Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

A DAC review of agency experiences 1993–1998

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Executive summary

1. The OECD/DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation has conducted a review to follow up observations, conclusions and recommendations of the comprehensive DAC 1993/4 WID Assessment study concerning Members' evaluation policy and practice with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment. Assessment recommendations concerning evaluation included *inter alia*: (1) the adoption of more participatory approaches in overall programming, project design and implementation; (2) better knowledge of local culture, conditions and perspectives; (3) the development and dissemination of evaluation guidelines and methodologies to improve the quality of discussions and assessments of gender issues in evaluations; (4) improvement in the quality of evaluations and in the assessment of effects and impact with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment, among other things through improving the availability and use of sex-disaggregated data; and (5) better attention to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation Terms of Reference and increased competence on evaluation teams.

2. To support Members' work with advancing the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women and following the request made by Ministers and Heads of Agencies in the 1995 Gender Equality Statement, the DAC adopted a new set of *Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation* in 1998. It also issued a *Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality* to promote a deeper understanding of the concepts and issues involved, and to outline approaches and strategies for addressing them in the interest of improving quality and coherence in development co-operation.

3. The purpose of the follow-up Review presented in this document has been to discover the extent to which the observations of the 1993/4 Assessment have been taken into consideration, and its recommendations followed in terms of evaluation policy adjustments, in evaluation design and implementation, and in the assessment of development effects and impact in terms of progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality. A two-part reporting guide was designed to assist Members in assessing changes and progress in the integration of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations. The first part of the guide concerns background information on overall, gender and evaluation policy development and project planning since 1993. The second part treats Members' internal assessments of evaluation reports and results since 1993.

4. Of 31 distributed *Guides for Reporting* to Members, observers and non-DAC OECD countries, replies were received from 15 Members and one observer. Thirteen of these are from Members who also participated in the 1993/4 WID Assessment, although due to a number of institutional and other reasons, comparability between the follow-up review and the 1993/4 Assessment is not exact. Many respondents also submitted for review a selection of evaluation reports as examples of good learning cases, special reports, relevant recent policy initiatives, methodological documents and other materials.

Findings and Conclusions

5. Progress made in terms of policy developments is striking in terms of the many new and revised overall, gender and evaluation policies agencies report. In the past five years, Members commonly have also instituted various mechanisms to support the implementation of policy, particularly at programming levels. At the same time, the very dynamism of policy development may in fact have played a role in "delaying" more tangible positive results related to women and gender issues[1] in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Operational staff and evaluators clearly require time to become familiar with new policy directives and how to implement them. Agencies' development and testing of appropriate methods and concrete measures for the systematic incorporation of gender issues in the project cycle thus seem hard pressed to keep pace with policies.

6. Respondents report a number of methodological initiatives to improve attention to issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in agency planning frameworks, performance assessments and evaluations. An increasing number of agencies explicitly require that gender issues be addressed in programming, project design and in assessments and evaluations and are constructing reference and guidance tools to assist staff. Support and reinforcement mechanisms such as guidelines, policy marking (in accordance with DAC usage), specific review or project inspection committees, in-house gender and/or social development specialists, advisory networks, designation of gender or women as a Special Reporting Area, etc. are in place. However, despite such mechanisms and measures, agencies report that accountability and enforcement are quite weak. Obviously, the installation of support mechanisms are in themselves not always adequate in ensuring policy compliance. Several reports also mention specifically the importance of evaluators' understanding the issues and the rationale for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the importance of commitment.

7. Many Members report that their organisations and/or ministries have undergone and/or are still undergoing changes or adjustments that are expected to affect positively the evaluation function, and the way that issues related to women's empowerment and gender equality are addressed in evaluations.

8. Overall, results are quite mixed with most members reporting uneven progress. Although agencies report some increase in both the quantity or incidence, and the quality of information on women and gender issues in evaluation reports compared to five years ago, the general picture is a very mixed and uneven one, both among agencies and from one evaluation report to another within the same agency. Several agency reports express clear disappointment that improvement appears slighter than what might have been expected. Although the reports note some improvements in project design and

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[1] *Gender issues* is the commonly-used albeit imprecise generic term that refers to a wide range of issues related to the general circumstances and situations of women and men or girls and boys, whether explicitly linked or not to the development goals of gender equality and women's empowerment.

performance assessment, a number of serious weaknesses and difficulties persist. Some of these are due to institutional factors, while others concern among other things:

– conceptual confusion in terms of linking WID and GAD concepts to criteria by which to measure achievements;

– lack of adequate gender competence of programme officers and evaluators; and

– the ineffectiveness of enforcement mechanisms.

Still others concern the constraints of time, depth, and financial resources inherent to evaluation in general, and variations in the use of evaluation results as active learning and planning tools. With regard to the latter, there are indications that an active management reponse and the direct use of review or evaluation results in project implementation may allow greater attention to social and gender issues, particularly where participatory strategies are featured in project philosophy and design.

9. The marginal improvements in evaluation reports noted by some Members concern primarily more accounts of women's participation in activities, and in some few cases women's share of project outputs. Particular weaknesses persist with regard to how issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment goals are addressed in the selection of data considered relevant to particular evaluations, in analyses of data and of findings, in conclusions and in the assessment of development outcomes, effects and impact.

10. An area of unequivocal improvement is that of evaluation Terms of Reference. Members report more explicit mentions or requests for information about gender issues compared to the 1993/4 WID Assessment. However, it appears that the *quality* of gender-related information in terms of the depth and relevance of discussion in reports has not improved commensurately by and large.

11. It is not possible to pinpoint conclusively a specific conjunction of factors and approaches that can ensure adequate mainstreaming of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations. Areas in which agencies report the most significant positive changes are improvements in evaluation Terms of Reference, and to a lesser extent, greater attentiveness to the composition and competence of evaluation teams. Agencies report that not a great deal has happened in terms of (positive) changes in the areas of: the use of sex-disaggregated figures and statistics, active partnership and the use of participatory approaches in evaluations, the development and use of gender-sensitive monitoring and performance assessment indicators and evaluation criteria.

12. Concrete measures that various agencies identify as working well to produce good evaluation results with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment include: appropriate evaluation guidelines; identification of gender-sensitive evaluation criteria; combining donor and national expertise in evaluation preparation and on evaluation teams; adequate briefing of evaluation teams on gender issues; gender expertise on teams; consultation with women beneficiaries in the field; and adequate time and funds for evaluation to allow for greater depth and field contact. A number of Members also express

the view that shifts in the direction of continual performance monitoring and better reporting *during implementation* appear to promote better contact with projects and field levels, and more relevant and consistent coverage of gender issues than ex poste evaluations.

Recommendations

14. A number of general recommendations can be made regarding policy, programming and project planning and evaluation design and practice. Among these are:

- steps to remedy the lack of gender-awareness and/or operational commitment, basic skills and capacity on the part of individuals and institutions through appropriate training and competence raising measures linked to specific interventions that involve both Donors and Partners. Members note the considerable degree of lack of knowledge or understanding on the part of both desk officers and evaluators – despite gender expertise within the agency itself – about the gender equality dimensions of the development issues with which particular projects are concerned;

- making use of the now generally available DAC Source Book and similar materials in briefing staff and evaluators and in communication with partners, as one way of dealing with conceptual confusion about what should be addressed and how in specific evaluations. Members' evaluation reports demonstrate some persistent misconceptions and misunderstandings about terminology, about the respective merits of WID and GAD approaches, about how "women's empowerment" relates to "gender equality" and how each and both of them should be operationally defined and measured in specific instances;

- incorporating gender issues better into existing planning and Project Cycle Management (PCM) procedural frameworks to correct formulations of vague or general project objectives, and poorly defined and analyzed beneficiary and other key stakeholder groups;

- incorporating gender considerations into standard evaluation criteria, and where warranted identifying special criteria suitable for assessing results, effects and impact in terms of progress towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment goals;

- correcting continued weaknesses in the collection and analysis of data related to gender equality and women's empowerment. There appears to be a common perception that there is a general *lack* of adequate data. While this may be true in many instances, a major problem appears to be knowing how to use available data and knowing where to look for potentially useful data, in other words a lack of awareness of what data are relevant, where to find such data and how to use them;

- upgrading donor and partner operational knowledge about the linkages of gender equality and women's empowerment to other sustainable development goals such as

poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, democratic governance and realization of human rights.

15. Areas recommended for continued and intensified work include a number of those also recommended in the 1993/4 WID Assessment, that are now showing the most positive results as reported by agencies during this follow-up review: better attention to target group and other key stakeholder identification and analysis in project design, monitoring and reporting; use of participatory approaches in evaluations; better knowledge of local culture, conditions and perspectives by evaluators; development of appropriate guidelines, perhaps for specific kinds of evaluations; identification and use of sex-disaggregated data; development of gender-aware performance indicators and evaluation criteria.

16. It is also recommended that a Working Party on Aid Evaluation Workshop be organized in Sweden during the fall of 1999. The Workshop would convene both DAC Member/Observer and partner country evaluators and gender experts to discuss the findings of the Review, assess successes and suggest solutions to persistent problems. A particular point for discussion could be the formulation of a strategy for capacity-building with respect to addressing issues of women's empowerment and gender equality in evaluations for both Members and their partners.

17. Finally, in light of the interest shown in the review, and of its reported usefulness in encouraging agencies to assess their own progress, strengths and weaknesses in a systematic way, it is recommended that Members continue to regularly monitor their own work with regard to the evaluation of project performance and progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of the Review

18. During the 1990s, renewed attention has been paid globally to a reconceptualized development agenda that extends beyond a focus on economic growth in a narrowly defined sense, toward people-centred, sustainable development processes. International conferences and agreements during the decade have reflected and reinforced a notion of the multi-dimensionality of development needs and problems, and thus an emphasis on the linkages between sustainable economic growth, social and environmental issues, human rights and democratic governance. Gender equality is one of several key sustainable development goals that also include *inter alia* poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The views and vision of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) with regard to these and related development issues are presented in the 1996 report *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation.*

19. The DAC and its Members have instituted a number of measures to promote attention to issues of women and gender equality in development. These include policy initiatives as well as contributions to the development of conceptual tools and methodological adaptations, and the sharing of experiences. The DAC adopted the *Guiding Principles to Aid Agencies for Supporting the Role of Women in Development* in 1983. These were revised in 1989 to include experiences acquired by member countries during the intervening period, and in consideration of the 1985 strategy document issued by the UN conference held in Nairobi to mark the end of the Decade for Women, *Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women*. The Guiding Principles contributed greatly to the promotion of a shared awareness among DAC Members of women's economic and social roles, and of the necessity of improving the quality of aid by addressing the situation and participation of women in their development cooperation. They also prompted Members' adoption of formal mandates, policies or principles within their own organisations and development activities, measures which have been followed or accompanied by various mechanisms to support policy implementation in programmes and projects.

