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Nordic influences on Gender Policies and Practices at the World Bank and the African Development Bank: A Case study

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Nordic influences on Gender Policies and Practices at the World Bank and the African
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Preface

In April 2007 the Swedish Government issued a new Strategy for Multilateral Cooperation that gives guidance on how to achieve better results through this cooperation in a number of prioritized areas, all aiming for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) conducts a series of evaluations with focus on the role of Multilateral Organisations.

This particular study focuses on the impact of Nordic donor countries on the gender policies and operations of two important IFIs: the World Bank (WB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

The study was conducted jointly with the Department for Development Evaluation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (EVA-11). It explores how Nordic countries have influenced the promotion of gender equality policies in African countries. Two separate reports were produced with a Finnish and a Swedish perspective respectively.

The attached review gives a clear and positive answer to the question of whether there was a common Nordic policy stance with respect to Gender Equality in development operations. Next, it identifies the many channels of influence that were used to achieve results. Finally it confirms that the Nordic countries exerted significant influence both on WB and AfDB decision making in ways that will help achieve progress towards gender equality in Africa. Among the many tentative recommendations that arise out of this particular case study, the report urges Nordic aid agencies to make effective use of the WDR 2012 in their Africa country programs with special emphasis on field operations.

The evaluation study started in June 2011 and was completed in September 2012. It was carried out by Annika Magnusson (Sweden) in collaboration with consultants from Finland.

October 2012

Lena Fagerlund
Acting Director-General

Executive summary

Background

This report sets out the findings of an evaluation study of Nordic influence in two multilateral organizations. Such organizations are important actors on the international scene. They undertake large programs addressing global and regional problems in areas of critical concern such as poverty reduction, environment and climate change, sustainable growth and security. They also play a crucial role in global initiatives geared to the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Multilateral funding also complies with the objectives and standards of the Paris Declaration. For these reasons, Nordic countries have always engaged actively with multilateral organizations.

This evaluation study discusses how the Nordic countries, through their joint efforts, have influenced the gender policies and operations of the World Bank (WB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). These Banks have received the highest joint support provided by Nordic countries to multilateral banks. It has mostly funded concessional loans such provided by the International Development Association (IDA) within the WB and the African Development Fund (ADF) in the AfDB. The review examined these operations as well as the Trust Funds (TF) managed by the two IFIs.

Objective and purpose

The main objective of the evaluation study was to find out and assess whether the Nordic countries, through their joint efforts, have influenced gender policies in the WB and the AfDB over a period of six years from 2006 to 2011. The review was limited to Africa. The specific objectives were to:

- 1 explore whether the Nordic countries work under the umbrella of a joint Nordic Gender Agenda, and if there is such an umbrella, whether and how is it influencing policies and programmes of the WB and the AfDB;
- 2 illustrate and assess the influencing mechanisms of the Nordic countries of the WB and the AfDB policies that are reflected in the documentation and interviews available for this study; and
- 3 assess whether the modalities of influencing the gender-related decision making in these two IFIs were well used by the Nordic countries.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was based on qualitative methods, mainly through reviewing documents, instructions, evaluation material as well as extensive interviews. Five channels of influence were identified as entry points. They were systematically followed through in the course of the study.

Main findings and conclusions

A Nordic Gender Agenda

There is no formally agreed Nordic document specifying how to approach Gender Equality in development cooperation. However, Gender Equality is at the heart of Nordic politics and the approach to this agenda converges in all its major dimensions. More generally, the Nordic countries pursue consistent development agendas. They are reputed to be among the strongest and most vocal advocates of gender equality, women's rights, economic empowerment and reaching MDG3.

Influencing mechanisms

This study has ascertained the usefulness of promoting gender equality through all available mechanisms in each of the two organizations at the appropriate policy level. The different entry points are the Executive Boards, the Board of Governors, the Replenishment negotiations mechanisms, senior management levels and operational managers at headquarters and in the field. The Nordic constituencies in both banks have succeeded in gaining influence through proactive involvement, political unity, effective coordination, mobilization of expertise, alliance building, communication skills, nimble and legitimate tactics. This required strong political backup coherence, consistency and strategic convergence among all Nordic constituencies.

Efficient use of modalities

Despite slow progress of gender mainstreaming in development assistance, this study shows that the Nordic and Baltic countries together with Switzerland and India seized the opportunity to influence WB and AfDB decision-making for improving gender equality in Africa. The modalities at hand for influencing policy issues such as Replenishments, Trust Funds and human resources were used in pragmatic and efficient ways by the Nordic countries. In particular, Nordic efforts to ensure the selection of Gender and Development as the theme of The World Development Report 2012 demonstrates that gender equality has acquired greater traction at the highest decision making level of the World Bank Group. In parallel, gender mainstreaming was strengthened as a key crosscutting theme in the implementation of Bank policies. Similarly, the latest International Development Association 16th replenishment decisions in 2011 included gender equality as a Special Theme for the 2011-2014 replenishment period. The policy shift was the result of many forces but Nordic influence through the actions documented in this report was decisive. The AfDB gender policy was also strengthened with more women involved in the Bank's decisions, in part as a result of the example provided by the successful policy shifts observed at the World Bank actions.

Recommendations

General policy recommendations

- The Nordic countries should emphasize the importance of adequate reporting from the field and push for the concrete **use of recommendations put forward in the WDR 2012**. Adequate coordination and liaison at field level holds the key to the reduction of gender differences and improved outcomes.
- Follow the **decentralization processes** in both Banks closely and be alert to policy implementation gaps in relation to gender equality.
- **Make sure that all Nordic embassy staff are well acquainted with multilateral issues** and make clear to them that they have an important role to play in influencing Bank programmes at country level and in the critical feedback mechanism that links field operations to headquarters and capitals.
- Ensure that the Nordics continue to **act together in replenishment negotiations** to secure influences.
- Explore ways to have more Nordic staff assigned to management positions.
- **Increase the use of secondments** in the IFIs preferably in strategic positions and encourage simplified procedures to realize this objective.
- Given the advent of new donors, allocate responsibilities for liaison with them among the Nordics in line with Finnish report 3rd recommendation. To this end, construct **a joint Nordic strategy on how to approach the new donor countries** (e.g. Turkey and Kazakhstan) and how to form alliances with the newcomers. In this context, promote collaboration and a common platform focused on gender integration.

Stronger Nordic influence

- **Be prepared for shifts in power and representation** at the constitutional level of both Banks. Networking and nurturing informal contacts is critical to the protection of past achievements.
- **Executive Directors should be skilled in negotiations, listening, arranging compromises, identifying opportunities as they arise and forge the necessary coalitions.** They should keep in mind that EDs enjoy power and influence but are most successful when focused on consensus building, when arguing for positions solidly grounded in evidence and when demonstrating the capacity to take decisions without having to run back to the office or the constituency to seek advice.
- Once a **coherent plan and priorities** are set it is efficient and consistent for all parties to comply with them and to draw their operational implications for dialogue at different levels and through different avenues.
- Make communications more efficient by changing the procedures of instructions between capitals and the Nordic offices at the Board of the Banks. Avoid writing memos for the archives (as one official put it). **Give more initiative to the Nordic offices in the Banks** since they are best suited to identify the questions of interest and initiate the process by proposing positions and circulating proposals among the constituency members for comments.
- Encourage **personal contacts with high-level managers in the Banks** and in particular the President. The informal channels are often more successful and every opportunity to liaise with top level persons should be taken into consideration. International venues and meetings outside the ordinary Bank arrangements are good occasions for such contacts. These are soft factors and can be strengthened through added comprehensive resources in terms of funds or staff as already mentioned above.
- A great deal of influence may be achieved during the replenishment processes. However, it is not only the actual process being crucial, but also the planning that takes place in the relevant Bank departments at an early stage. **A lot of work and thinking starts off before the official process. This is where you can intervene more successfully by acting in advance.**
- **Trust Funds** have become a very large share of total aid flows through the Multilateral Banks but they are not on the agenda of Board meetings. They should periodically be **brought to the attention of the Board** meetings and also at Governor level during the Annual meetings.

Acronyms

ADF	African Development Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank
AfDBG	African Development Bank Group
AM	Annual Meeting
BOG	Board of Governors
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGA	Country Gender Assessment
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CODE	Committee on Development Effectiveness
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DC	Development Committee
EB	Executive Board
ED	Executive Director
EU	European Union
EVA-11	Development Evaluation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
FIF	Financial Intermediary Fund
GAD	Gender and Development
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GE	Gender Equality
GENFUND	Trust Fund for Gender Mainstreaming in the World Bank
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GPOA	Gender Plan of Action
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune
HRMD	Human Resources Management Department
HQ	Headquarters
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICSID	International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes
IDA	International Development Association
IDA 16	International Development Association 16 th Replenishment
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group (WB)
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFI	International Financial Institution

IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organizations
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFAFi	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MFADen	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
MFANor	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway
MFASwe	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
NBC	Nordic-Baltic Constituency (WB)
NBO	Nordic-Baltic Office (WB)
NGA	Nordic Gender Agenda
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
NIC	Nordic-India Constituency (AfDB)
NIO	Nordic-India Office (AfDB)
Norad	Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation
NITFG	Nordic Trust Fund for Governance (AfDB)
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OPEV	Operations Evaluation Department, AfDB
PREM	Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network
PRSC	Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMC	Regional Member Countries (AfDB)
SADEV	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TF	Trust Fund
UA	Units of Account
UGPOA	Updated Gender Plan of Action
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WDR	World Development Report
WID	Women in Development
WINGO	Women's International Non-Governmental Organizations

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1 Introduction

Multilateral organizations are important actors on the international scene with large programs addressing global and regional problems in areas of common concern such as poverty reduction, environment and climate change, sustainable growth and security. They also play a crucial role in global efforts devoted to the pursuit of the universally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Supporting multilateralism is consistent with the harmonization and coordination objectives of the Paris Declaration. In this respect Nordic countries have always been proactively involved and engaged in multilateral initiatives. This has paid rich dividends in terms of policy influence.

In recent years we have experienced important global changes such as shifts in power structures, new uncertainties affecting economic development, political transformations in the Middle-East and North Africa to mention only a few. These trends have challenged all development actors and the multilaterals in particular. Given this turmoil it is important to preserve existing development cooperation gains and to make full use of multilateral channels. The strategies for multilateral cooperation of all Nordic countries underline the importance of sustained and if possible increased influence on the policy making and development in these organizations.

This evaluation case study discusses how the Nordic countries, through their joint efforts, have influenced the gender policies and work in the World Bank (WB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). These Banks have received the largest funding commitments by Nordic countries as compared with other multilateral organizations. Funding support has been mostly directed to concessional loans such as the International Development Association (IDA) in the WB and the African Development Fund (ADF) in the AfDB. This is the focus of this study. However, Trust Funds (TF) activities which are growing in importance within the Official Development Assistance (ODA) portfolio also received attention.

