



EVALUATION OF CIDA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

EXECUTIVE REPORT

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIS	Agency Information System (CIDA)
AMRT	Assessment Monitoring and Reporting Tool
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation
APPR	Annual Project/Program Performance Review
BHN	Basic Human Needs
CDPF	Country Development Program Framework
CEA	Canadian Executing Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIM	Inter-American Commission of Women
CPB	Canadian Partnership Branch
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DDGG	Donor Democracy and Governance Group
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DP	Development Partner
EC	European Commission
EMM	Europe, Middle East and Maghreb Branch
EU	European Union
GA	Gender Analysis
GE	Gender Equality
GEMs	Gender-Entrepreneurship Markets
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HQ	Headquarters
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICRC	International Committee for the Red Cross
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFC	International Finance Corporation, World Bank
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JIA	Joint Institutional Approach
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDG 3	“Promote gender equality and empower women”
MDG 5	“Improve maternal health”
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands)
NGOs	Non Government Organizations
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	Official Development Assistance

OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAD	Project Approval Document
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework (CIDA)
PBA	Program-Based Approach
PIAP	Policy Implementation Assistance Project
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PO	Project Officer
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
PPPM	Programme Policy and Procedure Manual (UNICEF)
PPR	Project/Program Performance Report
PTL	Project Team Leader
PREM	Poverty Reduction and Economic Management
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSD	Private Sector Development
RBM	Results-based Management
S&T	Science and Technology
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SWAp	Sector-wide Approach
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBG	World Bank Group
WID	Women in Development

EVALUATION OF CIDA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

This Executive Report presents key findings and recommendations from the Agency-wide *Evaluation of CIDA's Implementation of its Policy on Gender Equality*,¹ and is based on the multiple lines of enquiry of the study.² The evidence from these lines of enquiry is examined collectively and consolidated in more detail in the accompanying Final Report of the Evaluation. Most of the Evaluation work was conducted during 2007, with information gathering, interviews, file and document review, and survey done during the first half of the year; and analysis, field research, and report writing completed during the latter part of the year.

The overall objective of the Evaluation was to assess the performance of the Agency in implementing its *1999 Policy on Gender Equality*; specifically to focus on the extent to which CIDA's investments since 1999 reflect a commitment to achieving GE results.

1. Evaluation Issues

The general issue areas that provide a focus for the Evaluation are as follows:

- Commitment (level of effort and investment in gender equality).
- Enabling outcomes and effectiveness (capacity building, management and delivery, institutional results).
- Development outcomes (gender equality achievements in partner countries).
- Relevance (continuing need for CIDA's investments that contribute to gender equality, new aid modalities, comparative advantages).

A series of specific evaluation questions associated with each of these evaluation issue areas make up the framework of the study. The Evaluation Final Report is organized in a sequence that follows the order of the evaluation issue areas and questions.

The specific questions addressed in the Evaluation are:

► **Commitment**

1. What are CIDA's policy commitments and priorities for gender equality? What proportion of CIDA's development investments are aimed at gender equality outcomes?
2. How do CIDA's policy commitments to gender equality initiatives compare with those of other donors and executing partners? Are CIDA's policy commitments to

¹ In this report CIDA's *1999 Policy on Gender Equality* may alternatively be referred to as the "GE Policy" or the "Policy on GE".

² The various lines of enquiry include: a portfolio analysis and compendium of CIDA investments in GE, a file review, a survey of CIDA managers and professional staff, interviews with CIDA officials, interviews with CIDA partners and executing agencies, a benchmarking study, a review of documents, and field missions.

gender equality consistent with those of other donors and Canadian executing partners?

▶ **Enabling Outcomes and Effectiveness**

3. To what extent has CIDA achieved enabling gender equality outcomes within the Agency itself? What factors have helped or hindered achieving these outcomes?

4. How effective has CIDA been in managing and delivering gender equality initiatives? How useful have the Agency's gender equality tools, guidelines, and assessment frameworks (e.g., Performance Assessment Framework) been?

5. How well has CIDA integrated gender equality in its sector initiatives to achieve gender equality outcomes?

6. What has been the contribution of CIDA's support towards achieving institutional gender equality capacities and outcomes? How sustainable are these results?

▶ **Development Outcomes**

7. To what extent has CIDA contributed to the realization of human rights for women; given women access to and control over resources and benefits of development; and advanced women's equal participation with men as decision-makers?

8. What factors help or hinder the sustainability of development outcomes?

▶ **Relevance**

9. Is there a continuing need for CIDA investments to contribute to achieving gender equality results? How has CIDA positioned gender equality as part of its goals and commitments, in response to perceived needs?

10. What are the implications of the evolving aid environment, including new aid modalities and aid effectiveness, and what are the consequences for CIDA's gender equality initiatives?

11. What are the comparative advantages (areas of strength and experience) of CIDA in realizing gender equality outcomes, compared to other donors?

12. What if any are the unintended effects of CIDA's gender equality initiatives, either positive or negative?

2. Evaluation Approach

▶ **Lines of Enquiry**

The evaluation approach was one of gathering evidence based on multiple lines of enquiry. The sequence of work followed in the Evaluation included the following steps and methodologies:³

³ Nota bene: for details on sampling, timing of individual studies, limitations, and other methodological and procedural information, the interested reader is referred to the original reports that correspond to these lines of enquiry: i.e., roadmap report, file review report, survey report, benchmarking report, field mission reports, and compendium study.

- Preparation of a GE Policy logic model and roadmap report.
- Portfolio analysis and preparation of a compendium report on CIDA's GE investments from 1999-2000 to 2005-2006.
- An online survey of CIDA professional staff and management (achieving a weighted average response rate of 46 percent).
- A review of 100 files of GE-designated and 100 files of non-GE designated CIDA initiatives. The total CIDA investment represented by these 200 files examined is \$1.64 billion, or 10 percent of Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA) of approximately \$16.95 billion from fiscal year 1998-1999 to 2005-2006.
- A benchmarking study of sixteen bilateral and multilateral donor organizations (67 persons interviewed from these organizations).
- A review of documents – past assessments and evaluations, and other program and policy documents of CIDA and other organizations, partners and executing agencies.
- Interviews with key informants inside CIDA, managers and professional staff (64 persons interviewed).
- Interviews with key informants in Canadian executing agencies and other partners (46 persons interviewed from 30 organizations).
- Field missions – covering seven countries: Bolivia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Senegal, Tanzania, Egypt, and Ghana.⁴
- Preparation of a final evaluation report that collectively examines the evidence from the different lines of enquiry, and consolidates the findings, lessons and implications from the evaluation study.

► **Limitations**

Although the approach taken in the Evaluation was comprehensive, it is not without its limitations. The analysis of corporate data and documents are limited by the quality of the sources examined. The Agency Information System is the basis for the financial and activity analysis provided in the Evaluation. It is the Evaluators' assessment that this source underestimates the extent of GE initiatives and investments implemented by CIDA since 1998-1999. Furthermore, the file and document review undertaken for the Evaluation is limited by the extent and quality of information found in Agency files. The file review has documented gaps and shortcomings of relying on corporate files for evaluative work. It is for this reason that multiple lines of enquiry were adopted as an approach for the Evaluation. Analysis of converging evidence from the sources and methods mentioned above, provide assurance and credibility to mitigate these and other limitations discussed in the individual reports of the Evaluation study: i.e., roadmap report, file review report, survey report, benchmarking report, field mission reports, and compendium study.

⁴ Ghana findings are based on a separate evaluation by CIDA and a review of field and head office documents.

3. Key Findings

3.1 Commitment

▶ CIDA's GE investments

3.1.1 For more than three decades, CIDA has been working toward the full and equal involvement of all people, regardless of gender, in the sustainable development of their communities and societies. Since producing its 1976 guidelines and releasing its innovative 1984 policy on Women in Development (WID), CIDA has worked consistently – internally and with its partners, other donors, and international institutions – to promote women's full participation as both agents and beneficiaries of development. CIDA's 1999 *Policy on Gender Equality* reaffirmed CIDA's long-standing commitment to the pursuit of gender equality internationally, and introduced a new vision with a focus on advancing women's equal participation with men as decision-makers; realization of human rights for women and girls; and reducing gender inequalities in access to and control over resources and benefits of development.

