. The discouragement is unfortunate, and it may be a misconception that short-term skills training – rather than basic literacy training – will automatically lead to employment.

There may be an opportunity in linking literacy training to post-literacy and skills training for employment. However, there is a risk that this link, if made, will not result in opportunities for young women to have access to non-traditional trades for women – e.g. commercial jobs in the market place. On the other hand, the fact that the project is urban based may provide an opportunity for linkages to non-traditional employment as industries in urban settings grow and evolve.

Design of a 'package' which promotes gender equality and poverty reduction at one and the same time could provide scope for a continued NFE 3 programme. As the scope for additional agenda points is limited in the current DNFE set-up, links with other organisations that work for poverty reduction might be attempted in order to converge with services, employment etc. which are likely to be reached by both girls and boys, women and men.

ASK:

ASK's mission for social justice gives rise to prioritising its services for disadvantaged and conventionally voiceless groups in society: the poor; women and children. ASK sees poverty and gender inequality as stemming from the same injustice created by unequal distribution of power. It recognises the fact that women and children are most vulnerable even among the poor, and pays special attention to meeting their needs. The office was purposefully moved from a posh area to an area where poor families would not feel intimidated to come. (Several young ASK staff have political aspirations in the hope to improve national level governance.)

ASK filed a writ of petition challenging the government's eviction of dwellers in Dhaka slums and won a High Court judgement declaring illegality of the eviction in October 2000. The slum dwellers are mostly poor families who migrate to the cities because they can no longer earn livelihood in their rural homes²⁰. In the majority of cases, the men engage in manual labour work such as pulling rikshaw. The family would reside in makeshift tents made of bamboo sticks and polythene sheets tied to the poles. The women and children are the primary target for abuse by local *mastaans*, who extort and assault slum residents routinely in the slums. However, in the open streets, they are subjected to an even broader range of risks by an even larger group of abusers.

Runa's story

Runa and her family used to live in a village. As work in the village became scarce her father went to Dhaka to seek employment. He pulled a rikshaw (a three-wheeled popular form of transport in Bangladesh urban centres) for income. Unfortunately he had an accident and could no longer support his family. So Runa and her elder sister went to work in a garment factory in Dhaka.

Runa's sister got married recently and became pregnant. She was no longer able to work. Runa walked to work alone everyday. She sometimes had to work over-time, well into the night. One of these nights on her way home, she was stopped by five men. They forcefully took her to a deserted area and gang-raped her.

The excruciating pain in her body felt like nothing compared with the pain Runa experienced inside her soul. When the miscreants left her for dead in a ditch after they had finished their dirty business, Runa struggled to get to a roadside stall. There she bought with the little money she had left a can of kerosene and a box of matches. She went back to the spot where the rape took place, doused herself from head to toe with the kerosene and lit a match.

²⁰ (Reports on land grabbing by the powerful, pushing small farmers out of their homesteads, are documented elsewhere.)

Runa was found unconscious with a third degree burn by a passer-by the next day. She was completely defaced. When the journalist went to see her at the hospital a few days after the incident, only an 8-year old fellow patient girl in the ward was caring for her, putting a damp cloth on Runa's still burning skin and helping her drink through a straw. Runa was conscious enough to relate her experience to the journalist. She said, "I don't want to live. They have taken away the only thing I had left — my dignity." A week later she died.

(The story has been written based on news reports in The Daily Star during the field mission of the Evaluation Team in month of May, 2001.)

Girls are often forced into prostitution. There are frequent reports of sexual assaults by law enforcement agents themselves when homeless women are taken into police's "safe custody".

The rising rate of violence against women can be partly explained by a rise in the number of cases reported by women and their families. Unfortunately it seems to be also an indicator of a backlash created by the new trend of women claiming their rights – as a result of their economic emancipation and empowerment – hence a threat to the status quo. To mitigate against further suffering of the victims ASK staff follow up on client cases and develop local social justice monitors through the Ain Shahayata Committees, whose members often consist of local elite persons involved in the village court of *shalish*.

STD:

STD and its network member NGOs use the inter-linkage between poverty and gender inequality in their information dissemination and awareness raising efforts.

GE as a key element of poverty reduction in the development policy of GoB (as well as many donors) has often been manifested in giving special attention to women. Many Government and NGO programmes alike specifically mention their intentions to improve particularly the lives of women and children among the poor. Rationale given for affirmative action initiatives usually rests on the economic argument of women's productive, human resource potentials. For example, educating a daughter means the possibility of the family getting an extra wage earner.

This sort of reasoning is usually accepted by majority members of the society where poor rural families are finding subsistence agriculture more difficult to live on. Changing demographics in girls and women accessing market economy (particularly visible is the large number of women and girls employed in garment factories) are helping push the boundaries of conventional parameters of women's participation in economically productive work.

5.2 Summary Findings – Relations between Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction

Sida finds common ground with the Government of Bangladesh in the fact that poverty reduction is the top goal of their development co-operation and national development policies, respectively. This serves a useful entry point through which gender equality and related concepts can be introduced.

For both NFE 2 and 3, literacy and education are seen as roads out of poverty. Because of the tendency for poverty to be feminised, an emphasis on female education has been included in GoB national policies.

Many NGOs involved in the programme also provide small-scale credit and participation in small-scale public works to learners beside teaching and technical assistance. This represents, however, a risk of a selection bias in favour of candidates who represent better credit risk. There is also a natural tendency that community members already associated with the NGOs may find access to these resources more readily. Without an explicit poverty reduction agenda and policy, such biases may leave out the very poor whom the interventions are specifically meant to help.

With the exception of the Pilot PLCE programme, the two non-formal education interventions suffer from the lack of a more explicit gender-sensitive poverty reduction orientation. The Project Pro-forma for the NFE project did include a 204 million taka commitment to post-literacy and continuing education, which represented a new initiative for DNFE programming. This commitment is the basis for the Pilot PLCE program which it is hoped will contribute to a stronger GE commitment in future post-literacy and continuing education programming. In general terms, however, the bulk of programming in NFE2 lacks a post-literacy or vocational component.

The current absence of a gender sensitive skills-based programme – and hence a potential for economic returns – has significantly reduced the perceived relevance of the interventions to the poor. Plans for the pilot PLCE component of NFE 2 as well as future NFE 3 both try to remedy that gap.

Understanding of gender-based causes of constraints is a vital basis for better attuning educational services to poverty reduction and women and men's needs. Gender analysis has not been applied but could provide a valuable tool especially for the design of the pilot PLCE component of NFE 2 to make its literacy and skills development input more effective in realising the beneficiaries' income potentials. For example, appropriate skills based training and choices of skills/trades could help girls earn a small income, and avoid trapping them in low-pay traditional skills defined by gender stereotypes.

Future efforts could also explore institutional linkages with other organisations engaged in poverty reduction, whose resources can help meet needs of poor women and men, girls and boys, to step out of poverty.

Economic emancipation by poor women and men has also often led to their political emancipation. The greater say women now have in decision making in the family and in public tends to threaten the status quo. One backlash stemming out of progress women made on the economic and political fronts is, for example, the violence frequently used by those who feel their position threatened. These changes in power relations require sensitive handling on the part of development workers.

ASK sees itself as a defender of the rights of the poor, particularly destitute women. The organisation is not directly involved in poverty alleviation activities. However, provision of access to justice and recourse to the poor serves as a safety net that reduces their vulnerability and improves their self-confidence to compete openly and succeed.

STD too does not treat poverty alleviation as its primary purpose. Rather it advocates for gender affirmative action, particularly pointing to the economics of women's productive, human resource potentials. STD's DWIN members, on the other hand, tend to be directly involved in poverty reduction programmes at the grassroots level. The two combine to help push forward a gender-sensitive anti-poverty agenda and non-traditional work boundaries for women and men.

Chapter 6

Stakeholder Participation and Gender Equality

This chapter focuses on the extent to which women and men and girls and boys, representing the primary stakeholder group in particular, participated in and influenced the different aspects of the interventions. Participation by secondary and by key stakeholders who are particularly well positioned to influence the attention to the gender equality goal is also assessed. The seven-point scale for assessment of participation (section 1.2.5) developed by the evaluation team is applied selectively. Dialogue plays an important role in stakeholder participation and is discussed in assessment of participation in the interventions.

6.1 Analysis of Stakeholder Participation

Although there were a number of consultative workshops initiated for NFE 2, there is no particular evidence that key stakeholders (especially including primary stakeholders) were involved in key design decisions such as curriculum content, size of centres etc. All key project design decisions seem to be made centrally.

As pointed out by the Swedish Embassy, the question of stakeholder participation needs to be considered in the wider context of development work in Bangladesh. Development projects/interventions have very seldom included consultative and participatory workshops with primary stakeholders as elements in the design process. However, the issue is receiving more attention at the present time.

Progress on participatory approaches to project development and management is, of course, linked to the question of decentralised management of which the Government itself has not yet advanced a clear strategy or policy. The issue of participation thus becomes linked to questions of decentralisation and to the overall reform of the public service in Bangladesh. Indeed, the prevailing tradition of a highly centralised public service (which is itself hierarchical in its organisation and structures) is one of the major constraints to participatory project development, management and evaluation.

NFE 2:

There are elements of participation in the management of the NFE centres. In each upazila there is a centre management committee (CMC) which includes a primary school teacher, a local respectable person, a UP member, a social worker and learner's guardians, including one woman guardian and the centre teacher who acts as the secretary. The CMC appears to have limited influence since the chair is from the local administration and most of the design aspects are set by the overall design of the NFE programme as a whole.

In a telling phrase, DNFE staff and DNFE documents refer to persons "made literate" through the programme. Very large volume targets, standardised class sizes and curriculum (six months basic literacy training and three months post-literacy) mean there is little scope for addressing needs of specific learners. The centralised DNFE administration and emphasis on very large volume and low cost targets make a participatory approach almost impossible.

DNFE's overall approach to literacy training discourages attention to both participation and to issues of quality and sustainability simultaneously.

Women-only learning centres do, however, create a forum for women's assembly and discussion of important topics relating to family life issues.

Dialogue with Sida (by DNFE) comes mainly from ongoing discussions and interaction with the education programme officer and through intermediaries such as STD and DAM during their consultancies relating to gender equality.

Women-only learning centres are reported to encourage women participation in discussion of key topics. There is some evidence of results in a gender equality survey undertaken by DAM.

There is an opportunity to build greater participation for women and men into design elements of successor programmes to NFE 2 such as the new World Bank and ADB supported programmes in post-literacy and continuing education. The NFE 2 pilot project in PLCE is a good mechanism for this opportunity.

In the absence of a design approach to NFE 2 aimed at promoting meaningful primary stakeholder participation there is no evidence of differentiated participation by women and girls.

It must be recognised that in the centre-based (NGO delivered) component of the programme there are large differences in openness to participation on the part of the delivering NGOs. There are also large differences in each NGO's awareness and knowledge of gender equality and their commitment to a g/e approach.

NFE 2 – Pilot PLCE:

The primary stakeholders who are the learners in the pilot PLCE are chosen by the NGOs delivering the project, often from the persons they are already working with in a given area (but not exclusively so). Like NFE 2, each centre has a Centre Management Committee (CMC) with representation from the NGO, the learners' guardians, the teacher, the union council, etc. The CMC has very limited powers in directing the centre as the NGO's supervisor is the person that teachers and instructors report to. Different NGOs may have a more or less participatory attitude depending on their own policies. For example, most offered learners a choice of vocations for training but some were much more careful than others in ensuring that participants understood the implications for employment, income, and operating costs in the vocation they chose.

Other than the relative over-representation of women as learners there are few gender dimensions to the situation in the pilot PLCE regarding primary stakeholder participation. There is some understanding among some of the NGOs visited that continuing education will require participants to be more motivated and engaged in the project than was the case for literacy training.

NFE 3:

Participatory methods of dialogue are applied in a variety of contexts, e.g. in training of staff, in the process which led to the Formative Evaluation, in meetings with Teachers, Focus Group Discussions with working children, etc. UNICEF reports that workshops are being held with participants to identify their needs and to make modifications to the centres.

The centralised approach based on quantitative goals, however, makes it difficult to apply participatory approaches and active beneficiary/stakeholder dialogue.

The Final Appraisal Report for NFE 3 Hard to reach urban working children, 1997, states that "The project was designed without an adequate stakeholder analysis". Further, that stakeholders' interests need to be analysed to inform the project strategy, and target group to be explicitly defined and monitored.

The final project document resulted from dialogue between the donors, including Sida/Swedish Embassy, and GOB's representatives in which gender equality issues were made more visible.

Swedish supported technical assistance, including both the NFE-TA team and the Local Gender Consultancy has had to deal with serious constraints in promoting the desirable dialogue with DNFE on implementation of a gender approach and the monitoring of performance, process and results.

In the first instance, the decision by PMED not to proceed with renewing the contract for the LGC to support DNFE has meant that specialised gender

analysis expertise is not available within the organisation after those who did participate in gender training – some 60 people – have been dispersed. Embassy staff have pointed out that the formal terms of reference of the NFE-TA Team and the LGC/STD team call for collaboration among the two teams with one focusing on monitoring, human resource development, and PLCE and the other more closely on gender and development but both teams working together in the crucial area of gender in NFE. In this sense, it is clear that the NFE TA team was to act in support of GE while its key areas of specialisation would be in monitoring, in Post-Literacy and Continuing Education and human resource development. It would be in the collaboration of the Local Gender Consulting Team and the NFE TA team that gender equality would receive the critical support required.

NFE-TA personnel interviewed reported to the evaluation team that they did not see the development of gender analysis skills within themselves and within the partner organisations as a priority, given the many pressing tasks of the programme, but something which sound attitudes, common sense and an open mind should take care of. While this view is understandable given the real challenges the NFE-TA team faces in promoting change in its core areas of specialisation, the organisational context of DNFE suggests that a more formal and rigorous application of gender analysis will be required if progress to achieving gender equality goals is to be achieved.

The non-renewal by PMED of the contract for the LGC team to support DNFE has placed a greater burden on other sources of technical assistance if the need for gender analysis in the programme is not to go unmet as seems to have been the case since the contract was not extended.

Dialogue within the group of donors reveals that opinions sometimes differ about how to promote key policy issues, including gender equality. Alternative ideas are being discussed concerning future support to continuing education for urban girls and boys.

The ET did meet with a very active CMC and several centres are reported to have active parents and employers on the committee. There is, however, a general complaint that the majority of CMCs do not participate actively in the running of the centres. Hence, the dialogue on important centre issues including employers' support for working girls' and boys' attendance is limited.

On the positive side, the more active NGOs administering centres can implement a somewhat more participatory approach to teaching – with attention to both girls and boys adolescents – without modifying the curriculum. This is a capacity, which needs to be enhanced for most of the NGOs. Such topics could perhaps be taken up at the frequent meetings between the implementing NGOs' Programme Officers and DNFE.

Turnover of staff trained in gender equality has weakened the possibility of gender focused monitoring and other improvements, such as for example participatory M & E – an approach which seems to be missing in the proposed MER system.

ASK:

Primary stakeholders: ASK works with community clients both through its direct legal assistance and through partner NGOs (PNGOs). It uses a process of rapport building with the help of local PNGOs and researchers by engaging in dialogue on locally prevalent issues with potential clients and local support persons (e.g. local elites). Intervention sites are identified based on incident rates of human rights violation. Monitoring is done through both case-by-case follow-ups of clients and collection of data that reflect broader changes taking place in the community by field workers.

The ET's field observations indicate that ASK staff and legal awareness trainees have a clear grasp of how both discriminatory laws and practices have implications for both women and men. Legal awareness training brings into light the tangible consequences of discriminatory practices, such as dowry extortion, on both female and male members of the family. Thus community elites who hold much influence over such practices (i.e. as arbiters in a *shalish*) are given special attention as recipients of such training.

Government: because of its solid reputation for high standard work and links with progressive elements in the legal system, the media and international legislative bodies, ASK is a strong voice in raising human rights and democracy concerns. Although it often acts as a critic to government action or inaction, it is consulted by the government for various human rights-related issues and initiatives. It manages to influence change of laws to be more sensitive to the needs of women and children. Examples include the new Law Preventing Repression of Women and Children passed by the Parliament in 2000 which, for the first time in Bangladesh history, recognises sexual assault and harassment as a crime.

ASK representatives also sit in boards of other NGOs (e.g. as a member trustee for the Acid Burn Foundation), get invited to participate in conferences and seminars organised by government and other development partners. Results of discussions in these fora sometimes lead to significant policy changes or generate a momentum for further debates.

Civil society: ASK interacts with other NGOs such as other legal aid groups e.g. the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association & Bangladesh Environmental Law Association. Some of these collaborative partnerships have produced landmark breakthrough in legal reforms and draw widespread attention and public support for human rights issues.

Although ASK and STD exchange information (e.g. videotapes), there has not been a concerted effort for the two organisations to support each other's work. This is an area in which Sida might consider playing a more active role: Facilitating dialogue and focused exchanges for the NGOs to explore in what ways their combined efforts could make a bigger impact on the common GE goals they share with Sida.

Donors and the public: For its core programme ASK selects as partners like-minded donors that share its philosophy and commitment. It sees Sida as a representative of progressive Scandinavian liberal democratic principles. Besides routine reporting ASK shares with its partners *ad hoc* publications. It issues statements or press releases for the stand ASK takes on an issue. Donors send resource materials and information about international events and offer of sponsorships to ASK.

ASK publishes high quality publications to support its efforts to disseminate information to the various stakeholders. For example Bangla books and leaflets on various laws are used to supplement training and distributed at community working areas to stimulate attention on special issues (e.g. research report on gender violence and legal system in Bangladesh; a collation of laws on women's participation in the political process). Its annual publication Human Rights in Bangladesh serves as a useful reference for groups interested in monitoring of human rights violations.

Because of the large number of donors interested in the various parts of ASK's work, it can afford to be selective. However, it recognises that the organisation's work will be significantly hampered without the core funding support. To reduce its vulnerability an idea of a trust fund is being explored.

ASK executives say that they welcome external evaluations because they learn from these exercises through what others see in their work. There is a growing awareness for the need to broaden the interactions with donors and external evaluators so that staff at middle management and below can also benefit from the feedback and participate actively in the debates. [This ET was given credit for promoting such an inclusive process by way of the broadly based participatory methodology we applied.]

STD:

Early documents by STD firmly identify Sida's gender policy as the focus of STD philosophy. As STD's self confidence has grown it seems to have moved away from such an identity and sees itself as sharing the philosophy of like-minded others beyond Sida. The growing independence of STD seems to also result in a decline in both frequency and depth of dialogue between the organisation and embassy staff.

In many ways, this must be seen as a desirable outcome as STD has matured into a more autonomous organisation. This may be partly attributable to the following factors: 1) concern for financial sustainability; 2) growing volume of work; and 3) decrease in embassy staffing, particularly the post of gender advisor. STD appreciates the embassy's trusting support and respect for its own decisions, including the way financial resources are distributed. It also acknowledges the information resources the embassy sends them. It is encouraging to see this trusting relationship and Sida's respect for STD's asserting its self-identity and growing competence. At the same time, there is a role

for the embassy to support more closely STD's efforts to mainstream gender perspectives especially in the public sector.

STD reports some successes in developing good relationships with some government agencies. These gains need to be further harnessed. There is also a need to focus STD's relatively limited resources and to develop more strategic partnerships with a clear overview of the entire system.

At the sub-national level the DWIN is gaining ground and is beginning to generate valuable lessons at the community and PNGO levels. STD's approach, tools, and concepts and new materials for gender advocacy are well received by DWIN members. The DWIN members, in turn, bring to the table a rich volume of experiences of promoting GE at the grassroots. This mechanism, with its synergistic nature, has tremendous potentials. However, STD needs to be careful and clear about how it distributes its human resources.

6.2 Summary Findings – Stakeholder Participation and Gender Equality

With respect to stakeholder participation as it relates to gender equality and women's and adolescents' participation in decisions making, all the interventions have scattered elements of participatory mechanisms, but all have potentials for further development. This includes the two NGOs, which have Gender Equality in their mandate.

In the following table an attempt is made to summarise the lessons on stakeholder participation in the analysed interventions along the dimensions in the analytical framework. A stakeholder mapping was undertaken during the documentary assessments of each intervention. This was followed up in the field where the evaluation team met with representatives of primary, secondary and key stakeholders.

Not surprisingly the two NGOs, ASK and STD, have integrated mechanisms for stakeholder participation in their operations, i.e. for secondary stakeholders such as other NGOs in the DWIN network, more than for ultimate beneficiaries. Obstacles to stakeholder participation, beyond the potential representation of centre committees CMCs in the non-formal education programmes, are embedded in national policies – or the lack of the same, e.g. efficient decentralisation.

Primary stakeholder participation in the courses provided by the non-formal education programmes – if mainly passive and information giving forms of participation – provide opportunities for addressing the 'multiple constraints' on women's and girls' participation that are pronounced in Bangladesh. Participation in the mixed girls and boys courses in NFE 3 provide opportunities for sharing light on children's and women's rights and some understanding of gender responsibilities.

Table 4.4a Participatory Mechanisms in four Interventions, Bangladesh

Intervention	Participatory Mechanism	Stakeholders Participating	Level of Participation	Link to Gender Equality
NFE 2, Non Formal Education – Basic Literacy for Youth and Adults	Centre Management Committee (CMC) – few functional. Dialogue through intermediaries/ NGOs and TA	Primary Stakeholders in courses (50 pct. female) – limited in decision making to a few Learners’ guardians – in principle one woman pr CMC Secondary/ NGOs	1 (Passive) 2 (Information receiving) 3 (consultation w. implementers/ NGOs)	Potential for functional (level 5) participation, e.g. enhancing relevant gender contents in curriculum and – for interactive participation (level 6) incl. women and male learners in the longer run and in few centres through enhanced intermediaries (and TA)
PLCE – Pilot project on Post-Literacy & Continuing Education	CMCs – Implementing NGOs – NGO ‘forum’ and TA facilitation	Primary sth. in courses – limited in decision making – more than 50 % female learners Secondary/ NGO ‘forum’;	1 (Passive) 2 (Information/ training receiving)	Potential for functional (level 5) participation, e.g. enhancing gender relevance of skills training, and – for interactive participation (level 6) incl. women and male learners – through enhanced intermediaries and TA
NFE 3, Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children	CMCs – (few are functional) – staff training – needs assessment workshops (UNICEF) – teachers’ meetings – NGO and TA participatory approach	Primary stakeh. girls and boys in courses – Guardian representation on CMC Secondary stakeholders/ NGOs varying participatory experience and participation in dialogue with DNFE	1 (Passive) 2 (Information receiving) 3 (consultation w. implementers/ NGOs)	Potential for functional (level 5) participation, e.g. enhancing relevant gender contents in curriculum and – for interactive participation (level 6) incl. women and male learners in the longer run and in few centres through enhanced intermediaries (and TA)
ASK – Human Rights and Legal Aid Resource Centre	Advocacy on HR through media, campaigns, seminar – yet consultations with GoB (and NGOs) Legal awareness training of local support persons – Monitoring of/with clients of HR violations	Primary and secondary stakeholders in concrete legal/ court cases – e.g. on violence Secondary and key stakeholder participation in advocacy and actions towards legal reform (Strategic gender interests)	2 (Information giving to public and stakeholders) 3 (Consultative process w. GoB) 5, 6, 7 (Functional, interactive and self-mobilisation) practised within ASK and in relations with civil society, GoB and international partners – e.g. on trafficking of women and children	Links to issues of violence, abuse, rights and empowerment of women, (men) and children at household and community level Legal reforms potential (meeting strategic interests)
STD – Steps Towards Development	STD approach, tools and concepts Gender advocacy through DWIN and PNGOs	Primary and secondary stakeholders in training, capacity dev. etc.	2 (Information giving) 3 (Consultation with DWIN, PNGOs, GoB, Sida) 6 (Interactive participation in training and internally in STD)	Explicit ref. to Sida’s Gender policy

ASK consults with both primary service users and secondary government stakeholders among its key stakeholders. Both ASK and STD provide frameworks for interactive participation with their primary stakeholders at sub-national levels. Some of these groups are reported to have practised self-mobilisation. For example, a number of youth groups approached ASK to advise them on how to start new voluntary Union Level Theatre Teams. A growing number of local NGOs also approached STD for affiliation as regional network members.