The geographical focus of the study is the Africa Region – the priority focus of Nordic aid. The Nordic countries have always had a strong presence in Africa. They supported the independence movements of the 60s. They also invested heavily in development cooperation projects and programs throughout the decades. Many joint Nordic projects have been implemented over the years in countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique often in support of agriculture and regional development programs. Strong efforts were also made to promote regional organizations during the 80s. However, the coordination costs involved in implementation of joint Nordic-funded aid projects proved prohibitive and the approach was gradually abandoned. Today delegated cooperation is the norm. It involves one Nordic country taking the lead in managing other Nordic operational portfolios in whole or part within an African country. The Nordics' choice of cooperating partners has been quite similar. For many years Tanzania and Mozambique have been the top recipients of Nordic aid.

A “Nordic Aid Model” was often publicly referred to in the 80’s since activities in bilateral programs often coincided in terms of best practice, priorities, politics and large volumes of grants. The Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – have been among the top group of the aid-giving countries on per capita basis. With the membership in the European Union (EU) except Norway, political changes and alignment with the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and other international trends the Nordic model is less prominent today. However wider aid coordination approaches such as the Nordic+ group suggest that that Nordics can still be perceived as a joint group.

The point of departure for this exercise is the acknowledgement of a common set of values among the Nordic countries in terms of Gender Equality (GE) in development cooperation. Historically there has been a strong focus on economic and social justice in the development policies of all Nordic countries. Fair income distribution, effective and just state, environmental aspects, democracy and human rights are all part of the “socially oriented” Nordic Aid model embedded in the ideals of international aid. The millennium development goals emphasizing the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women are focal in the development policies of the Nordic countries. In the international discussions on aid effectiveness the Nordic countries are often playing in the same division and pushing for more transparency, efficiency and results for end-users.

In both Banks, the AfDB and the WB, the Nordic countries form part of the same constituencies. This has laid the ground for joint Nordic positions. It has also enabled a comparison of the two parallel structures. The procedures for coordination within each of the two constituencies are a sound basis for the study. It made possible an examination of Nordic influence through the respective Board and Committees. Annual meetings and thematic venues are also arenas of importance where influence can make a difference at different levels. Other ways of influencing decision-making at a management level will also be touched upon in the review.

This evaluation was commissioned by the Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) together with the Department for Development Evaluation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (EVA-11). Sweden and Finland have constituted the Management Group.

1.1 Objective and purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide knowledge on the current status of Nordic countries’ collaborative approach to representation in (and influence on) the policies and operations of multilateral development banks. It is based on a case study of Nordic governments’ impact on gender policy-making in the WB and the AfDB.

Specifically the evaluation study seeks to find out and assess whether the Nordic countries, through their joint efforts, have influenced WB’s and AfDB’s gender policies and operations in Africa over a period of six years (from 2006 to 2011).

The evaluation concludes with recommendations on possible ways to more effectively influence policy making in International Financial Institutions (IFIs) based on good practices identified in the course of the study. Such recommendations have the potential of securing greater influence in other multilateral organizations.

The specific aims of the study are:

- 1 to explore whether Nordic countries have a joint Gender Agenda, and if so, how this has influenced policies and programmes within the WB and the AfDB.
- 2 to identify and assess the influencing mechanisms used by Nordic countries at the WB and the AfDB.
- 3 to examine whether the modalities of influencing gender-related decision-making in these two IFIs were effectively used.

1.2 Evaluation questions and scope

In order to achieve the objectives of the review the following evaluation questions guided the desk surveys of available documentation and the interviews:

- 1 To what extent is there a joint Nordic agenda with respect to gender equality?
- 2 What influencing mechanisms were used by the Nordic countries within the two multilateral development banks and according to what modalities?
- 3 Were these mechanisms and the assets available to Nordic countries used in an effective way to influence the gender-related policies and operations within both institutions?

This is a joint evaluation commissioned and with active participation by the two Evaluation Body's in Finland and Sweden. The other Nordic countries are not taking an active part but are being interviewed when they are represented in the Constituency office at the WB or AfDB. In Finland and Sweden Government officials at the Foreign Ministry are included. The Ministry of Finance plays an important role in Finland as well as in Sweden. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) was also interviewed. Other important actors are all those involved in the coordination of the work which is channeled through the Nordic constituencies in the respective Banks. The independent Evaluation authorities of the WB and AfDB are included as well as management staff at different levels in the Banks.

1.3 Limitations

- The study focused on Finland and Sweden and examined instructions, working papers etc. It made limited use of documentation and material from Norway and Denmark.
- The study did not carry out field investigations due to time restrictions.
- The study did not look into how gender policies were reflected in country strategies and operations.
- The lack of readily available tools for measuring influence prevented quantitative analyses

2 Evaluation design and methodology

The design of the evaluation addresses the three specific objectives as described in chapter 1 above. The first objective is to clarify whether there is a Nordic Agenda to promote gender equality in Africa. The second objective is to assess the influencing channels used by Nordic countries at the World Bank and the African development Bank to impact on their gender policies and operations. The third objective is to assess the effectiveness of the approaches and modalities used to influence gender-related decision-making in the two multilateral development banks.

The evaluation used qualitative methods: reviews of documents, interviews of staff members and interaction with government bodies. The immense amount of relevant written material and documentation from diverse stakeholders made it difficult to pre-select sources based on the above criteria. On the other hand, respondents to interviews were identified at an early stage in order to narrow down the scope of the study. The two consultants who initially carried out the evaluation and handled all the interviews were well experienced in development cooperation at high management level. This facilitated their access to senior persons.

A limitation of this evaluation was the difficulty of capturing and singling out the results of policy influence that can be specifically attributed to the efforts made by Nordic countries. The findings described in chapter 4 describe what features of gender policies that were highlighted by the Nordics and how gender policy development was undertaken from the perspective of the two institutions. The findings do suggest a plausible effect but they do not offer a definitive proof as there was no way to disentangle the distinctive impact of Nordic influence vs. other factors.

The challenges involved in determining the links between policy influencing activities, actual changes in policy and consequent developments on the ground proved insuperable. The judgments reached as to whom one should attribute policy shifts were necessarily subjective. The effects of the policy shifts on the ground can only be over the long-term and they are not often monitored in an explicit way. Hence the causal relationships that might have traced the influence of the Nordic countries to results on the ground could not be ascertained since other actors and the Banks themselves interact in a complex way with reciprocal influences flowing back and forth.

Influence may be defined as the power to make a difference or keep something unchanged despite countervailing influences. Influence is related to the connections among individual actors, especially those that have the status and enjoy the power to affect policymaking. At the start of this study five different avenues were identified as entry points and channels of influence:

- The resident Boards of Executive Directors where members are represented and act on a daily basis on behalf of their constituencies. All decisions concerning loans, programs, policies, evaluations etc. are reviewed by the Executive Directors and agreed upon by consensus.
- The Board of Governors (BOG) where all member countries are represented at Ministerial level: they meet twice a year.
- The replenishment negotiations for IDA (WB) and ADF (AfDB) where each member country is represented through a deputy assigned by its respective Government.
- Interactions with management in different venues, official and unofficial, seminars, working sessions, field trips, etc.
- Interaction at the field level were mainly Bank staff serving abroad as well as Embassy staff and aid workers who share ideas and experience and influence takes place with respect to implementation issues.

All interviews performed at the two Banks targeted respondents endowed with responsibilities within one or more of these avenues of influence. The above avenues frequently intersect so that Nordic influence is amplified through interactions at different levels given the synergies of interventions at distinct levels of the hierarchy.

Interviews were carried out with Government officials in Helsinki and Stockholm at the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Finance and Sida. A few interviews were also made with people who had recent experience with the two Banks. The methods used were in dialogue with a focus on their perception of a Nordic influence on policy matters in the two Banks and an important part was to gather written material.

Two separate visits, one to the World Bank in Washington and the other to the African Development Bank in Tunis, were organized by the Nordic offices in each Bank in close dialogue with the evaluation consultant. A short version of the Terms of Reference was sent in advance as well as a questionnaire highlighting the most important questions. Altogether 60 interviews were held and those interviewed represented staff at senior levels within the Banks, Executive Directors and staff of the Boards as well as Evaluation officers. The selection of respondents was made by staff members at the respective Nordic office to the Board in active cooperation with the consultants.

The questions and propositions advanced in the interviews were structured in the following way:

- Which are the most efficient ways of having an impact on policy related work at the Bank?
- How should efforts be directed among different avenues of influence? To what extent did the respondents collaborate with the Nordic chair or with Nordic countries?
- What examples illustrate the impact of Nordic countries on priorities and policy issues?
- How did evaluations and lessons learned impact on decision-making?

The deployment and use of the Nordic resources and assets was ascertained with respect to gender equality promotion in IFIs' policy formulation. The study examined the discourses related to the influence of the Nordic actors in gender policy arena in the WB and the AfDB by defining a terminology and using it as an analytical instrument in the following way:

First, *Nordic Gender Agenda (NGA)* is understood as a common understanding grounded in shared values and jointly identified tasks designed to enhance gender equality in developing countries, in particular in Africa.

Second, *influence/influencing* gender policy in development assistance to Africa within the framework of WB and AfDB is defined as a demonstrated capacity to do one or more of the following:

- 1 *shape ideas about policy* – this is the ability to quickly and credibly generate politically usable information and move it to where it will have the most impact;
- 2 *initiate policy or programme proposals* –this is the ability to call upon actions that make sense of a situation for the target audience;
- 3 *substantially change or veto alternative proposals that may affect implementation of the policy* – this is the effort to hold powerful actors to new or previously agreed policies or principles or the ability to call upon actors to affect a situation.¹

The assets and modalities used to exercise influence related to decision making in the Banks requires: money, expertise and collaboration. These influencing “tools” may include financial or human resources, high position in hierarchy and a number of other qualities (high level of activity, political unity/coordination, dominance in specific area, expertise, alliance building/cooperation, communication skills, legitimate tactics, reliability, coherence, organizational strength and/or strategic convergence).²

Third, *levels to influence* in IFIs explored in this study are understood as follows:

- 1 High level decision making: Board of governors and Executive Directors and other High level Meetings
- 2 Negotiations on resources, such as IDA replenishment, Trust Funds and Nordic Staff in the Banks
- 3 Influencing other actors: IFIs' Management/departments, constituencies and others.

The evaluation study focused on the priorities set by the relevant constituencies where the Nordic countries belong in the two Banks.

¹ Aarva, Zukale, Magnusson & Nogueira de Morais, 2012

² Acosta Raul 2012, Advocacy networks through a multidisciplinary lens: implications for research agendas. Lewis Jenny, 2006, Being around and knowing the players: Networks of influence in health policy. Rubenzer Trevor, 2008, Ethnic minority interest group attitudes an U.S. Foreign policy influence.

The following sources of information were reviewed and analyzed:

- Board documents, priorities and procedures, statements from Governors meetings, Annual reports of NBO, NIS and the Banks, Communiqués, etc.
- A selection of evaluations performed within the last five years of the two Banks
- Policy documents and guidelines on international development issues at the Nordic HQ and the two Banks

Mapping “influence” required the identification of potentially influential actors. In this study they were

- 1 those with *positional influence*, i.e. holding positions in the top levels at the WB and AfDB, recipient governments and donor governments and having the voting power, and those having agenda setting power over others;
- 2 those with *reputational influence*, i.e. having advocacy networks that are coalitions influencing through their soft power strategies.