3.1.2 From fiscal year 1998-1999 to 2005-2006, the total Canadian ODA was \$16.95 billion dollars. As part of that investment, \$792.8 million was designated funding for *GE-specific programming* (i.e., initiatives with a priority which had GE as the principal objective and result) and *GE-integrated programming* (i.e., initiatives with GE as one of the objectives and at least one related GE result explicitly relevant to the investment).⁵

3.1.3 Because CIDA's GE Policy situates gender equality as a "cross-cutting" theme of all Canadian development assistance, all CIDA investments are expected to advance gender equality to some degree, either directly or indirectly. The file review and field research carried out for the Evaluation found numerous examples of GE results in such investments. The Evaluation also found that an unknown proportion of CIDA's investments with significant GE-designated programming components are not explicitly or correctly captured through the coding system that informs the Agency's corporate database. As a result, *the reported value of GE-designated funding must be considered an underestimate of the true size of CIDA's investment in GE since 1998-1999.*

3.1.4 The \$792.8 million directly identifiable GE-designated programming investment by CIDA represents 4.68 percent of Canadian ODA from 1998-1999 to 2005-2006, averaging \$99.1 million a year. Asia Branch provided a relatively higher proportion of its funding (7.5 percent) towards initiatives with some identifiable GE-designated programming. Both Africa Branch and Canadian Partnership Branch provided over 6 percent of their funding towards GE-designated programming. Europe, Middle East and Maghreb Branch and Americas Branch provided 3.4 percent and 4.2 percent respectively. Multilateral Branch provided the lowest relative proportion of 3.3 percent, but due to the size of its total contributions (30.96 percent of all ODA since 1998-1999) relative to the other Branches, it accounts for the greatest actual amount of GE-designated programming.

⁵ It should be acknowledged, however, that there is a certain amount of arbitrariness in CIDA GE coding for some GE-designated initiatives, and so the system does not consistently capture the financial investment information.

3.1.5 As total ODA has risen by more than 50 percent during the period under study (from \$1.6 billion in fiscal year 1998-1999 to \$2.5 billion in 2005-2006), GE-designated programming has generally maintained its share of CIDA's annual ODA at higher than 4 percent.⁶ The highest CIDA actual annual GE investment registered was in 2004-2005, when the total contribution rose to \$138 million, compared to \$70 million in 1998-1999. Estimates provided by CIDA Branches for planned expenditures from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 suggest a marked increase in their more recent GE-focused investments.

3.1.6 The uncertainty of long-term commitment by donors, CIDA partners and Canadian Executing Agencies is an identified risk to the sustainability of GE results. In the view of CIDA professional staff and some managers, and of CIDA's partners and executing organizations, the Agency, while recognizably committed to GE initiatives for the long haul, has not committed sufficient resources to GE-designated programming initiatives that are commensurate with its stated GE Policy objectives.

► **Implementing CIDA's Policy on Gender Equality**

3.1.7 CIDA's GE Policy commits the Agency to GE both as an end result and as a means towards its corporate goals of sustainable development and poverty reduction. Responsibility for implementing the Policy rests with Branch managers and country directors. In recent years the Agency's push for gender equality has been led by a designated GE champion, in the person of the Executive Vice-President of the organization.⁷ In the view of CIDA professional staff and managers, however, support for GE has been inconsistent at the highest levels of the Agency and the Government of Canada's International Development portfolio. This lack of consistent support is seen to have weakened corporate resolve in the pursuit of GE.

3.1.8 CIDA's GE Policy sets out clear and focused objectives and provides a conceptual blueprint for action. Nevertheless, there is not an explicit *contemporary* Agency-wide GE strategy or action plan for implementing this GE Policy, with designated responsibilities, identified targets, and a precise accountability framework. The GE Policy is implemented to a greater or lesser degree across the Agency, and somewhat inconsistently across operational Branches and country programs. The GE Policy is not "highly visible" in day-to-day operations, in that many professional staff and managers attest to being committed to GE Policy objectives while having limited confidence in their ability to apply its directives and requirements. GE initiatives are for the most part designated on a case by case basis, with the exception of generic "gender funds", and other gender-specific initiatives (i.e., with GE as a main objective).

► **Mainstreaming gender equality**

3.1.9 There is consensus among donor organizations (including CIDA) and GE practitioners that while "mainstreaming" GE is a worthy goal; it has generally failed to deliver on its promise of infusing all development efforts with a concern to advance

⁶ Note: While CIDA is the lead government organization responsible for Canada's Official Development Assistance, other Parliamentary appropriations are designated as Canadian ODA – International Development Research Centre (IDRC) obtains approximately 4 percent of Canada's ODA directly from Parliament.

⁷ Recently, during preparation of this Evaluation report, CIDA's designated GE champion left the Agency, and the President of CIDA took on this role.

gender equality. “Everybody’s business” (i.e., as implied by mainstreaming) too often becomes “no one’s business”. A number of donor organizations (including CIDA) found that focused actions and funding can be more effective in grounding institutional commitment to GE in analysis, design, planning, delivery, reporting and accountability systems. As a result, specific gender equality programming and mainstreaming have come to be seen as complementary strategies. Within this evolved understanding, however, there is a growing consensus that relatively more attention and commitment to gender designated initiatives and gender budget lines are needed, if significant and sustainable GE results are to be achieved.

▶ **The “fit” of CIDA’s commitments to GE with other organizations and partners**

3.1.10 Over the years there has been a good fit between CIDA’s GE Policy and the larger policy framework of the Canadian government, CIDA’s donor partners, and Canadian Executing Agencies. CIDA’s GE Policy also resonates with the values and sentiments of Canadian society. A new effort and commitment is needed, however, to make changes/adjustments needed to reflect the evolving international conceptual framework for GE, particularly as it relates to the principles of aid effectiveness and new aid modalities. This is particularly challenging in the case of commitments to increased partner country ownership and mutual accountability for results.

▶ **CIDA is not unique in its commitment**

3.1.11 While CIDA has been considered a pioneer in promoting gender equality globally, and among its partners and stakeholders, clearly it is not unique among donor organizations in its commitment to achieving gender equality. All the organizations included in the benchmarking component of the Evaluation, to one degree or another, are evolving their development practices by recommitting and reworking their GE architectures, priorities, action plans, and organizational set ups. A process of improvement and scaling up of efforts is underway, and it can be said unequivocally that all the donors who participated in the benchmarking study are committed to this process in an unprecedented way.

▶ **Complementary approaches**

3.1.12 The different donors benchmarked in this Evaluation emphasize different strategic approaches to advancing GE – some pursue a human rights approach, while others follow an instrumentalist track through women’s empowerment towards broader social and economic development. CIDA appears to view these as complementary approaches since the Agency contributes significantly to initiatives and organizations that emphasize one or the other of these approaches. CIDA’s GE commitment can be seen to pursue GE as both a necessary goal in its own right and a means to sustainable development and poverty reduction targets.

3.1.13 CIDA pursues a multi-track approach to achieve gender equality in partner countries, including bilateral initiatives, contributions to multilateral actions, policy dialogue with partner countries, support to civil society, and donor coordination. CIDA’s GE Policy and related initiatives are consistent with and complement other donor policies, in their alignment with the higher level objectives of the Millennium

Development Goals, and with international conventions and agreements that address global GE issues.

3.1.14 However, CIDA does not have an explicit corporate view for GE that provides guidance in terms of a *strategic balance* for the Agency among its three GE Policy objectives; i.e., for commitment and allocation of resources in a balance between human rights initiatives, access by women to resources and benefits of development, and participation in decision-making.