20. Following its endorsement of gender equality as an overall strategic goal for development co-operation in 1995, the DAC formulated in 1996 a Draft Gender Action Framework to support the incorporation of gender issues into all work by the DAC, its subsidiary bodies and working parties. And in early 1998 the DAC adopted its new guidelines, *DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation*. These reflect accumulated experience to date, and represent a broadening of development visions, of perspective and of emphasis. Whereas the Guiding Principles focused on targeting women through special initiatives and on the development of Women in Development (WID) expertise or focal points in organisations, programmes and projects, the Guidelines emphasize sustainable, just and effective people-centred development in

terms of a two-pronged approach: (1) gender equality as a development goal, and (2) a commitment to *mainstreaming* as an overall strategy for systematically incorporating gender and women's empowerment perspectives in all development work, thereby supporting the goal of gender equality.

21. The Guidelines' recommendations for improved quality and effective action by DAC Members with respect to reporting, monitoring and evaluation of progress towards gender equality *emphasize innovation* in terms of:

– mutual learning based on joint reflection and the sharing of experience;
– flexibility and the incorporation of lessons learned into policy and programme implementation;
– enhanced co-ordination, partnership strategies and institutional capacity building for both Members and partners;
– policy formulation and planning procedures; and
– processes and competence for impact assessment.

22. Members' are further recommended to improve monitoring and evaluation processes and mechanisms by *inter alia*:

– formulating policies and strategies that clearly set out goals and the means by which overall progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment can be assessed;
– improving their own capacity for monitoring and evaluating progress in mainstreaming gender equality in specific interventions;
– supporting partners' efforts and capacity to formulate clear measurable goals and expected results, and to monitor and evaluate results achievement relating to gender equality and women's empowerment.[2]

23. In the course of preparing the guidelines, materials concerning definitions of key concepts and approaches for addressing gender equality issues were compiled into the *DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality* (OECD 1998). The Source Book recognizes that reporting, monitoring and evaluation are key entry points and opportunities for assessing and improving development cooperation ideologies, practices and impacts. Feedback through reporting, monitoring and evaluation on progress made towards gender equality and women's empowerment, or on obstacles encountered contribute to learning. However, it also notes that there is a tendency in assessments of women's empowerment and gender equality to focus on process, inputs and activities rather than on results and impacts. Moreover, assessments tend to be subjective and often based on the values and implicit assumptions about gender and equality on the part of the evaluator. The absence of specific objectives or goals concerning women's participation and empowerment and gender equality means that there are few criteria against which to measure progress or achievements. If discussed at all, gender equality issues are treated as

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[2] *DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation*, page 24.

"add-ons" in project monitoring and evaluation, i.e. they are often separate from the over-all discussion and analysis.[3]

24. The DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (formerly DAC Expert Group on Aid Evaluation) has previously carried out two major assessment studies concerning gender and evaluation, in collaboration with the DAC Working Party on Gender Equality (formerly the DAC Expert Group on Women in Development). A report distributed in 1989, *Women as Agents and Beneficiaries in Development Projects*, indicated that evaluations were not addressing the situation and participation of women. A three-part assessment study was carried out as a DAC contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. This study, *Assessment of DAC Members' WID Policies and Programmes*,[4] was one of the most comprehensive reviews ever undertaken of DAC and Member implementation of gender policies and measures. It marked a milestone in what has developed into a continuing process of documenting and sharing insights, experiences and results since that time. The Assessment included a thematic study on WID as a cross-cutting issue in evaluations in which 1,315 evaluation reports 1989-1993 from 16 donors were analyzed.

25. Indicators for assessing the evaluation reports included: the incidence and general quality of overall discussion; explicit mention of WID or gender in the evaluation Terms of Reference; WID or gender expertise on the evaluation team; women as member(s) of the evaluation team; the use of sex-disaggregated data in the evaluation report; and whether the project budget included allocations for WID and the use of such funds.

26. Some of the findings of the Assessment relevant for evaluation include: evidence that progress had been achieved in discussions of gender issues in reports, in that more than twice as many evaluation reports addressed gender issues in 1993 as compared to 1989; there was a corresponding decrease in evaluations that did not at all discuss gender; and there was some improvement in terms of gender-balanced evaluation teams, explicit mention of gender issues in Terms of Reference and in the use of sex-disaggregated data during the same period. However, the 1993/4 WID assessment also found that: the evaluation reports reviewed were generally characterized by poor quality and depth of discussion concerning gender; evaluation criteria were gender-insensitive; gender issues only exceptionally originally included in the project except for women's projects; overall project approach, knowledge and consideration of socio-economic conditions and target group participation seem to promote attention to gender in evaluations; there were major sectoral differences in how gender was addressed such that evaluations of agriculture sector projects seemed to address gender issues more fully than those of e.g. social sector and energy projects; and there was very little discussion of gender in relation to benefits or short term results, and none in terms of effects or impact.

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[3] *DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality*, p. 36.

[4] OECD, December 1994.

27. Recommendations from the 1993/4 WID Assessment concerning gender perspectives in evaluation included: (1) the adoption of more participatory approaches in overall programming, project design and implementation; (2) better knowledge of local culture, conditions and perspectives; (3) the development and dissemination of evaluation guidelines and methodologies to improve the quality of discussions and assessments of gender issues in evaluations; (4) improvement in reporting and in the general quality of evaluations, and in the assessment of effects and impact with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment, among other things through improving the availability and use of sex-disaggregated data so that the distribution of benefits may be tracked; (5) better attention to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation Terms of Reference, through increased competence on evaluation teams, and by the incorporation of gender perspectives in evaluation criteria; and (6) a suggestion that a review of the implementation of the Assessment's recommendations be undertaken during 1997 or 1998.

28. This report summarizes the findings of a review to follow up the 1993/4 WID Assessment in light of the DAC Gender Action Framework and the new DAC Guidelines. The purpose of the review is to discover the extent to which the observations and recommendations of the 1993/4 WID Assessment, and the Guidelines are being followed with respect to policy adjustments, programme and project design, evaluation design and practice, and the assessment and analysis of development effects and impacts regarding gender equality and women's empowerment.

1.2   Review Method and Approach

29. The follow-up Review was designed and been carried out as a two-part exercise. The first part comprised Members' reviews and assessments of their own work since 1993 with the help of a reporting guide. The reporting guide was designed to elicit information about Members' experiences and ongoing work with gender equality and women's empowerment issues in three main areas:

1.   Members' overall and gender policy development, planning principles and procedures, programming and project design;
2.   Members' evaluation policies, evaluation design and evaluation practice;
3.   Members internal assessments of evaluation reports and results since 1993.

30. Questions 1–6 in the *Guide for Reporting* (See Appendix 1) addresses the first of these areas. These sections required respondents to report on the existence and nature of policies, and to judge the extent and degree of specificity of policies with respect to gender content. They allow for Members' own comments, explanations or ideas beyond standard multiple-choice responses. Questions were also included on measures for implementing policies, and on explicit requirements and mechanisms for ensuring compliance with policy directives and mandates.

31. The second set of issues concerns information about Members' evaluation policies, evaluation design and evaluation practice (questions 7–14 in the *Guide for Reporting*). These sections required Members' to report on the ways in which evaluation policies address issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, on requirements and mechanisms for ensuring that gender perspectives are incorporated into evaluations, including the existence of monitoring indicators, and attention to evaluation team composition and specialised competence. Questions were also included to elicit Members' thinking and practice with regard to capacity building for gender-sensitive evaluations in partner countries, as well as the use of participatory approaches in evaluations. Here, too, Members' were encouraged to note down their own comments, explanations and reflections beyond the multiple-choice responses provided.

32. Questions 15–17 in the *Guide for Reporting* focus on Members' internal assessments of evaluation reports and results since 1993. These sections enquire about Members' own efforts to follow up treatment of gender equality and women's empowerment issues in their agency's evaluations. Members who had not previously done so or who wished to update earlier findings were encouraged to carry out an assessment of selected reports from evaluations conducted 1995–1997. Members could thus track differences or changes and trends since 1993, and also attempt to analyze the nature and effects of any changes discovered. Here, the *Guide for Reporting* enquired particularly about changes or reflections regarding issues noted in the observations and recommendations of the WID Assessment report evaluation study, i.e. type of support, sector, partner involvement and the use of participatory approaches in evaluations, the use of sex-disaggregated figures and statistics, analysis of results in terms of effects or impact, and mechanisms for ensuring or improving attention to gender issues in evaluations. These sections also provided an opportunity for Members to identify examples of Good Practice or of evaluations that could be of particular learning value to share with others.

33. Thirteen of the reports were compiled by agency evaluation unit staff, four of these together with an agency gender specialist, and one with an agency social development specialist. One report was compiled by an agency gender specialist alone, one by the agency unit for Policy Advice, and the remaining report by a consultant in close collaboration with the agency's Social Development Division. The Follow-up Review required an overview of experiences from each agency, but in hindsight, it would also have been valuable to have incorporated the views of a selection of the evaluators themselves. Partner perspectives are also lacking.

34. Part two of the Review has consisted of working through the completed reporting guides and other materials submitted, and compiling this synthesis report of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.3 Submitted materials

35. Of 31 distributed *Guides for Reporting* to Members, observers and non-DAC OECD countries, replies were received from 15 Members and one observer. Thirteen of these are from Members who also participated in both the main part of the 1993/4 WID Assessment and the Theme III study on gender issues in aid evaluation: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, The European Commission (DG VIII), Finland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Two members – Japan and Norway – submitted two replies each, reflecting a division of evaluation responsibility between the Foreign Ministry and administrative, planning and implementing agencies, JICA and NORAD respectively. Three replies were received from two Members with relatively new evaluation functions (Portugal and Spain), and from a regional, multilateral lending institution (the Asian Development Bank/ASDB).

36. Since the 1993/4 WID Assessment a number of Members have undergone and/or are undergoing institutional changes or adjustments that are expected to affect the evaluation function, and subsequently the ways in which gender issues are being addressed in evaluations. These changes include new organizational and administrative structures for development cooperation (e.g. Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK), revised or new procedures for management and reporting (e.g. Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, USA, UK), and new gender accountability systems or procedures due to new gender policies or policy support mechanisms (e.g. Denmark, Switzerland). Some Members submitted materials illustrating these developments.

37. A number of Members noted that such changes affected their reports in terms of comparing their present findings and observations with the conclusions reported in the 1993/4 WID Assessment. In addition to differences in terminology and in the implementation of "WID" or "GAD" approaches respectively during the two assessments, organizational changes have meant that e.g. sector designations and other considerations have implications for the ways that agencies now work with gender issues in policy and practice as compared to the 1989–1993 period. While some of these difficulties were perceived to be due to changes in e.g. reporting requirements, reorganization or other kinds of institutional adjustments, changes in planning procedures, etc. since the previous assessment, comparison was also considered to be difficult due to new contexts, accountability requirements, etc.

38. In addition to the completed Guides, nine responses included examples of evaluations as proposed suitable learning cases (in terms of producing some positive effects in the field in terms of gender equality, and/or in terms of addressing gender equality issues in the evaluation report), special reports, policy initiatives, methodological documents and other materials.