3 Background

3.1 Gender in Development cooperation

3.1.1 Growing similarity of global gender policies

Public policy innovations have spread around the globe in the last half a century despite differences in local characteristics. Growing similarity of development assistance policy and frequent references to an emerging global consensus on development issues have been a striking trend in the foreign aid community³.

One example is the common policy frame adopted by nearly all donors regarding women and gender inequality. In 1970, only one donor (Sweden) had a dedicated “Women in Development” (WID) unit, but by 2007, nearly all major donors had adopted some form of a WID/GAD (“Gender and Development”) policy. Most of the factors responsible for the internalization of women’s rights and gender equality as a development donor concern stem from the creation of a global agenda for states and civil society to support women’s rights across society.⁴

The growth in support to women’s rights across the globe corresponds to the expansion of the women’s movement, increased attention paid to these issues in international conferences like the UN World Conference on Women and highlighting women’s issues during the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985). Also a large number of women’s international non-governmental organizations (WINGOs) were established. World society’s influence on the creation of this model was wide-ranging. This was eventually reflected in the policies adopted by developing countries. They were more likely to ratify women’s rights conventions in years of rights conferences, when they were members of related international organizations.

Swiss argues that despite different political, social and cultural contexts, development assistance in gender issues is carried out in most instances in a very uniform manner throughout the DAC donor countries. Swiss tested the world polity effect on the spread of gender and development policies and institutional structures among 22 aid donors of the OECD DAC from 1968 through 2003. The influence of international organizations, treaties, and United Nations conferences on the adoption of gender policies by foreign aid donor agencies of major Western democracies was demonstrated through cross-national event history analysis. Thus, the spread of similar donor institutions and women/gender policies among the OECD donor countries can be explained by world polity influence.

³ Aarva et al, 2012

⁴ Dobbin F, Simmons B & Garret G 2007, Annual Review of Sociology; Swiss L 2011 Security Reform and Development Assistance, Qualitative Sociology

Swiss's study provided a global overview of the adoption of women and gender as development assistance priorities. It did, however, little to explain social process in practice in the world polity. The detailed interaction of the nation-state and the international community are in fact always person-to-person interactions involving officials, experts and organization representatives.

In practical terms the work on women and gender equality was successful in the beginning of the 90's with concrete actions and promotion of directed assistance, training and appointment of gender focal points. However since the beginning of the 21st century growing international attention due to many evaluations was paid to the weaknesses in mainstreaming of Gender policy.

It now appears that gender issues were mainstreamed prematurely and to a point where no one was really in charge. A number of evaluations observed that gender issues were losing their earlier prominence and the spreading of responsibility without commensurate transfer of expertise led to a loss of momentum in compliance with agreed policies.⁵

The decentralization of aid to embassies and new aid modalities with a focus on harmonization and budget support diverted attention away from women's and gender equality. Insufficient resources were allocated to the gender theme and this helps explain why implementation of the mainstreaming strategy failed. The need for a strong central unit able to oversee gender work in operational departments and in the field was eventually acknowledged and action was taken.

The failure of gender mainstreaming is also due to other factors: disconnect between theory and practice; proliferation of development priorities; lack of leadership and failure to heed evaluation lessons.⁶ Findings from a number of evaluations disclose that partner country ownership and alignment with partner country priorities through the Poverty Reduction Strategies pushed gender equality further down the line. New aid modalities did not link budget support to improvements in gender policy. Country dialogue neglected gender equality. The synthesis study prepared by the Operations Evaluation Department (OPEV) at the AfDB underlined that in order to get new concepts and practices into the mainstream of an organization demands a significant cultural change. A change where gender equality is mainstreamed needs more concerted and consistent actions.

Recommendations from several evaluations were consistent. They suggested clarifying concepts and terminology, clearer mandates and improved training. Some of them suggested reintroduction of earmarked funds for innovative measures, strong leadership, concrete incentives and involvement of senior management to enhance accountability for results.

In 2006 the World Bank in cooperation with OECD/DAC, Gendernet and bilateral donors launched a new action plan called "Gender Equality as Smart Economics". This action plan focused on ensuring women's access to capital, labor and land markets.

⁵ Lessons from Evaluation of Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, Synthesis Report 2006/1, Norad

⁶ AfDB, OPEV, Mainstreaming Gender Equality, an evaluation synthesis, May 2011

In 2007 a number of new initiatives converged and lifted gender equality to the forefront of the policy agenda once again. In 2008 Denmark launched the MDG3 Champion Torch Campaign, an initiative aimed at accelerating progress in Gender Equality and women's empowerment, as stipulated by the Third Millennium Development Goal. A network was established and the launch of torches which travelled around the world pushing for action to do something extra in this area. Representatives of governments, private sector, civil society, the media, concerned individuals from South and North and international organizations participated. The sequencing of a number of high level meetings, the set-up of a secretariat in Copenhagen also contributed to success. It is now likely that the third MDG will be reached as a result of these efforts.⁷

The World Bank issued a new Action Plan for Gender Equality (GAP) for 2007-2010 to which a number of member countries contributed. The Gender network in DAC/OECD was also very active during this period. The Gender perspective was taking on board questions of economic opportunities for women, their participation in society and how to enhance their powers and rights.

3.1.2 Gender policies of development cooperation in the Nordic Countries

Women's rights, gender equality and the role of women in development cooperation policies are at the heart of all Nordic countries' domestic and international politics. Gender equality is achieved when women and men, and girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society.⁸ Women's participation and women's rights are of paramount importance in the realisation of the vision for the world's future enshrined in the UN Millennium Declaration.⁹ Efforts will build on and benefit from the momentum created by the Danish campaign to promote awareness of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG3) on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women as well as other major achievements, including on-going efforts in partner countries.¹⁰ Gender equality is promoted through mainstreaming, targeted actions and political dialogue.¹¹

These political messages drawn out from guiding policy documents of the Nordic countries emphasize the importance of Gender Equality as a priority in development cooperation. In the relevant policies or strategies which are guiding the individual Nordic country in its political dialogue and implementation of the development cooperation activities there are a number of common denominators but also some differences which are described in the following paragraphs.

⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, www.mdg3action.um.dk

⁸ Policy for Gender Equality and the Rights and Role of Women in Sweden's international Development Cooperation 2010-2015, Government Offices of Sweden

⁹ On Equal Terms: Women's Rights and Gender Equality in International Development Policy, Report No 11 (2007-2008) to the Norwegian Parliament, Stortinget

¹⁰ Road Map for the Implementation of the Strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation in 2011, Gender Equality, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

¹¹ Women and Gender Equality in Finnish Development Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2011

The common denominators and differences are described in the following paragraphs:

- **Support to the Millennium Development Goal no 3**

The Danish campaign to promote awareness of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG3) on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women as set the standard for this priority and its usefulness in an international agenda setting. Finland and Norway also subscribe to this message in their policy documents. Sweden makes a reference to the Millennium Goals but not directly to MDG3.

- **Promoting Gender equality through mainstreaming, targeted actions and political dialogue**

Gender mainstreaming has been used as a basic approach in development cooperation of all the Nordic countries. Targeted actions or special interventions are also mentioned as important ways of achieving results in development cooperation efforts. The political dialogue is equally stressed as an important tool in the advocacy of gender equality and development. This dialogue is to be promoted in all relevant circumstances such as with the partner countries, the multilateral organizations or any situation of development cooperation.

- **Economic empowerment**

Women's economic empowerment and working conditions are important areas in achieving gender equality. They are also viewed as paramount to economic well-being and development. All the Nordics align with the message that gender equality is a driving force in shaping good economics. Norway states that they will promote decent work for both women and men.

- **Gender and climate change**

Norway and Finland has got specific chapters on this theme closely linked to the issues of ownership and control of land. Gender equality is considered to be an important objective as well as a tool in programmes aimed at improving livelihoods and agricultural production, forest management and efficient energy sources according to Finnish policies.

- **Women, peace and security**

The UN Security Council Resolution (art. 1325) was passed in 2000 reaffirming the need to empower and protect women through enhancing their role and decision making capacities with regard to conflict prevention, resolution and peace building. In this context efforts are also emphasized in order to combat sexual and gender based violence in fragile states and conflict areas, supported by all the Nordic countries.

- **Sexual and reproductive health and rights**

The right to decide and exercise control over one's own body, sexuality and reproduction is fundamental for all people and remains a cornerstone for achieving equality and women's rights, strongly supported by the Nordics. Efforts to ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support are given special attention while women and girls are considered most at risk in these circumstances.

- **Political leadership and participation**

Equal opportunities and ability to participate in and exert influence on political processes and be represented in decision-making forums at all levels. Women's political representation must increase if they are to act as drivers of change highlighted by Sweden and Finland.

- **Increase access to education**

Giving girls and boys an education of equal quality is the basis of all gender equality. This principle is mentioned by Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Education is essential for women's rights and gender equality therefore special attention is given to ensure that all girls and women have equal access to education from primary school up to University.

- **Security of women and girls**

All kind of violence against women and girls must be prevented and combated. Women are entitled to a life free of violence as underlined by Norway and Sweden. In this context violence in the form of customary practices harmful to women and girls, such as female genital mutilation, child marriages etc are to be strongly combated. The human trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation must be stopped and strong measures will be taken.

3.1.3 Intentions of policy advocacy in international settings

The World Bank

The World Bank's current gender policy draws on the Gender Strategy issued in 2001 (World Bank 2002b, Integrating Gender into the World Bank's work: A Strategy for Action) and was endorsed by the Board in 2002. The idea behind developing a gender strategy paper at that time was to strengthen the country-level approach. It introduced a new diagnostic tool – the Country Gender Assessment, CGA - to identify gender-responsive interventions in sectors identified in the Country Assistance Strategies, CAS. This way of narrowing down the entry point for gender interventions into only those areas identified in a CAS resulted in a much less ambitious scope. To illustrate this disappointment a general result was that only social sectors were identified, such as Education and Health and other areas of economic interest such as Agriculture or Infrastructure did not integrate gender and therefore they missed out on the importance of women's economic empowerment. The absence of explicit results framework translating Bank support for gender into specific gender-related outcomes also diminished the policy's relevance.

In 2006 the bank launched a four-year GAP, Gender Action Plan, called “Gender Equality as Smart Economics” where integration of gender into operations and activities in predetermined economic sectors of importance for women’s economic empowerment was emphasized. It was noted that gender coverage of Bank operations in the economic and social sectors increased since the GAP was launched in 2007. The proportion of gender-informed projects increased by 20 % between 2007 and 2010.

The African Development Bank

A Gender Policy was adopted in June 2001 by the Bank and is still the guiding document. The more concrete work of mainstreaming gender was formulated in the Gender Plan of Action 2004-2007 and served as a key document. Later on the Bank approved an updated Gender Plan of Action 2010-2012 in July 2009 and it was obvious at this point that the Bank stepped up its work on gender equality and the appointment of more gender specialists also made a difference.¹² Disaggregated analysis of Poverty, Gender and social aspects were more prominent in social sector operations than in infrastructure.