3.2 Enabling Outcomes and Effectiveness

▶ **Achieving GE enabling outcomes within CIDA**

3.2.1 The Evaluation found that the following positive factors have substantially helped the Agency to develop its own capacity in pursuing gender equality objectives:

- GE championship embedded at the highest level of management.
- Strong cadre of GE specialists – both internally and externally through networks of consultants, women’s groups, and academia.
- Progressive and well-founded GE policy based on social development, human rights, and economic empowerment principles for women, with ostensibly a clear direction and expectation for integration of GE in all relevant Agency interventions.
- Well researched GE performance assessment framework system based on the Agency’s aid intervention models, with well-articulated indicative GE results and indicators.
- Various “tip sheets” and other tools for applying gender analysis and gender perspectives in country programs and projects, strategy papers, and institutional assessments.
- A growing number of country program-level GE strategies that provide guiding frameworks to systematize and integrate the GE approach in country-level investments, including the description of a structure and process by which the strategy will be implemented.
- Well connected internal GE network and strong links with national and international GE professional community.
- Effective voice for gender equality, representing Canadian positions in international organizations/forums – Canada as an “honest broker”/advocate.
- Hiring practices that emphasize “specialist” expertise.
- Procurement criteria that often include GE experience as a requirement.

▶ **Challenges to achieving GE enabling outcomes within CIDA**

3.2.2 The Evaluation also documented negative factors that confound the Agency’s pursuit of its gender equality objectives:

- Lack of consistent leadership at highest management levels in the Agency.
- Inconsistency of expertise and approaches across Agency Branches.
- Outsourcing of knowledge and expertise creates a potential risk of gaps internally in institutional core competencies, and diminishes capacity for engagement with management on GE matters.
- Multi-tasking of GE specialists and focal points, drawn towards competing pressures and interests.
- Risk of ghettoization of gender function within the broader context of priorities and sector-specific work of the Agency.
- Gender unit embedded in policy unit – separated from programming dynamics and field level realities – with no clear strategy or sufficient capacity for field outreach and engaging regional and country offices.
- Lack of consistent middle management championship of GE (“distributed leadership”) – with notable exceptions and numerous examples of significant individual commitment and initiative.
- Inconsistent communications and GE messaging within the Agency, lacking a formal structured accountability framework for GE work.
- Lack of monitoring capacity to ensure the implementation of the GE strategy in programs and projects.
- Insufficient financial and human resources allocated to GE in programs and projects.
- Lack of or incoherent strategy for rolling out GE initiatives, with no concerted plan of action clearly defining roles and responsibilities across the Agency, Headquarters and the field.

► **Achieving institutional outcomes with CIDA’s Canadian partners**

3.2.3 The impact of CIDA’s GE Policy and initiatives on partners is generally very positive, in that many of these organizations support the Agency’s objectives and are responsive to its GE requirements. CIDA’s leadership in advocating for GE and building GE into its contribution agreements and contract terms has led to a certain consistency among its partners in promoting GE, not only as a CIDA vision, but generally as a dimension of Canada’s profile in international development. In some cases, implementing partners have found that addressing the requirements of CIDA GE Policy acts as an asset to leverage their position vis-à-vis other donors.

3.2.4 CIDA’s Canadian partners (NGOs) demonstrate a range of policy-level behaviors relative to GE. Some preceded CIDA in adopting a comprehensive GE policy, others have evolved a policy position in parallel with CIDA, while others have followed CIDA’s lead. Those Canadian partners who have not adopted a specific policy of their own tend to incorporate a “GE statement” in their management documents, strategic plans, accountability frameworks, guidelines, and/or action plans.

3.2.5 Most of CIDA’s implementing agents (CEAs and other Canadian partners) interviewed for the Evaluation, find that having a good policy framework at CIDA has

definitely been a facilitating factor for them to focus on GE issues, and has provided the right conditions for funding. Implementing agents are well aware of CIDA's GE Policy, and refer to it to provide appropriate content in their proposals, albeit too often less so in reporting, as evidenced from the file review and confirmed in interviews.

3.2.6 The file review found that too often in the case of investments that are not specifically focused on GE, actions to promote GE appear to be an "add-on" to the design and planning that is not carried through, or not fully integrated into implementation. For their part, most of the implementing agents interviewed reported difficulty in incorporating GE in the design and planning of projects, and subsequently in the implementation and reporting on specific GE results.

3.2.7 Many CIDA partners and even CIDA managers in the field still apply the "practical needs and strategic interest" approach to GE and are not well aware of the "three pillars" approach on access to rights, decision-making and development resources.

3.2.8 CIDA's implementing agents tend to claim that more often than not, their work does achieve GE results that are not well rendered through CIDA's standard reporting formats. Reporting on these "invisible" or "tip of the iceberg" results is usually better articulated in their own publications, pamphlets, papers, review reports or evaluations. Indeed, the GE outcome descriptions provided by the implementing agents interviewed would appear to demonstrate, albeit on an anecdotal basis, the success in GE work funded by CIDA. However, this is not to legitimize this notion of "invisible" results, since capturing and reporting these results is important, as is the recognition that GE results are also too often not achieved where they are expected.

3.2.9 That said, the evidence shows that CIDA implementing partners are generally better at reporting *micro* level gender equality outcomes of individual projects – compared to analyzing and presenting broader GE outcomes at the *macro* or *meso* levels, or aggregating results according to the three objectives of the GE Policy (as proposed by CIDA's *Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results*). Reporting is also challenged by the frequent absence of baseline data and gender disaggregated information.

3.2.10 In those cases where CIDA is not the only funding source for Canadian partners' GE work, they find it difficult to isolate and attribute results specifically to one or another of their partnership agreements.

► **CIDA's GE performance assessment framework**

3.2.11 CIDA's *Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results* provides a conceptual and methodological means to draw conclusions about the extent to which CIDA investments are contributing to corporate gender equality results. While the *Framework* has never been fully implemented corporate-wide beyond a pilot phase, it has figured prominently as a guiding document for a number of CIDA branches and country programs in the development of GE frameworks and strategies. It has also formed the basis for the methodology used in the file review component of this study.

3.2.12 The *Framework* was not intended for dissemination throughout CIDA; and most project officers have indicated that they "haven't ever used it." Broader dissemination should be considered, since the *Framework* provides a performance management

framework of generic importance to how good policy is developed and implemented. It focuses performance measurement where CIDA has chosen to focus, and identifies what actual results are to be measured. If the *Framework* were to be used in the design and planning stages to guide the definition of expected GE results, it would facilitate 'rolling-up' those results within country programs, across delivery models, as well as at the corporate level.

► **Gender analysis, strategies, and project cycle**

3.2.13 While CIDA's GE Policy calls for systematic inclusion of gender analysis in the Agency's initiatives, the file review found that a significant portion (one quarter) of *directive* and *responsive* investments do not include gender analysis at the design and planning stages, and that of those which do, only 53 percent meet at least half of the quality criteria suggested by the GE Policy itself. In addition:

- Gender analysis is more prevalent in those investments where CIDA is responsible for the design, than in those investments proposed by CIDA's implementing partners.
- Proposals submitted by multilateral organizations for CIDA contributions were more likely to not contain gender analysis than proposals submitted by Canadian civil society partners.
- The quality of gender analysis is better in GE-specific and GE-integrated investments, than it is in other investments with implicit GE components.

3.2.14 Gender equality is taken into account to some extent in the early stages of the project cycle in approximately two-thirds of CIDA's *directive* and *responsive* investments, but attention to GE weakens throughout implementation. It appears that even a thoughtful gender analysis and GE strategy devised during the design and planning of an investment may be neglected during implementation, particularly in the case of non-GE projects and projects where GE is but a small portion of the focus.

3.2.15 GE strategies are frequently not translated into implementation plans: work planning and resource allocation too frequently fail to pursue the strategy. Here, two sorts of programming merit specific mention. Gender equality funds tend to demonstrate strong buy-in for GE throughout project implementation. CIDA INC⁸ projects, on the other hand, generally include a gender analysis as required by program guidelines, but the analysis frequently gives rise to activities that are carried out as an autonomous component of the project, rather than integrated throughout.

3.2.16 For *core-funded/institutional support* investments, due diligence in assessing organizations requesting core funding appears, from the file review, to be carried out prior to funding decisions, and to focus primarily on organizational commitment to GE in terms of policies, strategies and resourcing. There appears to be less frequent exercise of due diligence in the lead up to second stage or subsequent funding, when focus might be brought to the adequacy of analysis, performance measurement and reporting.