39. Altogether, eight Members and the ASDB reviewed the composition of evaluation teams 1995–1997 in order to answer question 11 in the Guide regarding gender balance and specialized expertise on teams. Three Members – Denmark, Finland and Switzerland – reported on internal assessments recently performed or in planning, that have a bearing on the issues discussed in this follow-up Review: Denmark reports plans to undertake a special study during 1999 to assess the incorporation of gender issues in evaluations based on a selection of reports. Finland has recently evaluated gender and cultural dimensions of 23 projects in four of its partner countries in Africa through support to research at the University of Helsinki[5]; and Switzerland reports the forthcoming publication of the results of an Assessment Study of the implementation and effects of activities related to gender equality in India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger and Peru.

40. Australia, Canada and Sweden conducted special assessments of a selection of reports from agency evaluations completed 1995–1997, in order to provide detailed answers to questions 16 and 17 in the Guide concerning observed changes towards progress made in addressing gender issues in evaluations since the 1993/4 WID Assessment. These are summarized below.

1.3.1   Internal Asessment Study – Australia

41. AusAID undertook a desk study of 39 reports from evaluations and performance reviews conducted by AusAID's Performance Information and Assessment Section (formerly the Section for Evaluation and Review) from April 1993 to May 1998[6]. The reports were rated according to AusAID's lists of key and auxiliary questions recommended for inclusion in reviews and evaluations in the earlier WID policy (1984) and the 1997 Gender and Development policy respectively. Central features were to compare attention given to gender issues before and after the 1993/94 DAC WID Assessment, and to assess the impact of the introduction of a new Gender Equality to replace the earlier Women in Development (WID) policy. While the 1984 WID policy focused on the needs of women and the importance of ensuring that women were beneficiaries of Australia's development cooperation program, the GAD policy introduced in 1997 represented a change in focus to the promotion of equality between women and men.

42. The study found that the majority of reviews and evaluations do refer to gender issues, but that the amount, quality and relevance of discussion varies considerably. However, gender policy reforms are not (yet?) reflected in an improvement in the extent to which women's empowerment and gender equality issues are addressed. The assessment concludes that the greater proportion of the lower ratings given to reviews done after the introduction of the GAD policy seems to some extent to be a result of the greater rigour that is required to answer the range of questions that are set out in the policy statement and accompanying guidelines.

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[5] R.B.Kassea and A-M. Pirttilä-Backman. 1999. *Gender Equality in the Finnish Development Cooperation Projects in Africa*.

[6] *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in AusAID Evaluations*. AusAID 1998.

43. AusAID reports that a number of actions are being taken to improve the situation, including provision of better pre-departure briefing and/or training on gender issues for teams, as well as the introduction of a payment milestone that relates to the acceptable review of gender and other cross-cutting or sectoral issues in reports.

1.3.2 Internal Assessment Study – Canada

44. CIDA reviewed a sample of 40 reports from a total of 131 evaluations completed 1995–1997[7]. To the extent possible, a similar number of reports for each sector as in the 1993/4 review were chosen for the sake of comparison.

45. The review concluded that attention to gender issues increased overall during the period, in that a greater percentage of reports than in 1993 contain a full rather than a partial discussion of gender issues, with the exception of agriculture sector project evaluations where *none* contained a full discussion (as compared to 25% 1993/4). However, at the same time, a larger number of evaluation reports from social infrastructure and energy projects than in 1993 contain *no* discussion at all of gender issues (half of social infrastructure projects and two-thirds of energy projects).

46. Further, there has been considerable improvement in the use of sex-disaggregated data except for social infrastructure projects where there has been some decrease. However, it is noted that figures and statistical information are often minimal and limited to basic details such as the number or percentage of women participants, or as in a few cases, the number of women interviewed for the evaluation. Half of the reports address gender equality and women's empowerment only in the assessment of activities, and in most cases, they do not address results, benefits or impacts other than in general terms. When quantitative data is provided, this does not seem to be accompanied by an analysis of the significance of the figures provided in terms of project performance.

47. CIDA's review also notes that establishing evaluation criteria specifically related to women's empowerment and gender equality seems to have worked well in terms of providing good assessments of these issues. Further, there seems to be a positive correlation between the depth of the assessments, the extent or detail of gender specific evaluation criteria, and the participation of partner country evaluators on the one hand, and the extent to which gender issues are addressed in evaluations on the other hand.

1.3.3 Internal Assessment Study – Sweden

48. Sida reviewed the total population of 42 evaluation reports completed April 1997 through mid-1998[8]. 65% of the reports assessed were found to address gender issues more (approximately 10%) or less (55%) fully, a slight increase from the 61% noted in the review

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[7] An enhanced version of this report was compiled in early 1999, *An Assessment of Women in Development and Gender Equity in Evaluations. An extended version of a report prepared for the DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation*, Ottawa, Ontario: CIDA Performance Review Branch.

[8] L.Peck. 1999. *Evaluating Gender Equality – Policy and Practice. An Assessment of Sida's Evaluations 1997–1998*. Stockholm: Sida.

done for the 1993/4 WID Assessment. In no case was Sida's 1996 policy goal of gender equality actually addressed or referred to in terms of project implementation or results. Rather gender issues are treated usually as a special set of issues that is rather separate and apart, or as a side effect from the main thrust of the evaluations. Moreover, it was found that discussions usually are limited to the participation of or possible benefits accruing to *women*, rather than how the situation of women and of men respectively has changed or has been affected as a result or consequence of the project or programme. It was also found that there is little discussion of gender in connection with explicit target group discussions and that a confusion in terminology – "women", "gender" and "gender equality" are often used interchangeably – appears to make adequate analysis difficult.

49. About 1/3 of the reports reviewed contain sex-disaggregated statistics or figures, however *not* with respect to target group discussions or to discussions and analyses of results or effects. Further, there is often a lack of data and considerable inconsistency in the reports between findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning gender issues. Slightly more reports were found to contain some discussion of gender issues (65%) than was explicitly requested in the Terms of Reference (62%) for the evaluations.

50. Reasons for this situation are found to be: unclear or general formulation of project objectives; imprecise or very weak guidance provided by evaluation Terms of Reference, although the incidence itself of explicit mentions of gender has seemingly increased compared to the 1993/94 Assessment; insufficient time and inadequate competence (both desk officers and evaluators); conceptual confusion such that evaluators clearly are unsure of what is expected of them; and failure to incorporate gender perspectives in evaluation criteria.

1.4   Structure of the Synthesis Report

51. Figure 1 on page 19 presents an overview of participants in the follow-up Review, whether or not they participated in the 1993/94 WID Assessment Theme III Evaluation Study; whether or not a Gender Policy is in place, the date or dates (a number of agencies have revised their policy one or more times) the gender policy entered into effect and the extent to which it addresses evaluation; as well as whether or not there is an Evaluation Policy and the extent to which it addresses issues relating to gender equality and women's empowerment.

52. Chapter 2 summarizes the present situation in terms of agencies' policy development and policy implementation, and in programming and project planning and design. It begins with an summary discussion of a key issue raised in many agency reports by the review, that of terminology and definitions relating to gender equality and women's empowerment

53. Chapter 3 discusses agencies' current evaluation policies and practices, and the ways in which Members' are addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in reporting, monitoring, performance assessments and evaluations. This section also contains a

discussion of Members' support to evaluation capacity-building with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment in partner countries, and of experiences with participatory approaches.

54. Chapter 4 concerns agency assessments of evaluation reports 1995–1997 and summarizes findings in terms of perceived results and changes in terms of evaluating gender equality and women's empowerment since 1993.

55. Chapter 5 presents conclusions and recommendations based on the review. A major recommendation concerns a Working Party workshop to be held in Sweden in the late fall of 1999. The Workshop would convene both DAC Members/Observers and partner country evaluators and gender experts to discuss the findings of the Review as presented in this synthesis report, and to share experiences of agency initiatives, successes and persistent obstacles to adequately addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations.

Appendix 1 contains the Review *Guide for Reporting*. The guide was used to structure the information recorded by Members regarding experiences and self-assessments of ongoing work to incorporate gender issues into evaluations. Appendix 2 provides a list of reference materials.

Figure 1

PARTICIPANTS IN 1998–99 FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Country	Participation in 1993/4 Assessment Evaluation Study	Gender Policy Date & its Content on Evaluation	Treatment of Gender Issues in Evaluation Policy
Asian Dev. Bank	No	1985; extensive	Brief
Australia	Yes	1984;1997; Brief	Not at all
Belgium	Yes	1996; Brief but specific	Brief
Canada	Yes	1995; Brief (emphasis is on ongoing monitor-ing)	Not at all, but included in the Performance Review Policy
Denmark	Yes	1993; 1996; Brief	Brief
European Commission	Yes	1991; Brief	Brief
Finland	Yes	1993; Brief	Brief
Japan	Yes	1991; 1995; Brief	Extensive for some evaluations
Netherlands	Yes	1980; 1987; 1991 Brief	Not at all
Norway	Yes	1985; 1997; No information on evaluation content	Brief
Portugal	No	No policy	No policy
Spain	No	1998; extensive	Extensive
Sweden	Yes	1996; brief	Brief
Switzerland	Yes	1993 (will update year 2000); Brief	No policy
UK	Yes	1988; 1996; Brief	Brief. 1999 update will have more on gender.
USA	Yes	1982; 1996; extensive	Extensive for annual per-formance reports

2. Agency Experiences with Gender equality and Women's Empowerment since the 1993/4 WID Assessment: Approaches, Policies and Planning

2.1 Concepts, Frameworks, Approaches: Women, WID, Gender, Gender Equality, GAD

56. The promotion of sustainable development processes is a challenging undertaking at all levels of development cooperation. It requires understanding and addressing a wide range of factors, structures, contexts, possible causes and effects concerning inequality between females and males, and discovering how the projects we evaluate have involved and affected different categories of females and males in target, beneficiary and key stakeholder groups. It also requires that we recognize and can address issues of gender equality in terms of linkages to other goals of people-centred sustainable development such as poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, participatory development, etc.

57. In the follow-up Review, some agencies noted a clear connection between confusion or lack of clarity in the use of specific concepts related to gender equality and women's empowerment on one hand, and on the other hand difficulties in defining and communicating what it is that should be addressed, analyzed and assessed or measured in specific evaluations. In the internal assessment study done for this Review, AusAID finds when considering the impact of the introduction in 1997 of a Gender and Development Policy to replace its 1984 Women in Development policy, that this reform is *not* reflected in an improvement in the extent to which women's development and gender issues are addressed by reviews[9]. The study surmises that this may be due in part to the greater rigour required to answer the auxiliary questions set out in the GAD policy statement for inclusion in reviews and evaluations. The internal assessment studies of AusAID and Sida both conclude that steps should be taken to ensure that concepts are understood, and that review and evaluation teams have a better understanding of the range of issues and considerations that affect gendered participation in projects, women's empowerment, gender relations and the likelihood of equal benefits accruing to target and beneficiary groups.

58. The 1993/4 WID Assessment Report discussed the use of "WID" as an inclusive concept within which "gender and development/GAD" and "gender issues" in general could be subsumed. Due to the popularity and currency of WID among Members at that time, the report concluded that WID could be a "convenient, summary term" for a range of activities and approaches concerned with women's participation and empowerment, and with equality between women and men (p. 6). However, the report also recommended that Members adopt Gender and Development as opposed to Women in Development (WID)

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[9] *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in AusAID Evaluations*, p. 2.

general policy frameworks and approaches to take broader social contexts into account, and to emphasize the development *goal* of equality between women and men.[10] But what exactly does "a broader gender approach" or "a gender equality approach" entail for evaluators and evaluations as distinct from "a WID approach"? Agency reports reveal little awareness of this question in terms of the information on women and gender relations reflected in the findings and analyses in evaluation reports.