Paradoxically secondary stakeholder participation, which takes the form of monthly meetings between the implementing NGOs in the NFE 3 literacy for urban working children is criticised by the partner organisation and NGOs themselves for being somewhat irrelevant. The meetings require long trips from the participating cities to Dhaka, the meeting agendas tend to concentrate on administration rather than on action on common problems, and many resources are tied up in not too productive meetings.

The Embassy actively seeks to promote mechanisms for participation and stakeholder involvement in dialogue on gender equality in public appearances, donor fora and interventions. Both the Embassy and partners are faced with frequent staff turnover and reductions, which affect relevant memory and experience. How best to optimise limited resources to facilitate participation for gender equality, i.e. through intermediary TA and NGOs on an off-and-on or on a continuous basis requires continuous attention.

Within Sida's country programme in Bangladesh, there are informal exchanges among like-minded Sida partner organisations. For example, ASK and STD occasionally share audio-visual materials or information on women's rights for example, that they each publish. There is an apparent need, as pointed out by some of the NGO leaders for more sharing of good practices. They suggest that Sida might intensify its role as facilitator of more structured linkages. For example, ASK suggests that an annual consultative meeting among Sida's NGO partners be held to exchange information about each other's programmes, objectives, progress and resources available. Gender Equality would be a priority agenda point.

Sida's facilitation role is most needed, however, in linking its government partners with the NGOs. The experience of DNFE-STD collaboration amply demonstrates the enormous challenge such an effort faces. Nevertheless, in view of the roles government and NGOs will continue to play in the development of Bangladesh, this difficult cross-fertilisation is a worthwhile cause.

Chapter 7

Changes and Other Effects on Gender Equality

This chapter addresses the findings regarding the key question of changes in gender relations, which have a bearing on the interventions studied. In addition to examining changes in perspective of practical gender needs and strategic gender interests, the evaluation team examined intervention effects which are important for future changes in gender relations. One is the empowerment of women as a result of intervention related activities. The other challenges the roles of women and men, and is discussed under male roles and masculinities. The section thus also addresses interpretations of key gender concepts.

7.1 Processes and Results – Practical and Strategic Gender Changes

NFE 2:

The findings on gender equality changes in NFE 2 were gathered by the evaluation team through three main mechanisms: review the evaluation of gender equality in NFE 2, workshops with key NGO staff involved in the delivery of the centre-based component of NFE 2 and discussions with learners, supervisors and teachers in a number of learning centres.

Table 7.1 below contrasts some of the different observations of the NGO leaders attending workshops held by the evaluation team, the views of centre supervisors and teachers and the responses of learners.

Table 7.1 Differing Views of Gender Changes in NFE 2

Reported Area of Gender Change	NGO Leader Workshop	Centre Supervisors and Teachers	Learners
1. Awareness of benefits of literacy	Women have more awareness than men of importance of literacy and therefore perform better and realise more benefits from training	Women are more effected by isolation and illiteracy and place greater value than men on training and its benefits	There is more "hunger" for literacy among women than men; relates to work and hours. Literacy training provides social opportunity
2. Improved capacity to work in groups	Women realise through training an increased ability to work together in groups	Agreed, women overcome shyness and isolation and are more ready to work in groups	Agreed, they are more confident of their ability to work together. Also literacy training overcomes village opposition to them working together
3. Reduced isolation	The learning centres have the effect of reducing isolation of women, especially in traditional areas where practice of purdah is common	Agreed, but with strong variations from one locality and centre to the next. In some centres the community does not normally isolate women	Agreed, but less strongly stated than the NGO leaders. Degree of isolation varies from community to community. Learning centres do contribute to reducing isolation but so do other factors such as income activities supported by NGOs
4. Rights information contributes to women's awareness	NGO leaders saw rights information content as having a major impact on women's knowledge	Agreed, rights information is often but not always included in the content. In fact, extent of this effect depends more on the basic orientation of the delivering NGO than on the prescribed content of the training	Agreed, centres visited did include messages on women's rights. Learners pointed out, however that rights information is often reinforced (or introduced first) by visiting workers of the health and family planning services
5. Sense of empowerment	Because women attend more regularly and achieve better literacy results than men they feel empowered	Agreed, observed an increase in confidence and sense of self-esteem as women achieve literacy	Agreed, but emphasised not so much innate empowerment as increased esteem of community towards participants and learners. Point out that self esteem of husbands is important as well
6. Increased leadership capacity of women	Participation in the programme has helped to increase women's leadership and decision capacity	Main leadership role for women is as teacher, and to a lesser extent centre supervisors. Also, dealing with the centre management committee increases leadership skills of women teachers	No sign that individual learners have taken leadership roles. Some observed that the example of the women teachers is important. Teachers are seen as examples of achievement by women community members
7. Exchange among age groups	Because women learners in same centre may range from 11 to 45 years, there is an important exchange of information	True but not really different for men and women. Main gender impact may be reducing isolation of some older, widowed, women	Strongly agreed that there is a benefit of inter-mingling age groups. Gender effect seems to be mainly in inclusion of some widowed "older" women
8. Employment gain for women teachers	NFE 2 provides an important employment opportunity for women teachers	True but more could be done by the NGOs to allow for women supervisors of learning centres	Yes, women teachers are an example of what can be achieved by young and bright women in the community

In addition to workshops with NGO leaders and visits to learning centres, the evaluation team relied on material produced by the Dhaka Ahsania Mission during an evaluation of the gender equality results of NFE 2. These results were also discussed in detail with the report's principal author.

The DAM gender equality evaluation of NFE 2 (Draft report in March 2000) compared women and men learners to non-learners and concluded that women and men participating as learners are more likely to know of the concept of gender equality (almost 80% vs. 59% of non-learners):

1. When asked about which rights they are able to enjoy a higher percentage of women learners (70%) than non-learners (52%) report the right to expend their own income.
2. Similar patterns apply to rights such as the right to work outside the home, casting votes for their preferred candidate, and control of family expenditures. Both groups of women report a very low level of right to choose a marriage partner.
3. More women learners (33.9%) than non-learners (22.5%) report that childcare and household work should be an equal responsibility of women and men.

Interestingly learning centres were not the only source of knowledge on equal rights for women and men. They were mentioned as the main source of information in women and men's rights by 67 percent of male and 56 percent of female learners. Other sources included radio/tv and people (including family planning workers).

One critically important finding of the focus-group component of the study seems to be that the extent of gender equality information and its impact varies from one NGO delivered learning centre to the next and that NGOs should be chosen with this criteria in mind. Interviews with participants (learners) in a small number of centres in different regions re-iterated the importance of family planning workers in identifying women's rights, especially rights of access to family planning.

Much of the gender effect of the programme seems to have come about through the work of specific NGOs.

Unfortunately, little is known about the gender effect of the 2/3s of the programme delivered through the DNFE and government run Total Learning Movement (TLM) which provided literacy training to over one million learners.

The lack of information on the gender equity effects of the TLM centres under direct DNFE delivery can be attributed to three factors:

1. The TLM learning centres were not covered by the evaluation carried out by the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) for the DNFE and Primary and Mass Education Division. The DAM evaluation surveyed learners in 30 centres run under the NGO component of the programme;

2. The generally weak state of project monitoring and the lack of central compiling and analysing of the limited amount of data which is gathered meant that DNFE was not able to provide the evaluation team with even partial data on the g/e results of the TLM centres; and,
3. At the time of the evaluation team's visit in May 2001, almost all TLM centres had completed their courses or were not in operation and thus the team was only able to conduct visits to NGO operated centres.

Finally, it is important to note that interviews with contributing donors, external technical agencies, and other observers indicated that those interviewed had rather lower expectations of the TLM centres than those operated by NGOs. There was no possibility for the evaluation team to directly verify these perceptions.

Little is known about other influences on gender equality knowledge gains and rights achievement. Many observers expressed concern that the knowledge gained through the programme (including literacy itself) may not be sustainable and result in GE changes without further interventions.

Another constraint to effective g/e content and results frequently noted by key informants is the mass nature of the programme and emphasis on monitoring enrolment (not even completion) at the apparent expense of issues such as quality, relevance, link to income and poverty etc.

NFE 2 – Pilot PLCE:

The NGOs delivering the pilot programme PLCE noted that changes in favour of gender equality were most likely to materialise if literacy is followed up with market directed skills training. Women and girls when surveyed have indicated a preference for training in trades such as:

- food making (processing commercial snack foods)
- power loom operation
- tailoring
- candle making
- needle point
- screen printing
- electric wiring
- rickshaw repair
- poultry rearing
- cattle rearing

The NGOs and participants that the team was able to meet with indicated that women who completed the course were able (with some financing provided usually by the NGO either as cash or as capital equipment) to generate incomes of 300 to 600 taka per month. Some of the women interviewed self-reported improvements in their sense of achievement and self-esteem (along

with status in the community) as a result of their ability to earn income. They also noted that the community seemed to accept their participation in the training because it has an economic benefit (this comment also applied to their husbands). Some of the women participants interviewed have ambitious plans to be operating shops and employing staff in the next 3 to 5 years which represents a major improvement in their outlook on the future.

In summary, the benefits to women participants seemed to be real enough at the individual level although some may not be sustainable without continued support by the participating NGOs (especially in the form of small-scale credit). Some women participants will have great difficulty sustaining their income gains in the very tough competitive climate of the informal sector in their chosen trades.

It is also notable, that the programme has not been successful in linking women to non-traditional skills and occupations such as electric wiring. Sometimes, changes have occurred in local practices which used to limit women's opportunities. For example, in one location visited, women are now able to operate a retail outlet for their tailored goods at the local market (which they could not do before). This has allowed women trained under the programme to enter what was a male role locally (tailoring) in the past. Both practical and strategic changes seem to have happened. Thus, one lesson learned is that changes in male and female roles will need to be understood on a very micro (local) scale if they are to be successful. An accepted role for women in one sub-district may represent a fairly substantial change in the next.

NFE 3:

Achievements in terms of process and results of the NFE 3 indicate that there are a number of opportunities concerning GE to be pursued.

The Evaluation Team's observations corresponds with those of the Formative Evaluation, which suggest that:

In the context of an increasing population of urban working children in Bangladesh, NFE 3 is a meaningful project having great possibilities. (FE, June 2000, p. 10-1)

The possibilities of NFE 3 would all contribute to enhancing gender equality, if and when realised:

- 1) It can contribute to urban human resource development.
- 2) It can help raise the literacy rate in the urban areas.
- 3) It can help the working children move into the formal school system on completion of learning cycle 3 or earlier.
- 4) It can help the working children move into vocational school.
- 5) It can be so planned as to combine earning with learning.
- 6) It can help raise the social status of girls and women.

- 7) It can generate awareness about health, nutrition, sanitation, environment and the rights of children.

Indications of achievements regarding (6) and (7) can be registered immediately on visiting the learning centers, while (3) is beginning to materialise. The remaining possibilities are high on the agenda of stakeholders in the field, e.g. NGOs, programme officers, learners and parents. It is less evident whether and how the possibilities are being pursued at central level.

Many achievements are intangible but observable in change in attitudes and awareness concerning the detrimental effects of gender discrimination, in enthusiastic learners and teachers working in overcrowded, simple 'classrooms', learners' dreams for the future, illiterate mothers' stories of learning from their children how to write their names, etc. It is difficult to substantiate achievements by supportive tangible data, which the monitoring systems do not readily avail. Nevertheless, the following achievements relating to gender equality changes – with further possibilities – have been verified by the ET's own observations:

- The majority of learners are girls and a large majority of the teachers in NFE 3 centres are women. Supervisory positions are still mainly occupied by men.
- The mix of boys and girls in same classes contributes to easy socialising.
- Socialising with teachers, supervisors and CMCs at Centres and between parents/guardians themselves, has contributed to break down stereotypes of gender roles.
- Isolation of girls and women is diminishing and their mobility increasing. NFE 3 contributes to this trend which is of course attributable to many different sources including media.
- Some learners and teachers have been afforded opportunities for formal education through scholarships and some teachers have improved their employment opportunities.
- More specifically there has been considerable effort by Sida/Embassy to promote gender equality concerns as project goal and in capacity building of staff at all levels.
- Sida sponsored and supported measures to improve the gender equality content of the programme i.e. local gender consultancy team's work.
- Considerable motivational and training work of DNFE staff by STD as part of local gender consultancy group.
- Some attention to gender in a (proposed and rather complex) monitoring, evaluation and reporting system (MER), mainly limited to capture sex-disaggregated data on learners and teachers.

The single largest occupation group for learners is domestic servants. UNICEF considers it a major achievement to gain access to literacy training and reduce the isolation of girls working as domestic servants.

Better completion rates and attendance rates are reported for girls/young women than for boys and young men.

The fact that the project does not actually reach many in its target group – (more than 55% of learners were found to be not in paid employment) may limit gender equality (and other) impacts.

The monitoring and data collection and management system is being revised and tested, and expectations for its operation are great. Data is provided by the NGOs on enrolment and attendance on a gender disaggregated basis for each of the centres they manage but it is not centrally collated and analysed. Programme Officers have invented their own reporting forms for their own needs. Outdated monitoring forms were managed to NFE 3 centres by a Monitoring Assistant during the team's visit to Rajshahi. Hence, changes and impacts of the programme are difficult to document by figures. Qualitative statements by numerous stakeholders are better evidence of positive changes.

Opportunities for promoting gender equality changes in NFE3

According to the Formative Evaluation there are a number of opportunities, which confirm the observations of the Evaluation Team. Each of the following areas which are suggested for sustaining and improving the NFE 3 warrant a gender perspective with supportive gender analysis:

- 1) A larger proportion of working children among the learners,
- 2) capacity building for the executing agency,
- 3) raising the efficiency of the NGOs,
- 4) better teaching-learning materials,
- 5) better training for the teachers and the supervisors,
- 6) continuing education facilities for the learners, and
- 7) further educational opportunities (vocational or general) for those completing the 2-year programme and are interested in continuing their studies.

There is an opportunity to strengthen gender equality in the NFE 3 and other NFE programmes through the use of g/e criteria in NGO selection, strengthening of g/e perspectives in curriculum, implementation of g/e indicators and monitoring.

The seven areas of improvement listed above were agreed to between the DNFE and the donors by mid 2001, although not reflected in the revised Project Pro-forma. As noted by the Embassy, this agreement was the culmination of a process which lasted over a year.

As with NFE 2, there is a risk in the mass nature of the programme and emphasis on enrolment numbers at the expense of issues such as quality, relevance, link to gender equality in access to employment and poverty reduction measures etc.

An opportunity exists to use the lessons of this programme and of the pilot test component of NFE 2 as inputs to the much larger programmes of the GOB in post literacy and continuing education being funded through ADB and WB loans. The donors, including Sida may help promote the transfer of positive experience from the successful NGOs to the Government structures.

ASK:

Some of the practical changes attributable to ASK interventions are a reduction in polygamy, early marriage and *hilla* (intervening marriage), oral divorce, wife beating, and dowry incidence rates in ASK's operating areas.

ASK's direct legal aid helps meet immediate needs for poor women and children who otherwise have no other means to access protection or justice.

Our study of ASK indicates that the line between practical and strategic changes sometimes blurs. In many cases, the meeting of a practical gender need results in strategic changes by default, although not necessarily by design. For example, the legal clinics cum drop-in centres were intended to meet the practical, survival needs of women and children victims of abuse and negligence. However, the result seems to effect a number of strategic changes. For one thing, the act of women coming out to access legal service has a knock-on effect for them to access other forms of services. This has helped erode the isolation of women traditionally confined to their *bari* (homestead compound), which used to be reinforced by customary practice of *purdah* (hiding women from public views).

Legal assistance also results in a growing knowledge about the laws among the women and their families. Ordinary and poor people can now tell if certain laws are misrepresented by corrupt legal practitioners and other authority figures. The number of legally aware citizens is growing gradually. This means that there is now a growing number of people able to demand justice and to support each other in protecting their rights. Women clients of the legal clinic often express how strong they now feel for knowing their rights and that they are not alone.

ASK's work as a champion of human rights for the poor, particularly women and children, has produced some significant strategic changes in the way women and men in the country are treated by law. It has often accomplished these through winning some high-profile public interest litigations. For example, the April 2001 High Court ruling on illegality of the *fatwa* (verdicts by Moslem clerics – often used to preserve conservative values, such as forbidding women to work outside their homes) – was based on ASK's 140-page writ petition submitted in mid 2000. The enactment of the new Women and Children Repression Prevention Law approved by the Parliament in 2000 – towards which ASK made significant contributions – is expected to serve as deterrent to abuses often suffered by women and children.

Another recent example concerns the issue of guardianship. The conventional Bangladeshi practice had been that a father is the only legal guardian for children. Thus traditional family court sees children and women as the man's personal property. As of last August, the court ruled that all legal documents must now include the names of mother as well as father. Every government organisation and NGO is obliged to comply with this rule. Although enforcement for such a compliance is still questionable, the change is now reflected in voter registration forms. The implication of this is that women now have equal custody rights of their children as their husbands. (There are also reports that unlike before, people now also name their mothers in their CVs when sending out job applications.)

At the end of the ET's field mission, the Supreme Court ruled to hold accountable the Fire Department and Ministry of Industry Inspectors, beside factory owners, for negligence to comply with Factory Safety Act which caused deaths of women garment workers in fires²¹. This is another landmark judgement attributable to ASK's initiative and perseverance.

ASK's work has generated certain, valuable multiplier effects. It has helped ASK's partner NGOs to grow through mutual learning. For example, partnerships in training and popular theatre helps the NGO Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha, to spread awareness of laws and human rights among its client groups. This in turn facilitates other aspects of the PNGO's work, such as fair election monitoring, in the locality.

Another example of a widening scope of ASK's influence can be seen in the replication of its Drop-in Centre model by the Ministry of Social Welfare through the ARISE (Appropriate Resources in Street Children's Environment) project supported by UNDP, which takes place in all urban divisional headquarters.

ASK has been careful with gender balance of its own staff at all levels. It promotes an egalitarian culture. In spite of the high stress involved in challenging power holders, staff turnover at ASK is unusually low. The organisation is not complacent about its achievements. Instead, it perpetually identifies next steps to be taken and how the organisation can improve its own contributions. For example, it sees a big gap in enforcement of laws. It also questions whether GE principles are internalised in the way each ASK worker relates to other people in their own lives.

The spirals linking concrete cases with policy advocacy and that of reflection and action keep ASK in good footing as a significant voice in the protection of human rights, social justice and gender equality in the country. ASK leaders' humility in recognising how much is yet to be done, and the organisation's practice in growing its next generation of leaders and staff, will sustain its efforts towards meeting its goal.

²¹ Few factories have fire exits or fire extinguishers. In many of the cases resulting in tragic deaths of garment factory workers caused by factory fire, the doors were found to be locked from the outside so that the workers were trapped inside the inferno with no chance to escape.

STD:

Over a relatively short span of time since its inception, STD has demonstrated a number of achievements:

- In a programme review in November/December 1996, STD was credited with “playing an important catalytic role in the field of gender”.
- Since 1995, STD has trained 96 (52 female, 44 male) gender trainers among local NGOs in 14 districts through TOTs. They subsequently deliver gender training to leaders and members of local communities. The standard 10-day TOT covers basic gender analysis and motivational skills for increasing gender awareness and changing attitude and beliefs. It is followed up with 2 refresher courses every year plus other forms of sharing through DWIN co-ordination meetings and ad-hoc communication. These gender trainers represent a good resource to propagate further gender sensitisation of development work in Bangladesh.
- During a relatively short period of time, STD has developed into a useful one-stop resource centre for gender education needs²². Beside a training centre, it now has a fully equipped audio-visual production centre as well as a unit devoted to printed materials. The multi-media capability of STD’s existing infrastructure resources enables it to tailor the messages to a variety of stakeholders. The volume of demand for STD products (e.g. videotapes and print materials), training and consultancy services represents a significant source of income for running the organisation (40% recovery of total programme expenditure against Sida contribution).
- The DWIN membership now consists of 179 local NGOs in 14 districts. The synergy generated and the reach of disseminating gender concepts and analytical tools to the grassroots level can be felt. There is a lot of learning at community level from clients of the local NGOs. Currently STD is emphasising identification of gender gaps within network member organisations. The network is also seen as a mechanism for developing a broader, alternative partnership approach among member NGOs that is based on conceptual development through mutual sharing of resources (and costs), as opposed to a relationship that is associated with financial expectations.

All these have strategic implications for widening the spread of gender awareness in the country. STD is developing linkages with national media, other national NGOs (e.g. with BRAC for a development internship programme), and to a limited extent, also some international resource organisations. Some work of STD’s DWIN member NGOs shows considerable strengths and potentials in promoting GE ideals and altering gender relations at community level. Unfortunately the effect is not yet consistently wide-

²² (The Executive Director sees STD as the only organisation in Bangladesh that exclusively focuses on gender issues and provides gender analysis skills training. He makes a distinction between gender and women’s issues in defending his claim.)

spread across the network and largely dependent on the general strengths of the individual NGOs as an organisation.

The issue of member organisation capacity building needs to be addressed more thoroughly, with more innovations to be considered through the resources offered by a peer support system (e.g. stronger NGOs helping others). Here perhaps STD needs to see more clearly that its relationship with its member NGOs is a two-way street. Although some senior staff in STD take pride in encouraging the sense of ownership by DWIN members, there are a lot of valuable lessons that STD need to learn from those members, particularly in terms of application of gender analysis tools and strategies for working with the grassroots. For example, STD can draw from the concrete cases available among the experience of DWIN members, use those to continue building its training and advocacy efforts, and facilitate sharing of the lessons among all of its partners.

STD's efforts to institutionalise gender sensitive practice in government institutions and large public sector programmes and projects have, unfortunately, produced few results. For example, the failed mission of the earlier Local Gender Consultancy with DNFE may have explanations relating to STD and not to DNFE alone. The difficulties it has had, in order to be accepted or recognised as a strong provider of technical assistance to the government in the GE field, are a source of concern. STD has worked hard to develop a high profile for its role as a service organisation devoted to gender equality. It still needs to work hard to gain solid credibility with a consistently high standard for all of its products and services. Ensuring high quality is one of the avenues STD can control in order to break into the "higher return market", such as public sector institutions and large-scale programmes, that have a massive scale of influence.

Sida can help STD to overcome these challenges in at least two ways. One is to ensure continued support to STD until it has grown strong enough to live up to the high profile it has created for itself in GE promotion. Pre-occupation with financial sustainability may detract STD leaders from performing sound strategic programming and allocation of its limited resources (particularly human resources). Sida and STD together can identify ways through which STD can continue to learn and develop its capacity as a GE service organisation. A plan for graduation can be negotiated based on the achievement of these goals that STD sets for its self-development²³. These areas should be prioritised in the next phase of Sida support.

Secondly, Sida can play an important role in facilitating linkages between STD and government institutions and other NGOs through interventions that Sida supports in Bangladesh and elsewhere. For example, Sida might find ways to bring the resources STD has to offer into all other government

¹ Here because of the nature of its services and primary stakeholders, it can be argued that STD's programme and financial sustainability rests on its institutional sustainability, for which credibility is a key ingredient.

and private sector institutions it partners with, such as those attempted in the NFE interventions. It can draw lessons from previous experience of the programme and others in building a stronger bridge between those partners. Sida can also facilitate a more active exchange of ideas and resources among all NGOs working on promotion of GE that it supports. Developing a mechanism for its partner organisations to support each other may be one of the ways Sida could concentrate its limited resources. It might be a small investment that has a potential large impact.

7.2 Women's Empowerment – Effects and Interpretations

Effects of interventions, intended and unintended in the short and long term perspective, regarding gender equality have indicated several effects on women's empowerment:

NFE 2 and 3:

Two evaluations have attempted to track gender equality effects of NFE 2. The mid-term evaluation found a number of women-empowering effects as did the detailed gender equality survey study completed in March 2001.

Learning centres provide a unique opportunity for some women to assemble with other women and to end isolation while men have other social/recreation opportunities in the evening. NGOs indicate that women's empowerment and gender equality goals may be implicit and based on an individual NGO's orientation and the importance it places on gender equality.