A gender help desk was established, training of task managers and checklists developed in order to mainstream gender in the project cycle. Assessments following the method of “Quality at entry” performance of Country Strategy Papers have shown mixed results. In countries where Joint Assistance Strategies exists, including a broad set of donors, gender integration was most efficient. A quality Supervision System has also been development called Gender Results and Resources Tracking System that will provide gender disaggregated statistics. A regional Development Banks network on gender has been implemented and enforced attention has been put on Gender Based Violence, especially in Fragile States.

The updated Gender Plan of Action (GPOA 2009-2011) was approved by the Board in May 2009 and the main areas of intervention were¹³:

- Result-based focus on Gender Equality
- Transport and improved livelihood and participation of women and men in economic development
- Energy sector, clean energy and gender equality
- Water and Gender Equality
- Extractive Industries and gender empowerment sensitization
- Women farmers and food security and farm input
- Women and micro-finance and small- and medium scaled industry
- Health services and maternal health
- Higher education and Gender Equality

¹² Independent assessment of the quality at entry of ADF 2005-2008 operations and strategies, OPEV, March 2010

¹³ Constituency Office Annual Report 2009-2010

The Bank proclaims clear commitments to a number of set targets in its Mid-term Strategy of 2008-2012 including higher ambitions to mainstream key crosscutting themes. Gender opportunity and equity must be a basic guiding principle for all its operations it states. A more effective implementation of the Gender Action Plan is underlined and new guidelines elaborated ensuring that gender issues will be fully embedded across the organization.¹⁴ Gender experts will also participate in appraisal and supervision missions.

3.2 Modalities of influencing the World Bank and the African Development Bank

3.2.1 Financial instruments of WB and AfDB

World Bank Group (WBG). Since inception in 1944, the WB has expanded from a single institution to a closely associated group of five development institutions: Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). The WB has over 100 country offices and over 10 000 employees. The headquarters is located in Washington, USA.

For the development of Africa the most important of the WB's five institutions is the International Development Association (IDA), established in 1960. Since its inception, IDA credits and grants have totaled US\$ 238 billion, averaging US\$ 15 billion a year in recent years and directing the largest share, about 50 percent, to the poorest countries in Africa.

IDA is one of the world's biggest donor institutions funded largely by contributions from the governments of its richer member countries. IDA helps the world's poorest countries and aims to reduce poverty by providing interest-free credits and grants for programs that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities and improve people's living conditions, while the WB's other lending arm, IBRD serves middle-income countries. It is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 81 poorest countries, 39 of which are in Africa. It is the single largest source of donor funds for basic social services in the poorest countries. IDA provides credits on concessional terms. This means that IDA credits have zero or very low interest charge and repayments are stretched over 25 to 40 years, including a 5 to 10-year grace period. IDA also provides grants to countries at risk of debt distress. IDA covers for around 20 % of all ODA in the world. In 2010 IDA commitments were 15 billion USD with half of the sum targeted.

The Nordic share of IDA has been around 4.5-4.9 % of the total contributions to IDA. In the last three years contributions amounted to 889 million USD in 2009, 918 million USD in 2010 and 947 million USD in 2011.¹⁵

¹⁴ African Development Bank Group, Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2012

¹⁵ Annual Reports of the WB, IDA 2009-2011

Management structures of WB. The World Bank's highest decision making body is its Board of Governors (BG), representing member countries as government shareholders. The Governors, generally finance and development ministers from all member countries, meet once a year for an annual meeting, jointly with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and twice a year at a 25 member Development Committee (DC) meeting providing political guidance for the Bank. The daily decision making is delegated from Governors/Ministers to 25 Executive Directors (ED), representing one or several of the 188 shareholders in the Executive Board.

The Annual Meetings (AM), which generally takes place in September-October, has customarily been held in Washington for two consecutive years and in another member country in the third year. They occur ahead of the meetings of the International Monetary and Financial Committee, the Development Committee, the Group of Ten, the Group of Twenty-Four, and various other groups of members. At the conclusion of their meetings, the International Monetary and Financial Committee and the Development Committee, as well as several other groups, issue communiqués. The AM will include a day of plenary sessions, during which Governors take up matters of business and consult with one another. At the AM, the BG makes decisions on how current international monetary issues should be addressed and approves corresponding resolutions. The Annual Meetings are chaired by a Governor of the Bank and the Fund, with the chairmanship rotating among the membership each year. Every two years it elects Executive Directors. Each year any new members are welcomed into the Bank and Fund.

Because the AM brings such a large number of member country officials together, they provide opportunities for consultations large and small, formal and informal. Numerous seminars are held in conjunction with the meetings, including seminars conducted by staff members for members of the press. The Annual Meetings Program of Seminars is designed to foster creative dialogue among the private sector, government delegates and senior Bank and Fund officials.

African Development Bank Group (AfDBG). The AfDBG includes The African Development Bank (AfDB) The African Development Fund (ADF), The Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF) having Headquarters in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and a temporary relocation in Tunis, Tunisia. AfDB In 1967-2010 it has approved altogether over 3,500 loans and grants totaling UA 55.93 billion. In 2011 the Bank committed UA 5.72 billion toward its operations in all sectors.

The Nordic share of ADF fluctuates around 7 % and the latest contributions Units of Account was 2 517 million in 2009, 2 634 in 2010 and 2 901 in 2011.¹⁶

¹⁶ Annual Reports of AfDB, 2009-2011

3.3 Trust Funds and their role as policy instruments

3.3.1 General information about Trust Funds

Trust funds are vehicles for channeling aid funds, (grants) multi-bi aid from donors to be administered by a trustee organization such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank, UNDP, or other multilateral organizations. Trust funds are not programs but rather dedicated sources of funding for programs and activities agreed between the donor(s) and the trustee organization. Donors use trust funds to do things that would not be possible through traditional multilateral aid channels, such as earmarking their trust fund contributions to particular countries and development issues.¹⁷

World Bank Trust Funds. There are three categories of trust funds:

- 1 Bank-executed Trust funds (BETFs) that support the Bank's work program. There is a lot of this kind of trust funds, although the total volume (amount of money) is small. They enable the Bank to explore further a specific issue.
- 2 Recipient-executed Trust Funds (RETFs). These are almost like lending, but they are managed by the Bank for the country.
- 3 Financial intermediary funds. They are multibillion funds, such like Global Fund for Health, for Agricultural Research and for Education.

Contributions to Bank-administered Trust Funds within the World Bank surpassed contributions to IDA already in 2008. In the Evaluation of the World Bank's Trust Fund Portfolio recommendations were made to establish a kind of umbrella facility which would provide a structured approach to fundraising and management of the large amount of Trust Funds (in fiscal year 2010 about 1 075 active trust funds).¹⁸

There is no evidence that trust fund resources have added to global ODA. Trust Funds have introduced non-traditional ways of mobilizing finance and the scaling up of IDA or ADF operations, financing other investments or funding technical assistance to build up capacity. The resources provided are on grant terms and have supported post-conflict countries which were unable to borrow from IDA or IBRD. The same observations are made of Trust Funds in the African Development Bank.

The added value seem to be in providing coordinated grants, financing response to country development efforts, i.e. to education if grants are not sufficient. Trust funds may provide for strong coordination among participating donors, but not necessarily with those outside the pool.

In 2007-08, trust funds accounted for about 11 percent of total Official Development Assistance. The World Bank administers the largest amount of donor trust fund resources. Over the period 2002-10 donors contributed 57.5 billion USD to trust funds operated by the World Bank, which actually exceeds IDA contributions of the last three replenishment periods (2003-2011).

¹⁷ 2011 Trust Fund Annual Report, The World Bank Group

¹⁸ An Evaluation of the World Bank's Trust Fund Portfolio, IEG, 2011

The African Development Bank had 314 ongoing trust fund projects with a total of USD 398 million of which 40 percent were in knowledge-based activities in 2011. The AfDB has moved away from tied bilateral trust funds to multi-donor trust funds of which most are thematic in nature.

3.3.2 Gender related trust funds

The Norwegian government, which has a long track record of supporting World Bank gender activities, initiated a Trust Fund for Gender Mainstreaming in the World Bank (GENFUND) in 2001. In 2004/05 Sweden also contributed to this Fund.¹⁹ A multi-donor Trust Fund in support of the World Bank's Gender Action Plan was set up during 2007-2010. The objectives were to promote gender equality in World Bank Group client countries and to support women's economic empowerment.²⁰

The financial contribution to the GAP Trust Fund from Nordic countries amounted to 23.9 million USD or 63 % of the total budget for the GAP (Dec 2010). In the program of Adolescent Girls Initiative, Nordic Donors' pledges amounts to 12 million USD or 58 % of the total budget (Dec 2010). Direct funding support was also committed to fill an important information gap in the WDR 2012 on Gender equality and development with respect to gender issues in 15 countries.²¹

In AfDB there was never a specific Trust Fund for Gender established. An initiative called "African Women in Business" was put in place in order to support women entrepreneurs in West Africa. Norway has been supporting a number of Gender initiatives over time and this particular program with 15 million NOK.²²

The only Nordic country which has contributed with financing of Gender activities to a separate Trust Fund within the AfDB is Norway. In 2010 they provided 21 million NOK for provision of Technical Assistance to the Bank and Gender. Norway has funded a project called African Women in Business Initiative since 2004 with continued support through a trust Fund as of today. The initiative provides for analytical work and research. It also supports women entrepreneurs with innovative business approaches with an amount of 15 million NOK starting in 2011.²³ The AfDB will use the funds in the West Africa region for implementation, training, incubators and support of the women associations in that region.

3.3.3 Nordic Trust Funds

WB. A Nordic Trust Fund was set-up in 2009 to support a knowledge and learning program to help the World Bank develop an informed view on how human rights relate to the Bank's core mission of promoting economic growth and poverty reduction. A secretariat was established in order to facilitate training of Bank staff and a grant program where integration of human rights perspectives is implemented. The funding contribution from the Nordic countries amounted to USD 11.1 million as of October 2010. Within the field of fragile states, security and disasters a number of Trust Funds have been set up and supported by Nordic countries.

¹⁹ Interview with Prudence Woodford, MFA, 2012-05-28

²⁰ Gender equality as smart economics, A financial overview of the Gender Action Plan 2007-2010, the World Bank, 2010

²¹ Protocol, 2010-11-26, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

²² Statistics from AfDB, ORRU, Partnership and Cooperation Unit, Dec 2011

²³ Documents from AfDB Partnership and Cooperation Unit

AfDB. The Nordic Trust Fund for Governance (NTGF) established in 2002 has served to promote innovative activities in support of good governance carried out by local/national organizations, governments and NGOs in AfDB regional member countries. The NTGF has been used to finance activities which are not traditionally financed by the Bank's lending and grant instruments. It has also allowed for strategic thinking in the area of governance and pushed boundaries in terms of needs and capacity problems in public sector and civil society. Significant outcomes of this support have been the implementation of measures against corruption, credible audits and promotion of sound public finances.²⁴

3.4 Nordic Constituencies

3.4.1 The Nordic-Baltic Constituency at the World Bank Group

The Nordic-Baltic Constituency (NBC) consists of relevant departments within the Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Finance of each capital of the Nordic-Baltic countries. Aid agencies at headquarters are consulted when necessary and the Embassies of all the Nordic-Baltic countries abroad take active part in the dialogue. In certain countries the embassies abroad form an alliance and submit coordinated replies on relevant topics such as country assistance strategies, CAS, or other themes.