59. Agencies note that evaluation reports may contain some information about the numbers of female beneficiaries of project resources and services, or as participants and consultees during specific evaluations. However, exceedingly few evaluation reports contain comparisons with benefits to males or male involvement in projects. They are to an even lesser extent able to link changes in the relative situations of females and males involved in projects to progress towards equality between and among females and males, defined in terms of equal access or opportunity of resources, services, positive effects of projects, etc.

60. It is clear from Members' responses that agencies and the DAC seem to share a general ideological understanding of what is meant by *gender* and by *gender equality*. However, at operational levels it is not always clear how activities should be defined from a gender equality perspective, or what should be measured and how in assessments of progress towards achieving gender equality goals. Use of concepts related to gender equality is inconsistent, among other things "women" and "gender" appear frequently to be used interchangeably and as approximate synonyms of one another. In addition, the significance or relevance of including the situation of males in gender analyses appears not always to be understood.

61. As far as performance or progress assessments and evaluations are concerned, this conceptual confusion seems among other things to result in general or vague requests for information required to assess progress towards specific intervention objectives, activities and outcomes in e.g. evaluation Terms of Reference. Evaluators thus appear to find it difficult to define precisely what issues they should assess and why, which categories of beneficiary individuals and groups should be approached and consulted with, and where relative emphasis should be placed (women's roles? women's participation? relations between women and men?). The fact that evaluators may also receive inadequate briefing or methodological support from Members as well as from partners means that addressing gender issues may be arbitrary and subject to individual evaluators' gender awareness, commitment and motivation, knowledge of relevant issues and gender competence, all of which combine to affect overall ability to take the personal responsibility required for addressing women's empowerment and gender equality in a meaningful way in specific evaluations.

62. It has been common to portray WID and GAD as quite distinct conceptual approaches and strategies, and to interpret the relationship between them as one of explicit or implicit

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[10] OECD/CIDA. 1994. *Assessment of DAC Members' WID Policies and Programmes*, pp. 28-29, p. 43, p.III-4.

opposition despite their commonalities. This appears to hold generally true internationally as well as for most DAC Members and Observers. Most of the available literature, reference materials, reports, policy statements and analytical documents explicitly or implicitly depict the relationship between the two approaches as a "shift" from WID to GAD that has occurred or should be taking place. Moreover, most commonly-used gender analytic frameworks tend inadvertently to reinforce this essentializing tendency by the use of oppositional schemes for the mapping and analysis of activities, roles, access, capacities, vulnerabilities, power, needs, interests, priorities, etc. of women *versus* men.

63. In the interest of demonstrating the feasibility and value of combining WID and GAD approaches in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, it is perhaps in order to outline a few points. A number of basic issues lie at the core of the two approaches that enhance their similarities and potential for mutual reinforcement *despite* distinguishing features:

– the recognition and visibility of women, their lives and their possibilities;

– ways in which the issue of inequality is viewed, i.e. in terms of androcentrism or systematic, pervasive bias in favour of males, or exclusively in terms of the universal subordination of all women as a single gender category or group;

– how links between gender, decision-making and public or political power are characterized; and

– how inclusive specific analytical frameworks are of females and males other than adult women and men (most are *not* inclusive of girls and boys below the age of about 11 or 12 years, female and male adolescents 11–15 years, or female and male young people 15–18 years of age, and cannot easily be adapted to these age groups. Some also pose difficulties when efforts are made to apply them to elderly women and men);

– the risks adherent to targeting women exclusively (overburdening; marginalization of women; reinforcement of women's stereotyped roles and responsibilities; negligence of male roles, activities and responsibilities; and backlash), we also realize the necessity of rendering the lives and situations of females visible if equitable development is to be achieved.

64. The operational definitions of gender equality used in agencies' monitoring of policy implementation and in evaluations are influenced by both WID and GAD frameworks. The challenge is to link on the one hand project focus, feasible strategies, and target and beneficiary group identification and participation (women? men? females and males? poor/disenfranchised women? poor/disenfranchised women *and* men?) to on the other hand, the promotion of gender equality as an overall policy goal, and in terms of the objectives of specific interventions.

What seems to be required as a basic point of departure is recognition that WID and GAD approaches are not or do not necessarily have to be perceived as intrinsically in opposition to one another. Figures 2a and 2b on the next two pages focus on the commonalities and points of integration between WID and GAD.

Figure 2a

APPROACHES ADDRESSING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
AND GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPMENT

WID	GAD
Commonalities	
Recognition of the importance of rendering females visible in development contexts	
Concern for the situation and empowerment of women	
Recognition of sex and gender discrimination	
Recognition of women's contributions to development	
Acknowledgement of and respect for women's knowledge, experience and perspectives	
Characterized by both quantitative and qualitative dimensions	

Distinguishing but Integrable Features

WID	GAD
Focus on Women's activities and roles	Focus on Gender relations and on activities and roles of men as well as women
The problem is seen as women's exclusion, therefore emphasis is on women's rights, on increasing women's participation in development and *on women's economic empowerment*.	The problem is seen as gender inequality, *which is often an effect as well as a cause of women's exclusion.* Therefore, emphasis is on women's and men's human rights, on the quality of and conditions for the equal participation of both women and men in development, on the equal distribution of benefits, and on the transformation of power relations between women and men in the society.
Tendency to treat women and men as internally homogeneous groups in opposition to one another in analyses	Views females and males as highly differentiated groups, and gender inequalities as influenced by e.g. age, class, caste, status, ethnic identity, locality, religion, etc.
Emphasis on increasing women-specific projects and initiatives, *or increasing the numbers of women participating in mainstream projects*	Emphasis on using gender analyses in identifying and preparing all projects and programmes (*mainstreaming*), to determine targeted beneficiaries and incorporate a gender perspective in project design
Tendency to focus on Women, exceptionally on girl children (in e.g. education sector projects)	Expanded scope for focus on females and males of all ages

2.2 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Agency Policies

65. The 1993/94 WID Assessment discerned a general pattern of uneven policy development among agencies due to *inter alia* differences in particular national or regional development cooperation histories, political and economic conditions, and the source and nature of initial efforts to work institutionally with women's participation in development. However, in 1999 practically all agencies report policy mandates and frameworks for gender equality issues. Although there continue to be differences in the ways in which agencies work with gender issues and the degree of perceived success attained, the policies adopted and the operational tools developed reflect a high degree of a common awareness and shared understanding of the issues involved. The vigour with which agencies are developing various measures to support the implementation of policies and thereby the improvement of quality of programmes and projects appear to reflect the existence of a general consensus about the institutional and methodological adjustments required. DAC's work in support of the incorporation of gender issues into Member's development cooperation work since 1994 has surely contributed to this, not least through the new Guidelines, providing opportunities for agencies to meet and exchange experiences and lessons learned.

66. A number of striking policy developments are noted in agency responses to questions 1-6 in the Guide. The process of policy development, adoption and implementation with respect to gender equality has unfolded in various ways for the different Members and other agencies. Policy efforts incorporating gender were initiated early on for some members (preceding the 1993/4 WID Assessment and the Beijing Conference in 1995), while others have fairly recently formulated such policies. Most members report that they have revised their overall and gender policies since the WID Assessment, or are currently in the process of doing so. A few agencies have revised their gender policies more than once since their earliest versions. There also appear to be differences in the nature and potential use of agency policies in operational work, in that some outline key objectives and/or principles, while others also include general plans of action or directives and recommendations for policy implementation in specific planning contexts.

67. A general impression is that later and revised policies – both overall agency policies and gender policies – appear generally to be more explicit or far-reaching than earlier ones. Fully thirteen respondents (12 Members and the ASDB) state that their agency's overall policy documents presently treat the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment extensively with concrete recommendations. Many of these responses also go on to explain that gender is one of several priorities their agency has identified for development cooperation and/or is a major development cooperation objective for their country and agency. Three Members report that their overall policies treat gender issues, albeit briefly or in general terms. A number of responses in both these categories also report that the overall policies are supported by separate or supplementary policy statements, and/or by thematic or sector development policies that also address gender issues.

68. In response to question 3 in the Guide regarding the existence of a specific policy for gender equality, fifteen respondents (14 Members and the ASDB) report the existence of a specific gender policy. Of these, eleven Members have new, revised or expanded policies formulated or supplemented after the 1993/94 Assessment, six of them since 1996. Moreover, in several cases these policies also include a strategy, Plan of Action or guidelines in support of their implementation. Eleven agencies also report that issues of gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed briefly or in general terms with respect to evaluation, while two agencies state that gender issues are addressed extensively and with concrete recommendations. Three Members report that although their gender equality policies contain brief discussions of evaluation, these references are very specific: Australia mentions that gender is to be addressed as a key issue in evaluations; Switzerland notes that the agency gender policy contains specific questions/pointers concerning gender issues in evaluations; and Belgium comments that its agency gender policy specifies that gender issues should be addressed in evaluations through appropriate indicators, gender evaluation criteria and gender expertise on evaluation teams. Two agencies with gender policies did not reply to the second part of question 3 in the reporting guide regarding the treatment of evaluation in their gender policies.

69. While noting the dynamism and continual development of Members' policy work, there are also indications that this very dynamism places heavy demands on planning, monitoring and evaluation. The fact that so many agencies have new or newly revised policy frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment as well as for other prioritised concerns and goals such as poverty, policy reform, economic restructuring, institutional development, capacity building, democracy and human rights, etc, means that there will be varying degrees of the extent to which these have been able to become so well-established and familiar that they have had time to become incorporated into programme and project planning, and thus to be reflected in monitoring and evaluation reports.

70. Agencies' policy developments are usually followed by measures to support implementation such as institutional mechanisms, guidelines and other operational tools, training, etc., and many agencies now are in the process of developing such measures. This may partly explain the results most agencies report. They note that addressing achievements or results with regard to gender equality continues to primarily involve efforts to ascertain in quantitative terms how many women were reached by a given project or programme and/or what project outputs or short-term benefits participating women receive. Evaluation reports that effectively assess improvements in females' and males' situations, and effects in terms of progress toward women's empowerment and gender equality are still rather few and far between.

2.3 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in agency planning, procedural frameworks and project design

71. Seven respondents including the ASDB report that the treatment of gender equality and women's empowerment issues in main agency planning and procedural frameworks is extensive with concrete recommendations for measures and actions. Examples provided include the existence of quite detailed instructions, the use of the DAC gender policy marker system to categorize programmes and projects, strategic plans, procedural handbooks, guidelines including computerized forms of directives that agency staff can access from their stations, various screening mechanisms, and varying degrees of inclusion into agency LFA or Project Cycle Management processes. Some respondents remark that their agencies are presently reviewing key aspects of planning and procedures to better address gender equality and other sustainable development goals.