In addition to achievements in terms of gender equality mentioned in previous sections, women teachers and learners have improved self-confidence and decision making power. Such effects cannot solely be attributed to the NFE 2 and 3 interventions. As often mentioned to the evaluation team there are many other supportive circumstances: Influence of media, comparative programmes which are being talked about and national policies which are intended to counter discrimination.

ASK:

The legal aid assistance provided to women who otherwise have few resources and opportunities to access such a type of services, has an evident empowering effect both at practical, individual level and at strategic level. The growing volume of women coming out of the *baris* to access mainstream services is a part of a social change that is gradually gaining acceptance in the Bangladesh society.

Box 7.1 Listening Session with Ain o Shalish Kendro DIC/Legal Clinic Clients in Mirpur Circle-1:

Women and children at ASK Drop-in Centre cum legal clinics in Mirpur

It was a hot pre-monsoon afternoon. The small waiting area outside the ASK legal clinic in Mirpur Circle-1 had no fan. The women took turn waving a big palm leaf fan to keep each other cool. There was a toilet by the waiting room. The women and children studying at the “Jokhon Tokhon” (Anytime) Drop-In Centre meandered in and out of it. No smell came out from the toilet.

Most clients at the clinic are victims of abuse by their husbands who abdicate responsibilities. They also share experiences of physical and sexual abuses in the garment factories where most of them work to maintain themselves and their families. The majority finds out about the clinic through other women in the factory, or leaders of women's groups/samities organised by NGOs. When asked what they expected to get from ASK, many say that they want to see their husbands punished severely (for ruining their and their children's lives). They know that their wish can only be partially fulfilled.

When asked what they have got out of their visits to ASK, the women say that they now have courage. By coming out they know that the men who abuse them are wrong by law. They also feel strong because they know that they are not alone.

Box 7.2 “You have to stand up for yourself...”

Alo

Alo worked as a helper in a garment factory. It is a common practice that if you are absent for a day in a garment factory, you get three days' salary deducted from your pay. The government has a law that obliges garment industry employers to pay a minimum wage of Tk. 930 per month. Few employers abide by this law. Alo took issue with her boss when a good portion of her pay was deducted for having fallen ill for a few days. She was beaten. She found out about Ain o Shalish Kendro's service through a co-worker in the factory and reported her experience. ASK filed a case against the garment factory owner. In front of Alo the police officer telephoned the factory owner and advised him to run away for a while as the police were coming to arrest him. The owner later threatened Alo when she came on the street when she walked to work.

Alo still suffers from pain in her neck and shoulder. She has left her previous employment and works in another garment factory. She has introduced two other women to ASK clinic. Her face beamed with delight when she recounted the day a *shalish* was organised by ASK to get one of her friends' husband to pay proper maintenance to his family. The man dropped to the floor and kissed his wife's feet to beg for forgiveness. The couple now lives together again and the man takes care of his duties.

Sufia, another clinic client, has been weeping most of the afternoon after Zainab, the samity leader asked after her condition sympathetically. She told of her unbearable pain she and her two young children suffer after her husband had deserted them. She cooks for a family in the neighbourhood but cannot afford to feed or clothe her children properly.

To Sufia, Alo offered these words: “You have to stand up for yourself. Your husband will not help. Nobody else can do that for you.” Other women in the circle nodded in agreement. Alo invited Sufia to come to her place every Friday where women friends get together and share their stories and seek strength in each other on their day off work.

[It is worth noting that Nicaraguan women who initiate filing of complaints at the *Commisarias* do not always follow through with formal registration of their grievances. Conversely, most Bangladeshi women do proceed with the succession of negotiation, a *shalish* arbitration or a court case.]

Women’s empowerment in Bangladesh is received fairly positively by male members of the community, while a high rate of violence against women, however, still prevails. Increased participation by women in economic activities and protection of their rights bring irrefutable benefits to the welfare of entire families. Interestingly, the victory for womenfolk often is perceived by the poor as more of a class than a gender issue where the poor and powerless triumph over the rich and powerful. Thus the achievement of gender equality has a potential unifying effect for women and men among the poor and powerless.

STD’s work through *DWIN* and other organisations, programmes and projects have put *GE* on the development agendas for many development efforts. The positive response to *DWIN* received from local NGOs signifies a perceived benefit by the NGOs for being part of the network. Incentives of a network membership include: the power gained from sharing ideas and experiences (i.e. an organisational level equivalence to the experience of women getting together, as is the case with *ASK* clients); the usefulness of gender analysis tools in working with community constituents; and the organisation’s ability to perform gender analysis either to meet donors’ demands or to generate income.

In recent years networking has increasingly become a mechanism through which like-minded Bangladeshi NGOs support each other. It can be seen as a way through which these organisations feel empowered. At the community level, programmes and initiatives by many leading NGOs (beside some others) over the last decade specifically target women and girls (e.g. *Grameen Bank*’s micro credit; *BRAC*’s literacy programmes; etc.) The extent to which this targeted approach empowers women remains a subject of interesting debates. However, village women interviewed by the *ET* do suggest the growing sense of dissatisfaction with conventional roles to which they used to be confined. Several women tell us the sense of achievement they feel with their increasing mobility, control over decision making in the family, participation in community affairs, because of the income-generating abilities and being members of a *samily*, other women’s groups, or a local council, through the work largely by NGOs. Many vow that their daughters will not be brought up the way they themselves had been.

Box 7.3 A Nari Dibash (Women's Day) Celebration

Fanfares could be heard everywhere as the world greeted the turn of a millennium. The eleven-member Village Development Committee (VDC) in Choigoria *gram* decided that they wanted to celebrate the Women's Day of 2000 in style. The women on the committee were village entrepreneurs who had been selected to be leaders for community development work by a local NGO.

Soon children in the school were rehearsing songs, dances and a musical theatre that talked about consequences of a divorce. The grass was cut and bamboo poles erected for draping a *shamiana* (a cloth roof) to shelter the guests and performers. Dignitaries and all other local elites were invited. The celebration was attended by 5000 women and men.

The success of organising this colossal event earned the VDC a new respect. Women attendees developed a new courage. Many of these village women worked as labourers in some big factories owned by very wealthy families in the area. Perhaps inspired by the speeches on the Women's Day – telling them that they hold half the sky – the women labourers approached the VDC for help to press a demand for equal wages as their male co-workers for work of equal value.

The VDC sought a meeting with the factory owners, most of whom did attend the *Nari Dibash*. They went prepared with stories about the merits of economically productive women. To their surprise, the factory owners not only agreed to pay women equal wages, they also offered to support women attending a non-formal education programme in the area. They agreed that if a mother is uneducated, she cannot educate her children.

The women told each other that the real Women's Day celebration had just begun.

(This story is based on a group interview with villagers in Choigoria village, Boal union — working area of Gono Unnayan Kendro.)

7.3 Male Roles and Masculinities – Effects and Interpretations

Male – and female – roles are already being influenced through the four Sida supported programmes studied. The fact that women and girls come out in large numbers to attend literacy and basic education classes offered through NFE interventions, in the hope of improving economic situations, signal a change from the past associated with traditional gender-based division of labour.

The ASK and STD interventions included discourse on male roles in the form of direct challenges to the use of violence and the most dramatic form of exploitation of women and girls. Advocacy materials sometimes offer images of possible alternatives for gender roles, showing men in household maintenance and child care roles as well as women in non-traditional occupations.

On the other hand, and in contrast to the team's situation experienced by the evaluation team in Nicaragua (with its very different cultural, social and economic context), there was little discussion or contemplation of a positive re-examination and/or re-definition of male roles and masculinities evident in public discourse in Bangladesh. Content analysis of audio-visual and print media coverage, interviews with women's organizations, academics and other key informants indicate that there is not yet a significant national discourse on re-examination of socially defined male roles and masculinities

Nevertheless, staff of NGOs and civil organizations in all four programmes identified opportunities for contributing to a re-definition of roles. E.g.

- Violence, acid-throwing, burning and beating of women in particular by male spouses and family members, is a topic of daily discussion and debate in the public media. NFE 2 centres are known to discuss these problems in terms of changes in women's and men's role in a changing society.
- In NFE 3 learning centres working boy and girls are mixed in the classroom. In day to day learning the children experience natural relationships between girls and boys.
- Boys' and men's self perception is slowly being changed when girls and women start defending themselves and their rights.
- It is at the heart of ASK's and STD's work through consultations at legal clinics, gender awareness and analysis training, and other types of meetings, to discuss and try to change people's perceptions about male and female roles.

Experience reported from ASK and STD below has general relevance:

Local NGO workers in ASK and STD partner organisations report that they have gradually learned that targeting women as beneficiaries of their services and assistance alone is not enough. The approach can be abused (e.g. loan given to a woman in her name is in fact used by the husband) or creates a backlash (e.g. increased incidence of family violence because women are no longer subservient; increased resentment among men who feel discriminated against; and threats to power and values felt by conservative community leaders). Thus, a new strategy that is gaining ground among these local NGOs is working especially with men, to include them into the circle of community allies. Examples were seen in gender awareness training and orientation given to local opinion leaders and locally elected members of the *Union Parishad* (Union Council) and local *shalish* leaders and other members of the community elite class. Reducing resistance enables women and men to see their common interests in promoting GE. Most NGO workers recognise that adoption and internalisation of these ideas will take time, but note that at least the process has begun.

STD's own efforts to practise within the organisation what it preaches also seem to have an empowering effect on its own staff. STD staff feel that the

organisation leads by example in promoting gender equality. The organisational environment and ethics is said to be gender-friendly and its effects are seen in the mutual respect and co-operation among the women and men in the organisation. Some women staff also report that the support they receive through such an environment helps them grow confidence in carrying out the work they do.

Recognition of girls' and women's economic contribution has allowed development pioneers to introduce certain elements of gender analysis, including the concepts of access to and control over resources. However, structural change in the various forms of gender inequality has been slow. For example, household responsibilities still fall almost exclusively on women and girls' shoulders. In fact, the differential treatment favouring women and girls sometimes create a backlash. People whose interests are threatened by change to the status quo often incite violence to these efforts, branding them as evil external forces that are designed to destroy traditional values. Some still insist on treating women and girls as sexual objects who exist to meet men's sexual urges and reproductive needs. The increasingly high rates of violence against women and girls are said to reflect a reactionary response to the changes in gender relations. Some analysts discuss this persisting inequality as part of a cultural poverty. To overcome this situation, attention is increasingly being paid to the roles of men and the needs to include them in the efforts to achieve GE. There are also efforts to identify conventional sources of resistance and hostility, followed by attempts to turn them around or neutralise their influence.

7.4 Summary Findings – Changes and Other Effects on Gender Equality

In all four interventions studied there were significant changes in GE, although they vary in subtlety. These changes are particularly impressive among the NGO interventions, often showing impacts at both practical and strategic levels.

The quantitative change of having a large number of literate or semi-literate women and girls along with men and boys – brought about by the NFE interventions – cannot be discounted, although its sustainability without relevant post-training opportunities is questionable.

The interventions offer opportunities for girls and boys, women and men to interact in safe learning environments. They also offer opportunities for demystifying stereotypes and changing the participants' perceptions of each other and themselves. In addition, they offer a forum for the participants to question and challenge certain manifestations of gender-based behaviours, such as violence against women.

To what extent lives of those new learners have changed as a result of these interventions is perceived slightly differently by learners, centre supervisors

and NGO management staff. However, everyone seemed to agree that the experience of learning together helps women break isolation, become more aware, and, as is the case with men, develop a greater self-confidence.

Learners report a greater awareness of rights and experience of a form of relational empowerment in making their own decisions to spend what they earn.

Political empowerment is also indicated by the women's reported new awareness of their right to work outside the home, to cast votes for their preferred candidate, and of control over family expenditures. Although women learners agree with non-learners in believing that they have a very low level of right to choose a marriage partner, more learners than non-learners have come to believe that childcare and household work should be an equal responsibility of women and men.

All of the gender equality information reported to the evaluation team come through the centre-based programme. There is currently no consistency in either the contents or quality of such information. There are also local variations in how strongly attempts to support women in non-traditional work succeed. To promote wider and more systemic GE changes, there are needs to use GE criteria in screening service delivering NGOs, as well as strengthen the GE components of curriculum, and use of GE indicators and monitoring. Improved GE considerations are also particularly important in the pilot PLCE project for the model to succeed and have a wider influence on the emerging NFE programmes.

Sida efforts to promote GE as part of project goals and in capacity building of staff at all levels in DNFE were thwarted by weak personnel policy and the fact that decisions can be made arbitrarily. The LGC managed, however, to motivate a number of DNFE staff in spite of the massive turnover that followed. The new MER is to incorporate gender disaggregated data.

Work by ASK has apparently had concrete impacts in the reduction of polygamy, early marriage and *hilla* (intervening marriage), oral divorce, wife beating, and dowry incidence rates. All of these translate into improved quality of life for women. One of the most empowering experiences for women participating in those programmes is the mere fact of coming out and share stories with other women.

It is in such situations that the line between women's practical needs and strategic interests blur. The opportunity for women and girls to assemble with others like them does not provide them only with a safe place or services. It opens doors to other mainstream resources and opportunities that otherwise exclude them. These steps outside the confines of traditional gender roles are what have been changing the relationships between women and men, girls and boys in Bangladesh. It is noteworthy that progress in women's empowerment and achievement of gender equality appears to have a unifying effect for women and men among the poor.

ASK's work illustrates how in meeting certain women's practical needs through legal aid provision they have been able to transform the lives of many more women in the country through the legislative changes that they advocate. The restriction to performance of *fatwa* by religious leaders and the recognition of mothers as legal guardians are among the significant milestones in renegotiating the balance of power between all women and men in contemporary Bangladeshi society.

The gender awareness work within the organisation and with partner NGOs working at grassroots level also have significant transformational implications. The growing interests in self-organising popular theatre groups for attitude change among rural youths indicates a certain level of both relational and collective empowerment among those touched by the organisation's work.

STD is also regarded as having played a catalytic role in raising gender awareness. It has developed into an important multiplier of gender trainers and supplier of supportive resources. There are now 179 local NGOs in 14 districts that are part of STD's DWIN. Whether a DWIN member organisation practises GE is an important emphasis in their self-evaluation. Practical manifestation of such gender sensitive organisational culture can be seen in the groundbreaking number of women staff members riding motorcycles and in management positions.

There are other knock-on effects on NGO partner organisations and members of their communities. For example, a women Village Development Committee facilitated by STD's DWIN member GUK was successful in its lobby for fair wages on behalf of local women farm labourers.

Another important GE change to note concerns the approach taken by the NGOs in challenging male dominance. The interventions by ASK and STD show that although women's economic contributions can be effectively argued to support changes in gender relations, structural changes in power sharing is extremely slow. To address hostility and resistance from the male establishment, many efforts are being tried out to specifically target male leaders and community opinion makers for gender education.

These lessons through which effective changes in gender equality have been gradually shaped deserve to be shared and replicated widely. There is an opportunity for Sida to provide a link among its partners, especially one with the government, which has the power to scale up the replication of effective strategies.

Chapter 8

Concepts in Gender Equality

Throughout the above sections the key gender concepts have been central in the assessment and subject to different uses depending on the intervention and context. In chapter 7 the concepts of empowerment, male roles and masculinities and practical and strategic changes in terms of gender equality were analysed. This chapter therefore analyses and recapitulates the meaning of the key concept gender equality to different stakeholders.

Both *NFE 2* and *NFE 3* interpret gender equality in quantitative 50/50 male/female terms. Given the quantitative target of 50% women learners in the NFE 2 Literacy programme and '50%-plus girls' in the NFE 3 Hard to Reach Children programme it is not surprising that participants also tend to interpret gender equality in quota terms. As noted in the section on practical and strategic changes, participation at this level can provide some support to gender equality changes, which meet women's and girls' practical gender needs.

In addition, it is worth pointing out that selected stakeholders, not least NGO representatives, met by the Evaluation Team expressed more differentiated interpretations of gender equality and gender equality goals. As an example, participants in a workshop undertaken by the ET with NGO representatives from NFE 3 identified the following ways in which their projects were expected to promote gender equality:

- i. providing more opportunity for girls in poor families which would normally favour boys for income reasons;
- ii. overcoming the isolation of girls and young women;
- iii. empowerment of young women to take part in income opportunities;
- iv. improving knowledge of the rights of young women and men;
- v. more young women are illiterate than young boys and the programme should attempt to redress this imbalance;
- vi. equal opportunities for both boys and girls in all aspects of human rights/development;
- vii. greater participation of young women in the development of Bangladesh;
- viii. "Family is the centre of women's development".

Similar sentiments were expressed in workshops relating to NFE 2 and in visits to learning centres for both projects in discussions with supervisors and teachers. They illustrate various interpretations of key gender concepts. They also illustrate how informal, sub-objectives relating to gender equality may be working their way into some of the centres. The problem, of course, is that these sub-objectives are not consistent across centres and are not promoted by the overall project authority.

ASK staff believe that gender equality is a fundamental rights issue. They report to have purposely moved away from a fixed interpretation of GE concepts and instead, recognise diverse definitions among their different levels of stakeholder groups. For example, to the women's movement GE may mean a total overhaul of discriminatory laws. For a mother concerned with her children's nutritional status it may mean a chance for her to earn an income. For a school head master it may mean a certain percentage of girls enrolled in primary classes. For a village family it may simply mean not having to pay dowry for their daughter's marriage.

There is a fairly strong opinion among the staff that the concept of gender *equity* is more fundamental than a quantitative measure of equality. For example, while inheritance rights stipulate equal distribution of assets between male & female heirs, a woman may still be murdered by her brother because he wants her 50% share of the property also. Thus the "50:50 formula" does little to ensure equity. The family needs to understand why it is important that the woman gets full access to and control over what is rightfully hers. There needs to be a more holistic view rather than demanding simply a 50:50 sharing of resources and services.

STD staff consistently adopt the interpretation of GE as being primarily concerned with access to and control over resources. The participatory nature of the training methodology used for *STD*'s Gender Analysis Training allows for other possible interpretations. Many of the local NGOs see GE as one of the dimensions in social development. Local community members tend to interpret the idea as women and men working together, particularly in the sense of women's ability to earn income for the family.

In its gender training *STD* makes a distinction between sex and gender. Gender roles are seen in light of productive and reproductive roles as well as roles in community management and politics. Causes of discrimination, such as patriarchy and socialisation, are discussed along with gender-based division of labour. The training introduces such concepts as power relations and empowerment and practical and strategic gender needs. Training participants are also oriented to global efforts towards advancement of women and Government of Bangladesh policies and commitment to gender equality. Images from real life situations, such as still photographs and videos, as well as role-plays are used to stimulate these discussions. Case studies are used to recapitulate these concepts later in the training, and monitoring/evaluation tools discussed.

STD does not work directly at the community level. Its network members who consist of locally based NGOs, adapt the gender concepts disseminated through STD Training of Trainers. There is training for local government officials, workers of other NGOs, and local elites. It is through these training inputs that the participants are exposed and sensitised to key concepts and ideas of GE.

Among STD's stakeholder groups there are rhetorics being repeated as commonly heard all over Bangladesh from government officials down to village leaders: "Women are half of the country" (credited to Mao Tse Tung's "Women hold up half the sky"); "Educate a woman, you educate a nation" (credited to Napoleon). While people acknowledge the existence of serious problems such as violence against women, they are not comfortable talking about them. It is difficult to assess how widespread any kind of concern about deeper meanings of GE is.

In conclusion it is evident that the two NGOs ASK and STD automatically include gender perspectives in their activities, since this is central in their mandate. The DNFE for a while had cadres trained in gender analysis, but the institutional memory has been lost, and staff familiarity with gender equality questions is limited. An important lesson is that integration of gender equality in Sida supported activities needs continuous attention to one or more of the mainstreaming components. Secondly, that rather than searching for the perfect definitions of the gender concepts, it is more important to nurture attitudes amongst Sida's partners which will help to transform gender equality statements in policies and strategies into action.

Chapter 9

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned presented in this section combine reflections on findings and opportunities or ‘recommendations’ for Sida’s development co-operation and its contribution to gender equality. Some are Bangladesh specific, others should be applicable beyond the boundaries of the Bangladesh programme, and may contribute to gender equality goals shared by other donor agencies and partners.

9.1 Country Strategy and Dialogue

- While Sida’s Country Strategy for Bangladesh (and the process of its development) has provided an explicit requirement that gender equality should be mainstreamed in interventions supported by Sida, the translation of the strategy into specific interventions requires that gender equality should be strengthened in each of the interventions. As the transition is made to a new Country Strategy for Bangladesh, close consideration will need to be given to how to translate the organization goal of promoting gender equality into concrete programme design considerations.
- The strong public profile of the Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh with regard to issues relating to equality (including especially, equality for children and youth) represents an important strength and can be built on through continued emphasis on issues concerning gender relations and equality for women and girls.
- Sometimes, as in Bangladesh, continued Sida emphasis on equality issues in dialogue with counterparts encounters either active resistance or problems of continuous change and turnover in personnel which tend to weaken its impact. This highlights the fact that dialogue on gender equality is a continuous process with a need to renew its impact on a regular basis and to be tactically sensitive to setbacks and required changes in direction and emphasis.
- Strong Sida efforts to promote g/e dialogue with key stakeholders in the non-formal education interventions are apparent. A more systematic protocol to identify key messages pertinent to policy priorities in every intervention can be useful for such dialogues especially with regard to cross-cutting issues such as gender equality. Without a certain uniformity in approach supported maybe by learning measures for involved personnel the extent and quality of dialogue on gender equality tends to vary according

to the personal interest and capacity of the officers and international consultants involved.

9.2 Mainstreaming

- There is a need for greater recognition of the essential role of systematic and structured gender analysis in the design, development and evaluation of Sida supported bilateral interventions if the strategy of mainstreaming is to prove effective as a means of achieving the goals established in the Policy and Action Programme.
- It is increasingly clear that the G/E goal must be understood in conjunction with goals in such areas as poverty reduction and human rights. Interventions with goals in such areas should recognise where and if a contribution to gender equality can and should be a goal.
- Sida's advocacy for mainstreaming gender equality goals is facilitated in those cases where the counterpart agency has started its own process of identifying and achieving such goals. Sida can support such initiatives of GoB and NGOs especially in light of the support of official policies and assistance to building mainstreaming structures
- The benefit of the partner agency's receptiveness to gender mainstreaming is magnified if other international sources of support are also addressing gender equality.
- Sida is widely respected in the donor community and amongst government and civil society organisations for its long-standing support to gender equality and promotion of women's rights. Sida is well positioned to support its partners in gender mainstreaming – strengthening lateral influence and facilitate stronger linkages among partners, GOs and NGOs, for strengthening institutional capacity for gender analysis that leads to gender mainstreaming and follow through. (e.g. NFE2 and NFE3 in cooperation with STD)
- Every opportunity should be seized to maintain Sida's presence as an important voice in the donor community. Sida should take advantage of the investments it has made over the years in promoting human rights, democracy and GE principles, and development of resources to uphold these principles. If not always a leader, it should act as a positive influence on other donors. Sida can keep GE issues alive by sharing the tools and experience it has in integrating GE principles in its programmes. A number of national and international fora and mechanisms exist, in which Sida already participates.
- Training partners in documentation and dissemination of good practices could enhance the gender mainstreaming process. For the two NGOs in particular, the development of an in-house capability for process documentation within each of these organisations would serve a number of purposes:

1. It would encourage perpetual self-reflections.
2. It would contribute to building research and monitoring capacity.
3. It would strengthen each organisation's sense of pride, drawing from its own strengths and lessons it learns from experience.
4. It would provide Sida and the partners a collection of good practices and success stories.
 - Organisations that have mastered the competency in such skills could then teach and inspire others (e.g. government and other NGO partners) to do the same. All can then compare notes and share how they succeed. Just like disadvantaged women find power through sharing stories of their struggles and experiences, organisations fighting for gender and social justice against enormous barriers need to find ways to gain strengths by celebrating together successes and progress²⁴.
 - If very large interventions in areas such as literacy are to move beyond a simple target rate for women's participation and address issues of gender relations in a more "mainstreamed" approach, the problem of quality assurance in mass participation programming will need to be addressed. The need to keep per capita programme costs low in a programme with 10s of millions of participants must be balanced with the need to provide critically important, reasonable quality, gender content.
 - The innovative attempt to link gender-specific support to local NGOs to Sida supported efforts in non-formal education through the Local Gender Consultancy mechanism represents an important experiment in promoting gender equality linkages across different Sida supported interventions. While it has experienced difficulties specific to the counterpart agency in Bangladesh, it should not be abandoned as a possible model for wider use in Sida supported interventions.