The Nordic Baltic Office (NBO), is located in Washington and consists of nine member countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden). The office is led by an executive director supported by 10 staff members representing all the member countries. The executive director is representing these countries at the permanent Board of the WB.

In January each year an NBC meeting is held when division of labor on thematic issues and country specific work is decided upon. NBC puts focus on Country strategies, thematic priorities and coordination responsibilities. A list of development countries prioritized by NBC in terms of relevance to the Nordic countries is agreed upon and regularly up-dated. A Nordic country will be given the coordination responsibility for a specific country and will write the comments on topics such as CAS, PRSC, HIPC etc. In 2011 there were 47 low-income countries selected, and the assigned coordinating countries were Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. In addition to the yearly meetings there are two meetings in capitals and two others in preparation of the spring and Annual meeting of the WB.

There are several instruments / mechanisms in action to promote a smooth way to put together joint statements or instructions for the benefit of the influence that Nordic-Baltic countries would like to see in the work of the World Bank. Instructions to guide the Nordic Baltic Office in Washington when exercising its representation in Board meetings, steering committee meetings and other forum of the World Bank Group are regularly sent through a coordination mechanism. The coordination is managed through a network linking all the actors using a common web-based information system (sharepoint)²⁵. Nordic-Baltic meetings are held three times a year and venues circulate regularly from capital to capital. A draft instruction shall be based on

²⁴ The Nordic Trust Fund for Governance, Final Report, AfDB, Partnership and Cooperation Unit, 2009

²⁵ Sharepoint is a Microsoft product where you set up a website to share information, documents and reports with other users.

guidance from the NBO with suggested positions. Draft instructions are then sent to all capitals and NBO for comments. A final instruction should be sent to the NBO no later than three days before a Board or Committee meeting.

A schedule looking three months ahead, indicating topics and country issues which will appear on the Board, is updated and circulated to capitals every two or three weeks. The schedule gives some warning or idea about when these prioritized issues will show up. When the topics finally are listed for a board or committee meeting there is much less time to act. The procedure follows that a first instruction will be sent out to capitals at the earliest opportunity but not later than five weekdays prior to Bank discussion, provided that the relevant Board document has been made available.

The NBO will write reports from all relevant Board and Committee meetings as well as on key issues that have been raised on a bilateral basis and are relevant to several capitals. The reports are submitted through the sharepoint system. It is also expected that the NBO should provide guidance on key issues which are discussed in the Board meetings. The guiding should serve with the following:

- Relevant background
- Preliminary views from other chairs
- Highlight of the key policy or specific issue to focus on
- Suggest a Nordic-Baltic position
- Indicate when earlier Nordic interventions have had an impact particularly on long running issues
- Potential links with other Board discussions

A coordinating country may request comments or informally discuss with the NBO in case were a proactive input is needed.

Their tools

- Joint priorities produced by the Nordic country in charge
- Written instructions and memos in return to keep the dialogue at Board level
- Weekly telephone conferences involving all constituency members and Nordic office at respective Bank

3.4.2 The Constituency of the Nordic office within the African Development Bank

The constituencies of the permanent Board of the African Development Bank where slightly changed in May 2010 due to the fact that South Africa which now is one of the larger actors of the regional countries in AfDB was to be offered a more prominent seat. In this shift the Swiss moved out of the joint Nordic-India-Swiss constituency and is now pooled together with Germany and Portugal. South Africa is represented jointly with Lesotho and Swaziland. In all the Board is represented by 20 elected executive directors.

The Nordic-India Office (NIO) in Tunis, is headed by a Danish Executive Director, and consequently the coordination is handled by the Danes. There is apparently right now no strict form which regulates how instructions are sent, however, there is a general high level of coherence among the Nordics and it is quite obvious what kind of policy issues to push. They also confirmed that the most efficient way of influencing matters in the Bank is through active participation in Committee work as well as approaching management directly. Informal meetings at high levels in particular when crucial information from field offices/Embassies are revealed is of high value and can really make a difference.

The coordination mechanism is less formal than the set-up for World Bank instructions. The NIO in Tunis will go through the agenda of the Board and select topics of interest and forward these to either Embassies or Nordic capitols. The NIO is responsible for making these selections and also for the report writing. India does not participate much in the coordination although they have four officers in charge in at the Ministry Delhi. Every week on Monday mornings there is a telephone conference with all the Nordic capitols and the NIO where preparations and topics are settled in relation to Board meetings. According to the ED there is a high level of team spirit in the Nordic cooperation within AfDB. For the records the same system as all other Bank reporting "Sharepoint" is used.

In the priorities of the Nordic-India-Swiss (NIS) Constituency in the AfDB of 2008 chapter 8 is devoted to Gender. The following positions were declared:

- Ensure that the Bank has developed appropriate tools and mainstreamed their use in preparing its operations and country strategies
- Gender is addressed more upstream when identifying interventions
- That the Bank has enhanced internal capacity and staffing
- That the Bank's staff is gender balanced
- That the forthcoming Gender Action Plan incorporates lessons learned and involves enhanced engagement in Fragile states
- Make sure that relevant and useful gender indicators are included in Results framework: follow-up on promises made in ADF 11 Deputies report
- Evaluate the study commissioned by Norway in view of possible further actions

In the attached annex were responsibilities for coverage of countries and sectors are divided among the Nordic countries, Sweden was appointed to take care of Gender and democracy as a cross-cutting theme. This was confirmed by the ED at the NIO in Tunis. The present ED takes this assignment very seriously and she is constantly making remarks when needed at Board and Committee meetings at the AfDB.

A Swedish strategy highlighting the priorities of the cooperation with the African Development Bank will be issued at some point in October 2011. The areas of intervention are not changed and are the following:²⁶

- Private sector development
- Gender
- Climate change and environment
- Failing states
- Internal reforms (transparency etc.)
- A focus on AfDBs disclosure policy is also an issue to be followed.

²⁶ Anna Westerholm, Head of Unit, MFA, Sweden

4 Findings

The previous chapter gives an answer to the first specific objective i.e. if there is a joint Nordic Gender Agenda. The answer is clear that common denominators exist and the individual Policies on Gender Equality have the same goals and ambitions. The following chapter will demonstrate how this joint Nordic Gender Agenda is influencing the policy making within the WB and AfDB.

The findings in relation to the mechanisms of influencing are following the entry points or avenues as earlier identified. Modalities of influence are the financial instruments and human resources as described in chapter 3.

4.1 The World Bank

4.1.1 The Nordic-Baltic Constituency

A number of previous studies have looked into policy areas of special importance to the Nordic constituency and how these have influenced the work in the World Bank, in particular during the 1980s.²⁷ The Nordics used three different entry points in order to influence policy matters in the fields of poverty reduction, environmental protection and the role of women in the development process. The first entry point was through direct build-up of competence among the World Bank staff in these policy areas. A second entry point was through the scrutinizing of loan proposals and if need be highlighted in Board meetings by the Nordic ED. A third entry point would be to add additional funding outside the regular budget process.

In the Status report of the Nordic-Baltic office in 2006, the Executive Director (ED) writes that the World Bank under the era of President Wolfensohn in many ways was seen as a “Nordic-Baltic Bank”. The ED explains that the World Bank over the past 10-15 years have taken up many of the development priorities and attributes of the development paradigm that were prevalent in the Nordic-Baltic constituency. All the signposts dear to the Nordic-Baltic states such as a holistic approach to development, justice and fair income distribution, an effective and fair state, social and environmental aspects, the rights of children and women have been promoted and incorporated into Bank activities and programs.²⁸

The status report declared support of the Gender Action Plan initiated through the High Level Consultations on Gender Equality MDG in February 2006. A stronger focus on the promotion of economic opportunities with the aim to empower women was emphasized partly because the Bank’s comparative advantage but also because mainstreaming of gender issues traditionally had been stronger in the social sectors.

²⁷ Paper to the XIV International Economic Congress, PhD Candidate Hanne Hagtvædt Vik, University of Oslo

²⁸ Status Report, NBO August 2006

Status Report 2007 pointed out that the Bank has deepened its work on many of the priorities of NBC including the *focus on Africa and gender*. The year was characterized as “the Year of the GAC (Governance and Anti-Corruption)”. In 2007, the Board of EDs approved the new World Bank Strategy on Health, Nutrition, and Population (HNP) based on extensive consultations with development partners. In the middle of the process, a draft strategy was leaked, stirring up concern over what many actors, including the Nordic and Baltic countries, viewed as a lack of focus on sexual and reproductive health. Management responded to the critique and revised the Strategy document: in its final version the Strategy clearly addresses these important issues.²⁹

The Status Report 2008 and 2009 further referred to the GAP among other NBC priorities, such as “Voice” and participation—initiative and so called “back to basics”—sectors (energy, infrastructure and agriculture), which was seen as a sign that the priorities of developing countries are taken seriously. Status Report 2009 referred to the importance of Bank’s involvement in Gender issues listing the action taken by the WBG, but the specific Nordic activities in the field were not mentioned.³⁰

The 2010 Report saw the NBC having an important role in holding Bank management accountable on two important dimensions: implementation/action and focus on fighting poverty thus doing its part to assist developing countries to reach MDGs. Similarly NBC was seen to have a key role in advancing the work of WBG in critical areas, such as *Gender*, Climate Change and assisting Fragile and Conflict Affected States. The report drew the special attention to Gender issues emphasizing the leading role of the NBC Chair in Board discussions on this matter.³¹

In the same year in the meeting with the President of the WB the NBC pointed out that gender aspect should be included in the Poverty Reduction policies and plans. In 2011 the most important development in relation to GE work was the preparation of the WDR 2012. According to the Annual Report, the NBC has considerably supported the WDR team, both financially and through substantive consultations. The report provides lessons learned and recommendations for the Bank and the international community to support and promote gender equality in developing countries more effectively.³²

These statements and findings from previous research shows that the Nordic countries already have a solid platform from where they can continue to play an active role advocating and influencing policy making within the Bank. The fact that the Nordic countries have continued to be in the same constituency for decades has made it possible to keep up with joint development agendas and be consistent in the approach.

Another important factor is that the majority of the Nordic Governments have chosen to integrate World Bank policies with its development aid policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The only exception is Finland where the Ministry of Finance holds the most prominent position in formulating Finnish World Bank policy.