72. Nine Members report that their agencies planning and procedural frameworks treat gender equality and women's empowerment briefly or in general terms. Comments from this group also note among other things that agency reviews of planning procedures and frameworks are underway due to a need for better and more accessible methods to address gender issues, as well as e.g. participation. In this connection, interesting observations are made by respondents concerning the fact that even where fairly detailed instructions or gender screening mechanisms exist, these are not always enforced.

73. Question 4 in the Guide concerns agencies' explicit requirements for incorporating gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives into project and programme design. Fourteen Members report that *despite* explicit agency requirements, these are not always enforced. A single Member – CIDA – reports that incorporation of gender equality and women's empowerment into project and programme design is explicitly required and always enforced. The remaining agency, the ASDB, notes that although it is not explicitly required to incorporate gender issues in design, they are sometimes addressed nonetheless.

74. Respondents' comments and explanations on this point reflect a widespread concern among Members about the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement mechanisms for addressing gender issues in project and programme design. For example, in reply to questions 5 and 6 in the Guide regarding requirements for specifying expected outputs, results or impact in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment in project and programme design, ten agencies report that explicit requirements exist. In a number of instances, this requirement was linked to the use of LFA or PCM methodologies. In one case the requirement concerned interventions with a DAC gender policy marker of 1 or 2. All respondents report that one or more mechanisms are in place in their agencies for ensuring that gender issues are addressed. Most report the existence of several, potentially mutually-reinforcing mechanisms, including specific review or project inspection committees and processes; gender specialists, focal points or advisory groups; performance indicators; quality support groups or units, and multi-disciplinary task forces; designation of gender as a Special Reporting Area; and gender supervision visits. Finland is launching a

Cultural Analysis initiative intended to improve attention to gender and interlinkages with other social, economic and cultural issues in recognition of the fact that improvements in addressing gender issues requires better knowledge of local perspectives and practices, and of local definitions and systems of meaning.

75. Yet despite explicit requirements, checklists, and various "double-checking" mechanisms, a few reports point out that project proposals and pre-implementation planning documents which clearly lack attention to gender are never rejected or returned for revision on these grounds to those responsible for the project planning. The reports do not contain detailed explanations of *why* compliance is so weak. Unfortunately, a shortcoming of the Guide is that it enquires only whether and what mechanisms exist, not how they actually function or are used. However, the reports do indicate that causes for ineffective enforcement are to be found in a combination of institutional and individual staff factors. A number of Members comment spontaneously on the inadequacies of some agency enforcement mechanisms. In their view, a lack of gender competence and personal commitment, as well as work overload are contributing to the lack of effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms. Other causes appear to be: disbursement pressures and the (rapid) pace of planning for some projects, the complexities of partnership, the relatively short period of time that has elapsed since the establishment of some mechanisms, as well as persistent uncertainty about the issues and how to operationalize them among staff despite guidelines and other tools.

76. Many agency reports mention "gender analysis" as one planning tool used to address the systematic incorporation of gender equality and women's empowerment goals into project planning and design. However, the ways that specific kinds of gender analyses are presently being used to refine target group, beneficiary and stakeholder analyses in concrete projects or programmes, and in particular evaluations are not entirely clear. *Gender analysis* has become a generic term used to denote what in actuality are a number of different conceptual and analytical frameworks applied to various development research and planning contexts. Different frameworks can be distinguished from one another in terms of conceptual assumptions and points of departure, in terms of flexibility and adaptability to various project settings, the degree to which they can be used to address the situations of both females and males, etc. They therefore have different advantages, limitations and uses. Most of them are also undergoing fairly rapid change and revision from their original versions in light of new experiences and lessons learned. So far, very little of the rapidly growing literature on gender analysis has explicitly compared different frameworks in a manner accessible to development agency non-specialist staff, although some recent publications are helpful in this regard[11].

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[11] For example: N. Kabeer, *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development.* London: Verso, 1994; A. M. Imam, "Engendering African Social Sciences: An Introductory Essay" and D. Elson, "Gender Analysis and Economics in Africa" in *Engendering African Social Sciences*. Chippertham, Wiltshire: CODESRIA and Anthony Rowe, Ltd., 1997; and C. March, I. Smyth and M. Mukhopadhyay, *A Guide to Gender Analysis Frameworks*. Oxford: Oxfam GB, 1999.

3. Evaluating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Evaluation policy, design and practice

3.1 Evaluation Policy and practice

77. Thirteen Members and the ASDB have an explicit evaluation policy, while two Members lack such a policy. Portugal explains that it has just begun to build up evaluation capacity, and will formulate an evaluation policy in the future. Ten agencies report that gender issues are treated briefly or in general terms in the evaluation policy, while three report that the issues are addressed extensively with concrete recommendations or examples. ASDB notes that although gender issues are addressed only briefly in agency evaluation policy, every evaluation must comment on effects on women. A further three agencies report that gender issues are not treated at all in agency evaluation policy.

78. In several cases, agency evaluation policies are accompanied and supported by guidelines in which gender issues to varying degrees are addressed. Canada, the UK and the US comment on linkages between monitoring and evaluation and their countries' changing information management systems in that context. In all three cases, emphasis is increasingly less on ex post evaluations and more on systematic, ongoing monitoring and review during implementation. USAID notes that this is in keeping with the agency's changing management role, as well as to illuminate and explain annual performance results on a continual basis. It uses a number of measures to support continual monitoring, such as specific activity inventories and an internal strategy and performance review document that tracks performance of specific issues. In this way, the agencies hope to be able to identify broader lessons and good practices more easily. The UK notes that its 1994, pre-DFID ODA Evaluation Guide will be updated during 1999, and it is expected that gender issues will be treated systematically in the revised guide. DFID also uses a strategic agency report, Output to Purpose Reviews (OPRs), for closer contact with interventions.

79. Similar to the situation for project and programme design regarding requirements for and enforcement of the incorporation of issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, discrepancies are reported concerning agencies' transformation of policy into evaluation practice that allows the mainstreaming of gender issues. Twelve agencies report that incorporation is required, but not always enforced. ASDB and Spain report that incorporating gender issues into evaluations is required and always enforced, while Canada and the Netherlands note that addressing gender issues is not required but that evaluation reports sometimes discuss or comment on these issues nonetheless. CIDA states moreover that due to agency requirements to mainstream gender issues into project and programme planning, there is an expectation that they will be discussed in evaluations as well. In (..continued)

answer to question 10 in the Guide concerning agency mechanisms for ensuring attention to gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations, it is interesting to note that all respondents report the existence of several methodological and institutional mechanisms and procedural routines in their agencies. The use of guidelines and the inclusion of gender issues in evaluation Terms of Reference are clearly the most common mechanisms, with eleven agencies reporting these.

3.2　Evaluation Terms of Reference

80. One area of unequivocal progress since the 1993/4 WID Assessment is clearly that of evaluation Terms of Reference. Members unanimously report improvements in terms of increased incidence of explicit requests for information on women and gender issues. The issue of evaluation Terms of Reference also prompted a number of qualifications and other interesting observations from respondents. A few report that incorporation of gender issues in evaluation Terms of Reference is "encouraged but not mandatory". Several note that while explicit gender content of evaluation Terms of Reference in their agency has improved and for some agencies is *always* included, this does not seem yet to prompt noticeable improvement in the kind and quality of information contained in evaluation reports, which continue to be largely inadequate in terms of gender. Other comments concern the issue of relevance and references to the focus of particular projects and programmes, the availability of data and whether it can be feasibly compiled and analyzed within the time and other resources of specific evaluations, and the role played by individual desk officers' interest, competence and commitment. It thus appears that assessments of effects on women and progress made towards gender equality in evaluation reports has shown only marginal improvement *despite* better Terms of Reference. A few agencies observe that this may be due to the fact that gender issues still tend to be referred to in vague or general rather than concrete, context-specific terms, in spite of the noted common tendency of Terms of Reference to be overly prescriptive and detailed. Subsequently, most evaluators – except in the case of evaluators who are also gender and/or social development experts – may thus be uncertain as to what to report on, why and how.

3.3　Institutional and procedural mechanisms

81. The availability of in-house specialist competence is reported by nine agencies to be an important mechanism for gender mainstreaming. In some cases, agencies also have in-house focal point networks, or gender specialists in their embassies in partner countries. Five respondents report the existence or use of monitoring or performance indicators as a mechanism for ensuring attention to gender issues and effects during evaluation. Other mechanisms noted are training, access to a network of consultants who can review Terms of Reference and evaluation reports, and access to performance measurement consultants who also have gender expertise. DFID reports a full-time Social Development Adviser

appointed to DFIDs Evaluation Department since 1997, and JICA reports having gender specialist competence in its Office of Evaluation and Post-project Monitoring.

82. Most agencies do not systematically ensure that evaluation teams include both women and men (fourteen report that this is not done). Nor do most agencies routinely ensure that specialised social and/or gender competence is included on teams (eleven replied no and three yes to this question, while two did not reply). Norway reports that as far as possible all teams should have at least one member with social and/or gender expertise to ensure adequate coverage of project effects on target groups, and that this is routinely stated in evaluation invitations to tender. A number of respondents commented that social and gender expertise is included on teams if deemed (by the responsible desk officer) relevant for the focus of the project or programme being evaluated. Relevance is usually based on whether or not social or gender issues are specifically raised in the Terms of Reference.

83. Twelve agencies report that they do not systematically keep track of approximate overall percentages of women to men on evaluation teams (four replied that they do keep track). Thirteen agencies in all reviewed the composition of most evaluation teams 1995-1997, and provided approximate annual percentages of women on teams, and overall estimates in terms of percentages or ratios of women to men as team leaders. The figures are very tentative as agencies differed somewhat in the ways they went about determining their estimates. The information provided does not indicate a clear trend in one or the other direction. Three agencies show slight increases in the numbers of women on teams. This increase is echoed in numbers of women as team leaders in only one case however. Ten agencies report percentages that remain at about the same level over the three year period for each of the figures. On average, women make up about 22% of team members and about 8% of team leaders, but figures range from 6% to slightly half of team members on the teams selected, and from 0% to 37.5% of team leaders.

84. Two interesting observations emerge from agency reports concerning the issue of evaluation team composition. One is that the relationship between numbers of women and men on teams on the one hand, and gender specialist expertise on the other is unclear. Several reports note that gender competence or expertise and not the sex of team members is the essential issue, particularly if gender competence is coupled with socio-cultural or social development expertise in general. The second is that a few agencies note that good evaluation results in terms of addressing gender issues is achieved when the team leader is a gender expert.

3.4   Partners in evaluation

85. Two Members – Belgium and the USA – report that their agencies provide support to capacity building for gender-sensitive evaluations in partner countries. Belgium reports that support is provided indirectly through NGOs and multilateral channels for capacity-building purposes. The USA provides assistance for the development of gender-sensitive results frameworks. Switzerland reports that although it does not regularly provide support

to partners, it has sponsored some training workshops on evaluation that have included gender issues.