9.3 Poverty Reduction

- Even though GE is often seen as a necessary intermediary step leading to the ultimate goal of poverty reduction, gender analysis is rarely used to guide targeting of the interventions. There appears to be a need to demonstrate how gender analytical tools can be a most useful contributor to address all forms of deprivation and injustice in a poverty reduction effort. A sound gender analysis can help focus and direct valuable resources to appropriate agents of change to bring about positive results.
- Experience in Bangladesh suggests a strong correlation between poverty reduction efforts and the promotion of basic legal and human rights. Provision of basic access to the judicial system and a reasonable chance of se-

²⁴ There is a growing body of literature about the power of affirmation on organisational effectiveness, particularly in a new Organisation Development approach called Appreciative Inquiry.

curing legal redress seem to reduce economic vulnerability for assisted people. There is an opportunity in Bangladesh and elsewhere to explore the links between gender equality, poverty and legal rights.

9.4 Stakeholder Participation

- The two sets of interventions studied in Bangladesh illustrate contrasting approaches to stakeholder participation by government and non-governmental organizations. Even within NFE 2, the command and control style of “forced” participation seen in the TLM’s drive to meet a set quantitative target, stands in contrast to the sometimes idiosyncratic, but more learner-centered and innovative approach of the NGO-run learner centres.
- The relatively smaller size and flexibilities of most NGO programmes give them an advantage to experiment that government agencies do not have. This possibility to be open to new ideas often make NGOs the hotbed for innovations and give them an edge to pioneer novel initiatives. Gender equality, which tends to challenge an old power structure, generally finds better reception in an NGO culture. The nature of participation by primary stakeholders tends to be more active and substantial in NGO programmes, where joint analyses and action plans are developed through participatory processes.
- Sida’s provision of technical assistance by STD, (whose capacity was first built by Sida), to DNFE was an interesting model. It represents a valid effort to induce innovation by facilitating a transfer from NGO to government.
- The barrier to change experienced by the LGC at DNFE points to the need to examine a number of questions, for example:
 - whether the TA service could be improved;
 - whether measures could be taken to thoroughly negotiate the nature of the consultancy; or
 - whether additional support (e.g. by mobilizing support of other donors) can be brought to bear on the cause.

9.5 Changes in Gender Equality

- A natural focus Sida may want to consider is to help promote the transfer of positive experience from the successful NGOs participating in NFE 2 to the Government structures in literacy training. It will be important for development partners of the government to influence the Project Proforma drafting process. Efforts can also be made to influence new projects, through existing co-ordination mechanisms or special initiatives.
- One of the most often cited and most significant impacts of establishing participation rate targets for women and girls in literacy programming seems to be the possibility that such participation in a public and social

experience can help to overcome the serious problem of isolation and lack of communication among women in some communities. The experience of Bangladesh may prove useful in other countries where social and religious practice isolates women and makes them more vulnerable.

- Programmes which directly address the legal rights of women and girls and provide them with representation and support can have strong practical and strategic effects. To some extent they may be seen as an important adjunct to an effective mainstreaming strategy

9.6 SWOT Analysis of Institutional Factors in Sida's Support to Promotion of GE in Bangladesh

In order to further summarise lessons with regard to institutional factors affecting Sida's support to promotion of GE in Bangladesh the team undertook a SWOT analysis as recorded forthwith.

SWOT Analysis of Institutional Factors in Sida's Support to Promotion of GE in Bangladesh

Strengths

- Sida GE policy and country programme priorities are consistent with those of GoB and other major donors.
- Sida's good image as a friendly and supportive development partner to GoB and a champion of progressive Scandinavian liberal democratic values to NGOs.
- An ambassador active in GE and Human Rights advocacy and concerned and Embassy staff i.t.o. gender equality promotion.
- Two top embassy officers (both the ambassador and the present gender focal point) with GE advocacy roles are men – lending strength to the importance that gender is not only a women's issue.
- Some strong national staff re. g/e mainstreaming.
- Initial push of gender policy and thoughtful response and implementation plan by field staff in mid 1990s made positive inroads to present gains.
- Some strategic choices of like-minded NGOs leading change nationally.
- Leverage to facilitate exchanges between GO and NGOs.
- Mechanisms exist for lateral collaboration with government, NGOs and other donors.

Weaknesses

- GoB pre-occupation with quantitative targets in large-scale project, on the expense of qualitative details (in spite of policy statements).
- Staff turnover in interventions, particularly due to GoB personnel policy on transfer of civil servants, make it difficult to build capacity for the promotion of GE.
- Intensity of gender integration effort dependent on individual officer's interest and commitment.
- Workload of embassy staff limits possibilities of maximum programme effectiveness in gender equality – some missed opportunities.
- Not all embassy staff are knowledgeable about Sida GE policy or been trained in gender analysis (concepts & tools) – as reported by staff themselves.
- Absence of in-house gender specialist within the country programme is not compensated by systematic efforts to engage adequate external support to supplement concerned embassy and partner staff.
- No instrument or learning measures to explicitly monitor integration of gender equality in each programme portfolio.
- Gender equality is not prioritised among some technical assistance providers in competition with other goals.
- Insufficient attention to monitoring quality. When an area of improvement is identified it is not always followed up with necessary support. (e.g. the quality of STD narrative reports – a concern raised in agreement to funding proposal)

Opportunities

- Demands exist for sound understanding of gender issues and application of analytical tools among stakeholders.
- GE recognised as an important part to economic growth as well as poverty reduction, human rights and good governance – areas receiving attention in development co-operation with Bangladesh currently.
- Sharing and cross-fertilisation of innovative ideas and well-tested experiences among partners whose programmes are supported by Sida, including advocacy strategies from grassroots to national policies.
- Improved training in gender development aspects relating to sector subject matter among staff and TA service providers and increased support by outside gender expertise to meet specific needs.

Threats

- Further cuts to embassy personnel.
- Interpretation of new trade-oriented foreign policy may dilute the visibility of GE efforts. Trade can be a component of a g/e strategy but only if explicit measures are included in the trade agenda. A key example would be ensuring a strong g/e component to support modernisation of the garment sector.

Opportunities

- Swedish government's present role as chair of the European Union adds weight to its lateral influence viz. other partners.
- Bangladesh national election opens up possibilities for renewing calls for progress towards GE.
- National election may also see more women contesting in local and parliamentary elections – thus increasing the volume of GE champions.

The overall picture is an active Embassy with a shortage of staff, however, with a high commitment to optimise the synergies between national policies and Sida's. The national context provides opportunities to link poverty reduction, rights and gender equality objectives if it is well understood by Sida and dialogue about its implications is kept alive.

In conclusion, a main lesson from this evaluation may be repeated, – that there are a variety of embryonic signs of mainstreaming gender equality from the national policies and country strategy to the individual interventions studied. To some stakeholders mainstreaming seems to be an up-hill struggle in a country context with severe in-equalities in women's and men's opportunities and access to participate in decision making. Substantial changes have happened in the Bangladesh society over the decade or less to which this evaluation has mainly been directed, not least in terms of the effects caused by globalisation and hence many women's inclusion in the industrial labour market. The effects on gender equality seem to be contradictory. On the one hand male roles are perceived by some men to be affected negatively, and result in intensified violence against women. Others invite the extra income that women may contribute to family sustenance. These changes, combined with an increasing number of literate and semi-literate women and adolescents from non-formal education programmes for example, affect the attitude to gender equality at all levels including the community level.

To all those actors in government partner organisations and in civil society it would be unfair to attribute the changes only to Sida's support. However, Sida has at times played an important catalyst in the donor community and is much alert about the opportunities that may pose themselves to promote gender equality. The important lesson at this time may be, that Sida – in cooperation with its partners – helps to facilitate a move of the agenda for development cooperation towards optimising the synergies between shared overall goals of poverty reduction and gender equality, maintaining clarity of the gender equality goal to avoid evaporation. This would be in line with international trends – with due consideration to international commitments to poverty reduction, gender equality and women's rights.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Sida's support to development cooperation for the promotion of Gender Equality

1 Background

Equality between women and men is now firmly placed on the international agenda after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The *Beijing Platform for Action* adopted at the Conference clearly recognises that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for addressing the central development concerns of poverty and insecurity and for achieving sustainable, people-centred development. This recognition is also reflected in development policies of bilateral donors and international agencies as well as of partner countries in the south.

In May 1996 the Swedish Parliament established the *promotion of equality between women and men in partner countries* as a goal for development cooperation between Sweden and partner countries. The focus on equality between women and men is based on two important premises: firstly that equality is a matter of human rights; and secondly that equality is a precondition for effective and sustainable people-centred development.

Gender equality may be defined as *equal rights, opportunities and obligations* of women and men and an increased potential for both women and men to *influence, participate in and benefit from* development processes.¹ Through this definition, stakeholder participation is given a central role in all efforts to promote gender equality. Consequently, it will also play an important role in the evaluation outlined below.

In June 1996, the Swedish government established guidelines for promoting gender equality in Swedish international development cooperation. These guidelines form the basis for Sida's Action Programme for promoting gender equality, which was adopted in April 1997. The Action Programme comprises a policy, an experience analysis and an action plan. It covers a five year period, 1997–2001. The Action Programme *emphasizes the importance of understanding and affecting the structural causes of gender inequalities*, particularly those related to economic decision-making and economic independence; representation in political decision-making and management; and human rights.

¹ Sida's Action Programme for promoting equality between women and men in partner countries, Sida, April 1997

The Action Programme focuses on a ‘*mainstreaming*’ strategy for working towards the gender equality goal. This strategy aims to situate gender equality issues at the centre of broad policy decisions, institutional structures and resource allocations about development goals and processes. Mainstreaming implies that attention to the conditions and relative situations of different categories of women and men, boys and girls should pervade all development policies, strategies and interventions.² Analyses of their respective roles, responsibilities, access to and control over resources and decision-making processes, needs and potentials, was clearly established in the Platform for Action as the first important step in a mainstreaming approach. The evaluation outlined below will assess whether some kind of systematic *gender analysis*³ has been done and has been allowed to influence the intervention, either initially during design or later during implementation and follow-up. Has a mainstreaming strategy formed part of the factors that influence results with regard to the promotion of gender equality⁴? What other factors may be distinguished as important for results?

Mainstreamed interventions are to be combined with *dialogue and consultations* between Sweden and partner countries. In, for example, the country strategy process⁵ and in annual negotiations on specific sector programmes, equality between women and men should be taken up as an integral part of discussions on national development. The dialogue should be utilized to come to agreement on the appropriate goals, targets and indicators of progress for promoting equality between women and men at national level in Sida’s country strategy process and within the context of individual projects and programmes.

2 Reasons for the evaluation

Sida has previously commissioned studies that assess how and to what extent gender equality and poverty issues are treated in country strategy documents

² All personnel working with development cooperation are expected to have the basic competence to promote equality between women and men in relation to whatever issues they are working on and to recognize when there is a need for expert competence.

³ Gender analysis: Please see Action Programme page 6 and Making a difference – gender equality in bilateral development cooperation, Sida, December 1998, pages 45–47.

⁴ Selection criteria for interventions to be assessed in the evaluation, please see page 5 in this ToR.

⁵ The Country Strategy is the most important instrument governing Sweden’s development cooperation with a country. Normally, a new country strategy process for each country is started every third year. The background material for a strategy is a Country Analysis and a Result Analysis. The country strategy is operationalized in a Country Plan that outlines the activities that Sweden will be involved in during the entire strategy period. Please see Sida at Work Sida’s methods for development cooperation for more information on the country strategy process, Sida, 1998, pages 31–40.

and evaluation reports.⁶ The value added from this evaluation is that it goes beyond analyzing documents and reports to assess, as far as possible, the changes with regard to gender equality that interventions may have contributed to. As Sida's Action Programme for promoting gender equality will be revised during 2001, it is important to gain more knowledge about the results and lessons of the efforts to promote gender equality in development cooperation.

3 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is:

- To assess how Sida's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in the country strategy process, i e
 - to assess the quality of the gender analysis in the country strategy process;
 - to assess if and how gender equality is promoted in the dialogue with the partner country during the process.
- To assess the strategic and/or practical changes with regard to the promotion of gender equality⁷ that interventions supported by Sida have contributed or may contribute to.
- To provide an input to a deeper understanding of the concrete meaning of the following concepts in interventions supported by Sida: gender equality, empowerment of women, stakeholder participation, strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality and mainstreaming.

Users of the lessons learned in the evaluation outlined here are Sida staff in Stockholm and in the countries involved. Lessons learned will also be of interest to other stakeholders in partner countries. The evaluation process should be designed so that both Sida staff and stakeholders in partner countries receive feedback on evaluation results.

⁶ Sida Studies in Evaluation 97/2: Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality – An assessment of Sida's country reports and evaluations in 1995–96, Eva Tobisson and Stefan de Vylder.

Sida Studies in Evaluation 98/3: Evaluating Gender Equality – Policy and Practice – An assessment of Sida's evaluations in 1997–1998, Lennart Peck.

En Studie av jämställdhet i tio av Sidas landanalyser och landstrategier, Jessica Pellerud, 2000.

⁷ Strategic changes with regard to gender equality relates to strategic gender interests/needs. They imply changes in economic, political and/or legal structures or frameworks at local and/or national levels so that equality between the sexes is promoted. Changes of this kind challenge the prevailing power relations between females and males.

Practical changes with regard to gender equality relates to practical gender interests/needs. They are reflected in the reduction of gender disparities in basic subsistence and service provisioning e g in health status and access to health care, levels of education and access to information, access to food and livelihood security, etc. Practical interests/needs do not *directly* challenge the prevailing distribution of labour. They are experienced by women and men within their traditionally accepted roles in society. Based on definitions in Striking a balance – On women and men in development cooperation, Sida, 1999, page 11.

4 Methods

4.1 Case studies

Case studies will be undertaken at country and intervention level. The Consultants are not specifically requested to make any linkages between these two levels.

At the country level, the Swedish support to three countries are selected as case studies, South Africa, Nicaragua and Bangladesh. These cases are to provide information about how Sida's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in analyses and dialogue during the country strategy process. The cases are selected for the following reasons:

- they represent different regions where Sida is active as a donor;
- the countries have adopted the Beijing Platform for Action;
- the countries have ratified the CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Bangladesh with reservations);
- a country strategy process has been started and completed after June 1996;
- gender equality issues are included in the goals and direction of the Country Strategy;
- gender equality objectives are included in the agreements on development cooperation.

At the intervention level, Sida has selected a four interventions in South Africa and Nicaragua respectively. These are listed in Annex 1. Selection criteria are listed below.

Interventions that meet one or both of the following criteria:

- where gender equality has been 'mainstreamed' either initially during design or later during implementation;
- that may have contributed to practical or strategic changes with regard to gender equality (an alternative where 'mainstreamed interventions' has not been a possible selection criteria);

Interventions that meet all three of the following criteria:

- with potential to provide lessons for Sida's support to promote gender equality;
- where a new agreement has been signed after June 1996;
- representing 3–4 sectors where Sida is involved as a donor.

As concerns Bangladesh, the Embassy of Sweden is carrying out a study looking at how the gender equality perspective has been guiding when planning interventions during 1997–2000. The Consultants are to use this study

for the selection of 1–2 interventions to assess. The Consultants are to apply the selection criteria above that is applicable. Sida is to approve of the selections made.

Within the framework of the interventions selected, the Consultants are to identify interesting study objects and elaborate on these choices in their inception report.

4.2 Stakeholder participation

Concepts such as gender equality and women's empowerment are broadly defined (please see annex 1) in Sida's Action Programme. These concepts may have been understood and implemented in various ways in different contexts. Furthermore, progress towards equality and empowerment may be realized at two main levels, at the level of the individual and in a wider sense at structural levels involving change for categories of individuals or groups. Consequently, stakeholder participation is crucial for the realization of this evaluation.

Stakeholder participation is to take the form of active consultation with female and male stakeholder groups within the partner countries, such as beneficiaries, project implementors, ministry officials etc. and stakeholder groups within Sida and the various Swedish Embassies. It is important to combine methods such as focus group discussions with individual interviews and to crosscheck analyses with stakeholders.

4.3 Gender disaggregated data

Needless to say, all information in the evaluation report should be gender disaggregated.

5 The assignment

This section of the Terms of Reference will consist of three different parts following the 'Purpose and scope' of the evaluation.

5.1 How Sida's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in the country strategy process

The Consultants are to analyse the country strategy process documentation and interview stakeholders.

5.1.1 *The quality of the gender analysis in the country strategy process*

- Has a gender analysis preceded or been integrated into the background material for the Country Strategy (Country Analysis and Result Analysis)? Does the Country Strategy document itself reflect such analysis with respect to gender? In other words, is the Country Strategy 'mainstreamed'?

- Does the gender analysis take into consideration and reflect the following issues about the local context when it comes to gender equality:
 - the strategic and practical interests/needs prioritized by the national government;
 - the strategic and practical interests/needs prioritized by major NGOs and/or other civil society institutions;
 - constraints and problems in addressing these interests/needs;
 - ways to address these constraints and problems;
 - participation by women and men, girls and boys in addressing these interests/needs;
 - other important factors in the local context?
- To what extent are the gender equality priority areas in the Country Strategy guided by the priority areas raised in Sida's Action Programme; and the priority areas raised in Sida's Special Handbooks for mainstreaming gender perspectives into different sectors? Specifically, do the gender equality priority areas in the Country Strategy reflect the emphasis on strategic gender interests in the Action Programme? Does the analysis in the Country Strategy reflect the gender equality approach in the Action Programme or does it reflect a 'Women in Development approach'⁸?
- Is it possible to see any links/synergies and /or conflicts in the country strategy process between the gender equality goal and the other goals of Swedish development cooperation, particularly the overall goal of poverty reduction?⁹

5.1.2 Dialogue during the country strategy process

- How were negotiations with the partner country conducted with regard to gender equality? Was there a dialogue between the governments on issues of gender equality? What issues were raised in the dialogue?

5.1.3 How are gender analyses and dialogue reflected in key documents and agreements?

- Do the Country Plan and the Agreement on development cooperation between Sweden and the partner country in question reflect the gender equality concerns expressed in the Country Analysis and Country Strategy? Do the Country Plan and Agreement reflect the gender equality issues raised in the dialogue between the two governments? Are there ob-

⁸ Please see page 24–25 from *Evaluating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – A DAC Review of Agency Experiences 1993–1998*, Prudence Woodford-Berger, 1999

⁹ The overall goal of Swedish international development cooperation is poverty reduction. To provide guidance for Sweden's contributions to the reduction of poverty, the Swedish Parliament has laid down six goals for Swedish international development cooperation: economic growth; economic and social equality; economic and political independence; democratic development; environmental care; and gender equality.

jectives and/or indicators for what to achieve when it comes to gender equality? That is, is the content in the Country Plan and the Agreement on development cooperation between Sweden and the partner country in question ‘mainstreamed’?

5.2 Strategic and practical changes with regard to the promotion of gender equality

The Consultants analyses are to be based on interviews with stakeholders and analysis of country and project documentation. Given the difficulties in measuring and assessing strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality, it is crucial that the Consultants work in an analytical way and in the evaluation report discuss challenges regarding methods that will arise. The Consultants are to have close contacts with Sida during this part of the evaluation assignment.

5.2.1 Stakeholder analysis for the evaluation

In order to define what stakeholder groups that are to be consulted during the evaluation, the consultants are to carry out a stakeholder analysis. The Consultants are first to establish what primary and secondary stakeholder groups that have been identified in the project documentation for each intervention and their composition as regards sex and other key factors. With this as a point of departure, the Consultants are to further elaborate this stakeholder analysis, if deemed necessary.

5.2.2 Objectives and indicators of progress towards gender equality in interventions

The concept of gender equality tends to be loaded with values and take different meanings in different contexts and even for different individuals. Further, promoting gender equality involves promoting a process of change and change may be elusive to capture in indicators. Consequently, the objectives and indicators of gender equality in interventions need to be context specific. The first step in identifying context specific objectives and indicators is to establish what objectives and indicators that are defined in project documentation. Secondly, the Consultants are to select and interview representatives of primary and secondary stakeholders in the intervention. If there are strong diverging opinions among stakeholders during the interviews on objectives/indicators these should be accounted for and form part of the analysis of strategic and practical changes with regard to gender equality. The second step, interviewing stakeholders, will become even more important if the objectives/indicators in project documentation are not specific enough to use when carrying out the evaluation.

5.2.3 Strategic and practical changes with regard to the promotion of gender equality

- The Consultants are to assess the strategic and/or practical changes with regard to the promotion of gender equality that the interventions selected

for this evaluation have contributed or may contribute to. If practical changes are identified, the Consultants are to discuss whether these may lead to strategic changes.

What activities have been performed within the framework of the intervention? What are their immediate intended or unintended effects with regard to gender equality? What are their immediate positive and negative effects on gender equality? If there has been immediate effects on gender equality, what may be said today about whether the effects may be lasting?

- A complex interplay of various factors influence the degree to which gender equality is promoted in interventions: factors in the *societal context* and in the *sector* of the intervention (e.g. health) together with factors that have to do with the *implementation and organisation* of the intervention and the roles of various *female and male stakeholders* in this implementation and organisation. These last two factors are specifically important to assess. The Consultants are to discuss what may have caused or may contribute to promoting effects on gender equality. What factors have been of importance for promoting gender equality and/or impeding the promotion of gender equality? Why?
- What has been the role of different stakeholder groups in influencing the promotion of gender equality? Have they played an active or passive role? Specifically, what has Sida's role been in influencing gender equality in the interventions? Has Sida raised the gender equality issue in discussions with cooperating partners? Has Sida played an active or passive role?
- What analysis of the gender equality aspects of the intervention is carried out in Sida's Assessment Memorandum? When assessing the quality of the gender analysis consider the same issues as in section 5.1.1. Is it possible to say anything about the relationship between the quality of the gender analysis in the Memorandum and how gender equality issues are integrated in the intervention?
- Is it possible to see any links/synergies and/or conflicts in the intervention between the gender equality goal and the other goals of Swedish development cooperation, particularly the overall goal of poverty reduction?
- In the case of Bangladesh, an intervention selected for this evaluation *may* be a Sector Programme Support (please see Annex 1). Should this be the case, the Consultants are to assess *Sida's* position and role when it comes to mainstreaming gender equality in the design process for the Programme – potentials, problems and lessons. The Consultants are *not* to assess results of the Programme.

5.2.4 *Understanding concepts*

The Consultants are to discuss the concrete meaning of the following concepts in the selected interventions: gender equality, empowerment of women, stakeholder participation, strategic and practical gender equality effects and

mainstreaming. How the concepts are understood and implemented by primary stakeholders may serve as an input towards a deeper understanding of the concrete meaning these concepts may take in Sida supported interventions.

5.3 Conclusions and lessons for development cooperation

The Consultants are to discuss lessons for Sida and for partners involved in the interventions on how to strengthen support to promoting gender equality, i.e. lessons about:

- how to strengthen the gender analysis and dialogue in the country strategy process and in interventions;
- factors that have been of importance in influencing change towards gender equality, what has worked well/not so well and why;
- problems and possibilities when using measures/indicators of progress towards gender equality;
- the concrete meaning of the following concepts in interventions supported by Sida: gender equality, empowerment of women, stakeholder participation, strategic and practical gender equality effects and mainstreaming;
- implications for the interventions assessed on how to improve their work for promoting gender equality;
- implications for the revision of Sida's Action Programme for the promotion of gender equality.

6 Competence

The evaluation is to be carried out by a team with advanced knowledge of and experience in:

- gender analysis
- anthropology or similar human or behavioural social science;
- participatory evaluation methods in field situations;
- local context in Bangladesh, South Africa and Nicaragua (probably links with local consultants)
- gender equality issues in the following sectors: education, health, democratic governance, urban development.