⁸ The Industrial Cooperation Program (CIDA-INC) is a cost-sharing program that provides a financial incentive (a cash contribution) to Canadian companies to start a business or provide training in developing countries or countries in transition to a market economy.

3.2.17 There is generally a lower prevalence of file evidence on GE considerations in implementation phases in *core-funded/institutional support* investments (relative to *directive* and *responsive* investments). Only 27 percent of the core funding files examined demonstrated some evidence of CIDA providing support to build GE capacity in the core-funded organization; and less than a third of the files showed evidence that CIDA and the organization to which it provided core funding carried out some level of policy dialogue concerning GE, or collaborated/networked to advance gender equality considerations. These findings suggest that CIDA may be missing important opportunities to promote gender equality through the core funding/institutional support delivery model.

► **Quality of performance reporting**

3.2.18 Based on the file review findings, performance reporting in more than one-third of CIDA's *directive* and *responsive* investments does not provide information useful to CIDA management on the pertinence, appropriateness and effectiveness of whatever GE activities are undertaken in the framework of those investments. However, where reporting on gender equality is present, it tends to respond reasonably to the quality criteria suggested in the GE Policy.

3.2.19 The quality of GE reporting in *core-funded/institutional support* investments is generally weak, with approximately only one-quarter of the investments meeting any of the five assessment criteria applied in the file review.

3.2.20 Identification as a "GE investment" (e.g., in GE-specific or GE-integrated programming) does not guarantee adequate performance reporting on its results. It also appears evident that reporting on GE outcomes is particularly weak in investments with *implicit* GE components (i.e., that may have GE-related outcomes but are not necessarily GE-designated initiatives).

3.2.21 The findings of the file review suggest that a disconcerting number of CIDA's strategic partners (i.e., repeat recipients of core funding and institutional support) do not provide sufficient evidence, in their reporting on specific CIDA investments, of their performance in promoting GE.

► **Coding and baseline information**

3.2.22 The coding system deployed by CIDA officers and the CIDA information system is not an entirely reliable source of information on CIDA's investments in GE, due to inconsistencies in the interpretation and application of what guidelines exist for priority coding. Coding for GE appears to be arbitrary, with weak mechanisms for exercising due diligence in the process.

3.2.23 The file review found that the weakest component of GE during implementation of *directive* and *responsive* initiatives is the establishment of a "GE baseline", with only 37 percent of files demonstrating some evidence of this. This finding suggests that GE performance measurement in nearly two-thirds of CIDA's *directive* and *responsive* investments are handicapped by the absence of a baseline.

3.2.24 Projects showing GE results statements and indicators in CIDA file documents generally report on these, but more frequently than not do so without benefit of gender disaggregated data. This may be due to weak national capacity or failure on the part

of the implementing agent to put in place adequate data collection and reporting systems.

3.2.25 The dynamics of GE strategy implementation are rarely reported. This means that, with notable exceptions, project documentation is generally a poor source of information on field-level experience with GE promotion.

► **Invisible results**

3.2.26 Many CIDA officers are convinced from their experience that there are more results in the field than what is documented in reports – hence the claim of “invisible” GE results. The Evaluation can confirm this assessment based primarily on the field missions and supported by interviews conducted with Canadian partners of CIDA, and the document/file review exercise. However, it is also important to note, that while many realized GE results are “invisible”, the Evaluation has also found initiatives where GE results were expected but apparently fell short of their mark, as evidenced from interviews and field missions as well as document and file reviews.

3.2.27 In those cases where CIDA’s partners do report on GE, as evidenced in CIDA files, the reporting is often not adequate or does not necessarily reflect the true and complete situation. Because much of the information presented in the annual Project Performance Report (PPR) is drawn from this partner reporting, the usefulness of the PPR as a source of information for judging of gender equality results (for example by use of the *Framework*) is limited.

► **Monitoring and evaluation**

3.2.28 GE is not systematically assessed in monitoring and evaluations mandated by CIDA for its investments through *directive* and *responsive* delivery models. External monitoring was carried out in 26 percent of the *directive* and *responsive* investments analyzed, with GE performance assessed in only half of these monitoring exercises. GE is rarely addressed in the external monitoring of projects that are not coded GE. However, where GE is assessed in monitoring and evaluation, these appear to be effective means to identify measures to increase the GE performance of CIDA’s investments.

3.2.29 A quarter of the *directive* and *responsive* sample examined in the file review underwent mid-term evaluation, with GE performance being assessed in slightly more than half of these evaluations. GE appears to be more consistently assessed (generally as a cross-cutting theme) in evaluations of non-GE projects, than in their monitoring. This may be due to the apparently more systematic inclusion of GE among standard evaluation Terms of Reference. Where GE is assessed in a mid-term evaluation, recommendations are systematically made for enhanced GE performance.

3.2.30 A final evaluation was carried out on nearly one-third of the *directive* and *responsive* investments in the review sample. GE was assessed in approximately three-quarters of these evaluations. The few evaluations of GE-designated projects analyzed were professionally executed according to their Terms of Reference.

► **Managing for GE results at the country program level**

3.2.31 The analysis and recommendations on GE Policy implementation contained in country program evaluations have been shown to be effective in stimulating action on the part of program management to improve GE performance. The management response to these evaluations, and the preparation of program-level gender equality strategies consistent with evaluation analysis and recommendations, are proving to be an effective means to bring greater clarity, direction and rigor to country program work on this priority. Qualified on-staff GE expertise and dedicated budgets complete a package of management measures to assure that GE is more adequately taken into account than may have been the case in the past.

3.2.32 Some of CIDA's country programs display many strengths in implementing the Agency's GE Policy. The country programs studied for the Evaluation tend to show marked improvement in performance on a number of points.

- Program management is tending to give a clearer and clearer message that GE must be taken seriously across the ensemble of investments at the country program level.
- GE is more and more systematically included in the preparatory analysis and design of projects.
- Country programs (as evidenced in those studied in the Evaluation) tend to have a balanced portfolio of GE-specific and GE-integrated initiatives, and initiatives with implicit GE components.
- Where attention to GE is maintained throughout the project cycle (as directed by GE Policy guidelines) and project management respects "success factors" as defined by CIDA, projects tend to show positive GE results consistent with the level of focus given the issue (i.e., GE-specific, GE-integrated, or initiatives with implicit GE components).
- Country programs respond favourably to recommendations from corporate program evaluations on the need and the means for more strategic, consistent and significant attention to GE, including CIDA's role in policy dialogue and donor coordination.
- With the articulation of country program GE strategies, GE-specific programming tends to be used more strategically within the country program: to fill gaps in programming approaches, to address emerging issues, to pilot new and innovative approaches, to build capacity in civil society and the "national gender machinery", to support networking of women's organizations and associations.
- Combining support to GE government structures and management of a GE fund, allows CIDA to build GE capacity in government agencies and promote dialogue and joint initiatives between government and civil society.

3.3 Development Outcomes

▶ **Achieving GE Policy results: directive and responsive programming**

3.3.1 The file review component of the Evaluation assessed gender equality results of *directive* and *responsive* investments with reference to the three objectives of the GE Policy and the breakdown of these objectives into their key elements as suggested by CIDA's *Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results*.

3.3.2 The majority of GE results documented during the file review correspond to the objective of increasing women's access to resources and benefits. This relatively strong performance is true for both GE-designated and non GE-designated projects. This phenomenon is explained by the important place of women among beneficiaries of CIDA projects in key sectors. Investments in basic human needs, for example, are rarely coded for GE, yet they generally tend to generate solid GE results, with women as the principal beneficiaries of improvements in the basic amenities and services that most frequently fall under women's responsibility.

3.3.3 Among the four key elements of this GE Policy objective, strongest results are reported in "improving women's livelihoods and control over productive assets", in "strengthening institutional capacity" and in "increasing access by women to appropriate services for their well-being". There is relatively less documented evidence of success in instigating the "adoption of policies supporting gender equality".