²⁹ Status Report, NBO October 2007

³⁰ Status Report, NBO September 2008; Status Report, NBO September 2009

³¹ Annual Report, NBO September 2010

³² Annual Report, NBO September 2011

4.1.2 Financial contributions

IDA replenishments

In the IDA 15th replenishment (2008) negotiations, gender was only mentioned at the very end of the document. The mid-term-review of IDA15 took place in November 2009 and at this point gender was brought up pointing at the need for analyzing the implementation of GAP, the Gender Action Plan. Progress was notified in terms of higher proportion of IDA countries using GAP and that more gender planning was introduced in the CAS. These points were issues brought up and highlighted by the Nordics and did set the ground for more intensive pushing of gender in the forthcoming IDA 16 negotiations.

It was then decided to coordinate a working group in order to push gender issues to a higher level in the IDA 16 replenishment. The existing gender action plan was apparently a good start and during this period Sweden was the chair in the European Union which also gave leverage for stronger influence. The Executive Director of NBO played a crucial role as Executive Director at the Board and CODEV during this phase and she also liaised with other EDs in a very successful way. All these efforts laid the ground for achieving good results in advocating actions supporting gender equality.

In the negotiation background papers (Swedish platform) at the start of IDA 16 it was suggested that Sweden would increase its contribution by 15 % if all issues concerned (GE and others) were finally included in the replenishment document.³³

Throughout the negotiations of the 16th IDA replenishment a platform shaping arguments for the different rounds, was gradually sharpened in order to achieve as much progress as possible in making gender equality an integrated part in relevant dimensions of World Bank activities.³⁴ The IDA 16 document contained wording related to gender that had specifically been proposed by the Nordics (in particular Sweden and Norway). Throughout the whole process of negotiations the intensity, the level of details and quality of the messages regarding gender was substantive. The Nordics and Canada were actively pushing the gender dimensions as articulated by a gender expert working for IEG.³⁵

Trust Funds

Sweden has been a key supporter of the gender work at the World Bank, influenced the Bank's integration of gender equality in its operations, and mainstreaming of the Gender Action Plan.³⁶ This support laid the foundation for Sida's dialogue with the World Bank's Gender Team on how the work could be systematized within the Bank's activities. Meetings were held and Sida developed indicators to measure gender equality in the new process.

The Nordic countries also seconded personnel to the Gender team in several instances. This expertise raised the standards of advocacy and implementation.

³³ Prioriteringar inför halvtidsöversyn av IDA 15, PM 2009-09-09

³⁴ Förhandlingsplattform för påfyllnad IDA 16, första, andra och tredje plattform, arbetspapper och PM, UD

³⁵ Interview with Gita Gopal, consultant to IEG and Task manager for the Evaluation on Gender and Development, 2002-2008, nov 2011

³⁶ Summary of preliminary results, November 2011, World Bank CFPTO, Global Partnership & Trust Fund Operations

4.1.3 Dialogue with the field offices

The Nordic Embassies in Africa play an important role in the communication of findings and messages from actions and operations in the field implemented by the Bank. Their information serves as input to instructions to be forwarded by the constituencies onward to the Board and committees. Many examples from comments delivered by the Embassies shows that Gender Equality is being analysed and pushed. When the CAS of Ethiopia in 2008 was processed joint statements from the Embassies alerted the urgent need for the Bank to take actions in order to prioritise gender issues in Ethiopia. The Zambian CAS of 2008 was jointly commented by Nordics and a large number of Western countries, stating their concern over the almost complete absence of GE in the WB document. In similar setting where the PRSP (2011-2014) of Mozambique was under scrutiny the Embassy reporting notes that there is an interesting discussion on mainstreaming the gender perspective into planning and budgeting but no clear follow-up to the latest WDR which had many suggestions as to Gender Equality.

4.1.4 World Development Reports

The two most recent World Development Reports (WDR) are treating development aspects of Conflict, Security and Gender respectively. In the notes from the Nordic-Baltic office it was clear that Gender perspectives were not included in the WDR on Conflict and security in its early version. Messages were brought forward stating that gender character of violence was missing and that mainstreaming of gender-related issues should be taken on board. In the report of the NBO (Jan 2010) it says that staff (read WB management) promised in both written and oral interventions to take due regard to these issues. Another paragraph states that several Executive Directors echoed their view (the NBOs view) on the importance of gender.

When the outline of the World Development report on Gender was discussed in the Board in November 2010 there was great support among all members. Joint written statements were issued beforehand and the general message was that this WDR would provide a unique opportunity to bring the issues of gender equality to the centre of policy dialogue on development and shaping gender related policies in all countries. It is also worth mentioning the elaborated matrix where gender mainstreaming indicators are tabled according to the IDA 16 result management system, the Three-year Road map and a corporate score card.

4.1.5 High-level meetings

During this period a number of important high-level meetings were held often with the sponsorship and active participation of Nordic representatives. High-level consultations on gender equality as proclaimed in the MDG 3 were held in February 2006, sponsored by the World Bank in partnership with Norway, UNIFEM and others, resulted in a commitment to prepare a "Gender Action Plan". The influence at this early stage of reactivating gender equality into the implementation of international cooperation is crucial and allows for knowledgeable inputs and impact on the way forward.³⁷

³⁷ Annual Status Report, The Nordic Baltic Office, August 2006

All Communiqués of the Development Committee of the Annual meetings of the WBG during the period 2006-2011 mention the importance of integrating gender into the program activities except in year 2009 (meeting held in Turkey).³⁸

At the most recent annual meeting of the Development committee a separate document was attached explaining the implications of the WDR 2012 on gender as to the work performed by the staff in the World Bank.³⁹ A number of strategic directions are opted for in this document, which should lead to a leverage of gender issues in all interventions:

- 1 Informing country policy dialogue
- 2 Enhancing country-level gender diagnostics
- 3 Scaling up lending for domestic priorities identified by the WDR 2012
- 4 Increasing the availability of gender-relevant data and evidence
- 5 Leveraging partnership

4.1.6 Comments by third parties

A general comment from many sources (interviews) was that the Nordic countries are bringing in common sense to the policy dialogue with no vested interest, well prepared suggestions based on research and lessons learned. The credibility is high and even sensitive issues such as reproductive health, adolescent fertility which earlier were taboo are now incorporated into all relevant policy documents.⁴⁰ The continuity and consistency of keeping a Nordic and later on a Nordic-Baltic constituency as a group and representing a shared seat in the Board of the World Bank has of course made a difference in terms of the influential power in policies and priorities of daily business.

The Nordics are solid, technical and show up with coordinated views underlined one of the European EDs in the WB Board. They are also proactive in using all means to liaise and network within the organization and by this approach they gain support. The African constituencies in general appreciate what the Nordic countries are bringing to the Board and Committees of the WB. Social conditionality is welcomed and a strong focus on poverty reduction in an African context is highly welcomed. Nordic views are substantiated by relevant research which gives them a solid base and importance.⁹

A specific remark was that the Nordic Baltic Chair had been instrumental in shaping the Bank's support to the gender issue and mainstreaming this important issue into the Bank operations.⁴¹

There are five constituencies represented by women EDs, at the Board today, which has never been the case earlier and as someone mentioned this surely has some effects on the topics for discussion.

³⁸ Communiqués of the Development Committee yearly meetings, 2006-2011

³⁹ Implications of World Development Report 2012, DC2011-0011, September 1, 2011

⁴⁰ Ivar Andersen, Manager, IDA Team, World Bank

⁴¹ ED of Sudan to the Board at the WB

4.2 The African Development Bank

4.2.1 The Nordic-India Constituency

The Annual Report of the NIO in 2006 criticized poor mainstreaming and raising awareness of the cross-cutting policy issues internally in the Bank. It has been a challenge to operationalize policies e.g. on gender issues through formulation on policy action plans, guidelines and appropriate analytical tools for the implementation and measuring the results.

The annual reports of 2007-2009 described the AfDB policies and actions on gender issues as a traditional cross-cutting issue without specific emphasis on it from the part of the constituency. However, the Mid-term Strategy (2008-2012) of the Bank defining gender as an area for mainstreaming in all Bank operations, was seen more rhetoric than able to influence the activities. The report stated that the Bank is far from implementing an effective gender mainstreaming. Gender seems often “added-on” late in the design of the projects and with poor indicators. This was also said to be a conclusion of the Bank’s mid-term review of its Gender Plan of Action (GPOA 2004-2007). In 2007 a special unit (gender, environment, and sustainable development) was established in AfDB. The Report points out that gender mainstreaming cannot be left to this unit only with very limited resources, but needs to be the responsibility of all task managers for Bank projects. Gender was actually a topic on one of the six Working Groups established by the President after the 2008 Annual Meeting with the target to develop action plans for the improvement of results. The Updated Gender Action Plan (GPOA 2009-2011) proposed the following:

- women’s economic empowerment
- institutional capacity building
- governance reform for strengthening gender mainstreaming in African countries⁴²

The Constituency report of 2010-2011 highlights the ongoing institutional reforms of the Bank directed towards decentralization, aid-effectiveness and disclosure policy which all mark a shift in the institutional culture but phasing great challenges. Policy documents revising strategies in private sector, energy sector and policy based loans are also challenging the strained capacity of the Banks bureaucracy. Inclusive growth and African ownership are key areas for the success of the continent as pointed out in the report. In relation to fragile states there were concrete initiatives listed such as addressing gender based violence.⁴³

4.2.2 Financial contributions

The ADF replenishments

Instructions for the 12th replenishment (2010) did focus on a number of different aspects such as private sector development, climate change etc but also on gender equality in particular through formulation of projects and strategies. Priorities in investments enhancing women’s economic power was emphasized, as well as gender respon-

⁴² Constituency Office Annual Report, NIS – AfDB, 2009-2010

⁴³ Constituency Report, NI – AfDB, 2010-2011

sive budgeting and gender divided auditing in relation to budget support.⁴⁴ These recommendations were reflected in the report of the ADF-12 as well as the ambitions to continue to develop gender profiles and tools guiding the integration of gender into all operations.⁴⁵

In the response to requests made by donors (in particular the Nordics) the African Development Bank made clear that they intend to support women's economic decision-making and empowerment within infrastructure, agriculture and human development. The work on disaggregated gender statistics, budgeting and supervision will be strengthened, in particular within the policy dialogue and budget support. The Bank also wishes to mobilise support against gender-based violence in fragile states.⁴⁶

The Annual reports of AfDB always keep a section describing the latest news in gender mainstreaming. Much focus is directed towards the Gender Plan of Action. A unit dedicated to the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, including gender, was established in July 2008 (OSUS).

The Bank has promised that it will take action in order to reinforce the weak representation of women at high levels and non-administration levels within its organisation. Further on more innovative approaches to gender equality work has been promised. Mainstreaming of gender into strategies and projects as well.⁴⁷

Trust funds

A Trust Fund which was established around 2000 became very catalytic in creating awareness and capacity inside the Bank in order to enhance governance in many of its aid programs. A similar Trust Fund supporting Gender could be very useful both internally and externally as gender cuts across all sectors. The latest notion in development trends is inclusive development and inclusive economic growth. This is an area where gender should be included underlined by the Head of the Partnership and Cooperation Unit. The unit conveyed a desire to receive more funding directed towards Gender activities to balance the focus on policy and mainstreaming which has received quite a lot of attention and support.⁴⁸ The Nordic Governance Trust (2002) was catalytic and raised internal awareness and was in no way a burden to the administration.