The team leader is to have documented experience in the management of evaluations.

At least one team member must speak Spanish and one team member must have the ability to read Swedish.

7 Work plan

The study is envisaged to require an estimated 90–100 person weeks.

The tentative time schedule for the study is:

August/September 2000	Tender invitation
December/January 2001	Inception report (discussions with Sida), including analysis of country and project documentation for the selection of “study objects” – please see ToR 8. Reporting
January/May 2001	Field work (+seminars in partner countries)
May/June 2001	Draft country reports (+seminars at Sida)
August 2001	First draft synthesis report (+seminars at Sida)
September/October 2001	Final reports

8 Reporting

The Consultants are to submit the following reports to Sida:

1. An *inception report* commenting and interpreting the Terms of Reference and providing details of approach and methods for data collection and analyses. Country and project documentation are also to be analysed in order to identify interesting study objects within the framework of the interventions selected for this evaluation. The inception report shall include a work plan specifying how and when the work is to be performed.
2. Three *draft ‘country reports’* summarizing for each country the findings both on the country strategy process and the interventions selected as case studies, as specified in the ToR 5.3 Conclusions and lessons for development cooperation.
3. A *draft synthesis report* in English summarizing the findings, as specified in the ToR 5.3 Conclusions and lessons for development cooperation. Format and outline of the report shall be agreed upon between the Consultants and Sida. The report shall be kept rather short (60–80 pages excluding annexes). More detailed discussions are to be left to annexes.
4. Within three weeks after receiving Sida’s comments on the draft report, a *final version* in two copies and on diskette shall be submitted to Sida. When the report has been approved by Sida it should be *translated into Spanish*, so that it is available both in English and Spanish. Subject to decision by Sida, the report will be published and distributed as a publication within the Sida Evaluations series. The evaluation report shall be written in Word 6.0 for Windows (or in a compatible format) and should be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.

The evaluation assignment also includes the production of a Newsletter summary following the guidelines in *Sida Evaluations Newsletter – Guidelines for Evaluation Managers and Consultants* (Annex 3) and also the completion of *Sida Evaluations Data Work Sheet* (Annex 4). The separate summary and a completed Data Work Sheet shall be submitted to Sida along with the final report.

Consultation and dissemination of emerging findings and lessons will be important throughout the study (please see ToR 7. Work Plan) and the Consultants are to include a budget for this in their tender. However, dissemination activities following the publication of the evaluation report will be covered by a separate budget and contract between the Consultants and Sida. A decision on dissemination activities will be taken at a later stage in the evaluation process.

Annex 1: List of interventions selected as case studies

Nicaragua

Urban development, Prodel – Program for local development
Health sector, Prosilais – Integrated local health systems
Democratic governance – Academia de Policia
Democratic governance – Atlantic Coast, Regional and local authorities

South Africa

Urban development, CUP – Comprehensive Urban Plan, Kimberley
Urban development, TPL – Trees Paving & Lighting, Kimberley
Democratic governance, Local authorities, Northern Cape Province
Democratic governance, StatsSA – Statistics Sweden

Bangladesh

The Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh is carrying out a study looking at how the gender equality perspective has been guiding when planning interventions during 1997–2000. The Consultants are to use this study for the selection of 1–2 interventions to assess. Sida is to approve of the selections made.

Within the framework of the interventions above the Consultants are to identify interesting study objects and elaborate on these choices in their inception report.

Annex 2: Broad definitions

Gender equality: Equal rights, opportunities and obligations of women and men and an increased potential for both women and men to influence, participate in and benefit from development processes.¹⁰

Empowerment of women: Women gaining increased power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, and increased access to and control over resources.¹¹

Stakeholder participation: A process whereby those with rights and/or interests play an active role in decision-making and in the consequent activities which affect them.¹² From any stakeholder's perspective there are a number of possibilities for participation. One stakeholder may inform other stakeholders, consult them or actually be in partnership (equal powers of decision-making) with one or more of the other stakeholders.

Sida has initiated a project to develop guidelines for the organization on participatory methods. It is expected that a definition and discussion on stakeholder participation will be available during September/October 2000.

Strategic changes with regard to gender equality relates to strategic gender interests/needs. They imply changes in economic, political and/or legal structures or frameworks at local and/or national levels so that equality between the sexes is promoted. Changes of this kind challenge the prevailing power relations between females and males.

Practical changes with regard to gender equality relates to practical gender interests/needs. They are reflected in the reduction of gender disparities in basic subsistence and service provisioning e.g. in health status and access to health care, levels of education and access to information, access to food and livelihood security, etc.

Practical interests/needs do not *directly* challenge the prevailing distribution of labour. They are experienced by women and men within their traditionally accepted roles in society.¹³

The strategy for working towards the goals and achieving the effects mentioned above is *mainstreaming*. The first important step in a mainstreaming approach is an analysis of the situation of women and men, boys and girls, i.e. analysis of the roles, responsibilities, access to and control over resources and decision-making processes, needs and potentials of women and men, boys and girls (gender analysis).

¹⁰ Sida's Action Programme for promoting equality between women and men in partner countries, Sida, April 1997.

¹¹ Sida's Action Programme

¹² Stakeholder Participation and Analysis, ODA, 1995

¹³ Based on definitions in Striking a balance – On women and men in development cooperation, Sida, 1999, page 11.

Annex 2

Country Context

The National Context Gender Equity Issues In Bangladesh

Prepared by
Jowshan A Rahman
National Consultant

Evaluation of Sida's Support to Development Co-operation for Promotion of Gender Equality

1. Poverty Situation

1.1 Introduction

Bangladesh is a small country with an area of 147,570 sq. km and a large population estimated at 126 million (1999). Women constitute nearly half of the population with a ratio of 100 women for every 105.8 men. The country is predominantly rural and often affected by natural calamities such as, flood, cyclone, tidal waves.

Presently Bangladesh has an elected government accountable to a 330-member Parliament. The governance is unitary in character with centralized management. The local government is structured by a three-tier (village/union/thana) system. There are many political parties in the country, but only three or four parties dominate the politics.

Bangladesh is characterized by abject poverty, under and unemployment, unplanned rapid urbanization, natural disasters and environmental deterioration. Poverty remains endemic even though aggregate poverty in the country indicates a declining trend. Various study findings reveal that the poorest of the poor could not be brought within the context of development dynamics. Although the GNP per capita has shown a steady rise from US\$ 279 (1990) to US\$ 350 (1998), the GDP per capita is US\$ 282 (1998).

Bangladesh is one of the few countries in the world where women have a lower life expectancy than men, although, in general, the life expectancy has

The Source of most of the statistics used are from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), GoB.

shown some positive trends (58.1 years for men and 57.6 years for women in 1996). Some 60 million people remained below poverty line of 2,100–2,200 Kcal, with nearly 40 million being the poorest; they have less than 1,805 calories per day.

The rapid population growth and young age structure (45 percent under 15 years) are some of the major factors towards prevalent poverty situation. Population density is 855 (1998) per sq. km. which is one of the highest in the world. The population pressure on existing resource-base and the disparities in income distribution has led nearly 48 percent population living below the national poverty line. Malnutrition is a critical problem. Average per capita food intake of adult men is 1,047 gm. and 874 gm. for adult women per day. Literacy rate of the population over 7 years is 47.3 (1998).

About 25 percent of the country's total population live in the urban areas. In 1998 about 49 percent of the urban population were poor, most of whom were slum dwellers and squatters. There is a slight declining trend in the rural poverty, while urban poverty has risen with a growth rate at 6 percent per year over last three decades. Twenty nine percent of the rural and 21 percent of the urban population are hardcore poor with daily calorie consumption of less than 1,805.

Less than 1 percent of the total population constitute various tribal groups. They are located mainly in the north-eastern and south-eastern regions. Besides the tribal population there are religious minorities.

About 76 percent (1999) of the population using safe drinking water and number of people at risk is 24 million (1999) from arsenic contamination in ground water. Another 21 million are potentially at risk from arsenocosis. The population using hygienic latrines (sanitary/water seal/pit) is 40 percent (1997). More than half of the schools are deprived of basic water and sanitation facilities.

1.2 Women in Poverty

The widespread poverty in Bangladesh exacerbates the condition of poor women. Increasing landlessness coupled with natural disasters has led to higher rural-urban migration and greater push for income earning avenues by women. More female-headed households are poor than those of male-heads. In Bangladesh about 15 percent of all landless households are headed by women showing strong links between disadvantage and poverty. Female headed households earn 40 percent less income than the male-headed households. Due to poverty, increased landlessness and economic pressure there has been an increasing trend in the women labour force. As per Labour Force Survey 1995/1996 (LFS), of the total 56 million labour force in the country 34.7 million are men and 21.3 million are women (BBS). Their participation in the remunerative employment and export oriented production such as garment sector is expanding. However this enhanced role of women has not

been reinforced with required improvement in education, skill development, access to productive resources, and health and nutrition.

Bangladesh has been ranked 140th in terms of gender-related index due to gender-gap in literacy, education, health care, asset ownership and income.

The magnitude of the problem both in terms of the number of households under the poverty line and the extent of deprivation is such that any policy or plan that does not address gender and poverty as twin issues will exclude the vast majority of women in the country. These women generally fall into the categories of a) landless women, b) women of marginal farming households, c) unpaid workers, d) urban slum, e) women migrated from rural to urban, f) women working in hazardous situation.

1.3 Women and Urban Poverty

The rapid rates of urban growth in Bangladesh have resulted in large gaps in the provision of services and physical infrastructure in metropolitan cities and towns. This has mostly affected the urban poor, particularly the women. The problems of the urban poor in Bangladesh did not figure high on the development agenda. A few initiatives were taken during eighties, to address urban poverty such as, slum improvement, low-cost housing etc. Within this experimental phase, women's needs have been addressed only marginally. However, the gender dimension of urbanization has not yet emerged as a priority issue in urban planning.

The urban poor women are deprived of basic services such as water, sanitation, housing, lighting, fuel, health facilities etc. Very often the slum women have to pay much more for their basic services particularly for housing than the middle class urban residents. Their physical, emotional and psychological needs are rarely taken into consideration in urban macro-planning.

Slum women need to work for cash income. Frequent engagement and disengagement from labour force negate their opportunities for skill up-gradation and upward mobility. Majority of the poor working women in the urban areas are in the informal sector such as, domestic service, road construction etc. A small number of them is in the formal sector like garment industry. The labour market for urban poor women is strongly segregated. They are generally given unskilled jobs. The threat of violence in the slum areas also affects the working environment of women.

2. GOB Commitment to International Instruments

- Government of Bangladesh (GoB) ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in November 1984 with reservations on Articles 2, 13(a), 16.1 (c) and (f). The reservations on Articles 13(a) and 16.1(f) were withdrawn subsequently.

- GoB endorsed, without any reservation, the Platform for Action (PFA) of the Fourth World Conference held in Beijing, 1995.
- GoB ratified convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1990

Bangladesh extended its commitment to the goals of some of international/regional declarations and provided strong support to:

- World Summit for Children (WSC) and World Declaration, 1990
- Education for All (EFA), Jomtien, 1990
- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Decade for the Girl Child 1999–2000
- Declaration and Action Program of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993
- Declaration and Action Program of the World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995
- Nairobi Forward Looking Strategy, 1985
- ILO Agreements related to equal rights for women in labour conditions, equal pay, maternity facilities.
- International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo, 1994 & Cairo + 5, 1999.
- International Conference on World Action Program on Women, Beijing + 5, 2000.

3. National Plans, Policies and Institutional Machineries

3.1 Development Plans

Bangladesh has a history of about three decades of development efforts towards poverty alleviation initiatives. The First Five Year Plan was launched in July 1973 followed by a Two Year Plan, 1978–1980, and Four Five Year Plans from 1980 to 2002 with a two year gap in July 1995 to June 1997.

The First Five Year Plan adopted a welfare approach towards women focussing on rehabilitation of war affected women and children. Thus women were considered as the beneficiaries. The Two-Year Plan initiated a shift from welfare to development approach towards women. The Second and Third plans emphasized on creation and expansion of opportunities for women relating to skill development, provide credit facilities and entrepreneurship development. The Fourth Five Year Plan placed women within the context of a macro framework with multi-sectoral thrust as well as specific strategy of mainstreaming women towards reduction of gender disparities. But the gender gap remained as it was, because the WID issues were not made an integral

part of the process of formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development programs across all sectors. With the overall goal of poverty reduction, the Fifth Plan set an objective to reduce gender gap giving priority to women's education and ensuring equal rights of women in all spheres of development including access to information, skills, resources and opportunities, keeping in view their strategic interests. The plan also emphasized on the promotion of equality between women and men in sharing of power and decision making at all levels. This is, no doubt, a positive departure from the past.

3.2 Policies and Institutional Mechanisms

3.2.1 Policies

Over the years GoB has initiated a number of activities to address gender equality issue.

The Constitution of Bangladesh provides for women's equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life [Article-28(2)].

A national policy for women's Advancement (NP) was declared on 08 March 1997. The NP emphasizes on the mainstreaming of women issues at national, sub-national, community and family levels. Following are some of the major objectives:

Objectives of the NP¹

- Ensure equality between women and men at all spheres of lives.
- Establish women's human rights.
- Develop women as educated and efficient human resources.
- Eradicate poverty among women.
- Establish equality between men and women in administration, politics, education, sports, family life and all other socio-economic spheres.
- Recognize women's contribution in social and economic spheres.
- Eliminate all forms of oppression and violence against women and adolescent girls.
- Ensure appropriate support services for development of women.
- Ensure security for women in all spheres of national, social and family life.

To translate the NP into action a National Action Plan (NAP) for the Advancement of Women was adopted in 1998. The major goals of the NAP are as follows:

The goals of the NAP are given bellow²:

- making women's development an integral part of the national development program

- establishing women as equal partners in development with equal roles in policy and decision making in the family, community and the national levels at large.
- removing, legal economic, political or cultural barriers that prevent exercising equal rights by undertaking policy reforms and strong affirmative actions
- raising/creating public awareness about women's differential needs, interests and priorities and increase commitment to bring about improvement in women's position and condition.

The NAP emphasizes the incorporation of gender dimension and gender concerns such as gender equality, gender specific allocation of programs to the sectoral ministries, special resource allocation for gender responsive interventions towards achieving gender equity in the key social and economic indicators.

Besides the overall National Policy for Advancement of Women, gender concerns have been incorporated in the social development sectoral policies.

The *Education Policy* clearly states that education will help to remove gender biases at all levels. A separate chapter on women's education has been included in the policy suggesting various actions towards improvement of women's educational status.

One of the major trust of the *Health Policy* is to ensure primary health care to all with an emphasis on the disadvantaged such as, the poor, women and children. Health and Population sector includes a gender perspective. This focuses on the need for instituting gender sensitive service delivery system. Ensuring adequate representation of women at the management and supervisory levels is another signification aspect of the Health and Population Sector Strategy (HPSS). GoB has formulated a *Food and Nutrition Policy* and Action Plan to address the nutrition issues.

The *National Water Policy* has set a major objective that "ensure the availability of water to all segments of society including the poor and underprivileged, and take into account the particular needs of women and children, bring institutional changes that will help decentralize the management of water resources and enhance the role of women in water management."

A *National Environment Management Plan* (NEMP) has been adopted that has a strong focus on the needs of women.

3.2.2 Institutional Mechanism for Implementation of NAP

A number of institutional mechanisms have been put in place as an effort towards implementation of the gender equity strategy. Noted below are some of them that are mentionable:

National Council for Women's Development (NCWD)

A forty-four member National Council for Women's Development has been set up chaired by the Prime Minister. The NCWD consists of Ministers; Sec-

retaries of the related sectoral ministries; Members of the Parliament; Members of Planning Commission and a number of reputed women including civil society. The scope³ of work of the NCWD is:

- To ensure women's participation in socio-economic development work. The council will formulate rules and regulations for the development work of different ministries, divisions and other agencies and co-ordinate them.
- The council will formulate laws and regulations to ensure women's legal rights and development and prevent oppression against women.
- The council will also take measures to preserve women's interest in all areas in which women are active and ensure their participation and advancement.

Parliamentary Standing Committee for Women and Children Affairs

A ten-member Parliamentary Standing Committee has been established to review the activities of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA). The committee meets once in a month under the chair of a Member Parliament (MP).

Women's Development Implementation and Evaluation Committee

In order to monitor the program implementation by related sectors as laid down in the NAP, the committee has been formed under the chair of the Minister, MWCA. The members include Secretary/ Joint Secretary level high officials of the MWCA, sectoral ministries, implementing agencies and representatives of the civil society.

WID Focal Points (WFPs)

WID Focal Point, a national mechanism was established in 1990 to ensure incorporation of gender concerns in the sectoral program activities of the line ministries. The WFPs are not below the rank of Joint/Deputy Secretary from the related ministries/agencies of GOB. To strengthen this mechanism, Associate WFPs have been put in place since 1999. So far forty seven ministries/agencies have designated WFPs including the Associate-WFPs. The TOR⁴ of the WFPs is as follows:

- Identify ongoing, planned and potential projects relating to WID in their respective sectors.
- Assist the concerned sectors in the formulation of the sectoral plan and projects relating to or having specific focus on WID.
- Prepare a list of priority projects relating to WID for inclusion in the Annual Development Plan each year in their respective sectors.
- Propose modifications of component or addition of new components in the ongoing projects with a view to incorporating adequate gender concerns in their respective sectoral projects and programs.

^{1,2,3,4} Review and Appraisal of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, Bangladesh Country Paper, June 2000, MWCA.

- Include gender specific information and data in the reports of the ministry.
- Monitor the sectoral WID activities.
- Close linkage, networking, coordination and collaboration with other sectors.
- Prepare quarterly reports on their respective sectors' WID activities and projects.

Besides the above institutional mechanisms, District (64) and Thana (460) coordination committees have been set up to provide necessary support to women and ensure their participation at sub-national level. Reviewing the gender issue related activities implemented by different GoB departments and assessing the situation of VAW are included as special responsibilities of these committees.

A number of civil society members have been included in the institutional mechanisms at different levels ranging from NCWD to various project steering committees. Establishing linkage with civil society has been found to be an effective strategy for achieving the gender equity goals.

An Institutional Review of GoB's WID capability was carried out during 1995–1997. This study identified many gaps in addressing gender equity issues. One of the major findings was that, there has been a limited understanding of the requirements of mainstreaming approach. Gender issues were not addressed cross-sectorally and horizontally. Sectoral Women's programs have been marginalized and implemented in an isolated manner instead of having an integrated approach. This is critically important for responding to the interests of women as well as men and distribute benefits equitably between them.

It is a complicated task to coordinate, facilitate and monitor the multi-sectoral activities that have been planned with an aim to reduce gender disparities. For this particular reason, the national institutional machineries need to be strengthened particularly the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA) in order to be able to take on its appropriate role. MWCA is relatively small, headed by a State Minister, having a lower status than the Sectoral Ministries. This makes it difficult for the MWCA to perform its role as the lead agency. The strength of the MWCA needs to be reinforced to work as the watch-dog. The sectoral ministries have to be made more accountable to the NCWD through an institutionalized and effective monitoring mechanism.

4. Role of NGOs

Notable contributions have been made by NGOs in various sectors, especially relating to women's empowerment. NGOs have played a complimentary role in gender equity efforts. NGO programs range from providing direct services to raising awareness, mobilizing support, advocating for policy changes and lobbying at different levels for modification and adoption of laws that are gender sensitive.

During post Beijing period some of the NGOs and women's organizations have taken up programs on the critical areas of concerns. The major concentration was on the areas of human rights, violence against women, trafficking in women and children, migrant labourers, women and health, gender training, women and poverty. Networking with international, national and sub-national level organizations, advocacy and community involvement/participation have been some of the effective strategies adopted by the NGOs in an effort to redress the gender disparity issues. For example community-based non-formal schools of BRAC are known the world over. Currently 9.5 million poor people in Bangladesh have access to micro-credit services through the programs run by Grameen Bank, BRAC, Proshika and other NGOs. Of these about 85 percent are women. Activist organizations like Aim O Shalish Kendra (ASK), Association for Social Advancement (ASA) have been involved in collecting information about women migrant labourers through establishing linkages with the women's groups of various receiving countries to develop strategies towards addressing this problem. Bangladesh National Women Lawyer's Association (BNWLA) and Naripokkha have been very active on the issues relating to women's legal rights and violence against women. Some discriminatory laws have been reformed mainly due to the movements mounted by the women's organizations.

5. Gender Equity Issues

The burden of poverty affects unevenly on women. They are dominated by patriarchal societal system, which enforce the dependence of women on men. This regulates the role and status of women in the society.

Because of the traditional "purdah" system or seclusion, the Muslim women are often denied of access to the development opportunities and they are generally kept outside the power structure. Non-accessibility to resource-base keeps the women away from income generative activities and this reinforce her subordination to male authority. There are sharp gender inequalities in access to control over resources as well as decision-making opportunities.

Women's condition and position is still far behind than men by any indicator. Continuing gender disparities in educational opportunities; health and nutritional status; employment and income-earning possibilities; participation in the governance and political process; indicate a wide gender gap and inequitable distribution of investment on women. Traditional societal mind-set are still critical hindrance towards enhancement of women's situation.

There is no accepted norm about allocation of public expenditures on women. Very little is known about the impacts of public investments on the condition or position of women. The challenge still remains to address the practical needs and strategic interests of women.

A gender perspective review on Revenue and Development budgets in the National Action Plan for Advancement of women reveals that it is difficult to

identify the amount allocated and spent on women's programs through various sectors.

5.1 Women in Education and Employment

There is a visible gender gap in the literacy rates, 50.6 percent for men and 41.5 percent for women (over 7 days, 1998, BBS); dropout rates for girls is high at primary level despite almost gender-parity in enrolment. There have been no articulated comprehensive policies bearing on women's education in the past but women have been targeted in the primary, formal & non-formal education and mass literacy. There has been a dominant focus on literacy rather than on education in the broadest sense. Perhaps the challenge to policy makers was to link development programs with education of which literacy is an integral part.

Because of the national mandate to remove illiteracy and priority given to primary and mass education, other strategic education issues of women have gone into background. The resultant consequences are the marginal involvement of women in higher education including higher secondary, college, university, professional and skill development training relating to education. The enrolment and continuation rates of girls in the secondary and higher secondary levels is much lower than that of boys inspite of the incentives such as scholarships and waives of fees. In technical and professional institutions, women's presence is hardly visible, particularly in disciplines such as agriculture, engineering, forestry. Women are poorly represented at the faculty, decision-making and higher management level.

The past education reveals that the benefits have been distributed inequitably. Because of the patriarchal attitude the men are favoured inordinately as compared to the women.

The impacts of this uneven distribution have widened the gender disparities. A crucial issue here is the relevance of the type of education that is being provided under the aegis of public education. The current debate has not given much emphasis on this matter as the target of full literacy has to be achieved. It is an accepted fact that the education system is not yet in keeping with the needs of the country while Bangladesh is opening up its economy in response to the exigencies of structural macro-economic adjustment.

Within the purview of this public debate the issue of the practical utility of education in general and women's education in particular is still very crucial. Women's access to highly skilled and well paid jobs are restricted, a small number are only able to join the formal labour market. The labour market is not symmetrical between men and women. The wages, working conditions, standard of valuation, chances of upward mobility through professional development are adverse for women. Moreover, a large number of them are not even considered as workers as they do not get paid despite their heavy workload.

The educated women-power cannot be employed to its requirement. A considerable number of them are unemployed or/and under-employed. Yet a lot of them are working for their family-survival. They work for longer hours with less pay than men. Thus the relevance of education needs to be critically looked at within the overall perspective of employment and human resource development policies. It is important to put equal emphasis on addressing women's practical needs and strategic interests while strategizing the program activities.