3.3.4 The principal weaknesses identified by the evaluators in the quality of GE results documented under this objective are: (i) their sustainability, and (ii) the extent to which the recorded gains are anchored in strategic/structural changes in favor of greater gender equality.

3.3.5 The GE Policy objective with the second most frequently documented results is advancing women's equal participation as decision-makers. Results under this objective tend to be generated by investments which aim to build awareness of and generate action on GE issues, build organizational capacity (particularly of women's organizations), and strengthen civil society generally. Results in this area are also generated by investments that focus on: improving the management of natural resources, agricultural production, social services, and sub-national governance. Beyond their intrinsic value, results in this area are often justified by their *instrumental value* in that they are seen to lead to greater gender equality in access to resources and the distribution of developmental benefits. The file analysis also found that women who benefit from capacity building opportunities may subsequently make gains in other areas of their professional lives that lead to their accessing decision-making roles. This is but one example of how gains in one GE Policy objective may contribute to gains in other objectives.

3.3.6 The file review found that human rights for women and girls is the GE Policy objective with the least programming attention and fewest documented results. It should be recognized, however, that such results would likely be sought only in the course of a GE-designated investment, since an investment promoting human rights more generally (that is, for all persons regardless of sex) would likely be coded differently.

3.3.7 Nevertheless, the file review suggests that there may be greater results contributing to the realization of full human rights for women and girls than would appear from a simple reading of results statements. The degree to which CIDA's directive and responsive investments generate results, identified with one or another of the GE Policy objectives, appears to depend to a large extent on its strategic approach and the articulation of expected results. For example, an investment that seeks greater gender equality in the access to the means of agricultural production may define its expected results and pursue a strategy consistent with "increasing women's access to resources and benefits." The same project could adopt a rights-based approach and define its expected results in terms of advancing women's full human rights in the economic sphere (for example, right to property, access to credit). This obviously poses a challenge to definitive categorizations of GE achievements according to the three GE Policy objectives.

► **Achieving GE Policy results: core funding/institutional support**

3.3.8 The analysis of GE results of CIDA's core funding/institutional support investments is limited by the relatively small number of investments analyzed (26 files in total representing \$587 million over the period 1999-2006). The quality and completeness of results reported in even this relatively small group of files further limits the analysis – with only 4 to 8 files displaying sufficient results information that merit confidence.

3.3.9 A further limitation is the apparent weakness in reporting from core funded organizations, as documented by the file review. Reporting from core-funded organizations rarely includes a meaningful discussion of GE results, unless the investment is explicitly linked to gender equality objectives. This is particularly true for core funded international NGOs and multilateral organizations, which are less likely to be pressured by CIDA through detailed reporting requirements. Core funded Canadian NGOs tend to prove an exception, providing more information on GE results in their reports.

3.3.10 The weakness in reporting is one factor contributing to the fact that Multilateral Branch-funded investments tend to show the least GE results, even in GE-coded investments. Considering that 31 percent of CIDA's GE disbursements flowed through Multilateral Branch (1999 to 2006), this situation means that CIDA has little information on the results of a significant portion of its GE-designated spending.

3.3.11 With the limitations indicated above in mind, the file analysis found that CIDA's investments through the core funding/institutional support delivery model tend to produce stronger results in terms of increasing women's access to and control over development resources and benefits, compared to the other objectives of the GE Policy. Of the four constituent elements of this GE Policy objective, most consistent results are found in advancing women's "well-being and basic needs". The weakest performance in this major result area is found in "policy change" in support of gender equality.

3.3.12 Results in terms of women's participation in decision making are of second order importance among the three major GE Policy objectives. The weakest performance reported from core funding/institutional support is found in the area of women and girls being better able to realize their human rights.

► **Field mission findings: results in terms of GE Policy objectives**

3.3.13 CIDA programs in the seven countries studied confirm the findings of the file review in terms of the consistently strong to significant GE gains in increased access to and benefit from development resources in the traditional areas of gender equality programming – education, health, water, and somewhat less frequently, in agriculture and the informal sector.

- Water is a sector of excellence for Canada in Ghana, with significant results in promoting women’s participation in water resource management, sanitation and hygiene-related practices in three northern regions.
- CIDA has a strong niche position in Bangladesh through its important investments providing socio-economic support to ultra-poor, channeled through or targeting women.
- CIDA’s support to the education sector in Tanzania is a success story, generating a significant increase in institutional capacity to integrate GE throughout the country’s education system.
- Women represent 60 to 75 percent of beneficiaries of CIDA’s investments in Senegal in education, notably in literacy classes and non-traditional professional training.
- CIDA’s support to the SME sector in Egypt contributed to significant gains toward a more gender sensitive environment for SME development.

3.3.14 Significant gains are also found, if less consistently across the programs, in “decision-making”, with greatest success at the community and sub-national levels.

- CIDA’s investments in Bolivia have generated significant impact in political participation by women and greater attention to GE issues in local development, particularly at the municipal level. There is also a significant increase in the number of women in leadership positions in cooperative associations targeted by Canadian investments.
- The significant gains in the skills and confidence of women for their participation in waste management, with economic gains and increased community respect as additional direct benefits, constitute a CIDA success story in Egypt.
- The significant results integrating GE into training of future political leaders and public servants (national and sub-national levels) charged with implementing Gender Equality Law is a CIDA success story in Vietnam.
- Promising results have been generated in Senegal through greater proportion of women in elected positions in rural, municipal and regional and national decision-making bodies, as well as among rural/agricultural organizations and credit unions.

3.3.15 There are modest gains in “human rights”, with an occasional success story. This mirrors the lower frequency and level of investment by the country programs in rights issues, as found in the file review. Support to quotas for women’s representation in elected bodies is warranted by the consistently positive results where this approach is applied by the government and supported by development partners.

- Sustained, multifaceted support to a Bangladeshi NGO dedicated to physical and emotional rehabilitation and reintegration of acid throwing victims, the punishment of perpetrators, and prevention measures, is an internationally recognized success story for which CIDA can claim a significant portion of the credit due international donors. The incidence of acid throwing is in decline since 2002, with an increase in successful prosecutions. There is strong male involvement, both as beneficiaries (victims of acid throwing) and champions.
- CIDA was the first international organization to support the national government initiatives and is one of eight development partners credited with successfully promoting the prohibition by the Government of Egypt of female genital mutilation.
- In Senegal, CIDA's support to the network of Women associations (le Réseau Siggil Jigéen) and the PDPF (Promoting women's rights and empowerment of women) contributed to modifying the Family code toward greater gender equality.

3.3.16 The interplay of documented GE results among the three GE Policy objectives is demonstrated by CIDA's investments promoting women's economic empowerment. A number of such investments have investigated the impact of economic gains of gender equality (for example, in Bangladesh and Vietnam). Findings from these studies indicate clearly that economic advancement of women changes gender dynamics within the household. The manifestations of those changes vary according to the culture. The scope and depth of the changes appear to vary with the level of women's contribution to family income. There are concerns, however, that women's total burden may actually increase if measures are not taken to ease their traditional household responsibilities.

3.3.17 Other specific results for each of the countries visited and studied in the Evaluation can be found in the individual country reports that complement this report. Due to the rarity of consolidated country-level data on CPB-funded activities, it is difficult to assess the GE results of NGO initiatives during a brief field mission. Some 'countries of concentration' are attempting to address this situation. The Vietnam Program, where CPB accounts for 25% of recent CIDA disbursements, produces an annual CPB programming report, but GE results are not yet documented in this report. The Tanzania Program is attempting to include CPB initiatives within the vision of Canada's development strategy for the country, including their contribution to the Program's GE Strategy.

► **Responsive funding mechanisms: GE Funds**

3.3.18 Responsive funding mechanisms, such as "GE Funds", have a number of qualities that make them a useful part of CIDA's programming mix to advance gender equality.

- Being responsive, GE Funds can support civil society voices and initiatives (particularly those of women's groups) in advocacy and service delivery.
- GE Funds can be used to promote dialogue and joint initiatives between government and civil society as well as encouraging networking among civil society organizations promoting GE.