86. With regard to local participation in evaluations, ten agencies report that participatory approaches are used in some evaluations to communicate and incorporate the perspectives of project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders in local communities. Japan and the USA report that they try to employ participatory techniques or methods in most evaluations. The Asian Development Bank reports that it has not employed participatory approaches in evaluations at all due to constraints of time and funds, as well as to perceived conflicts between participatory evaluation and evaluations as impartial management tools. However, the ASDB also notes that it will try out participatory methods in an evaluation of impact on poverty reduction later this year. CIDA reports that 32% of the reports from evaluations reviewed to provide answers to questions 16 and 17 in the Guide on changes and trends since the 1993/4 WID Assessment (presented in the next chapter of this report), concerned participatory evaluations.

87. Use of participatory techniques in evaluations appear to be linked to planners' perceptions of the degree to which specific projects are people-centred. Examples of project or programme contexts in which participatory approaches are employed include NGO implemented projects, village-focused or community-focused projects, urban projects (slum-dwellers), and projects in which "perceptions and attitudes" studies are carried out, usually because direct beneficiary participation was essential to project implementation. Commonly used methods include: working in close collaboration with partner country evaluators and other national or regional consultants; individual and group consultations with female and male beneficiaries in local communities; focus group discussions and other PRA techniques; and participatory community surveys.

88. Agencies' experiences concerning the use of participatory approaches in evaluations raises a number of important issues and problems. One of these concerns difficulties involved in designing and implementing participatory evaluations. Agency comments on participatory evaluation approaches concern some of the difficulties involved, such as the fact that evaluation processes are generally not designed in such a way that genuine participation can take place. Partly, this is due to perceived conflicts between shared decision-making over the purpose and direction of a particular evaluation on the one hand, and donor agency accountability and management responsibilities – and evaluation as a management tool – on the other hand. Other difficulties stem from the fact that participatory evaluations though desirable and valuable can be both costly and time-consuming. Agencies also report problems in identifying and locating both international and local consultants who are experienced and interested in using participatory methods. Another is the link between local participation in evaluations and value-added in terms of improvements in addressing issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment. The reports do not provide conclusive evidence on these issues. However, participatory evaluation approaches clearly comprise an area that Members' are beginning to explore to a greater extent than prior to the 1993/4 Assessment. This is also an area in which considerable work remains to be done.

4. Agency Evaluation Reports and Results 1995–1997: Progress and trends in addressing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

4.1 Emerging Initiatives

89. Agencies are obviously persevering in their efforts to improve their capacity and competence to address issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations. The reports present an exciting array of ongoing and planned activities.

90. Nine agencies report that they have not yet begun to systematically monitor or evaluate progress towards the goals of social development that concern gender equality and women's empowerment identified in the 1996 *Shaping the 21st Century* vision document. Many of these respondents note that some efforts are being made although not consistently and systematically. A key problem concerns the existence and availability of statistics on maternal and infant mortality, and on education. Sida mentions difficulties of "translating" the goals for eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and reducing maternal mortality by 75% by 2015 to fit within the level and limited time frame of specific interventions. In its Strategic Plan, USAID has adopted an adjusted time plan and achievement level to what is seen to be more modest but realistic goals, e.g. to reduce maternal mortality by 10% by the year 2007.

91. On the other hand, seven agencies report that they *have* begun to monitor their assistance in terms of achievement of the 21st Century social development goals. Examples of steps that are being taken include the EC's preparation of monitoring tools and indicators, and DFID's development of a performance reporting instrument for addressing the international social development goals through an Output and Performance Analysis process (OPA) that is presently in the process of being approved. The OPA will include education and health progress indicators for 30 countries. DANIDA is preparing guidelines for the use of an output and outcome indicator system to be used in monitoring the social development goals.

4.2 Evaluation Reports and Results: progress and trends since 1993/4

4.2.1 Internal Assessment

92. Most agencies have apparently not previously instituted efforts to systematically document and assess what progress is being made in evaluating gender equality and women's empowerment. Several reports note the usefulness of this Review in terms of providing an opportunity for internal review, reflection and discussion on agency approaches and practice concerning the monitoring and evaluation of gender issues. The impression is that a number of agencies may use the findings from the Review and their own internal assessment as a kind of information baseline that can be followed up in future.

93. Seven agencies have previously carried out some form of internal assessment, either in the form of in-depth or case studies, various special surveys and impact or other studies. A few report having conducted several such assessments, and one (the US) reports fairly regular monitoring through internal performance assessment reviews to identify Best Practices or "success stories" to be disseminated and shared within the organization.

94. Agencies are involved in a number of already completed, ongoing and/or planned activities – in addition to systematic monitoring or assessment – that are relevant to this follow-up Review. The Netherlands conducted a comprehensive 2-year WID study 1996-1997 to assess results of its development cooperation. In-depth studies were carried out in Burkina Faso and Kenya[12]. A number of Members who had not earlier done so reviewed a selection of their evaluation reports in order to be able to give their impressions of changes and trends. Three Members conducted special and rather extensive assessments (Australia, Canada and Sweden) for this Review in order to answer questions 16 and 17 in the Guide regarding changes since the 1993/4 WID Assessment. Several other Member agencies either already are carrying out or are planning similar assessments or internal reviews related to the theme of gender equality to be completed or implemented during 1999 (Belgium, Denmark, the EC, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the UK).

95. Agencies report a number of shortcomings that although they also affect assessments of gender-related issues and effects, actually concern general weaknesses in evaluation design, implementation and reporting. One is that descriptions and discussions of methodologies and techniques used during specific evaluations are poorly reported and/or motivated. Another is that many projects and programmes have been planned and implemented in such a way that indicators are lacking or inadequate, and objectives are only generally formulated. Moreover, quality of data may be questionable. All of these have implications for what is assessed during evaluation, and how assessment is done.

96. As to whether or not agencies are observing any significant differences or general changes since the 1993/4 Assessment, the picture that is emerging is a very mixed one. Those respondents who report positive results (seven Members) outnumber those who say that they do *not* note any change (four Members and the ASDB). Four Members did not respond to these last two questions. The areas in which agencies report the most significant progress are improvements in evaluation Terms of Reference, and to a somewhat lesser extent, greater attentiveness to the composition of evaluation teams. The experiences of these two issues varies among Members however.

97. On the other hand, the picture is rather dismal when it comes to positive results and achievements in terms of the content and quality of gender-related information, interpretation and analysis in evaluation reports. Although a measure of slow but steady improvement is observed in terms of perceived slight to rather significant increases in the existence and quantity of discussion (this varies from one agency to another), agencies self-

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[12] *Les Femmes du Burkina Faso et la Coopération Néerlandaise 1985–1995*, 1997 and *Women in Kenya and the Netherlands Development Cooperation 1985–1995*, 1998. The Hague: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Policy and Operations Evaluation -Department.

critically report persistent, serious weaknesses – despite improvement in Terms of Reference – in target and beneficiary descriptions and analyses, in data collection including figures and statistics, in data analysis in the reporting of findings, and outcomes, as well as in the reports' conclusions and recommendations. A possible exception is Sida's internal assessment of evaluation reports completed 1997–98, which showed a somewhat higher percentage of information related to women's situation and gender equality in the reports than was actually requested in their respective Terms of Reference. A number of reports note the significance of evaluation team composition in terms of improvements in quality of information on gender-related issues when the team includes a social development or gender specialist.

98. Only very few Members note any significant differences or changes in the incorporation of discussions and analyses of gender-related issues since the last Assessment in terms of sector, or with regard to forms or channels for support. Interestingly in this regard however, a few agencies note that sectors such as Energy, Health and Education appear to show more noticeable change (improvement) than others. This may be due to the "points of departure" for the respective sectors with regard to gender perspectives. In other words, those sectors that were quite clearly devoid of gender related information earlier will show improvement even if reports contain only small amounts of information relatively speaking, whereas sectors – such as agriculture – that did contain some discussion relevant to gender equality and women's empowerment earlier are likely to be viewed as showing no change unless considerable improvement of quality and coverage has been achieved, so that the value-added of the information is easily discernible.

99. In terms of developments with regard to specific key findings and recommendations of the 1993/4 WID Assessment concerning: the use of sex-disaggregated figures and statistics; assessment of activities; the use of participatory approaches in evaluations; reporting of effects or impact in the field; and the development and use of gender-sensitive monitoring and performance indicators or incorporation of gender perspectives into standard evaluation criteria, agency findings based on internal assessments of selected evaluation reports point to very mixed results as described below.

4.2.2   Sex-disaggregated figures and statistics

100. Australia and the USA report that sex-disaggregated figures and statistics appear extensively in the reports assessed. While no agency reports a complete lack of sex-disaggregated statistical data, six say that such data appears seldom, while four report that they are sometimes included in evaluation reports. Sida, for example, reports that sex-disaggregated statistics were included in about one-third of the 42 evaluation reports reviewed. However, the extent, relevance and usefulness of such statistics in the reports varied greatly, especially since *analysis* of such figures or statistics is not done even when they appear. Several agencies observed that the inclusion of sex-disaggregated figures and statistics seems to have increased a bit, but is still limited and that a determining factor appears to be the kind of intervention that is being evaluated. Although it is not clear from the submitted reporting guides and other materials what *kinds* of statistics and other data are disaggregated by sex, the feeling seems to be that interventions concerning macro-

economic issues and institutional restructuring/strengthening represent the kinds of programmes and projects that are often devoid of sex-disaggregated data.

101. Stand-alone women's projects or programme components are also devoid of disaggregated data. Most "women's projects" either explicitly or implicitly in their objectives identify e g "families" and/or "children" or even "the community" as direct or indirect beneficiaries. Even when primary target groups are defined as specified categories or groups of women, it is therefore desirable to assess distribution of benefits to, and project effects or impacts on these other beneficiaries.

4.2.3 Assessment of activities

102. Of the nine agencies reporting on this issue, six observe that the evaluations seldom report on progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment at any level of detail, while three report that this sometimes is done. Although agencies do note improvement, this is at the level of participation in intervention activities, and increasingly in terms of reporting on project or programme outputs. Again, agencies vary greatly in this regard. CIDA reports that up to 50% of evaluation reports contain findings and conclusions on women and gender-related issues, although this is at the level of activities.

4.2.4 The use of participatory approaches in evaluations

103. Of the twelve agencies reporting on the use of participatory approaches in evaluations, nine report using such approaches or techniques in most evaluations, while one sometimes uses these depending on the nature of the intervention being evaluated. Two agencies do not use participatory approaches. A number of interesting comments were made on the usefulness or value-added of participatory approaches with regard to attention to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations. Three agencies note that it is not possible to ascertain what effects the use of participatory approaches or techniques has had, primarily because there is still too little concrete evidence to be able to make any general or conclusive observations. The UK in assessing the overall effects of the range of participatory techniques employed in evaluations, notes that the use of participatory approaches does not appear to have had any bearing in terms of improving coverage of gender issues. In general, there appears to be considerable uncertainty as to the role and weight of participation in evaluation in the context of a concept of evaluation as a donor and/or implementor management tool.

104. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Japan, the Netherlands and the USA report noticeable improvement in addressing gender issues as a result of the use of participatory approaches, and provide examples of such use. The examples provided would seem to indicate that the nature of the intervention and the way it has been planned plays a considerable role. The USA notes that where strategy design as well as performance assessment is done through participatory methods, attention to gender issues improves, particularly in projects concerning literacy and legal rights (education), and where inter-organizational collaboration features strongly. Canada notes that carefully selected country evaluators and experienced use of local-level consultations during evaluations tend to allow evaluations to go beyond assessments of inputs and activities, and to better identify benefits, possible

intended and unintended effects and their distribution among women and men. The Netherlands cites an example where a special preparatory study was done by national gender experts, that provided relevant information for the main evaluation. Although the European Commission apparently does not employ participatory evaluation approaches on a regular basis, it notes that regional or national evaluators can improve evaluations by supplementing and compensating for limited donor agency staff capacity. It also observes that a key problem is identifying qualified, gender-aware evaluators who are experienced in the use of participatory approaches.

4.2.5   Gender issues in reporting effects and impact in the field: Good Practices

105. Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK report and have submitted examples of project or programme evaluation reports as instructive learning cases. Some of these note that the selected reports are not to be considered as Good Practices in terms of successfully mainstreaming a gender perspective. However, they either represent examples of projects that show positive results and impact in the field, or are instructive cases for other reasons in terms of increasing our understanding of how to effectively address issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation reports, and can be made available to other Members upon request. Finland, Japan, Norway and the USA report ongoing assessments and recent methodological initiatives that should have a bearing on the way that issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in performance assessments and evaluations.

4.2.6   Gender-sensitive monitoring or performance indicators and evaluation criteria

106. Difficulties in measuring and reporting on gender equality effects and impact in evaluations are linked to weaknesses in how project development objectives are formulated, and in the performance indicators or evaluation criteria selected. In many respects, difficulties in identifying and using appropriate indicators and evaluation criteria epitomize persistent systemic weaknesses in evaluations (too little time and depth, inexperience in working with qualitative as well as quantitative indicators, lack of beneficiary and other key stakeholder participation in evaluations, etc). They also illustrate weaknesses in evaluators' and desk officers' understanding of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment, and how to operationalize them in programming and in concrete projects.

107. The 1993/4 WID Assessment identified the gender-insensitivity of evaluation criteria as a key cause of poor quality and depth of discussion of gender equality issues in evaluation reports, and an area in which more work was required. Seven agencies report that performance indicators and evaluation criteria are seldom gender-sensitive, five that they are sometime gender-sensitive and one agency that indicators and evaluation criteria are not at all gender-sensitive. Of those who responded that indicators and criteria are seldom or sometimes gender-sensitive, many say that their agencies now have as a specific, separate criteria category "effects on women".

108. The USA reports that the more continuous monitoring done through agency performance assessment reports seems to have increased the likelihood of indicators being gender-sensitive. Canada reports that 62% of the reports assessed for this Review did

include gender-sensitive criteria, although there was considerable variation in terms of how the scope these afforded was used in the reports' discussions and analyses. Sweden's internal assessment contains a thought-provoking discussion on the advisability of identifying special, gender-sensitive performance indicators as opposed to striving to systematically incorporate gender perspectives in standard evaluation criteria. This issue should prompt a discussion among members on the necessity of discussing and more clearly defining what it is that constitutes "gender-sensitivity" in the selection of evaluation criteria.

5.   Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1   Conclusions and Lessons Learned

109. The follow-up Review shows that results of Members' work with women's empowerment and gender equality in evaluations since the 1993/4 WID Assessment are quite mixed. Agencies report uneven progress, and there are a number of areas in which more work clearly needs to be done. Some improvements are noted in project planning and design that allow issues related to gender equality to be more adequately addressed in performance assessments than during the period 1989-1993. On the other hand, there are clear weaknesses in evaluation design and in the effectiveness of accountability, compliance and enforcement mechanisms, thus indicating that a lack of commitment persists as well as a lack understanding of the issues involved, and of appropriate analytic and reporting methodologies.

A number of general conclusions can be drawn regarding: (1) policy development and institutional issues; (2) project planning and design; (3) evaluation design and practice; (4) partnership and participation; and (5) awareness, capacity-building and competence.

5.1.1   Policy Development and Institutional issues
–   The relative newness of gender equality as an overall goal and the quite rapid pace of policy developments has meant that more time is required to become familiar with policies, and with measures to support their implementation. Time is also required to clarify linkages between main policy goals, and to develop integrative operational mechanisms for addressing them in specific interventions;
–   Institutional adjustments and policy support mechanisms such as in-house gender units or individual specialists, directives and guidelines, are often unable to adequately influence or enforce requirements for addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in project planning and in project monitoring and evaluation;

5.1.2   Project Planning and Design
–   Target group and key stakeholder analyses continue to be inadequate, and to lack gender analyses;
–   Project objectives are formulated in general terms, often without explicit reference to identified problems or specified beneficiaries, making the assessment of gender-related effects and impact difficult;
–   These is a persistent lack of an operational understanding of gender issues and of what mainstreaming involves by responsible desk officers. This lack of understanding extends to consultants as well, and often concerns wider issues of beneficiaries' social, cultural, political, and socio-economic realities, as well as

the specific gender dimensions. Members' ongoing work with devising methodological aids for systematically mainstreaming social and gender issues into LFA and PCM planning frameworks could contribute greatly to rectifying these weaknesses;

5.1.3 Evaluation Design and Practice

– Although some improvement has been accomplished, much more work needs to be done regarding the development and use of performance indicators and evaluation criteria that incorporate gender perspectives;

– While progress has been made in evaluations reporting on women's participation in project activities, improvement is required in reporting women's share of benefits and outcomes, and in project contributions promoting equality in terms of development effects and impact;

– Time and funding factors as well as gender competence and commitment play a role in determining the extent to which evaluations as learning processes address issues of gender equality and women's empowerment. A number of agencies report that more ambitious or thorough, processual, time-expanded evaluations that allow for greater depth and field contact, seem to increase the likelihood of gender issues being addressed more adequately.

5.1.4 Partnership and Participation

– There is persistent uncertainty adherent to working consistently with partner country evaluators and gender experts;

– There is persistent uncertainty adherent to working consistently with participatory approaches and techniques *in the field* and with targeted beneficiaries, users and/or clients during evaluations, which means that the participatory potential actually inherent in most if not all assessments is not being made use of;

– There appears to be a lack of in-country expertise experienced in working with participatory approaches.

5.1.5 Awareness, Capacity-building and Competence

– There is still a lack of gender-awareness and/or operational commitment on the part of individuals and institutions, which makes mainstreaming responsibility for monitoring and evaluating gender difficult;

– Agencies pay insufficient attention to institutional frameworks and appropriate capacity-building support with regard to gender issues in monitoring and evaluation;

– There is a lack of knowledge on the part of desk officers and evaluators with respect to the existence of gender-related data, how to request and access, and how to use such data;

– There is a lack of knowledge about whether and how other cross-cutting issues poverty, environment and democracy are being integrated into evaluation methodologies and practices, and other linkages to gender equality.

110. Concrete measures that various agencies identify as having worked well to produce positive results with respect to the way in which gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in evaluations and in evaluation reports include:

– adequate target group analysis that incorporates an appropriate gender analysis during project planning;
– adequate target group identification and a plan for participation *for the evaluation*
– clear and explicit Terms of Reference in which gender issues are addressed as clearly as possible, with concrete requests for required information.
– adequate time to allow for assessment depth and/or continual performance monitoring;
– identification of evaluation criteria that incorporates a gender perspective;
– good and appropriate guidelines for specific (kinds of) evaluations;
– combining donor and national gender experts and/or social development specialists on evaluation teams;
– good briefing of evaluation teams;
– consultation with women beneficiaries in the field.

5.2   Recommendations

In light of the Review's findings and conclusions, recommendations are proposed for continued and intensified work to improve results primarily in the areas of evaluation methodology, partnership and participation, and capacity-building and skills.

5.2.1   Evaluation Methodology
– Agencies could further develop and share lessons learned regarding the incorporation of gender equality into existing planning and PCM/LFA procedural frameworks, so as to correct vague or general formulations of project objectives and poorly defined and analyzed target and other key stakeholder groups, thereby improving the possibility of evaluating progress.
– Evaluation Terms of Reference should address issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment as concretely as possible, for example: by providing adequate background and/or referring evaluation teams to good sources of background information, and to gender methodological guidelines and other aids; by requesting the explicit review and assessment of female and male access to resources, products and services provided or affected by the project; and by requesting explicit information and analysis of outcomes and effects on females and males;

– Improvements could be made in evaluation briefings, such that evaluators are provided with policy and evaluation guidelines, clarifications of required information on gender issues, references to useful background and other materials, and possible contacts (NGOs, researchers, networks) in partner countries;

– Improvements should be made by evaluators in the discovery and use of sex-disaggregated data to track benefits, outcomes, effects and impact;

– More work and exchange of experiences could be done regarding the development of gender-aware performance indicators and the systematic incorporation of gender perspectives into evaluation criteria.

5.2.2   Partnership and Participation

– More effort could be put into exploring the ongoing work of individuals and organizations that work with participatory assessment and learning approaches, methodologies and techniques, and incorporating lessons into project planning and evaluations;

– Better and more consistent use could be made of participatory approaches in evaluations, both with regard to the participation of in-country, gender competent evaluators, and to the participation of targeted beneficiaries and other key stakeholder groups in project monitoring and evaluation.

5.2.3   Capacity-building and Competence

– Donors should (continue to) provide relevant and appropriate training on mainstreaming issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in project planning, monitoring and evaluation for desk officers and consultants;

– Donors could provide support to capacity-building for partners' evaluation competence with regard to the systematic incorporation of a gender equality perspective in project monitoring and evaluation;

– Donors and Partners could be made aware of and be encouraged to refer to the now generally available *DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation*, and the *DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality* as well as similar materials to increase their own understanding of the issues, to communicate with one another and with co-financers and other parties, and to brief consultants tendered for reviews and evaluations;

– A Working Party on Aid Evaluation Workshop should be convened by Sweden – the lead in this follow-up Review, to be held in the Fall of 1999. The Workshop should be suitably facilitated, and would convene both DAC Member/Observer as well as partner country evaluators or gender equality specialists. The objective of the workshop would be to discuss the findings of the Review, progress made and persistent problems, to share experiences on methodological and other initiatives, and to determine a strategy for capacity-building for both parties with respect to addressing issues of gender, women's empowerment and gender equality in evaluations;

– Members are recommended to continue to monitor their own work and progress, and to share their experiences with regard to evaluation of gender equality and women's empowerment on a regular basis, at intervals to be determined by the Working Party.

Annex 1

Evaluating gender equality and women's empowerment
– Working Party on Aid Evaluation Members' Follow-up of the DAC 1993/4 WID Assessment concerning Evaluation

Background
A Secretarial Note on *Gender and the Expert Group on Aid Evaluation* (DCD/DAC/EV(97)6) was discussed at the April 1997 meeting. The Note suggested a number of actions that could be taken as part of the Group's input to the DAC Gender Action Framework. One of the actions suggested was a review of the implementation of the recommendations of the 1993/4 *Assessment of DAC Members' WID Policies and Programmes.* A subsequent report prepared by *Sweden DAC Gender Action Framework and Evaluation Group Input* (DCD/DAC/EV(97)10) included a proposal for such a review. The proposal was discussed and accepted at the November 1997 meeting. A proposed draft *Guide for Reporting* was discussed at the May 1998 meeting.