5.2 Women and Health

Over the years, women as a group continue to exhibit a number of adverse features in their health status compared to men, despite the National Health Policy that has a commitment to health for all. Almost half of the Bangladeshi girls are married before the legal age (18 yrs), although the mean age at first marriage is rising which is 20.2 yrs for girls and 27.6 yrs for boys. Total fertility rate is very high which is 2.98 (BBS 1998). Maternal mortality rate is 4.3 per 1000 live births (BBS 1998). According to the Health and Demographic Survey (HDS 1995) about half of the rural mothers did not receive any medical delivery assistance. Almost 23 percent of the country's total population is adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15 years. By the age of 18 yrs over 60 percent girls are married. A large number of them become mothers while they themselves are still in the age group of children as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Generally they are unaware of the HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and thus most vulnerable. Mortality due to abortion complications is very high and contribute significantly to maternal mortality.

There are about 800,000 abortion cases taking place every year in Bangladesh and of these, only 10 percent are estimated to be done properly. A recent query at the infections Hospital reveals that nearly 50 percent of tetanus cases among women were due to septic abortion.

The approaches to women's health adopted over the last decades have been mainly confined to the Maternal Child Health (MCH)- Family Planning matrix. MCH was also seen as instrumental to the imperative of population control, ignoring the women's total health needs. This approaches has been dominated by the image of women as the 'mother' only. This has reinforce women's mind-set to think and act for other as health providers taking their own health needs as the last priority in the family. Moreover, the MCH strategy places the burden of too many tasks on women without considering the value of sharing the responsibilities by the male members.

However, there was a positive shift in this approach when Bangladesh signed Program of Action (POA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD 1994). This has made a conscious move from absolute contraceptive approach to reproductive health delivery approach. But reproductive health continues to be within the preview of the family planning

program rather than in the wider perspective of overall health services. The crucial issue here is that the women's health needs have been addressed in a piecemeal manner without taking it holistically.

Nutritional difference persists among adult males and females, although food intake of female household members between 20-29 yrs account for 84 percent of male members' food intake. Nutritional status of girls children are worse than for boys. Throughout their life-cycle, calorie intake is lower for females than males. The severe deficiency in nutrients during growing period, pregnancy and lactating period aggravates women's chronic nutritional deficiencies. Biases in infra-familial food distribution is always in favour of men.

In terms of having a family women are totally dependent on their husbands. She has no say or no participation in this regard. She is at the lowest cadre in this husband-wife relationship and completely powerless in this situation. In terms of gender division of labour women has to bear a large share, particularly at the family level. More so in nurturing and rearing up children. These are attributable to the dominant masculine role. In Bangladesh men have inordinate decision-making power in majority of the households and family issues.

5.3 Women in the Political Process and Governance

The gender equity issue has an insignificant slot in the political arena of Bangladesh. A review of the manifestos of the political parties as well as women's participation in political and political hierarchies would confirm this. The issues of gender discrimination came to the fore through debate on development issues, not through the political agenda of the mainstream political parties. More so is the current debate on achieving more seats in the institutional political structure. The political parties have not attached due importance to women's participation particularly at decision making level, although such concerns have been raised repeatedly through organized women's movement in the country. This may be attributed to the patriarchal norms of male domination over resources. Power-sharing between the sexes has not yet been accepted by the society. The marginal position of women in the politics is a reflection of socially constructed gender relations on the basis of male domination and women's subordination in the social set up.

Although women's participation in political power structure is crucial for gender equity, women's representation at various institutional levels has been insignificant during the last decades. In 1996 national election, despite the increased participation of women, only 36 women candidates were nominated by political parties. Of these only 7 women were elected representing a little over 2 percent of the total elected members of the Parliament. In the National Parliament there are 300 open-for-all seats through direct election. In addition, 30 seats are reserved for women. In most of the cases the women members of the party-in-power are elected indirectly in these seats.

The current debate is around increasing number of reserved seats in the Parliament for women from 30 to 64 to represent all the districts. A strong de-

mand raised by the women's organizations to fill these seats through direct election rather than through selection by the majority party in the Parliament.

Thus women are rarely represented in public forums. They do not enjoy the same autonomy as men when they participate in political process. Cooption, nomination, indirect election, these are the general practice for women entering the political arena as contrasted with the men's entry into the same structure. Women are mostly excluded from the activities of political parties in an integrated manner. Thus their participation in the political process and decision making level is mostly peripheral.

There have been some visible progress in women's participation at the local government level. A major breakthrough was the enactment of a law for direct election to reserved seats for women in all the three-tiers of the local government. In the last election, around 12,828 women have been elected as Union Parishad (UP lowest tier of local government) members in the reserved seats of 4,479 UP of Bangladesh. In addition, 20 and 110 women have been elected as chairpersons and members respectively for general seats contesting with men. This is a positive departure from the past.

However, some efforts have been made towards empowerment of women. In the present Cabinet women's participation is about 15 percent, two of the 4 women ministers are in the strategic positions. Women's participation in the government system in terms of public labour force is still 9 percent despite the set quota (10 percent for gazetted and 15 percent for non-gazetted) for women government employees. However, a special initiative has been taken to appoint more women at the senior levels.

The challenge remains, how many and what percentage of them are in the strategic positions? How much efforts have been put in, in order to empower them to be able to participate in the decision-making process? How much investment have been made on scaling up their skills keeping in view gender equity issue? How much progress achieved in terms of creating women-friendly and supportive environment for women to avail the opportunity of placing them in the strategic positions? These need to be looked at critically.

5.4 Violence Against Women

Violence Against Women (VAW) is defined by the UN Declaration on the Elimination of VAW (UN Resolution 48/104) is that "any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether in public or private life".

Contrary to this, in Bangladesh, certain kinds of VAW is not recognized socially as violence. Domestic violence is an example in this regard. The incidence of VAW has been increasing alarmingly in the form of killing for dowry, acid throwing, abduction, battering, sexual abuse, trafficking in women

etc. Fourteen percent of female deaths are associated with violence such as homicide and suicide resulting from assault. Deaths of women resulting from violence exceeds the proportion attributable to maternal and child birth complications. About 14 percent of maternal mortality is caused by violence. It is difficult to get adequate statistical information on the extent of the VAW and it is greatly under-reported. Societal attitude towards sexual crime is that, it is a dishonour to the victim. Rape is associated with loss of honour and thus the general perception is that the victim women should get married with the offender/perpetrator. The domestic violence is not included in the penal code. Therefore in most of the instances, the severe cases of domestic violence is not filed by the police. However considerable number of cases of physical violence by the husband or his family is reported frequently by the print media.

A number of rape cases by law enforcing authorities are also reported. The women victims of violence are generally kept in custody of police stations while the case is investigated. The backlog of cases results in long delays and unnecessary detention of under trial detainees. The densely populated prisons are a threat to the victims, no matter they are convicted or innocent. There is no separate prison for women. The rules of safe custody for victims results in keeping them in jail along with the convicted women. Sometimes this leads to further victimization of women often associated with physical and sexual abuse.

In most of the cases women have to bear with the social consequences. For example, a rape victim women will have least chance of getting married. She will have to live like an undesirable person in the family. A sexually abused women may be divorced by the husband and deserted by her own family for no fault on her part.

There are a number of acid burn cases living with the consequences of various kinds. Because of their disfigurement they loose their jobs, cannot get into the education system, cannot get married and there is least chance of integrating into their own community. The trafficked women upon return back to the country, are left with an uncertain destiny with least possibility of getting even a shelter-home.

5.4.1 GoB Policy and Actions

In accordance with CEDAW, Beijing PFA and other international commitments a set of special goals has been included in the National Policy on Advancement of Women regarding VAW. To redress the VAW issues a number of actions have been put in place.

Institutional Mechanisms

An Inter-ministerial committee has been set up for prevention of VAW chaired by the Minister of Women and Children Affairs. The Committee reviews the national VAW situation and monitor related activities of district co-ordination committees.

Nari Nirjatan Protirodh (Prevention of VAW) Cell is a special activity of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA) to monitor VAW at national level. Under this, MWCA runs a few shelters for abused women. District and thana level committees chaired by the head of the district administration, provides legal aids to the women victims and take actions against the complaints.

Special courts have been instituted in each district for quick disposal of cases. Department of Social Services provides social services in 64 government hospitals with emphasis on VAW. A Women-Friendly Hospital Initiative has been in operation in the public hospitals for humane handling of the women victims of violence and preventing the tragedy of maternal death and VAW in the country. This will help making medical services more sensitive to VAW.

Ministry of Home Affairs has set up four women's investigation cells in four police stations. Staffed by women police officers, these cells are to facilitate women victims access to the police.

A high-powered committee is formed, chaired by the Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs to review existing laws and update them towards addressing all forms of discrimination against women.

A pilot project on a multi-sectoral program on VAW has been started by the MWCA with a broad objective of mobilizing state machinery at all levels to deal effectively with prevention and redress of VAW. MWCA has started another project for the prevention and rehabilitation of trafficking in women and children.

5.4.2 Legislations

A number of legislations have been enacted and some existing laws modified for protection of women's interest and equal rights. These include reform of family laws; laws on equal pay and employment; protection and expanded political rights. Some provisions of the Muslim Personal Laws have been modified but no effective measures have been taken to reform Hindu personal laws or other minority groups as it was felt that such proposals may not be acceptable to them.

Following are the related Legislations:

- The Muslim Family Laws ordinance regulates personal matters such as inheritance of property, marriage, divorce and other marital regulations.
- Dowry Prohibition Act of 1980 and its Amendment in 1986 has made the practice of dowry an offence and punishable.
- Family Court (FC) Ordinance of 1985 provides for the establishment of FC at district and thana levels and has exclusive jurisdiction relating to dissolution of marriage; restitution of conjugal rights; dowry; maintenance; and guardianship and custody of children.

- Woman and Child Repression (Special Act) of 1995 and the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act 2000 further increase the punishment including death sentence for crimes against women; such as cruelty to women and children like sexual abuse including rape, injury, death, kidnapping or abduction of children to use them for prostitution etc.

5.4.3 Complimentary Role by NGOs and Print Media

A number of reputed leading NGOs and women's organizations such as Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, Ain O Salish Kendra, Naripokkha, Mohila Ainjibi Samity etc. have made significant contributions in furthering issues and actions regarding VAW. Complimentarily between the GoB and NGO initiatives in this respect merits special mention. For example because of the NGO and women's movement a number of legislations have been reviewed and amended. Particular areas that are focussed by NGOs are advocacy for women's human rights; mobilization of support and services for women victims of violence; organizing gender training, conducting VAW related research/studies; providing counseling services and shelter to the victim women. Through these efforts lateral linkages have been established informally between the NGOs and government service providers at the sub-national level.

A private Acid Survivors Foundation has been set up to facilitate women victims of acid throwing in terms of providing treatment, shelter, skill training and rehabilitation of acid survivors.

Print media have become very active in bringing the issues of VAW to the fore. A daily Bangla newspaper Prothom Alo has initiated an effort to build up a fund for assisting services in favour of women acid victims.

5.4.4 Areas of Concerns

Despite these efforts impacts are not visible, the VAW is alarmingly increasing. In the print media a number of cases are reported every day. Implementation status of the VAW related activities is very poor. There has been a huge backlog of undisposed cases inspite of the existence of special courts at district levels. Only 8 percent of judges are women. Representation of women in the police force is less than one percent. There is no women at the higher echelon of police administration. Women are also debarred from taking part in Bangladesh civil services examinations for entering into cadre service as direct police officers.

Limitations of the existing laws and lack of proper enforcement are the areas of concerns. Besides, persistent discriminatory societal practices; unequal provisions in the personal laws such as inheritance, guardianship of children, marriage and divorce; inadequate social awareness about the legal rights of women and their inaccessibility to the legal system; the complexities in the legal procedures; poor professional competence of the police in the investigation of VAW cases; and indifference and negligence of the law enforcing authorities; are some of the vital constraints that need to be taken care of.

6. Conclusion

The government of Bangladesh has articulated the concept of integration of women in mainstream planning and development with an ultimate goal of gender equity. This has been stated in various policy documents including National Policy on Women's Advancement, and the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans. According to these, women's concerns and needs will be made integral part of all sector-based planning and implementation process.

For a variety of reasons women's productivity, potential and skills are either sub-optimal or not explored to the full extent in Bangladesh. One of the key reasons is women's identification with their socially constructed roles relating to home management, child rearing and allied activities. Unfortunately development interventions did not take into account women's double and triple sets of constraints and thus could not address them as desired. Thus women's practical needs as well as strategic interests towards their empowerment should be taken into account while formulating sectoral plans and strategies.

One of the hindrances in operationalizing mainstreaming and or integration of women in the development process was that multi-sectoral linkages could not be established which is essential while planning program implementation and delivery of services for women. In Bangladesh these are difficult to achieve as the existing institutional infra-structures and outreaches are segregated and vertically ordered.

The persistence of inequality renders most development strategies ineffective unless the strategies itself consciously directed in favour of removal of the causes of discrimination. The sources of gender inequality are the societal attitude and social institutions including laws favouring men. Mainstreaming of women cannot be visualized unless these legal and structural gender discrimination is countered.

However, a holistic, non-compartmentalized approach to gender issues and integrated interventions cross-sectorally stand out as important strategic directions. Gender issues relate to the development of all people, men and women; and not just only women. Thus, this must be presented and analyzed in a broader frame, and should not be marginalized. It is recognized apparently that the country's existing poverty alleviation programs have made substantial contributions towards economic empowerment of women in terms of earning income and how to use it. Perhaps, it is the appropriate time to review these programs to see whether women's enhanced economic role has gone hand in hand with visible improvement in their skill development, access to productive resources and services. Country's plans and programs should be formulated so that there will be positive impact on all people; men and women keeping in view the gender equity issue. The gap needs to be bridged between the plan and implementation of programs. Over the years, some interventions have demonstrated implementable strategies towards overcoming gender specific obstacles and promoting gender equity. It is critical to build on these strategies that are already in place. It is equally signifi-

cant to “flag” on gender desegregated information and prioritize them in the country’s development agenda, reorienting the existing policies and programs. Strengthening the institutional base for providing overall policy guidance and monitoring of progress relating to gender issues need to be looked at seriously. In this regard, a significant strategic approach is the effort in strengthening the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs as facilitating, coordinating and monitoring agency towards assisting sectoral ministries that are implementing social development programs focusing on gender equity issues. Community involvement is a proven strategy that is initiated by the NGOs and human rights organizations. Complementarity between the government and the non-government agencies reinforced people’s awareness about critical gender concerns are also important.

Women’s appropriate participation in the national agenda-setting, resource allocating bodies, planning and implementing agencies need to be made a central concern. Higher share of resources has to be allocated aiming at bringing gender-balance in education, health and nutrition sectors that are instrumental to human resource development.

A country-wide public awareness program of human rights, men’s and women’s rights is critical in reorienting the traditional mind-set of the people in favour of creating a women-friendly environment.

Although some implementable initiatives are visible, there is still a long way to achieving the desired goal of gender equity. The challenge, therefore, is what is the timeframe to enter into the new paradigm in this millennium.

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Annex 3

Itinerary in Bangladesh

Bangladesh Field Study Daily Programme

Week 1: Saturday 12 May to Thursday 17 May 2001:

Saturday 12 May:

12.50pm Team arrives Dhaka. and check into Eastern Guest House, House-4, Road-24, Gulshan-1.

Sunday 13 May:

9.00 am–10.45 am First team meeting and logistic planning.

11.00 am–1.00 pm Meeting with key staff at Swedish Embassy (Dr. Anders Granlund, Counsellor; Monica Malakar, Programme Officer; Reazul Islam, Programme Officer) to discuss logistics, timing etc. and review overall country strategy.

2.30 pm–4.00 pm Meeting with Swedish TA Team (Zia-Us-Sabur).

Monday 14 May:

10.00am–10.30 am Meeting with Director General, (DNFE) (A.S.M.Abdul Halim).

10.30 am–11.30 am Project Director NFE-3 (Ashrafuddin Ahmed).

12.30 pm–1.30 pm Meeting with Deputy Chief (Dr Delwar Hossain), Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED), Ministry of Education.

2.30 pm–4.00 pm Meeting with Swedish TA Team (Dr. Claude W. Bobillier).

4.00 pm–5.00 pm Meeting with PD, NFE-2 (Mahtab Uddin) and project staff.

Tuesday 15 May:

- 10.30 am–1.00 pm Meeting with Ain o Salish Kendro (ASK) (Acting Executive Director, Khurshheed Erfan Ahmed; Deputy Director, Training, Md. Saidur Rahman, and Coordinators of Core and other programmes).
- 2.30 pm–5.00 pm Meeting with Steps Towards Development (STD), (Director, Ranjan Karmaker).

Wednesday 16 May:

Ted and Mirza

- 9.30 am–10.00 am Interview with JICA Education Expert (Dr. Eisuke Saito)
- 10.00 am–12.30 pm Interview with Director (Planning), other concerned officers of DNFE.
- 12.30 pm–1.00 pm Interview with PD and other concerned officers of NFE-3.
- 2.00 pm–5.00 pm FGD with concerned officers of DNFE, NFE-3 and selected PNGOs of NFE-3.
- Summarise findings of the day and planning for the following day.

Sevilla and Barua

- 10.00 am–11.00 am Visit to ASK. Interview with Acting Executive Director, (Khurshheed Erfan Ahmed) and other concerned officers of ASK.
- 11.00 am–1.00 pm Interview with the Executives and other concerned officers of selected PNGOs of ASK.
- 2.00 pm–5.00 pm Visit to ASK clinics in Dhaka city.
- Summarise findings of the day and planning for the following day.

Thursday 17 May:

Ted and Mirza

- 9.00 am–11.00 am FGD with selected PNGOs of NFE-2.
- 11.00 am–12.00 pm Interview with Deputy Director Planning, DNFE
- 2.00 pm–3.30 pm Meeting with Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Director Research, Dr. Ahmadullah Mia, and Director Programmes, Ehsanur Rahman

4.00 pm–5.00 pm Meeting with Unicef, Child Development & Education Section, Dr. James Jennings, Chief, and Ruby Q. Noble, Project Officer.
Summarise findings of the day and planning for the following day.

Sevilla and Barua

9.30 am–11.00 am Interview with Director (Ranjan Karmaker), STD and other concerned officers of STD.

11.00 am–1.00 pm Interview with the Executives and other concerned officers of selected PNGOs of STD.

2.00 pm–5.00 pm FGD with concerned officers of STD and selected PNGOs.

Summarise findings of the day and planning for the following day.

Week 2: Friday 18 May to Thursday 24 May 2001:

Friday 18 May:

10.00 am Team meeting to refine methodologies and ensure concepts, checklists and tools are being applied evenly and to discuss logistics for the second and third weeks of the evaluation.

Sevilla and Barua

Saturday 19 May: Sevilla and Barua transfer to Gaibandha by car and stay there to work on STD.

Sunday 20 May: Sevilla and Barua concentrate on interviews and data gathering process through visit to stakeholders and PNGOs of STD in Gaibandha.

Monday 21 May: Sevilla and Barua observe proceedings of meeting of PNGO members of STD of Thakurgaon, Kurigram and Gaibandha districts in Gaibandha.

Tuesday 22 May: Sevilla and Barua leave Gaibandha after breakfast for Sirajganj to concentrate on interviews and data gathering process on Sirajganj Uttaran Mahila Sangstha, (Dargah Road, Sirajganj, phone (0751) 72422, contact person: Ms Shafina Lohani, Director), a PNGO of ASK. Stay in Sirajganj.

Wednesday 23 May: Sevilla and Barua concentrate on interviews and data gathering process on PNGOs of STD. Leave for Dhaka in the afternoon.

Ted, Britha and Mirza

Saturday 19 May:

5.00 pm Meeting with Dr. Kazi Saleh Ahmed

Sunday 20 May: Ted and Mirza transfer to Narsingdi and DAM Raipura, by car to concentrate on interviews and data gathering process on two approaches of NFE-2.

Monday 21 May: Ted and Mirza transfer to Catalyst, Kaliakoir, Gazipur by car to visit NGO Catalyst, pilot project participants, CMC members etc.

12.50 pm Britha arrives at Dhaka and meets with team members in the evening.

Tuesday 22 May:

9 am–10.30 am Meeting with ADB Gender & Development Specialist (Ferdousi Sultana Begum)

11 am–12 pm Britha, Ted and Mirza meet with Swedish Ambassador and Counsellor.

3 pm–4 pm Meeting with DFID First Secretary Senior Education Adviser (Dr. Terri Kelly)

Wednesday 23 May:

7.30 am Britha, Ted and Mirza transfer to Manikganj by car to visit NGO SPUS.

7.30 pm Dinner at Jowshan's residence (House 48, Road 20, Sector 3, Uttara, Dhaka)

Thursday 24 May:

9.30 am Team Meeting

11.30 am Ted leaves Dhaka.

12.30 pm–2.30 pm Britha and Mirza visit NFE-3 centres of NGO-Srizony in Badda area.

Week 3: Friday 25 May to Thursday 31 May 2001:

Friday 25 May:

3 pm- 4 pm Meeting with Swedish TA Team (Dr. Claude W. Bobillier).

Saturday 26 May:

2.00 pm Team meeting to review data collection results, identify further follow-ups required, assign responsibilities for development of preliminary results.

Sunday 27 May: Sevilla and Barua to conduct follow-up visits and finish any other necessary interviews at ASK and STD.

Sunday-Tuesday 27–29 May:

Britha and Mirza transfer to NFE-3 at Rajshahi city by air to concentrate on interviews and data gathering process, concentrate on key informant interviews, workshops with adolescent project participants.

Monday-Tuesday 28–29 May:

Sevilla and Barua to concentrate on interviews and data gathering process, concentrate on key informant interviews, workshops with project participants of ASK and STD partners in Dhaka.

Tuesday 29 May:

2.00 pm Team meeting to prepare for debriefings.

Wednesday 30 May:

9.30 am–11.00 am Debriefing with NFE-3 to review and validate field mission results with key informant/partners/donors etc.

11.30 am–1.00 pm Debriefing with NFE-2 to review and validate field mission results with key informant/partners/donors etc.

3.00–5.00 pm Preparation for debriefing with Embassy

Thursday 31 May:

9.00 am–10.30 am Debriefing with STD to review and validate field mission results with key informant/partners/donors etc.

11.00 am–12.30 pm Debriefing with ASK to review and validate field mission results with key informant/partners/donors etc.

2.00 pm–4.00 pm Debriefing with Swedish Embassy to review and validate field mission results.

7.30 pm COWI dinner

Week 4: Friday 1 June to Saturday 2 June 2001:

Friday 1 June:

10.00 am Team meeting and next steps.

Saturday 2 June: Departure of team members.

Programme for Field Visit NFE-3

By Britha Mikkelsen and Mirza Najmul Huda

Visit to Rajshahi for NFE-3

Sunday 27 May:

09.20 am–10.00am Transfer to Rajshahi by air (GMG) and check in to Parjatan Motel (Tel. 88-0721-775492 or 775237).

11.00 am–1.00 pm Interview with the Programme Officer and other concerned officers of NFE-3, Rajshahi and District Coordinator, DNFE, Rajshahi.

3.00 pm–5.00 pm Visit learning centres, concentrate on key informant interviews and data gathering process with the teachers, supervisors, learners (boys and girls), centre level CMC members and other concerned field staff/persons of NFE-3.

Monday 28 May:

8.00 am–1.00 pm Visit learning centres, concentrate on key informant inter interviews and data gathering process with the teachers, supervisors, learners (boys and girls), centre level CMC members and other concerned field staff/persons of NFE-3

Interview with the concerned officers and Supervisors of PNGOs of NFE-3

Summarize findings of the day and planning for the following day and stay in Rajshahi.

2.00 pm–5.00 pm Concentrate on FGD with the key staff (teachers, supervisors, coordinators etc) and the beneficiaries (boys and girls) of NFE-3.

Summarize findings of the day and preparation of debriefing notes.

Tuesday 29 May:

10.20 am–11.00 am Transfer to Dhaka by air (GMG).

Note: Both ASK and STD work with other NGOs in reaching community clients. ASK works with partner NGOs (PNGOs) in the 6 areas covered by its outreach programme besides serving clients through its legal clinics for direct legal assistance and Drop-in Centre (DIC). STD does not work at community level but exerts its influence through members of the Development Workers' Information Network (DWIN) and the Trainers' Core Group (TCG) operating at different districts.