- GE Funds can be used to support the implementation of national GE policies (from policy to action) in strategic areas of development.
- GE Funds can be opportunistic, supporting pioneering efforts and pilot experiences that may prove worthwhile for replication.
- In the context of new aid modalities, GE Funds can be used to fill conspicuous gaps in programming, targeting specific issues and/or groups that may be left out of sector-wide initiatives. In this case, the fund is used to explore the terrain for an eventual project intervention.
- Being flexible, GE Funds can serve to catalyze action by international and local actors, and to leverage additional resources to the cause.
- GE Funds can assure that actions to improve GE reach all parts of the country.
- Despite their limitations, small project responsive funds *can* build capacity and produce sustainable results to the extent that they (i) support stable organizations, and (ii) include some measure of technical assistance.

3.3.19 The effectiveness of the GE Fund in serving these purposes depends largely on the degree to which the country program integrates it into its country strategy. It is common to see the GE Fund in the limited role of a country program's response to GE Policy imperatives. This use tends to produce interesting and generally positive results for its direct beneficiaries, but limited and scattered results in term of the strategic interests of gender equality.

► **Sustainability of development outcomes**

3.3.20 There is concurrence among CIDA officials, Canadian implementing partners and benchmarking donor organizations that GE results, such as are achieved, are fragile. If commitments to GE are not sustained over the long term, the positive gains achieved in gender equality are threatened. Only 13 percent of CIDA's professional staff and managers who responded to the CIDA Survey believe that the GE results achieved through the Agency's investments are "sustainable". To the extent that this assessment by front-line actors reflects ground reality, CIDA's performance in achieving sustainable results is not commensurate with the extent of its investment in GE. The issue of sustainability of GE results is paramount.

3.3.21 The interviews and benchmarking components of the Evaluation support the conclusion that positive GE results are fragile. The key challenges to sustainability arise from issues of *commitment, capacity, strategic approaches, and resources*. All actors on both sides of the development divide – governments, civil society, individuals – have a role to play in facing these challenges to the sustainability of GE results.

3.3.22 Commitment to greater gender equality on the part of the partner government – through appropriate national/sectoral policies, legislation and regulatory frameworks, and the administrative will to act, for example – is critical to redressing the systemic constraints and institutional inequalities that must change if sustained gains in gender equality are to be realized throughout the society. Advocacy groups are important partners in these situations.

3.3.23 Gains from GE-specific programming are more likely to be sustainable when they are anchored in supportive strategic and structural changes in the larger institutional environment. Balancing GE-integrated and GE-specific programming tends to reinforce both results achievement and results sustainability. GE Funds and other focused initiatives can complement sector investments by strengthening the capacity of women to take advantage of opportunities emerging from improvements in sector performance. Where country programs include a defined GE strategy, GE-specific programming tends to be used more strategically: to fill gaps in GE-integrated initiatives, to address emerging GE issues, to pilot new and innovative approaches, to build capacity in civil society and the “national gender machinery”.

3.3.24 GE competes for attention with other development priorities. Long-term commitment to GE by donors and executing agents – vigilant against “policy evaporation”, shaking off “gender fatigue”, bridging the “implementation gap” – is critical. So too is rejection of the charge, still too frequently heard in the context of Beijing, CEDAW and other international conventions, of GE being donor-driven. CIDA should maintain its principled commitment to supporting indigenous civil society organizations committed to GE – NGOs, women’s groups, research and policy advisory groups, human rights groups, community organizations – to play a central role in promoting gender equality.

3.3.25 Commitment must be backed by capacity. While weak GE capacity may still characterize some partner countries, years of GE training provided by donors have produced a solid cadre of local GE experts. Current challenges – for both donors and partners – to bringing adequate capacity to bear on the hard core of gender inequality pertain more to assuring the *right capacity in the right places*. Achieving and sustaining GE gains is more and more about the application of GE principles and analysis to specific issues: for example, gender budgeting, gender and labor markets, gender and micro-credit, gender and reproductive health/rights, gender violence, and gender-appropriate education.

3.3.26 The constant evolution in the strategic architecture for the design and delivery of development assistance is a source of both promise of, and risk to GE gains and their sustainability. National poverty reduction strategies generally include GE analysis, goals and indicators, but both donors and partner countries may lose sight of them among the multitude of administrative processes and competing interests that accompany such massive undertakings. The shift to program-based approaches makes GE integration more challenging. Strategies to advance GE that do not address men’s roles and responsibilities in gender relations neglect a critical factor in the sustainable reduction of gender inequalities, burying GE in the annexes.

3.3.27 Strategies to advance GE that do not address men’s roles and responsibilities in gender relations neglect a critical factor in the sustainable reduction of gender inequalities. The potential for male resistance and ‘backlash’ should be assessed as a risk factor, with appropriate mitigation strategies defined. The design and implementation of investments to ‘empower’ women’s in economic, political or social spheres need to assure that men, too, are prepared to cope with changes in gender dynamics in the household, in the workplace, and in communities.

3.3.28 Finally, sustainability of GE results requires the allocation of adequate resources on a sustained basis. Perpetual donor support is not the answer, but

adequate donor support for the time required to establish sustainable sources of local resources is a large part of the answer.

3.4 Relevance

► **Opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen gender equality work**

3.4.1 The links between gender equality and CIDA's overarching policy of poverty reduction and its programming priorities have been extensively discussed within CIDA, finding expression in various Agency policies and strategies, and culminating in the 1999 GE Policy, which includes a sample set of expected outcomes to guide the development of gender equality initiatives in programs and projects.

3.4.2 The Evaluation has validated the existence of a consensus within CIDA that the GE Policy is still relevant as the foundation of a sustained effort by the Agency. Gender equality remains a global challenge, particularly in areas that the Policy has been focused, in terms of securing access for women to economic resources, human rights, and participation in decision-making. Interviews with CIDA's implementation partners and the benchmarking exercise have documented the fact that Canada and CIDA are recognized for their commitment to gender equality. Spokespersons both within and without the Agency concur that the GE Policy is relevant and necessary to maintain focus and to rationalize resources in support of GE.

3.4.3 The opportunity exists to freshen and strengthen the Agency's GE strategic directions, if not for a change in the GE Policy per se. This opportunity emerges from the challenges of new aid modalities and aid effectiveness considerations; the changing needs of developing countries and countries in transition; the re-alignments and re-commitments made to GE by other bilateral and multilateral organizations; and CIDA's own strategic deliberations and positioning of its overall Agency priorities.

3.4.4 CIDA's commitment to taking stock and examining the effectiveness of its implementation of the GE Policy is therefore timely. With eight years of experience with the 1999 GE Policy, the time is ripe for reaffirming and strengthening CIDA's understanding of the role of gender equality initiatives in improving the lives of people in partner countries, and assessing its approaches to the promotion of GE as both a goal and means to achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development. The findings from the present Evaluation are intended to contribute to this ongoing process, as the Agency moves forward with a renewed impetus for GE focused work.

► **Comparative advantages of CIDA**

3.4.5 Although CIDA is not unique in its areas of strength and experience in GE work, it has developed a degree of comparative advantage in the following areas:

- policy dialogue and advocacy,
- performance assessment framework concept and methodology,
- cadre of gender equality expertise (specialists not generalists),
- procurement practices favourable for including GE expertise on project teams,

- multidisciplinary approaches and multicultural make up of GE teams,
- “honest broker” organization in national and international stakeholder interventions, and
- training and tools for implementing gender equality analysis and integrating gender equality in planning and implementation processes.

3.4.6 *Sectoral concentrations of GE results:* Judging from the sample base of the countries studied (field missions, file review, interviews), CIDA has also developed experience and expertise in the promotion of gender equality in a number of sectors and sub-sectors, including:

- *Micro and small enterprise development:* policy environment (e.g., Egypt, Tanzania); start-up support (e.g., Tanzania, Vietnam); micro finance (e.g., Egypt, Vietnam, Tanzania, Afghanistan, Senegal).
- *Primary education/literacy:* e.g., Vietnam, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Senegal.
- *Health sector:* e.g., Bolivia.
- *Legal sector:* e.g., Vietnam, Tanzania (beginning).
- *Decentralization:* e.g., Ghana, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Senegal, Bolivia.
- *Agriculture:* e.g., Vietnam.
- *Environment:* e.g., Bolivia (energy sector), Egypt (waste management).