In earlier days it was necessary to back up issues with the support of a Trust Fund. Gender was not an issue so it was important that shareholders like the Nordics made requests for gender implications when projects were scrutinized.⁴⁹

4.2.3 High-level meetings

At the annual meeting in Abidjan in 2010 the Swedish delegation brought up gender equality in the program implementation and the lack of women at higher levels within the management of the bank in a number of sessions.⁵⁰ The following annual meeting in Lisbon in 2011 the President of AfDB mentioned the importance of job creation for young people and women in particular under the theme "Towards an Agenda for

⁴⁴ Memo, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2010-11-02

⁴⁵ ADF-12 Report, Delivering Results and Sustaining Growth, Sep 2010, Tunis

⁴⁶ Memo, Swedish MFA, 2010-02-17

⁴⁷ Memo, Swedish MFA, 2010-08-18

⁴⁸ Interview with ORRU, AfDB, December 1, 2011

⁴⁹ Interview with Secretary General, AfDB, December 2, 2011

⁵⁰ Promemoriam, UD 2010-06-04, Afrikanska utvecklingsbankens årsmöte, 27-28 maj 2010, Abidjan

Inclusive Growth in Africa”.⁵¹ The positional influence being President of the organization will surely have an impact on management at the operational level and therefore this influential achievement must be considered a success.

4.2.4 Nordic staff in the Bank

A gradual increase of Nordic staff members at the AfDB took place during the period starting in 2006 until 2011 with a total number of 9 Nordics the first three years and 14 at the end of this period.⁵²

A positive way of influencing the Bank is through strengthening the capacity of the institution. A voice (VP) said that a clear way of influencing the shaping of policies with higher quality is through strengthening the Bank with staff. Secondments in strategic areas are useful and give credibility and higher legitimacy to areas which are prioritized. Technical assistance at high levels within the organization may also play a crucial role such as the secondment of a Swedish diplomat and former General Director at Sida, was working in the President’s office as an advisor.

Other voices from the management underlined that the most important influences are people.⁵³ We need to have more Nordic staff in the Bank. The marginal value is much higher in comparison to the World Bank and therefore influence can be stronger if AfDB is being further strengthened. Other Nordic staff members mentioned that you could be influential while being dynamic, activist and using innovative methods. The Bank also needs to take on board more expertise and in particular expertise within ICT and engineering.

4.2.5 Comments by third parties

“The issue about influencing from management is that at the end of the day management is implementing policy. The key channels of influence are the point of decision making as well as resources that are being used to change the way of thinking and doing. Those are probably the most powerful channels of influence.”⁵⁴

The Nordic chair is always driven by development issues (not political).

The Nordics can play a strategic role in the Bank while they are the honest guys (S.A. ED). The German ED did not recall of any particular Nordic agenda. More important that the donor countries listen attentively to what the Africans are bringing to the table and not keep saying we are fighting this and that. Nordics are more outspoken than other members, short, straight forward and to the point. The lack of intercultural dialogue is a problem and therefore diplomatic training is needed, he also mentioned.

The Italian ED said it was a good timing to ask questions related to influence of the Bank activities while AfDB now is going through a transition phase. They are moving from a very project oriented Bank to more program based approach with their Mid-term Strategy as a guiding tool. He mentioned two different styles in influencing from

⁵¹ Promemoria, UD 2011-06-23, AfDBs årsmöte 2011, 6-10 juni

⁵² Statistics from Human Resource Department, AfDB

⁵³ Interview with Director, Reg.Dep, AfDB

⁵⁴ Interview with Secretary General, AfDB, 2 dec 2011

the Board horizon. The former ED of the NI office identified some critical areas and pushed them with great energy in order to reach consensus at Board level (decentralization, aid effectiveness, inclusive growth). Another way of influencing, as the Canadian ED exemplifies, is being an extraordinary reader of all Bank documents in order to give very detailed comments at the Board. The Italian ED was of the opinion that it is more strategic to be close to the operations of the Bank and therefore the Danish ED was more effective and he looked at macro-processes and pushed for improved modalities. To change a paragraph in a document was not very useful.

The Nordics often use information from the field serving well the discussions at the Board. The continuous repetition of promoting gender equality has also changed the way of thinking so that gender implications in an infrastructure project really matters⁵⁵.

The Nordics can play the role of bridge into the Bank supporting initiatives such as modernization, decentralization, through innovative methods and new ways of working (comment by ED of NI).

The Nordics have been highly involved in “Governance issues”, and according to a staff member, when the internal fight against corruption was at its peak the influence of ethics and norms (Nordic influence) led to a number of changes and suspension of staff. Nordic Embassies in the field have also played important roles as whistle blowers. The multi-donor TF on Governance was instrumental in pushing these questions.

(More focus on private sector development. The Bank has collaborated with Swedfund, with a number of secondments earlier shaping business (15 yrs ago). Focus on green energy – gender. The Danes had the African Commission – SME, Business and private sector. African Guarantee Fund – Nairobi, with partial credit – African banks issues credit facilities.)

Sweden promised a gender expert with special competence in private sector, but so far no one in place. This is a requested capacity in order to make reality of gender mainstreaming.

⁵⁵ Interview with Secretary General, AfDB, 2 Dec, 2011

4.3 Lessons learned

The following lessons learned are extracted from the findings in this chapter:

- Out of the five avenues only the first one, i.e. the permanent Board Avenue, actually has a clear joint Nordic agenda.
- The Nordic Constituencies in the two Banks are playing an active role in the policy dialogue and they are well respected by other actors and the respective management.
- Relevant and well-prepared gender policies in the Banks are in place, but implementation and results need to be continuously closely followed.
- The replenishment negotiations are crucial occasions when policy concerns have been pushed with success, however, these opportunities could harvest even more if the Nordic countries would act together as a team.
- Trust Funds should be used for strategic purposes and continue to be a tool for pushing Gender Equality through the planning and implementation of Bank activities.
- Personal contacts, informal working groups and venues outside the ordinary Bank meetings are all efficient ways of influencing policies and decisions.
- In order to make a stronger influence on attitudes and culture more Nordic staff in the Banks is needed and stronger voices should be heard at Country level in the field.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Nordic gender agenda

There exists no proper common Nordic document declaring a joint view on how to approach and push gender equality in development cooperation through the Multilateral Organizations. However, it is very clear when analyzing all the guiding policy documents of the Nordic countries that Gender Equality is at the heart of politics and that the approach on how to promote this agenda in all its dimensions converges.

Historically Nordic countries have been valued as good doers, the supporters of soft parts of the development aid: health, education and social assistance governed by human rights approach. Recently the justifications and argumentation for promoting gender equality internationally, however, have changed to accentuate the economic and administrative structures. This indicates that the global development paradigm has shifted to the economic dominance, and along with this shift the Nordic agenda also tend to point out the importance of “gendered economy” or “economized gender” instead of the traditionally declared human rights based equality between women and men, girls and boys.

5.2 Influencing mechanisms and modalities

Nordic Influence and the response in the two Banks

Despite of the slow progress of gender mainstreaming in development assistance, this study showed that the Nordic and Baltic countries together with Switzerland and India had the opportunity to influence in the WB and AfDB decision making for improving gender equality in Africa. The modalities at hand for influencing policy issues such as replenishments, Trust Funds and human resources have been used in different ways by the Nordic countries but in its totality very efficiently. The Nordic successful actions to push preparation of The World Development Report 2012 Gender and Development shows that gender equality gains now more attention at the highest level decision making in the World Bank Group. During the study period gender mainstreaming as one of the key crosscutting themes in the Banks’ policies was strengthened, which is reflected also in the latest International Development Association 16th replenishment decisions in 2011 that selected gender equality as one of the Special Themes of the replenishment period 2011-2014. The policy shift was the result of many forces including Nordic influence through the actions documented in this report. The AfDB gender policy also strengthened with more women being involved in the Bank’s actions. Nordic reflections, however, were more prominent in the World Bank actions.

The Nordic constituencies in the Banks gain most of the qualities of the influential coalitions: high level of activity, political unity, good coordination, expertise, alliance building, communication skills, legitimate tactics, reliability, coherence, organizational strength and strategic convergence. The development agenda of the Nordic countries

today seems rather consistent. In terms of gender policies the Nordics are considered by the stakeholders to be among the strongest and most vocal in making a difference for gender equality, women's rights, economic empowerment and reaching the MDG3.

The strong and united power exercised by the Nordics at the Boards in order to reach changes in policy matters, in particular concerning gender equality, does however need the support from other interaction in any of the described avenues above to be successful. At the same time the international debate and policy development is a strong factor in pushing ideas, producing analyses and new ways of thinking when approaching gender equality and other aid agendas.

Policy concerns such as Gender and Human rights issues are not always welcomed by the borrowing country. This argument was often used as an excuse for managers in the Banks when not including gender issues in a certain program or a country strategy. A number of initiatives and incentives have been introduced over time i.e. through the Trust Funds, secondments, additional funding, rewards etc. However in order to achieve results a continuous and active dialogue in order to advocate these concerns at the field level/country level is also paramount. The objective to influence behavior, attitudes and utmost the culture will imply much more attention addressed at the country level in all possible angles and dimensions.

It is not only in these connections that policy issues are met with a negative reply but a number of Board members (constituencies) are not at ease with many of the soft social issues and often refer to the original mandate of a Bank which is lending money to productive sectors. The protests against "new" policy concerns at least indicate that they are considered and not just ignored. These policy concerns need to be continuously repeated and followed-up to assure their conviction by those parties who still might be a bit reluctant. The task of keeping a momentum in acquired achievements at policy level should not be neglected, although some stakeholders might be of the opinion that you should leave a topic when the battle is won. The earlier history of pushing gender equality as a mainstreaming issue tells us that landmarks will be lost if you leave the policy concern too early.

5.3 Reflections and future issues

Changes in the multipolar system

Power relations are changing and a number of previous borrowers (LDC's) have progressed into middle-income countries and some of them are also donors of today. A prominent gathering is the so called BRICS countries which are playing an important and strong role in particular as individual countries. This gives ways for new scenarios and changes in the international agenda influencing priorities, policies and decisions. Consequently the multipolar system is changing and a new world order will reign so that power lines will follow new directions. The discussions taking place at Board level and in Governors meetings of the Banks on these changes of powers are reflected in the more recent minutes and reports of the Nordic constituencies but there is not yet a strategic thinking on how to approach these changing scenarios.