Thus in our field work the ET included consultations with the following stakeholder groups associated with the two NGOs:

1. At community level:
 - a. clients of ASK's direct legal assistance at the legal clinic and drop-in centre (in Dhaka, consisting of women and children at the time of our visit¹)
 - b. members of a Union Level Popular Theatre Team trained by ASK in partnership with a local PNGO (Uttaran Mahila Sangstha in Sirajganj district)
 - c. trainees of ASK's human rights and legal awareness training (in Sirajganj district)
 - d. trainees of ASK's partner NGO training program on gender advocacy (consisting of Union Parishad members in Sirajganj district)
 - e. former trainees of STD's DWIN member NGOs on Gender Analysis courses, consisting of community elites (in Gaibandha district)
 - f. members of a Village Development Committee (VDC) organised by a DWIN member NGO (Gono Unnoyon Kendro in Gaibandha district)
 - g. members of a village group *samity* organised by a DWIN member NGO (in Gaibandha district)
 - h. male spouses of the afore-mentioned VDC and *samity* members
 - i. children studying at the non-formal education class of a DWIN member NGO and organised for special events by the VDC
2. At district level and below:
 - a. Executives and field staff of an ASK PNGO Uttaran Mahila Sangstha in Sirajganj

¹(the women and ASK staff report that sometimes the women come with their male spouses for help in resolving disputes. In the recent time men apparently also come on their own initiative to seek help on family or property disputes that concern their wives and children. ASK extends services to these men but reserves legal clinic membership exclusively for women as a policy.)

- b. Executives and field staff of STD's DWIN member NGOs (observed a co-ordination meeting of 44 NGOs within the North-western regional network from the districts of Gaibandha, Kurigram, Rangpur and Thakurgaon; with an in-depth look at the work of the meeting host Gono Unnoyon and to a lesser extent, Samaj Kallyan Sangstha, in Gaibandha district)
 - c. Gender analysis trainers from STD's Trainers Core Group in Gaibandha district
 - d. ASK and STD's field supervisors (part-time in Dhaka, part-time outside Dhaka)²
3. In Dhaka:
- a. Executives, senior and middle management staff, and workers of both ASK and STD
 - b. Norwegian Embassy officers responsible for NGOs (i.e. co-financing ASK along with Sida and the Dutch NGO NOVIB)
 - c. Former and potential clients of ASK and STD's training and audio-visual products and services

Gender specialists, observers of women's movement in Bangladesh, officers of other donor agencies

²(Some of ASK co-ordinators, such as Co-ordinators for Gender Justice and Popular Theatre, are required to spend 15 days each month to monitor field level activities. For STD, the DWIN, Training and audio-visual unit co-ordinators and staff also spend considerable amount of time outside Dhaka, although there is no mandatory proportion of time fixed.)

Annex 4

Persons Interviewed

List of persons met

Introductory Meeting with Ain o Shalish Kendro executive & staff
Tuesday, May 15, 2001, 10:30–13:00

- 1) Ms. Khursheed Erfan Ahmed Director Training & Acting
Executive Director
- 2) Mr. Md. Nur Khan Director, Investigation
& Documentation
- 3) Mr. Md. Moqsud Maleque Acting Coordinator, Child Rights
- 4) Ms. Fahmida Akhter Staff Lawyer, Outreach
- 5) Mr. Md. Matimudul Huq Unit Assistant, Advocacy
- 6) Mr. Md. Tipu Sultan Coordinator, Investigation
- 7) Mr. Saidur Rahman Deputy Director
- 8) Mr. Motahar Akand Coordinator, Popular Theatre
- 9) Ms. Rahima Khatun Julie Communication Organizer,
Communication
- 10) Ms. Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari Coordinator, Gender & Social
Justice
- 11) Ms. Salma Chaudhury Shilpi Researcher, Research
- 12) Ms. Zafrin Sattar Coordinator, Documentation
- 13) Ms. Salma Jabin Coordinator, Litigation
- 14) Mr. Zakir Hossain Deputy Director, Finance
- 15) Mr. Md. Shahidullah Deputy Director, Accounts
- 16) Ms. Dalia Afroz (Advocate) Senior Trainer, Training
- 17) Ms. Roushan Jahan Parvin Coordinator, Outreach
(Advocate)

Members of evaluation team:

Prabin Behari Barua
Ted Freeman
Mirza Nazmul Huda
Sevilla Leowinata

Introductory Meeting with Steps Towards Development executive and staff Tuesday, May 15, 2001, 14:30–16:30

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) Ms. Sree Maitra | Associate Program Officer, Training |
| 2) Mr. Moynul Huda | Coordinator, Audio-visual |
| 3) Mr. Premananda Sarker | Coordinator, Finance & Admin. |
| 4) Ms. Fatema Khyrunnahar Eva | Program Associate, DWIN |
| 5) Mr. Kartik Howlader | Program Officer, Finance & Admin. |
| 6) Ms. Fauzia Khan | Program Officer, Audio-visual |
| 7) Mr. Tarun Karmakar | Program Officer, Audio-visual |
| 8) Mr. Shaheen Rahman | Coordinator, MD & PA |
| 9) Ms. Rekha Saha | In-charge, DWIN |
| 10) Mr. Lutfur Rahman | Coordinator, Training |
| 11) Mr. Ranjan Karmaker | Director |

Members of evaluation team:

Prabin Behari Barua
Ted Freeman
Mirza Nazmul Huda
Sevilla Leowinata

Workshop/Focus group discussion with Ain o Shalish Kendro staff Wednesday, May 16, 2001, 10:00–13:15

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1) Mr. Saidur Rahman | Deputy Director, TGP |
| 2) Mr. Zakir Hossain | Deputy Director, Accounts and Finance |
| 3) Ms. Sanaiyya F. Ansari | Coordinator, Gender & Social Justice |
| 4) Ms. Salma Chaudhury | Researcher, Research Unit |
| 5) Mr. Mohammed Tipu Sultan | Coordinator, Investigation |
| 6) Ms. Dalia Afroz (Advocate) | Senior Trainer, Training Unit |
| 7) Dr. Faustina Pereira | Coordinator, Advocacy |
| 8) Mr. Md. Moqsud Maleque | Acting Coordinator, Child Rights |
| 9) Mr. Ananda Kumar Biswas | Outreach |
| 10) Mr. Motahar Akand | Coordinator, Popular Theatre |
| 11) Ms. Rahima Khatun Julie | Communication Organizer, Communication |
| 12) Ms. Zafrin Sattar | Coordinator, Documentation |

Members of evaluation team:

Prabin Behari Barua (facilitator)
Sevilla Leowinata

Visit to ASK DIC cum Legal Clinic, Mirpur Circle-1
Wednesday, May 16, 2001, 14:30–17:00

PB & SL accompanied by

Ms. Roushan Jahan Parveen (Advocate) Coordinator, Outreach
Ms. Dilu Ara Nutritionist

DIC:

Ms. Rita Parveen Educator cum Liaison Officer
Ms. Rizia Begum Samity Chair
Ms. Selina Akhter Staff Lawyer

Legal Clinic Clients:

Ms. Alo Begum
Ms. Taslima Begum
Ms. Hasina Begum
Ms. Sufia Begum
Ms. Shiuli
Ms. Begum
Ms. Minu

Note: these women come from quite far, with rikshaw fares costing Tk. 12–15.

Children (between 8–14, mostly from the neighbourhood and children of *samity* members.)

(There have been 53 children who dropped in to learn today. The clinic is open from 10–5 on Wednesday. Today it will open until 6 because of an office circular to make up for lost hours during hartals.)

Component-wise meetings with Steps Towards Development
Staff & Consultants
Thursday, May 17, 2001, 09:45–14:00

Training Component

Ms. Farhana Hafiz Tania Programme Associate
Ms. Mst. Fazilatun Nessa Shapla Programme Associate
Ms. Kazi Dil Afroza Islam Program Officer
Mr. Lutfur Rahman Coordinator
Ms. Sree Maitra Associate Program officer

Audio-visual Component

Mr. Manzane Hassin Murad Consultant
Ms. Fauzia Khan Program Officer (Editor)

DWIN Component

Ms. Rekha Saha In-charge
Ms. Seema Das Programme Associate, Gender & Development Resource Centre

Ms. Fatema Khyrunnahar Eva	Program Associate, Networking Unit
Ms. Shahnaz Perveen	Team Leader, Local Gender Consultancy for DNFE Projects 2 & 3

Material Development & Policy Advocacy Component

Ms. Zinat Ana Sheba	Programme Associate
Ms. Faria Ahmed	Programme Associate
Mr. Chandan Kumar Lahiri	Programme Associate
Mr. Shaheen Rahman	Coordinator

Workshop/Focus Group Discussion with Steps Towards Development Staff

Thursday, May 17, 2001, 15:00-17:30

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1) Ms. Farhana Hafiz Tania | Programme Associate, Training |
| 2) Ms. Mst. Fazilatun Nessa Shapla | Programme Associate, Training |
| 3) Ms. Seema Das | Programme Associate, DWIN |
| 4) Ms. Susmita Baul | Programme Associate,
Finance & Admin. |
| 5) Mr. Chandan Kumar Lahiri | Programme Associate, MD & PA |
| 6) Ms. Faria Ahmad | Programme Associate, MD & PA |
| 7) Mr. Premananda Sarker | Coordinator, Finance & Admin. |
| 8) Mr. Shaheen Rahman | Coordinator, MD & PA |
| 9) Ms. Fauzia Khan | Programme Officer, Audio-visual |
| 10) Mr. Lutfur Rahman | Coordinator, Training |
| 11) Mr. Karik Howlader | Programme Officer,
Finance & Admin. |
| 12) Ms. Kazi Dil Afroza Islam | Programme officer, Training |
| 13) Ms. Sree Maitra | Associate Programme Officer,
Training |
| 14) Ms. Zinat Ana Sheba | Programme Associate, MD & PA |
| 15) Ms. Rekha Saha | In-charge, DWIN |

Field visit

Introductory meeting with senior management team members* of Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), an STD DWIN member, in Nashratpur, Gaibandha

Saturday, May 19, 2001, 16:30–17:30

Mr. M. Abdus Salam	Coordinator
Ms. Anjum Nahied Chowdhury (Lucky)	Programme Manager, Health, Agriculture & Environment

Ms. Shirina Yesmin Bizly

Programme Manager, Training and Education

(* three of the five. The two other: Ms. Arifa Sultana Kanak, Programme Manager Institutional Development, was on maternity leave; and Mr. Md. Mohirul Islam Tusan, Programme Manager Disaster Management, was in the field on a monitoring tour.)

Sunday A.M. May 20, 2001. Started from GUK at 07:45.

Visit to GUK working area of Kundarpara Char, Kamarjani Union.
Focus Group Discussion

Ms. Mohsina Akter (Bithi)

GUK Area Manager, Area-4
(River Basin Prg.)

Group members of Sopto Diga Mohila Somiti, Kundarpara (out of a total membership of 25):

Ms. Josna

Ms. Toimon

Ms. Baschani

Ms. Jorina

Ms. Morsatha

Visit to GUK working area of Choigoria Gram, Bhoal Union
Focus Group Discussion

Ms. Samsiara Happy

Area Manager, Area-1 (Arid Land)

Group members of Village Development Committee [(VDC) out of a total membership of 11]:

Ms. Halima

Member, stationery shop owner

Ms. Chokina

Chairperson, stationary shop owner

Ms. Hasina

Member, shop owner

Ms. Mariam

Member

Ms. Jorina

Also member of Union Council,
owner of sanitation centre

Ms. Bharuti Rani

Non-formal Education
Program Teacher

Children of the NFEP school

Husbands of VDC members

- 4) Ms. Ambiatun Zannat ED, Social Welfare Organization, Thakurgaon
- 5) Ms. Julia Akhter Chygaon Research Associate, PGSP, Thakurgaon
- 6) Ms. Roushan Ara Chy Kurigram Bangladesh Mohila Parishad,
- 7) Ms. Firoza Alam Executive Officer, Esho Desh Gori, Ulipur, Kurigram
- 8) Ms. Reshma Sultana Coordinator, AFAD, Kurigram
- 9) Mr. Shahidul Huq Director, KDS, Kurigram
- 10) Ms. Oajjeda Begum Director, Thikana Sangstha, Kurigram
- 11) Mr. Md. Abdul Rahman Sarkar Coordinator, Apan Uddog Sangstha, Kurigram
- 12) Mr. Md. Azadun Nabi Director, Kajer Dak, Kurigram
- 13) Mr. Syamol Chandra Sakar Director, Jubo Samaj Kolen Samiti, Kurigram
- 14) Mr. Golam Mostafa Director, Alur Pothe, Kurigram
- 15) Mr. Rasel Ahmed Liton Sangstha, Gaibandha Coordinator, Samaj Kallyan
- 16) Mr. Nurul Huda Shapan Coordinator, HADS, Thakurgaon
- 17) Mr. Ranjan Karmaker Director, STD
- 18) Mr. Saidur Rahman Sohel Kendra, Kurigram Executive Director, Jonno Kolayan
- 19) Mr. Md. Habibur Rahman Accountant, KDS, Kurigram
- 20) Mr. Sunil Badra Roy Programme Officer, Uddayam Sangstha, Kurigram
- 21) Mr. M. Mohabbat Ali Supervisor, Gram Unnayan Kendra, Kurigram
- 22) Mr. M A Wadud Coordinator, Unnayan Shahajogi Sangstha, G'bandha
- 23) Mr. Md. Lutfur Rahman Coordinator, AKOTA, Gaibandha
- 24) Mr. Moinul Huda Coordinator, Audio-visual Unit, STD
- 25) Ms. Mst. FN Shapla Programme Associate, Training Unit, STD
- 26) Ms. Shirina Yesmin Bizly Programme Manager, GUK, Gaibandha
- 27) Ms. Anjum Nahied Chy Programme Manager, GUK, Gaibandha
- 28) Mr. Md. Abdus Samad Programme Manager, AKOTA, Gaibandha

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 29) Mr. Md. Nurul Alam | Director, Gano Chetona, Gaibandha |
| 30) Mr. Mustafizur Rahman | Executive Director, Save the Genesis, Kurigram |
| 31) Ms. Most. Rehena Begum | Programme Associate, GUK, Gaibandha |
| 32) Ms. Shirin Akter Liza | Programme Manager, AKOTA, Gaibandha |
| 33) Ms. Shamsun Naher Begum | Programme Manager, USS, Kurigram |
| 34) Ms. Ferdaushi Luna | Trainer, AKOTA, Gaibandha |
| 35) Mr. Shahin Rahman | Coordinator, Material Dev. & Policy Advocacy, STD |
| 36) Mr. Sattay Ranjan Das | Programme Assistant (Cameraman), STD |
| 37) Mr. Farid Ahmed | Coordinator, Women Dev. Program, G'bandha |
| 38) Mr. Aftab Hossain | Assistant, Training & Publication, GUK, Gaibandha |
| 39) Ms. Fatema Kh. Eva | Programme Associate, DWIN Unit, STD |
| 40) Ms. Rekha Saha | In-charge, DWIN, STD |
| 41) Mr. Rabiul Azam | Chairman, TNC, Thakurgaon |
| 42) Mr. Anup Kr. Sarker | Sr. Regional Officer, NGO Forum for DWSS, Rangpur |
| 43) Mr. M. Abdus Salam | Coordinator, GUK, Gaibandha |

Tuesday, May 22, 2001

Participants of Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha 3-day Training for Local Elected Council (Union Parishad) Members on Advocacy for Gender Equality, at SUMS training room (sponsored by South Asia Partnership)

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Mr. Md. Zafar Ali | UP member, (union name not listed) |
| 2) Ms. Rawshan Ara Huq | UP member, (union name not listed) |
| 3) Ms. Hena Khatun | UP member, Songasa |
| 4) Ms. Kamrun Nahar | UP member, Khokshabari |
| 5) Ms. Jahanara Begum | UP member, Kalia Haripur |
| 6) Mr. Md. Monjur Alam | UP member, Shialkol |
| 7) Mr. Md. Habibur Rahman | UP member, Khokshabari |
| 8) Ms. Hasna Begum | UP member, Songasa |
| 9) Mr. Md. Saiful Islam | UP member, Khokshabari |
| 10) Ms. Farida Parveen | UP member, Shialkol |

11) Ms. Nargis Parveen	UP member, Shialkol
12) Ms. Josna Khanom	UP member, Ratankandi
13) Ms. Hasina Khatoon	UP member, Khoksabari
14) Ms. Hafiza Khatoon	UP member, Bagbati
15) Ms. Manwwara Begum	UP member, Bagbati
16) Ms. Salma Hafiz	UP member, Bahuli
17) Ms. Ranima Begum	UP member, Kalia Haripur
18) Ms. Selina Begum Swapna	UP member, Shialkol
19) Ms. Roushan Ara	UP member, Khokshabari
20) Ms. Hasna Hena	UP member, Khokshabari
21) Ms. Setty Khanom	UP member, Bagbati

Participants of Ain o Shalish Kendra – Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha 3-day Training for Ain Shahayata Committee members on Human Rights and Legal Awareness, at Chaugacha Union Girls' College

1) Mr. Md. Abdul Gani	Service-person, Jinaigati
2) Mr. Md. Zail Hossain	Farmer, Dakatia Bari
3) Mr. Md. Rafiqul Islam	Business entrepreneur, Nougá Phulkoca
4) Mr. Kazi Azizur Rahman	Farmer, Shimla
5) Ms. Rubiya Begum	Housewife, Shahaugaca
6) Ms. Jesmin Nahar	Service-person, Parkhata
7) Ms. Nargis Parvin	Service-person, Nougá Phulkoca
8) Mr. Md. Omar Ali Khan	Farmer, Palugurguri
9) Mr. Abdul Rahman	Farmer, Charbaligururi
10) Mr. Abdur Kuddus	Farmer/retired teacher, Shahugaca
11) Mr. Md. Abdur Rahman	Farmer, Shimla
12) Ms. Rokeya Khatun	Housewife, Shimla
13) Ms. Haowa Begum	Housewife, Potolshongacha
14) Ms. Sahera Banu	Poultry farmer, Charbaliguri
15) Mr. Md. Hazrat Ali	UP member, Parshumra
16) Mr. Md. Shahjahan	Service-person, Gupirpara
17) Mr. Md. Nure Alam	Service-person, Burburia
18) Ms. Mst. Shefali Begum	Housewife, Animpur
19) Mr. Md. Nusrat Ali	Farmer, Ghorburia
20) Ms. Mst. Asma Khatun	Farmer, Shubirpara
21) Mr. Abdul Khaleque	Farmer, Animpur
22) Ms. Mst. Qamrun Nahar	UP member, Bhatpeari
23) Ms. Mst. Manju Ara Begum	Housewife, Pachthakuri
24) Mr. Md. Faraz Ali	Farmer, Nowgaphulkucha
25) Ms. Mst. Haowa	Farmer, Charshongacha

ASK trainers

Mr. Jafrul Hasan Sharif (Advocate)
Ms. Tanvia Roselin Sultana (Advocate)

Members of the Shiyalkol Union Level Theatre Team

Mr. Sri Sowpon Kumar	Team Leader
Mr. Md. Sayket Rayhan	Team member
Mr. Md. Rana	Team member
Mr. Md. Faridul Islam	Team member
Mr. Md. Alamgir	Team member
Mr. Md. Mohsin	Team member
Mr. Md. Tojam	Team member
Mr. Md. Sanowar Hossain	Team member
Mr. Md. Aminul Islam	Team member
Mr. Md. Abdur Salam	Team member

ASK supervisory staff

Mr. Motahar Akand	Coordinator, Popular Theatre
Mr. Tareq-ul-Islam	Field Supervisor

Wednesday, May 23, 2001

Sirajganj Uttaran Mohila Sangstha personnel

Ms. Shafina Lohani	Director
Mr. Sultan Sarkar	Supervisor, Maternal & Child Health & Family Planning Project
Ms. Seheli Naznin	Field Officer
Mr. Saiful Alam Khan, Jahid	Field Officer
Mr. Md. Mazbaul Islam Kamrul	Community Organizer, Gender & Social Justice
Mr. Md. Rezaul Karim Khan	Community Organizer, Popular Theatre
Mr. Salim Ahamed	Accounts Officer

Monday, May 28, 2001

Dr. Hamida Hossain	Director Research & Acting Executive Director, ASK
--------------------	---

Participants at ASK Teachers' Forum: training workshop on *Amar Prithibi* (My World, alternative basic education curriculum for working children) – from Begum Rokeya Government High School, Salvation Army Schools, Underprivileged Children's Education Program.

Ms. Nargis Akhter	ASK Trainer/Facilitator for <i>Amar Prithibi</i>
Ms. Farzana Yesmin	Associate Program officer, STD (GA trainer)

Thursday, May 31, 2001

09:15–10:50 at Embassy of Sweden Conference Room
Debriefing with STD

STD representatives:

Mr. Ranjan Karmaker	Director
Mr. Lutfor Rahman	Coordinator, Training
Ms. Bela Nabi	Consultant, Material Dev. & Policy Advocacy
Ms. Kazi Dil Afroza Islam	Program Officer, Training Component
Ms. Shahnaz Perveen cy NFE 2 & 3 DNFE	Team Leader, Local Gender Consultan-
Mr. Moynul Huda	Coordinator Audio-visual
Ms. Rekha Saha	Coordinator DWIN
Mr. Manzane Hassin	Consultant Audio-visual
Ms. Sree Maitra	Associate Program officer

11:00–12:30 at Embassy of Sweden Conference Room
Debriefing with ASK

ASK representatives

Ms. Ila Chanda	Advocate
Mr. Saidur Rahman	Deputy Director,
Mr. Mohammed Tipu Sultan	Coordinator, Legal Aid
Dr. Faustina Pereira	Coordinator, Advocacy
Dr. Hameeda Hossain	Director Research & Acting Executive Director
Ms. Khusheed Erfan Ahmed	Director Training

13:45–15:30 at Embassy of Sweden Conference Room
Debriefing with the Swedish Embassy

Embassy representatives

Mr. Alf Eliasson	First Secretary
Dr. Anders Granlund	Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission
Mr. Reazul Islam	Financial Controller/Programme Officer
Ms. Monica Malakar	Senior Programme Officer

FGD with selected PNGOs of NFE-2
17 May 2001 at DNFE Conference room

<i>NGOs.</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1. Al-Muhsini	Mr. Nazrul Islam Siddique Executive Director
2. Association for Renovation of Community Health Education Services (ARCHES)	Mr. Sk. Aminur Rahman Admin. Officer
3. Bangla German Sampriti (BGS)	Mr. Mofakh-Kharul Islam Executive Director
3. Bangladesh Association for Community Education (BACE)	Mr. Arif Hossain Chowdhury
4. Catalyst	Mr. Liaquat Ali Mr. Hemanta
5. Development Organisation of the Rural Poor (DORP)	Ms. Nurunnahar Shirin PM
6. Gram Kendra	Mr. Syed Ahmed Treasurer
7. Nijera Shikhi	Mr. K.C. Bhattacharjee Research and Monitoring Officer
8. Organisation for Social Action and Development (OSAD)	Ms. Rokshana Zahan Khan Programme Officer
9. Pushpo	Mr. Md. Abdul Mannan President
10. SUF	Mr. Ifthakher Ahmed Project Coordinator Mr. Tipu Sultan Programme Officer
11. Surovi	Mr. S.M. Mahmudul Haque

FGD with selected PNGOs of NFE-3
16 May 2001 at DNFE Conference room

<i>NGOs.</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1. Annesha Foundation (AF)	Mr. Kamelindu Karmaker Director
2. Bangladesh Association for Community Education (BACE)	Ms. Sahanaj Parveen Dristi Programme Director

3. CEDAR	Mr. Ramen Delanath Programme Monitor
4. CISD	Ms Nasreen Sultana Director
5. Development Organisation of the Rural Poor (DORP)	Mr. Mesbahuddin Selim Desk Manager
6. HCCB	Mukti Sarker Liaison Officer
7. Nijera Shikhi	Mr. K. C. Bhattacharjee Research and Monitoring Officer
8. Organisation for Social Action and Development (OSAD)	Ms. Rokshana Zahan Khan Programme Officer
9. Pushpo	Mr. Md. Abdul Mannan President
10. SJK	Ms. Shamsun Nahar President
11. Srizony Bangladesh	Mr. Md. Nurul Islam Project Coordinator
12. SUF	Mr. Ifthakher Ahmed Project Coordinator Mr. Tipu Sultan Programme Officer
13. SUK	Ms. Nasrin Hena Chief Coordinator
14. VEDO	Mr. Matiar Rahman Chief Coordinator
15. VRSC	Mr. Hafizur Rahman Field Monitor