► **Challenges and opportunities of new aid modalities**

3.4.7 Spokespersons interviewed for the Evaluation find that new aid modalities represent significant *opportunities* for gender equality work.

- New aid modalities open opportunities for GE policy dialogue at the highest levels, facilitated by the donor’s credibility in the issue. Canada benefits from such credibility.
- New aid modalities give CIDA (and other donors) potentially greater leverage in favor of GE through opportunities to counsel partner countries in the implementation of sectoral policies, through scaling up GE initiatives, and leveraging resources.
- Potential difficulties in pressing GE issues in the context of PBAs and SWAPs may be more than offset by moving beyond project-based approaches to more strategic programming with potentially greater impact on stakeholder groups.

3.4.8 While new aid modalities generate benefits, they also present some serious potential *challenges* to the promotion of gender equality that need to be addressed. The Evaluation findings show that CIDA and other donors share similar experiences in adapting their GE commitments and approaches to new aid modalities.

- New aid modalities tend to presuppose stronger gender equality commitment and greater capacities in partner countries than is frequently the case. Gender equality risks being downgraded to secondary importance (if not effectively neglected) unless the voices in its favor are persistent and forceful. Smaller

donors risk becoming “silent partners” in multi-donor interventions, unless they possess sufficient credibility and networking capacity to make their voice heard. Canada appears to hold its own relatively well in this regard.

- The front end work preparing investments under new aid modality initiatives is often weak in GE substance. Committed donors must make a constant effort to make sure it is appropriately addressed in the final mix of objectives, indicators, strategic approaches, priority actions, and resource allocations. This challenges donor staff (field and headquarters) to be better equipped with the appropriate analytical and management tools that address the implications of new aid modalities. Success in harmonizing approaches, requirements and tools among donors is not guaranteed. Highly centralized management (such as CIDA’s) represents a certain handicap in this context.
- The performance measurement mechanisms that accompany many initiatives implemented under new aid modalities rarely facilitate the measurement of GE results. This leads to the further “invisibilization” of results for an already-marginalized population. Beyond the risk of there being few results to measure and report, the principle of mutual accountability suffers. For a development partner committed to results-based management like CIDA, there is real risk in relinquishing the opportunity to be appropriately informed and to raise performance-based questions of those responsible for implementation and management of the investment.
- The current generation of new aid modalities does not allow much space for civil society as an active partner in the establishment of priorities and oversight of implementation. Donors’ commitment to flowing an increasingly greater portion of available development assistance budgets through new aid modalities necessarily reduces funding available for civil society actors, in both developed and developing countries. The continued vitality, if not the very existence, of these important partners in the promotion of GE, is at risk. This in turn threatens North-South civil society partnerships, which have been a critical factor in strengthening inclusive local governance processes and building capacity to deliver basic services for women and men equally.

4. Recommendations

4.1 There are a number of institutional and management issues that require attention if CIDA intends to maintain and systematize gender equality as a priority within its development concerns. It is almost certain that responding piecemeal to one or a few specific issues is not enough to sustain gender equality as an important priority -- as documented in the Evaluation’s benchmarking study, other donor organizations have tried partial solutions and found such an approach faulty, in large measure because the desired organizational transformation expected from “mainstreaming” fell short.

This evaluation has identified nine key recommendations related to the four evaluation issues (commitment, enabling environment, development results, and relevance), which together are intended to support a sustained commitment by CIDA to gender equality in the long term.

► **Policy Commitment**

4.2 While the Evaluation found a strong ongoing corporate commitment to gender equality, it also identified ways in which this commitment could be redirected towards achieving more focused and consistent results. Translating the Agency's policy commitment to concrete development investments that are manageable and traceable requires strategic thinking and planning on a corporate-wide basis.

The following recommendations reflect the findings of the Evaluation in terms of reaffirming and strengthening CIDA's corporate commitment to gender equality, and framing this commitment into action:

Recommendation 1: Develop a Corporate Gender Equality Action Plan with broad-based consultation. Recognizing that the current Policy is still vitally relevant, the action plan should provide further strategic focus to implementation, outline reasonable goals, accountabilities, and timeframes as well as measurable outcomes.

Recommendation 2: Secure budgeting for gender equality integration and initiatives, and continue to support gender equality funds as a way to strengthen local civil society and grassroots women's organizations to achieve better development results and to be effective agents of change.

Recommendation 3: Target additional investment for research and development in GE knowledge creation within and outside CIDA, and include resources for improving knowledge retention and dissemination.

► **Enabling Environment**

4.3 Despite considerable success in developing tools and procedures for integrating gender equality in the Agency's work, there are some critical areas where the enabling environment for gender equality could be strengthened. This is a particular concern in light of the identification of an "implementation gap," by which important elements of the Policy on Gender Equality fall by the wayside in the absence of clear directions and accountabilities, notwithstanding some very effective advocacy from both within and outside the Agency.

The following are recommendations for strengthening enabling outcomes to support consistent achievement of gender equality results:

Recommendation 4: Invest resources in GE training for all staff, including middle and senior management, so they can position GE in their units to deliver gender equality results more consistently.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen the ability of the Equality between Women and Men Division to engage program and field personnel as well as external partners, in a two-way exchange of experience and reflection, to ensure that gender-sensitive approaches are used more systematically in planning and implementation of programs and projects.

Recommendation 6: Consider developing a “GE help desk” capacity to provide information, tools, capacity development both internally within CIDA (Headquarters and field), and externally for partners.

▶ **Development Outcomes**

4.4 A key weakness identified by the Evaluation is in CIDA’s ability to capture and report on gender equality results, which in large part reflects problems with reporting systems and procedures, but may also indicate that the formulation and tracking of gender equality results are problematic. There is a need to facilitate a shift in CIDA’s focus related to gender equality, from an emphasis on process issues to a renewed commitment to producing gender equality results. Both the quality of gender equality development results and systems for reporting require improvement, with the following actions recommended:

Recommendation 7: Strengthen accountability for gender equality performance of core-funded organizations and within responsive programming, especially responsive proposals from multilateral organizations.

Recommendation 8: Strengthen GE reporting tools and data systems for collecting and monitoring gender equality results, as well as the collection of sex-disaggregated data both for baselines and for reporting purposes.

▶ **Relevance**

4.5 The Evaluation found that CIDA’s Policy on Gender Equality is still vitally relevant both within CIDA and in the larger constellation of development cooperation. Gender equality remains a global challenge, particularly in areas that the Policy has been focused, in terms of securing access for women to economic resources and benefits of development, human rights, and participation in decision-making. A particular concern, however, is that CIDA’s approach keep pace with changes occurring in the way development cooperation is planned and delivered in the future, particularly in light of the Paris Declaration and New Aid Modalities. Hence the following recommendation:

Recommendation 9: Develop a strategic approach to addressing opportunities and challenges presented by the New Aid Modalities, vis-à-vis gender equality and cooperation with other bilateral and multilateral donor organization.