The need of a changing culture within the Banks

The traditional male-based practices may continue to dominate, because the development paradigm i.e. the implicit, intellectual policy environment is determined by soft factors which may remain unchanged even though hard factors have changed. In other words, if the deeply historically rooted cultural norms and values – not only African, but also European ones – remain unchanged, the female dimension of any culture will stay in status quo at all levels of hierarchies starting from a family in an African village up to the Board of Governors in the development Banks. This may explain why it is so difficult for the Banks' management (male and female managers) to take the stronger role in implementing and following the implementation of gender equality actions within the development programs. It takes a lot more time and resources to push for cultural change; however, it is crucial if we want to see changes in terms of gender equality in the Bank operations and in reality. In this respect the Nordic countries still have much to do.

Regardless of the volume of aid, the share and importance of aid to African countries is declining. The private capital flows are much higher than foreign aid, more than 55 billion dollars per year. Power relations are changing with newcomers such as the BRICS who are moving in on the scene acting more like international companies. Their interests are focused on commercial benefits. The awareness of social justice and environmental sustainable solutions, such as CSR, within the private sector in the western world is increasing. But how could it influence new investors and retain captured knowledge? The volume of remittances from migrant workers in the western world to their countries of origin is also a factor of high relevance and should not be neglected in terms of potential and power of influence. These are important factors that need more strategic thinking and approach as to how to concretize further advocacy work in pushing gender equality in an inclusive and broad sense.

6 Recommendations

General policy recommendations

This study examined the successful ways and the limitations of promoting Gender Equality through all the existing mechanisms at hand within the two Banks at the policy level. The challenging part is now how to get these policy achievements into action. More emphasis is needed to follow-up what happens at the field level and reporting models should be established in order to capture results and activities.

- The Nordic countries should emphasize the importance of adequate reporting from the field and push for the concrete **use of recommendations put forward in the WDR 2012**. All the necessary coordination and liaison at field level should be enforced in order to reduce gender differences and improve outcomes.

The decentralization process taking place within the system of the AfDB is very important and aligns well with many of the targets in development aid (Paris agenda, MDGs etc) where more concrete results are expected at the country level.

- There is a need to follow this **decentralization process** closely and be alert to policy implementations and in particular the concrete actions in relation to gender equality.
- **Ensure that Nordic embassy staff are well acquainted with multilateral issues** and stress to them that they have an important task in influencing Bank programmes at country level. They are also key transmitters of crucial points and messages back to capitals.

To see real changes in terms of cultural norms and practices related to the position of women and gender equality a combination of good policies and concrete action will be necessary. However the more direct transfer of knowledge, attitudes and thinking should not be underestimated.

- When the **Nordics act together in replenishment negotiations** they achieve much more in terms of influence.
- More re Nordic staff into the regular management staff at senior level would help.
- **Increase the use of secondments** in the Banks and simplified procedures to accommodate them in strategic postings would help.
- Given the advent of new donors, allocate responsibilities for liaison with them among the Nordics in line with Finnish report 3rd recommendation. To this end, construct **a joint Nordic strategy on how to approach the new donor countries** (e.g. Turkey and Kazakhstan) and how to form alliances with the newcomers. In this context, promote collaboration and a common platform focused on gender integration.

Stronger Nordic influence

It certainly has been an advantage to the Nordics that they have been represented as a joint group in the respective constituency although other country members were also added. However, this constellation might change in the future and we know that it was already challenged when constituencies were remodeled a few years ago. Every fifth year a discussion takes place in the WBG and the AfDB on the reviewing of shares. At these occasions constituency membership is also on the agenda for discussion.

- **Be prepared for shifts in power and representation** at the constitutional level of both Banks. Networking and nurturing informal contacts is critical to the protection of past achievements

It is crucial that the Executive Director be a very competent and skilled person. Having served previously in the office at a senior level helps. This was general theme amongst many EDs interviewed. (It is an advantage if the ED is knowledgeable in Gender Equality matters but cultural sensitivity is equally important.

- **Executive Directors should be skilled in negotiations, listening, arranging compromises, identifying opportunities as they arise and forge the necessary coalitions.** They should keep in mind that EDs enjoy power and influence but are most successful when focused on consensus building, when arguing for positions solidly grounded in evidence and when demonstrating the capacity to take decisions without having to run back to the office or the constituency to seek advice.

When the annual priorities of the Nordic constituency work is being prepared it could be useful to aim for a larger more inclusive process where Ministers/Governors, state-secretary and General Directors are all included. A starting point would be for the Nordic offices at each Bank to scan and analyse topics and themes that are going to be a priority in the respective Bank for the coming year.

- Once a **coherent plan and priorities** are set it is efficient and consistent for all parties to comply with them and to draw their operational implications for dialogue at different levels and through different avenues.
- Make communications more efficient by changing the procedures of instructions between capitals and the Nordic offices at the Board of the Banks. Avoid writing memos for the archives (as one official put it). **Give more initiative to the Nordic offices in the Banks** since they are best suited to identify the questions of interest and initiate the process by proposing positions and circulating proposals among the constituency members for comments.
- It is important to have **personnel contacts with high-level managers in the Banks** and in particular the President. The informal channels are often more successful and every opportunity to liaise with top level persons should be taken into consideration. International venues and meetings outside the ordinary Bank arrangements are good occasions for such contacts. These are soft factors and can be strengthened through added comprehensive resources in terms of funds or staff as already mentioned above.

Financial resources are powerful means and the Nordics do take this into consideration in relevant negotiations and opportunities. But informal channels are also important in order to increase the leverage of influence and realizing change.

- A great deal of influence may be achieved during the replenishment processes. However, it is not the only crucial process. Timely action should take place at the planning stage in the relevant Bank departments. **A lot of work and thinking starts off before the official process so that it is best to intervene in advance.**
- **Trust Funds** have become a very large share of total aid flows through the Multi-lateral Banks but they are not on the agenda of Board meetings. They should periodically be **brought to the attention of the Board** meetings and also at Governor level during the Annual meetings.

A final remark or rather an illustration of all these efforts in making a change in terms of Gender Equality could be the form of a cake, where all the policy influencing would be the crust and the icing, and all the rest which imply changing the culture, using the right resources and making things change, are the ingredients of the cake. We need to be active in all this to make a difference.

Annex 1: People interviewed

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Anders Wahlberg, Deputy Director, Dep for Multilateral Cooperation
Anna Westerholm, Director, Dep for Multilateral Cooperation
Helge Flärd, Deputy Director, Dep for Multilateral Cooperation
Henrik Bergqvist, Deputy Director, Dep for Multilateral Development Cooperation
Magnus Nordström, Special Advisor, Dep for Multilateral Cooperation
Per Örneus, Head of Dep for Multilateral Cooperation
Prudence Woodford-Berger, Senior Adviser, Dep for Development Policy
Åsa Hjelt, Deputy Director, Dep for Multilateral Development Cooperation

Sida

Torsten Wetterblad, Programme Officer, Policy and thematic Department
Jonas Bergström, Programme Officer, Progsam

Others

Bo Göransson, Ambassador and senior advisor at the AfDB in 2009-2010
Tove Strauss, Consultant and earlier staff member at AfDB
Bertil Odén, Researcher, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala

The World Bank

Abdulrahman Almofadhi, ED, Saudi Arabia
Agapito Mendes Dias, ED, Sao Tome and Principe
Anders Zeijlon, Coordinator, NTF for Human Rights
Anita Bhatia, Director, Partnerships IFC
Anna Bjerde, Senior Manager, Sustainable Development, Africa Region
Anna Brandt, ED, NBO
Anna Ferry, Senior Advisor, NBO
Barbara Lee, Manager, Aid Effectiveness Unit
Cheryl Gray, IDB, former IEG
Colin Bruce, Director Strategy and Operations, Africa Region
Daniela Gressani, Deputy Director General, IEG
Gita Gopal, Consultant, IEG
Hans Martin Boehmer, Senior Manager, IEG
Hassan Ahmed Taha, ED, Sudan
Ivar Andersen, Manager Operations, IDA Team
Jeni G. Klugman, Sector Director, Gender
Jens Haarlov, Alternate ED, NBO
Jyrki Koskelo, Advisor, IFC
Kyle Peters, Director, Strategy and Country Services
Malcolm Ehrenpreis, Senior Gender Specialist
Marie-Lucie Morin, ED, Canada et al

Merza H Hasan, Executive Director, Kuwait
Ola Storberg, Senior Advisor , NBO
Philippe Le Houerou, Vice President, Europe and Central Asia
Ritva Reinikka, Sector Director, Africa Human Development Department
Robert Lenton, Chairman, Inspection Panel
Rudolf Treffers, ED, the Netherlands et al
Saroj Kumar Jha, Program Manager, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and
Recovery
Shanta Devarajan, Chief Economist, Africa Region
Steen Lau Jorgensen, Sector Director, Middle East and North Africa
Uwe Gehlen, Former Senior Advisor to Executive Director, Germany
Warrick Smith, Senior Manager, IFC Advisory Services

African Development Bank

Albert Mafusire, Senior Country Economist, Regional Department South A
Alexander Severens, Senior Adviser to the ED of South Africa
Aloysius Ordu, Vice President, Operations, Country & Regional Programs & Policy
Benoit Chervallier, Head of Unit, Resource Mobilization and Allocation Unit
Benson Maina, Lead Human Resources Specialist
Cecilia Akintomede, Secretary General
Christoph Kohlmeyer, ED for Germany, Portugal and Switzerland
David Flament, Chief Cooperation Specialist, Partnership & Cooperation Unit
Douglas Barnett, Lead Results Officer, OPSM
Frank Black, Director & Chair, Permanent Committee on Decentralization
Franck Perrault, Director, OPEV
George Honde, Senior Country Economist, Regional Department South Africa
Gemina Archer-Davies, Director, Human Resources Management Department
Jacob Kolster, Director, Regional Department (Tunisia, Libya, Egypt)
Kazumi Ikeda-Larhed, Head, Partnerships & Cooperation Unit
Ketsela Mulu, Senior Advisor & Alternate to ED for Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya,
Kordje Bedoumra, Vice-President, Corporate Services
Margit Thomsen, ED for Nordic countries and India
Mohit Dhoorundhur, ED for Mauritius, Botswana, Malawi and Zambia
Hela Cheikhrouhou, Director, Energy, Environment and Climate Change Department
Odile Keller, Division Manager, OPEV
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Peter Ide, Chief Technical Assistance Officer, OPSM
Petra Menander Ahman, Advisor, Office of Chief Operating Officer, Secretary for
the Deauville IFI Coordination Platform
Shahid Kahn, ED for South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland
Shehu Yahaya, ED for Nigeria and Sao Tome & Principe
Steve Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Director, Regional Department East (Ethiopia, Sudan,
Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia)
Sudhaker Shukla, Advisor to ED for Nordic countries and India
Sunita Pitamber, Head of Unit, Fragile States Unit
Tim Turner, Director, Private Sector Department

Veronica Giardina, Principal Cooperation Officer

Veronica Giardina, Principal Cooperation Officer, Partnerships & Cooperation Unit

Vinay Sharma, Director, Procurement & Fiduciary Services Dept

Vincenzo Zezza, ED for Italy, the Netherlands and the UK

Walter Jones, ED for United States

Youssef Ouedraogo, Special Advisor to the President, Governance Issues

Annex 2: List of documents and literature

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