List of Organisations/ Persons Consulted

<i>Organisations</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1. Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka	Anders Johnson Ambassador Dr. Anders Granlund Counsellor Monica Malakar Programme Officer (Development) Reazul Islam Financial Controller/Programme Officer
2. Directorate of Non-Formal Education	A.S.M. Abdul Halim Director General

- Kazi Farid Ahammed
Director (Planning)
- Nasimul Ghani
Deputy Director (Planning)
- Golam Kibria
Asstt. Director (Planning)
- A. Z. M. Nasimuzzaman
Deputy Director (TLM)
- Jahanara Begum
Deputy Director Monitoring &
Incharge of Evaluation
- Shamsuddin Ahmed
Deputy Director (NGO)
- M. A. Mannan
Asstt. Director (NGO)
- Dr. Jaynul Abedin
Asstt. Director (Evaluation)
3. Non-Formal Education-2 Project
- Mahtab Uddin
Project Director
- Golam Mostafa
Asstt. Director
- Asaduzzaman
Statistical Officer
4. Non-Formal Education-3 Project
- Ashrafddin Ahmed
Project Director
- Asna Jerin
Asstt. Director
- Rajasree Gain
Programme Officer
5. Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)
- Khursheed Erfan Ahmed
Acting Executive Director
- Md. Saidur Rahman
Deputy Director, Training
6. Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Ferdousi Sultana Begum
Gender & Development Specialist
7. Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)
- Ehsanur Rahman
Director Programme
- Prof. Dr. Ahmadullah Mia
Director Research
- Dipok Kumar Roy
Area Coordinator, Norsindi

- Tapan Kumar Sarker
Asstt. Area Coordinator Norsindi
- Sonjeepon Kumar Shamol
Asstt. Area Coordinator, Norsindi
- Anjushree Bhoumik
Centre Asstt., Norsindi
8. Jahangirnagar University
Former Vice-Chancellor Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed
9. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Dr. Eisuke Saito
Education Expert
10. Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality (PLAGE) Arifa S. Sharmin
Communication and Liaison Expert
- Farzana Naim
Policy Analyst and Planner
11. Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) Dr. Delwar Hossain
Deputy Chief
12. SPUS, Manikganj Sopan Kumar
Programme Officer
- Md. Abdul Khaleq
Accounts Officer
- Md. Masum Chowdhury
Supervisor
- Akram Hossain
Supervisor
13. Steps Towards Development (STD) Ranjan Karmaker
Director
14. Swedish TA to NFE in Bangladesh Dr. Claude W. Bobillier
Team Leader
- Zia-Us-Sabur
Institutional Dev. Consultant
15. UNICEF Dr. James Jennings
Chief
Child Development & Education Section
- Ruby Q. Noble
Project Officer, Education Section

FGD with beneficiaries
Suchana Education Centre Dhaka Ahsania Mission
Raipura, Narsingdi 19 May 2001

01. Ms. Niva Rani Saha
02. Ms. Akul Rani Barman
03. Ms. Monju Rani
04. Ms. Shabi Rani Saha
05. Ms. Archana Rani
06. Ms. Helan Rani
07. Ms. Falani Rani
08. Ms. Sumi Rani Saha
09. Ms. Purnima Rani
10. Ms. Shantahar
11. Ms. Rofika
12. Ms. Parvin
13. Ms. Rezia
14. Ms. Faku
15. Ms. Nurjahan
16. Ms. Rezia-2
17. Ms. Golapi
18. Ms. Afroza
19. Ms. Ektara
20. Ms. Selina
21. Ms. Shaleha

FGD with beneficiaries
Choitali Education Centre Catalyst
20 May 2001

01. Ms. Sultana Razia, Teacher
02. Ms. Sufia Akhter
03. Ms. Piara Begum
04. Ms. Anesha Begum
05. Ms. Amena Begum
06. Ms. Momtaj Akhter
07. Ms. Lutfu Akhter
08. Ms. Rezia Akter
09. Ms. Rohima Begum
10. Ms. Jahima Akter

11. Ms. Rohima Akter
12. Ms. Khadija Akter
13. Ms. Nurjahan
14. Ms. Rehana Akter
15. Ms. Jamila Begam

FGD with beneficiaries
 SPUS, Manikganj
 23 May 2001

<i>Name</i>	<i>Village</i>
10. Ms Hosna Ara, Teacher	
02. Ms. Monowara	Choto Bowali
03. Ms. Safya	Choto Bowali
04. Ms. Rumki	Choto Bowali
05. Ms. Sobnam Parvin	South Shibalaya
06. Ms. Rowshan Ara Akter	Choto Bowali
07. Ms. Sabina	South Shibalaya
08. Mr. Hasip	Choto Bowali
09. Mr. Lutfar Rahman	Choto Bowali
10. Ms. Jarina Akter	Choto Bowali

FGD with beneficiaries
 Srizoni-Bangladesh
 Badda Centre
 24 May 2001

01. Roksana Parvin
02. Md. Alamin
03. Md. Arif Hossain
04. Hosna Ara Akter
05. Munn
06. Salma Akter
07. Md. Rakib Hossain Ovi
08. Md. Sohag Ali
09. Tahmina
10. Khukumoni
11. Rakib
12. Ripa Akter Jeasmin

List of Organisations/Persons Consulted

Rajshahi

27/28 May 2001

<i>Organisations</i>	<i>Persons</i>
01. Bangla-German Sampreti (BGS)	Md. Abdur Roaf Sarker Project in-Charge
02. BRAC	Md. Abdul Khaleque P.O M.A. Razzak Supervisor
03. Catalyst	Md. Shariful Islam Supervisor Md. Rajab Ali Shakhe Supervisor
04. DFPS	Md. Safiqul Islam Coordinator
05. DNFE	Roksana Farhad Banu Programme Officer, Rajshahi Md. Rafiqul Islam Monitoring Associate Md. Mokter Hossain Office Asstt.
06. DSK	Ms. Shaila Parvin (Chonda) Project Supervisor Jaya Alam Teacher Khurshida Parvin Teacher
07. ESDO	Md. Fazlul Haque Programme Associate Md. Amanul Haque Aman Supervisor
08. GoB	Mr. Proluth Kumar Das Asstt. Deputy Commissioner Education and Development Rajshahi district
09. Jubo Academy	Md. Zahedul Islam Programme Associate Md. Golam Hossain Supervisor

10. PRAKRITAJAN	Ms. Rojina Khatun Supervisor
11. SBMSS	Ms. Taherun Nesa Supervisor
12. Shaw Unnayan Rajshahi	Md. Naharul Islam Project Coordinator Md. Nasim Reza Supervisor
13. TMSS	Md. Zahedur Rahman Asstt. Director Md. Azizur Rahman Zonal Manager Md. Rezaun Hossain Project Manager Md. Mizanur Rahman Supervisor Md. Abul Kalam Azad Supervisor Ms. Sumona Afroz Teacher
14. WDC	Md. Amanullah Director
15. Centre Management Committee (CMC)	Md. Rezanur Md. Alamgir Md. Abul Kalam Azad-1 Ms. Sumona Afroz Md. Abul Kalam Azad-2
16. Gurdian's	Ms. Jamena Khatun Ms. Muslima Lal Mohammad Ms. Sabina Ms. Amirunnesa Ms. Asma Khatun Ms. Masuma Ms. Fatema Ms. Sokhina

Annex 5

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Annex 6

Study Object Grids – Bangladesh

Analytical frame work – I

Bangladesh: Non-formal Education Project- 2 (NFE-2)

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
What?	Gender Equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation.	Literacy needs of women and men were incorporated into design of NFE-2? Was the proportion of female and male literacy workers (teachers, supervisors) and volunteers incorporated in project design? Were the gender issues included in the Training Module for training of key staff (teachers and supervisors, etc.)? Were the education materials gender sensitive? Were the gender issues considered in socio-economic studies, planning component and implementation strategy?	Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED), Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of NFE-2, Swedish and Norwegian Embassies in Bangladesh.	Key staff of Swedish & Norwegian Embassies, PMED, DNFE, NFE-2, partner NGOs, Deputy Commissioners & UNOs of respective districts & upazilas, teachers, supervisors and the learners (female & male).	Key informant interviews, reviews of curriculum of education materials and training modules, focus group discussion with key staff (teachers, supervisors, co-ordinator, etc.) and the learners (female & male).
	Poverty reduction links/ synergies/ conflicts with Gender Equality.	Was there any link established between literacy and poverty reduction in NFE-2, especially for women beneficiaries? Was feeling of women and men about literacy as a contributing factor towards poverty reduction?	PMED, DNFE, NFE-2, Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh.	DNFE staff, PD and other key staff of NFE-2 & partner NGOs, key staff of Swedish and Norwegian Embassies in Bangladesh.	Key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussion with key staff of the project and beneficiaries (learners, both female and male).

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
How?	Stakeholders' participation (including Dialogue with Sida)	Was participation by women and men occurred throughout the planning and implementation of the programme? Did Sida intervene through dialogue on gender equality? Key policies were identified as the focus of Sida dialogue with partners?	It is to be examined at Sida headquarter and Sida Bangladesh, PMED and DNFE level. Each approach of NFE-2 is to be observed at departmental and field level.	Sida, PMED, DNFE and NFE-2 staff, Sida TA and LGC Team.	Key informant interviews, review of project design and agreed minutes of different meetings, monitoring and evaluation documents.
	Mainstreaming strategy-degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero evidence? • Pro forma? • Analytical? • Design integration? • Implementation? • Evaluation and monitoring Links to other Gender Equality initiatives in policy formation.	See first item under "what" above: Was gender equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation? Was sex disaggregated data used in monitoring and/ or evaluation of the project activities? Were the achievement on enrolment of and completion of literacy course by women beneficiaries (learners) assessed against targets? Were attempts made to assess impact of literacy on perception of neo-literate (both women & men) about poverty and income?	Sida Bangladesh, Sida TA Team, DNFE, PIU (NFE-2) partner NGOs, selected districts & upazilas Administrations.	Sida staff, TA Team members, NFE-2 project staff, DNFE, partner NGOs' staff, selected staff of concerned district and upazila administrations, LGC team members.	Key informant interviews.
Which Changes?	Effects of intervention on Gender Equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical gender needs/ strategic gender interests and changes • Men and male roles • Effects of intervention on women's empowerment: intended/ unintended/ missed opportunities. 	What were the effects and impacts of literacy through NFE-2 on women and their access to socio-economic development activities? Were gender differences among neo-literate/ in the project area minimum? Had women beneficiaries become conscious of their rights and obligations? The role women and men (neo-literate) played in the family as a whole? Was family violence by male reduced in the project area? What changes occurred in the roles and the power of male and female project staffs of all levels?	Sida, DNFE, NFE-2, Partner NGOs, Literacy centres, Community levels.	Sida staff, DNFE, NFE-2 & staff of partner NGOs , District & Upazila level relevant staff, community people and project beneficiaries.	Key informant interviews, review of NFE-2 monitoring & evaluation reports, participatory group meetings with neo-literate and community people.

Analytical frame work – I

Bangladesh: Non-formal Education Project- 3 (NFE-3)

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
What?	Gender Equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation.	Were needs of literacy and life skills of girls and boys taken into considerations during the design of NFE-3? Was the proportion of female and male literacy workers (teachers, supervisors etc.) and volunteers incorporated in project design? Were literacy materials gender sensitive and gender issues included in the Training Module for training of key staff/ literacy workers (teachers, supervisors etc.)? Were gender issues considered in socio-economic studies, planning component and implementation strategy? Did the literacy materials include both literacy and life skills for the benefit of the children (learners) who are 'at risk' specially the girls. Were literacy centres for girls separated from that of boys to provide special attention towards gender equality?	Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED), Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of NFE-3, Swedish Embassy, UNICEF and DFID.	Key staff of Swedish Embassy, UNICEF, DFID, PMED, DNFE, NFE-3, partner NGOs, key staff of the project (teachers, supervisors, co-ordinators, etc.) and the learners (boys and girls).	Key informant interviews, reviews of curriculum of education materials and training modules, focus group discussion with key staff (teachers, supervisors, co-ordinator etc.) and the learners (boys and girls).
	Poverty reduction Links/ synergies/ conflicts with Gender Equality.	Was the link established between literacy and poverty reduction in NFE-3 especially for girl beneficiaries? Feeling of women and men about literacy as a contributing factor towards poverty reduction and ensuring child rights?	PMED, DNFE, NFE-3, Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh, UNICEF and DFID .	Key staff of Swedish Embassy, UNICEF, DFID, DNFE, PD and key staff of NFE-3 and partner NGOs,.	Key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussion with key project staff and learners.
How?	Stakeholder Participation (including Dialogue with Sida)	Was participation by women and men occurred throughout the planning and implementation of the programme? Did Sida intervene through dialogue on gender equality? Were key policies identified as the focus of Sida dialogue with partners?	It must be examined at Sida headquarter and Sida Bangladesh, PMED, DNFE and NFE-3 (project office and field) level.	Sida, PMED, DNFE and NFE-3 staff, Sida TA and LGC Team.	Key informant interviews, review of project design and agreed minutes of different meetings, monitoring and evaluation documents.

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
	<p>Mainstreaming strategy-degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero evidence? • Pro forma? • Analytical? • Design integration? • Implementation? • Evaluation and Monitoring <p>Links to other Gender Equality initiatives in policy formation.</p>	<p>See first item under what above: Was gender equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation? Was sex disaggregated data used in monitoring and/ or evaluation of the project activities? Were the achievement on enrolment of and completion of literacy course by girl beneficiaries (learners) assessed against targets? Were attempts made to assess impact of literacy on neo-literate (both girls and boys) perception of poverty and income? Were the achievement on ensuring child rights and eradication of child labour assessed.</p>	<p>Sida Bangladesh, Sida TA Team, DNFE, PIU (NFE-3) partner NGOs, selected City Corporations.</p>	<p>Sida staff, TA Team members, LGC team members, staff of DNFE, NFE-3, partner NGOs, concerned staff of the selected City Corporations and learners (girls and boys).</p>	<p>Key informant interviews.</p>
Which Changes?	<p>Effects of intervention on Gender Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical gender needs/strategic gender interests and changes • Men and male roles • Effects of intervention on women's empowerment: intended/unintended/missed opportunities. 	<p>What were the effects and impacts of literacy through NFE-3 on girl children and their access to socio-economic activities? Were gender differences among neo-literate/ in the project area minimum? Had women beneficiaries become conscious of their rights and obligations? Was family violence by male reduced in the project area? What changes occurred in the roles and the power of male and female project staffs of all levels?</p>	<p>Sida, DNFE, NFE-3, partner NGOs, literacy centres, community levels.</p>	<p>Sida staff, DNFE, NFE-3 and staff of partner NGOs, relevant staff of City Corporations. Community people and project beneficiaries.</p>	<p>Key informant interviews, review of NFE-3 monitoring and evaluation report, participatory group meetings with neo-literate and community people.</p>

Study Object Grid: Ain O Salish Kendro (ASK)

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
What?	Gender Equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent gender equality integrated into ASK work on legal rights • Legislative work of ASK relating to women's strategic interests and gender equality • Legal assistance and victim support work of ASK relevant to gender equality issues • Gender analysis of legal and legislative issues by ASK • Definitions of gender equality used in ASK documents • Shared understanding of G/E concepts and goals among ASK staff and partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Embassy Dhaka • ASK headquarters • Partner organisations • Legal Aid agencies 	Embassy staff ASK program staff, Staff of partner agencies and PNGOS collaborating with ASK Academics and researchers Direct clients of ASK and partner legal aid and advocacy work Legislators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review program documents, evaluations, monitoring reports • Key informant interviews and participatory meetings with staff and legal aid clients
	Poverty reduction Links/ synergies/ conflicts with Gender Equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explicit links between human rights, rule of law and poverty reduction (and gender equality) pointed out by ASK staff and in ASK legislative and legal aid work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Embassy Dhaka • ASK headquarters • Partner organisations • Legal Aid agencies 	ASK program staff, Staff of partner agencies and PNGOS collaborating with ASK Academics and researchers	review of program documents review of evaluations, reports, monitoring summaries key informant interviews and workshops
How?	Stakeholder Participation (including Dialogue with Sida)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory methods and processes used by ASK in all components of program (action, advocacy, direct support and training)? • Training needs assessment participatory? • Participatory processes for monitoring and evaluations] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASK headquarters • Partner organisations • Legal Aid agencies • Research and academic agencies 	Embassy staff ASK program staff, Staff of partner agencies and PNGOS collaborating with ASK Academics and researchers Direct clients of ASK and partner legal aid and advocacy work Legislators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document reviews • evaluations, • key informant interviews

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
	<p>Mainstreaming strategy degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero evidence? • Pro forma? • Analytical? Design integration? • Implementation? • Evaluation and Monitoring Links to G/E initiatives in policy formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a gender focused intervention the question for this program concerns the depth of analysis of gender equality issues and the extent of the integration of gender equality as a goal into the different activities under the program. Especially how gender equality and children's rights are linked. • Extent to which men's roles and responsibilities in gender equality are included in the design and implementation of program activities. • Strength of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and their use of gender disaggregated information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swedish Embassy Dhaka • ASK headquarters • Partner organisations • Legal Aid agencies 	<p>Embassy staff ASK program staff, Staff of partner agencies and PNGOS collaborating with ASK Academics and researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents including monitoring reports and evaluations. • Key informant interviews • Participatory workshops with partner agency staff.
Which Changes?	<p>Effects of intervention on Gender Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical gender needs/strategic gender interests and changes • Men and male roles • Effects of intervention on women's empowerment: intended/unintended/missed opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical and strategic gender equality changes experienced by direct clients of the legal aid services component of the program • practical and strategic changes rising from the training activities of ASK in its work with partner organisations • practical and strategic changes rising from the legislative work of ASK • reported and observed examples of women's empowerment among clients • reported and observed re-examination of male roles among partner agencies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embassy staff • ASK program staff, • Staff of partner agencies and PNGOS collaborating with ASK • Academics and researchers • Direct clients of ASK and partner legal aid and advocacy work • Legislators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents including monitoring reports and evaluations. • Key informant interviews • Participatory workshops with partner agency staff. • Participatory workshops, SWOT analysis, etc. with direct clients of ASK legal aid and support activities.

Study Object Grid: Steps Toward Development: Gender Development and Advocacy on Women, Children and Legal Human Rights. Bangladesh

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
What?	Gender Equality goal reflected in intervention design and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does STD's program link gender equality to other goals in human rights of women and children? • Methods used for gender analysis? • Communications strategies and arrangements emphasize gender equality? • monitoring/evaluation of gender equality results of the intervention? 	STD and its 162 working partners at local and national level (14 networks)	Sida staff, STD project staff, Staff of selected partner organisations Network leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review intervention design documents/reports/evaluations • Key informant interviews Participatory workshops.
	Poverty reduction Links/ synergies/ conflicts with Gender Equality.	<p>What has been STD partner experience of link between G/E and poverty? Are G/E activities targeted to poor and vice versa? Do service improvements and rights gains of women and men in relation to G/E also represent changes in poverty situations? What opportunities are there for more closely linking G/E and poverty reduction?</p>	STD and partner agencies across the country, especially in the 14 networks. Government partners	Sida Staff, Std Program staff, Partner agencies Clients/Beneficiaries of partner agencies	Review of program documents review of evaluations, reports, monitoring summaries key informant interviews and workshops
How?	Stakeholder Participation (including Dialogue with Sida)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What participatory mechanisms/processes used in program design and implementation? • Gendered participation mechanisms • Extent of participation (consultation, design, management, evaluation) • Level (including community members) • Extent of common understanding of gender concepts and goals. 	Swedish Embassy STD Dhaka STD and partner agencies	Embassy staff STD program staff, Partner staff, Partner clients and beneficiaries Local Trainer Core Group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document reviews • evaluations, • key informant interviews

	Study objects	Intervention Level			
		Specific questions	Geographical or institutional concentration of evaluation	Key informants, focus group participants, etc.	Methods and tools
	<p>Mainstreaming strategy-degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero evidence? • Pro forma? Analytical? • Design integration? • Implementation? • Evaluation and Monitoring Links to other Gender Equality initiatives in policy formation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a gender focused intervention the question for this program concerns the depth of analysis of gender equality issues and the extent of the integration of gender equality as a goal into the different activities under the program. Especially how gender equality and children's rights are linked. • Extent to which men's roles and responsibilities in gender equality are included in the design and implementation of program activities. • Strength of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and their use of gender disaggregated information. 	<p>Swedish Embassy STD Dhaka STD and partner organisations (national and local) Other women's organisations</p>	<p>Embassy staff STD program staff Partner agency staff and beneficiaries/participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents including monitoring reports and evaluations. • Key informant interviews • Participatory workshops with partner agency staff.
Which Changes?	<p>Effects of intervention on Gender Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical gender needs/strategic gender interests and changes • Men and male roles • Effects of intervention on women's empowerment: intended/unintended/missed opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in attitudes of staff of partner organisations • Changes in practices of partner organisations • Incorporation of G/E goals and strategies into programs of partner organisations • Experience of clients and beneficiaries of partner organisation with regard to G/E • Self-reported and observed women's empowerment effects • Re-examination of male roles by partner organisations • Contribution to national discussion on male roles 	<p>Swedish Embassy STD Dhaka STD and partner organisations (national and local) Other women's organisations Government and non-government partners</p>	<p>Embassy staff STD program staff Partner agency staff and beneficiaries/participants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents including monitoring reports and evaluations. • Key informant interviews • Participatory workshops with partner agency staff <p>Participatory workshops/SWOT analysis etc. with clients of partner organisations.</p>

Annex 7

Map of Bangladesh



Recent Sida Evaluations

- 01/29 Sida's Support to the Land Reform Related Activities in Poland. Mark Doucette, Sue Nichols, Peter Bloch
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
- 01/30 Sida's Support to the Land Reform Related Activities in Lithuania. Mark Doucette, Sue Nichols, Peter Bloch
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
- 01/31 Sida's Support to the Land Reform Related Activities in Latvia. Mark Doucette, Sue Nichols, Peter Bloch
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
- 01/32 Review of PAHO's project. Towards an Integrated Model of Care for Family Violence in Central America. Final Report. Mary Ellsberg, Carme Clavel Arcas.
Department for Democracy and Social Development
- 01/33 Sistematización del Proyecto de OPS. Hacia un modelo integral de atención para la violencia intrafamiliar en Centroamérica. Mary Ellsberg, Carme Clavel Arcas.
Departamento de Democracia y Condiciones Sociales.
- 01/34 Of Trees and People ...: An Evaluation of the Vietnam-Sweden Forestry Cooperation Programme and the Mountain Rural Development Programme in the Northern Uplands 1991-2000. Claes Lindahl, Kirsten Andersen, Kjell Öström, Adam Florde, Eivind Kofod, Steffen Johnsen.
Department for Natural Resources and the Environment
- 01/35 Acting in Partnership. Evaluation of FRAMA (Fund for Agricultural Rehabilitation after MITCH) Ministry of agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) – Sida project Nicaragua. Bengt Kjeller, Raquel López.
Department for Natural Resources and the Environment
- 01/36 Sociedad de Cooperación. Evaluación de FRAMA (Fondo de Rehabilitación para la Agricultura después del huracán MITCH) Ministerio de Agricultura y Forestal (MAGFOR) – Asdi en Nicaragua. Bengt Kjeller, Raquel López.
Department for Natural Resources and the Environment
- 01/37 Report on the Hoanib River Catchment Study Project Evaluation. Final Report. Harmut Krugman
Department for Africa
- 01/38 Sida's Support to the land Reform Related Activities in Estonia. Mark Doucette, Sue Nichols, Peter Bloch
Department for Central and Eastern Europe
- 01/39 Legal Services to the Poor People in Zimbabwe. Haroub Othman, Dorille von Riesen
Department for Africa

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