5. Management Response

Management Response to the Evaluation of CIDA's Implementation of its Policy on Gender Equality from 1999 - 2006

1. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is pleased that the Evaluation of its Implementation of its Policy on Gender Equality validated the Agency's good work and strong leadership to date. It recognized the continuing relevance of CIDA's Policy on Gender Equality both within CIDA and in the development cooperation community. The report highlighted on-going corporate commitment to gender equality. It found that where country programs included a defined Gender Equality Strategy, gender specific programming tended to be used more strategically. The report also acknowledged the considerable success in developing tools and procedures for integrating gender equality in the Agency's work but noted that critical areas such as training and outreach should be strengthened and that guidance should be updated to reflect changing aid modalities. It also raised questions about implementation and reporting gaps and called for the development of a Corporate Gender Equality Action Plan.
2. The nine recommendations in the Report are generic, operational in nature, and apply Agency-wide. They are grouped under the following headings:
 - Commitment (Recommendations 1,2, 3)
 - *Enabling Environment* (Recommendations 4,5, 6)
 - *Development Outcomes* (Recommendations 7,8)
 - *Relevance* (Recommendation 9)
3. A corporate team prepared this Management Response. CIDA's Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) was asked to identify managers from across the Agency to consider the evaluation recommendations and to develop the Management Response. The draft response was reviewed by the SPWG as well as other senior managers before being finalized.
4. CIDA management agrees with all the recommendations in the report except the recommendation to develop a "GE help desk" as CIDA believes we are already meeting the spirit of the recommendation with an Agency dedicated unit and co-located gender equality advisors working in all the operational branches. CIDA also has a long history of working closely with partners by sharing lessons learned and providing GE tools and guidance on approaches to delivering measurable GE results.
5. A number of concrete steps have already been taken to address the weaknesses identified in the Report. For example, work is well underway to improve the data management system for capturing and reporting information more effectively and accurately on gender equality investments and results for the coming year.
6. In the 2007-2008 Reports on Plans and Priorities CIDA made a commitment to increasing "the number of initiatives that specifically address equality between women and men". CIDA will continue to track and report annually on this commitment in the Departmental Performance Report.

7. CIDA will continue to build internal capacity to deliver GE results more consistently, through appropriate and tailored workshops, sessions, and forums for staff, at headquarters and in the field, including middle management.
8. CIDA will develop a Corporate Gender Equality Action Plan to address issues related to the Evaluation's recommendations. This will ensure the development of consistent approaches and tools and their systematic use in the planning and implementation of programs and projects.
9. Gender equality is a "CIDA brand". All members of CIDA's Management Board have a role to play in ensuring that CIDA's work contributes to advancing equality between women and men. They are accountable for the implementation of the Management Response, including the Action Plan, in their respective branches. The Vice President, Sectors and Global Partnerships Branch, will, in addition, be accountable for monitoring the implementation of the Management Response and reporting to Management Board.
10. The GE evaluation will therefore continue to inform CIDA's work in equality between women and men so that the Agency can better demonstrate sustainable gender equality results to Canadians.
11. CIDA's Evaluation Committee would like to extend its appreciation to Evaluation Division staff and to Bytown Consulting and C.A.C International who contributed to this comprehensive and thorough evaluation exercise. It would also like to thank the members of the Management Response Working Group who contributed to the preparation of this response.

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p><i>POLICY COMMITMENT</i></p> <p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>Develop a Corporate Gender Equality Action Plan with broad-based consultation. Recognizing that the current Policy is still vitally relevant, the action plan should provide further strategic focus to implementation, outline reasonable goals, accountabilities, and timeframes as well as measurable outcomes.</p>	<p>Agree with the Recommendation.</p> <p>A corporate GE Action Plan, based on CIDA's current GE policy, will be developed.</p>	<p>VP, SGPB</p>	<p>Plan completed by September 2009</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Secure budgeting for gender equality integration and initiatives, and continue to support gender equality funds as a way to strengthen local civil society and grassroots women’s organizations to achieve better development results and to be effective agents of change.</p>	<p>Agree with the Recommendation.</p> <p>Gender equality approaches and expected results will be incorporated into all country, partnership and sectoral program strategies, and this will be tracked and reported on an on-going basis.</p> <p>CIDA will track and report on its support to GE specific programming, including GE funds. CIDA recognizes that decentralized GE funds strengthen local civil society and organizations as well as public institutions, to achieve GE results.</p>	<p>VP, CPB VP, SGPB VP, Geographic VP, SPPB</p> <p>VP, CPB VP, SGPB VP, Geographic</p>	<p>Annual Performance Reporting Cycle</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annual Performance Reporting: Spring/Summer</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>In the corporate GE Action Plan, CIDA will identify additional investment for research and development in GE knowledge creation within and outside CIDA, and include resources for improving knowledge retention and dissemination.</p>	<p>Agree with the intent of the Recommendation.</p> <p>As part of the Agency's broader research priorities, CIDA will ensure that there is a coherent and corporate approach to GE knowledge creation, retention and dissemination.</p>	<p>VP, CPB VP, SGPB VP, Geographic VP, SPPB</p>	<p>September 2009 (Action Plan)</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p><i>ENABLING ENVIRONMENT</i></p> <p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Invest resources in GE training for all staff, including middle and senior management, so they can position GE in their units to deliver gender equality results more consistently.</p>	<p>Agree with the intent of the Recommendation but not all staff require the same level of training.</p> <p>CIDA will invest resources into developing training tailored to the needs of staff and management in headquarters and in the field. Training needs will be identified through existing human resource planning and reporting mechanisms.</p>	<p>Continuous Learning, Equality Division, Director for Geographic Specialists Cadre</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>HR/Personal Learning Plans</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Strengthen the ability of the Equality between Women and Men Division to engage program and field personnel as well as external partners, in a two-way exchange of experience and reflection, to ensure that gender-sensitive approaches are used more systematically in planning and implementation of programs and projects.</p>	<p>Agree with the Recommendation.</p> <p>The GE Action Plan will address this requirement by including specific activities and their related human and financial resource requirements.</p> <p>A mechanism will be established to ensure that gender equality factors are taken into consideration in the work of CIDA's committees.</p> <p>The Division will be strengthened so that it can engage in exchanges of experience and reflection with program and field personnel and external partners.</p>	<p>VP, CPB VP, SGPB VP, Geographic</p> <p>Management Board</p> <p>VP, SGPB</p>	<p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Consider developing a “GE help desk” capacity to provide information, tools, capacity development both internally within CIDA (Headquarters and field), and externally for partners.</p>	<p>We have considered this recommendation but consider that we are already meeting the spirit of the recommendation:</p> <p>1) Internally, CIDA already has a dedicated Division and a GE specialist cadre including experts at the country level to support managers and officers in meeting their accountabilities for GE integration.</p> <p>2) Externally, CIDA already works closely with partners by providing access to GE tools and guidance on approaches to delivering measurable GE results.</p>			

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p><i>DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES</i></p> <p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>Strengthen accountability for gender equality performance of core-funded organizations and within responsive programming, especially responsive proposals from multilateral organizations.</p>	<p>Agree with the Recommendation.</p> <p>Progress on this Recommendation requires strengthening CIDA's procedures and policy dialogue to encourage changes at the partners' policy and operational levels. This will be addressed in the GE Action Plan and different strategies will be developed for Canadian partners and for international NGOs and multilateral partners receiving core and responsive funding from CIDA.</p>	<p>All Program Directors / Managers in Programming Branches</p>	<p>September 2009 (Action Plan)</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p>Recommendation 8:</p> <p>Strengthen GE reporting tools and data systems for collecting and monitoring gender equality results, as well as the collection of sex-disaggregated data both for baseline and for reporting purposes.</p>	<p>Agree with the Recommendation.</p> <p>CIDA will establish a time-bound Agency-wide technical GE “Advisory Group” to ensure that processes, tools, and data systems capture GE results and sex-disaggregated data both for baseline and for reporting purposes.</p> <p>As a first step there will be a change in the Agency’s coding system making coding for GE mandatory for all investments, and requiring information on the type of investment. CIDA’s reporting tools, such as the Investment, Monitoring and Reporting Tool (IMRT), will be adjusted accordingly to capture the required information.</p>	<p>CIO VP, SPPB</p>	<p>September 2009 (Change in coding)</p>	

Recommendations	Commitments / Actions	Responsibility Centre	Target Completion Date	Status
<p><i>RELEVANCE</i></p> <p>Recommendation 9:</p> <p>Develop a strategic approach to addressing opportunities and challenges presented by the New Aid Modalities, vis-à-vis gender equality and cooperation with other bilateral and multilateral donor organization.</p>	<p>Agree with Recommendation.</p> <p>CIDA will develop a strategy that draws from experiences, lessons learned, gender equality strategies, and issues raised by civil society regarding the implementation of evolving aid modalities (PBAs, SWAs, Global Funds, etc.).</p>	<p>All Programs</p>	<p>September 2009</p>	