The 1993/4 Assessment recommendations concerning evaluation included *inter alia:* (1) the adoption of more participatory approaches in overall project design; (2) improvement in the quality of evaluations and in the assessment of effects and impact with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment; and (3) better attention to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation Terms of Reference. The Assessment also suggested that a review of the implementation of its recommendations with regard to evaluation be undertaken during 1997 or 1998.

Purpose of the Review
The purpose of the Follow-up Review will thus be to discover the extent to which the observations of the 1993/4 Assessment have been taken into consideration, and its recommendations followed in terms of evaluation policy adjustments, in evaluation design and implementation, as well as in the assessment of effects and impacts. In addition to heightening awareness and a constructive understanding of how far we have come in addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations, the Review will provide ideas and suggestions for action in the future.

The Review recognizes the goals of social development that include gender empowerment and women's empowerment as part of the *Shaping the 21st Century* initiative, and is also in line with the Gender Guidelines endorsed by the DAC High-Level Meeting in early 1998.

Conducting the Review

The Follow-up Review will focus on evaluation policy and practice, and be comprised of two main components:

> (1) In order to determine changes in agency policy priorities, commitment to mainstreaming, and impact on agency practices through the programming and project cycle since 1994, the Follow-up Review requires concise background information on Members' overall and evaluation policies, principles and/or guidelines with respect to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as of the design and overall implementation of evaluations in their agencies (questions 1–14 in the Reporting Guide below);

> (2) The 1993/4 Assessment noted an increase in the proportion of evaluation reports containing a discussion of gender issues, and some improvements in the way these issues were addressed from 1989 to 1993.

> In order to assess changes and progress in the integration of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations, Members are requested to report on internal assessments already performed, or to review a selection of their agency's evaluation reports in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment for the purpose of this follow-up Review. The internal assessment should include both central evaluations and sector or project evaluations carried out 1995–1997, (questions 15–17 in the Reporting Guide below).

The first component requires knowledge of agency overall planning requirements as well as of evaluation policies and procedures, and can probably easily be conducted by agencies' central evaluation offices or their equivalent.

With respect to the second component, a few Members appear to already have done internal assessments of the implementation of their overall and/or evaluation policy in terms of attention to gender issues in evaluations. *Those Members who have not done so, or who wish to update earlier findings, are requested to carry out an assessment of selected evaluation reports for the purposes of this Review.* Members' may want to carry out such an assessment with the assistance of a consultant.

When replying to the *Guide for Reporting,* members can make use of either the hard copy version or the diskette version, accessible both in Word 6 and Word Perfect 5. Respondents should forward the completed *Guide for Reporting* by **31 October 1998** at the latest to:

Eva Lövgren
Department for Evaluation and Internal Audit
Sida
S-105 25 Stockholm
Sweden

Tel: +46 8 698 57 72
Fax: +46 8 698 56 10
E-mail: eva.lovgren@sida.se

Any questions or clarifications regarding the *Guide for Reporting* should also be addressed to Eva Lövgren.

A guide for reporting
Members' policies and planning principles

Members are kindly requested to provide brief information on the following background questions:

1.   Do your agency's overall policy documents include the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment:

   •   not at all [ ]

   •   briefly or in general terms [ ]

   •   extensively with concrete recommendations [ ]

   Please note any additional comments or explanations:

2.   Are gender equality and women's empowerment treated in your agency's main planning, procedural frameworks, e g LFA, guidelines for project cycle management, etc.:

   •   not at all [ ]

   •   briefly or in general terms [ ]

   •   extensively with concrete recommendations [ ]

   Please note any additional comments or explanations:

3.   a) Does a specific gender equality policy exist?

   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   b) If yes, when did or will it go into effect?

   c) If your agency has a gender equality policy, how are issues of gender

    equality and women's empowerment treated with regard to evaluation:

   •   not at all [ ]

   •   briefly or in general terms [ ]

   •   extensively with concrete recommendations [ ]

   Please note any additional comments or explanations:

4.   What are your agency's explicit requirements for incorporating gender equality and women's empowerment into project and programme design?

    •   not required at all [ ]

    •   required, but not always enforced [ ]

    •   required and always enforced [ ]

    •   not required but sometimes present nonetheless [ ]

    Please note any additional comments or explanations:

5.   Are there requirements for specifying expected outputs, results or impact in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment in project and programme design?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

    If yes, please explain what the requirements are and how they are enforced.
    Use the reverse side of this page if you need more space.

6.   What mechanisms exist for ensuring attention to gender equality and women's empowerment in agency project and programme planning and design? (more than one response may apply):

    •   existence of monitoring/performance indicators [ ]

    •   availability of in-house specialist competence [ ]

    •   project inspection committees [ ]

    •   special procedures [ ]
        (please provide examples)

    •   other specific units, functions or agency mechanisms [ ]
        (please give examples)

Evaluation policy, design and implementation

7.　　Does your agency have an explicit evaluation policy?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

8.　　If yes, does the evaluation policy treat issues of gender equality and women's empowerment?

- not at all [ ]

- briefly or in general terms [ ]

- extensively with concrete recommendations [ ]

Please provide any additional comments or explanations:

9.　　What are the requirements for incorporating issues of gender equality and women's empowerment into your agency's evaluations:

- not required at all [ ]

- required, but not always enforced [ ]

- required and always enforced [ ]

- not required but sometimes present nonetheless [ ]

Please note any additional comments or explanations:

10.　　What mechanisms exist in your agency for ensuring attention to gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluations:

- guidelines [ ]

- existence of monitoring/performance indicators [ ]

- explicit mention or instructions in evaluation Terms of Reference [ ]

- availability of in-house specialist competence in evaluations [ ]

- other special procedures or mechanisms [ ]
  (please explain/provide examples)?

11.   a) Does your agency employ systematic routines to ensure that evaluation teams include both women and men?

 Yes [ ] No [ ]

 If yes, please describe briefly these routines.

b) Is it a requirement that evaluation teams include specialised competence in terms of social and gender analysis?

 Yes [ ] No [ ]

 If yes, please describe briefly how this is done.

c) Has your agency attempted to systematically assess what the approximate overall percentage is of women to men on evaluation teams for your agency?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, what is the approximate percentage of women to men on evaluation teams on an annual basis 1995–1997?

If yes, what is the approximate overall ratio of women to men as team leaders for evaluations 1995–1997?

If no, please perform a review of evaluations 1995–1997 and:

(a) make an estimate of the approximate percentage of women to men on evaluation teams on an annual basis; and

(b) make an estimate of the approximate overall ratio of women to men as team leaders.

12.   Does your agency provide support to capacity building in partner countries with respect to gender-sensitive evaluations?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If yes, please briefly explain and give examples of the kinds of projects or pro-grammes where this is done.

13.   The 1993/4 Assessment found that a factor in ensuring the inclusion of gender issues in evaluations was the consistent involvement of target groups in projects. To what extent has your agency employed participatory approaches in evaluations?

- not at all [ ]

- in some evaluations [ ] (please give examples of the types of evaluations and the types of participatory approaches):

- in most evaluations [ ] (please give examples of the types of participatory approaches):

- Additional comments or explanations:

14.   A vision of improved quality of life and people's increased power over their own futures through global development partnerships, and through people-centred, participatory processes and sustainable development is expressed in the *Shaping the 21st Century initiative.* Goals to concretize this vision include the promotion of **social development** through, among other things, gender equality and women's empowerment.

Has your agency systematically begun to monitor or evaluate progress in terms of these goals?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If yes, please indicate in what areas this is being done:

(a)   assessments of progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by the year 2005 [ ]

If this response applies, please explain briefly.

(b)   assessments of reductions of maternal mortality towards the goal of reduction by 75% by the year 2015 [ ]

If this response applies, please explain briefly.

Evaluation reports and results

15. What documented efforts (through systematic assessments or other means) have been made since the 1993/4 DAC WID Assessment, to follow up how gender equality and women's empowerment have been taken into consideration in your agency's evaluations? (Please note that more than one response may apply.)

    • no efforts have yet been made [ ]

    • in-depth studies/case studies [ ]

    • sample study or survey [ ]

    • impact studies [ ]

    • other efforts [ ]
       (please explain):

Please submit a copy of each such assessment report and answer questions 16 and 17.

Members who have not done an internal assessment, or who wish to update earlier findings, are requested to carry out such an assessment of selected agency evaluation reports carried out 1995–1997.

16. Do there seem to be any significant differences or changes since 1993/4 in terms of increased attention to gender issues in the evaluations with regard to:

    a) sector (e g health, education, natural resources)?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

    If yes, please specify:

    b) particular kinds of or forms for support (e g technical assistance, credit, research, project, programme, etc)?

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

    If yes, please specify:

    c) how support is channelled (bilateral, regional, multilateral, NGO)?

     Yes [ ] No [ ]

     If yes, please specify:

    d) other factors? [ ] (Please explain)

17.   a) Do the selected evaluation reports include sex-disaggregated figures and statistics?

- not at all [ ]

- seldom [ ]

- sometimes [ ]

- extensively [ ]

additional comments:

b) Do the evaluation reports include systematic consideration of progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment in assessments of activities, outputs or results, and benefits, effects or impact?

- not at all [ ]

- seldom [ ]

- sometimes [ ]

- extensively [ ]

c) Please summarize any specific observations that can be made in connection with evaluation preparation and/or approaches and methodology about what seems to have worked well in terms of providing good assessments of gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation reports (e_g special Terms of Reference, specific evaluation preparation and/or briefing, etc.). You may use a separate piece of paper or the reverse side of this page if you need more space to record your answer.

d) Has your agency employed participatory approaches in the selected evaluations?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, do these seem to have had any bearing on attention to gender equality and women's empowerment?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, please briefly describe how, and/or provide examples in connection with the following:

- participation of partner country evaluators [ ]

- participation of local-level stakeholders in evaluations [ ]

- consultation with local groups [ ]

- consultation with women's groups and/or groups that work with issues of gender equality and women's empowerment [ ]

e) Can any specific observations be noted about substantive results and impact in the field in terms of progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment as presented in the selected evaluation reports?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, please provide at least one example of Good Practice in terms of projects demonstrating positive benefits and impact in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment as demonstrated through evaluation, by submitting evaluation reports, and by briefly describing the relevant intervention(s).

f) Are monitoring/performance indicators and evaluation criteria in the selected evaluation reports gender sensitive?

- not at all [ ]
- seldom [ ]
- sometimes [ ]
- consistently [ ]

g) Can any other changes be noted in agency evaluation reports with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment since the 1993/4 DAC Assessment?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If yes, please describe briefly and/or give examples.

18. Please provide the name(-s) and particulars of the respondent(-s) to these questions, or to another contact person at your agency:
    - Name(-s) and designation of respondent(-s)
    - Agency
    - Department(-s)
    - Telephone number(-s)
    - Fax number(-s)
    - E-mail address(-es)

Annex 2   List of Reference Materials

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