

Enhancing partnerships between multilateral and bilateral agencies to support partner country efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment

Joint biennial workshop of the DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) and the UN's Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality
28-29 January 2008
Paris

1 The OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) and the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) hold a workshop every two years to exchange ideas and share information on issues of mutual relevance and interest. The two groups represent the gender focal points and advisors of the United Nations system, bilateral agencies and the development banks.

The focus of the workshop

- 2 This workshop will focus on
- The role of multilateral agencies in delivering on commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment
 - How bilateral agencies can best support the efforts of multilateral agencies
 - Innovative practices in partnerships between bilateral and multilateral agencies Opportunities to enhance and scale up our mutual work to support partner country efforts, and
 - Improved tracking of expenditure which is directed towards development assistance which is focussed on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Global contexts

There is a renewed interest in gender equality and women's empowerment

3 Over the past eighteen months we have seen a renewed commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in both the bilateral and multilateral donor communities, unprecedented since the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women.

Delivering as one

4 In late 2006 the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence recommended the establishment of a "dynamic UN entity focussed on gender equality and women's empowerment", consolidating UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the UN Division for the Advancement of Women. The new gender equality entity would be fully and ambitiously funded.

Gender equality as smart economics – a World Bank Group gender action plan, 2007-10

5 The World Bank Group recently approved *Gender equality as smart economics* – an action plan to advance women’s economic empowerment to promote shared growth and MDG3 – gender equality and women’s empowerment. It targets women’s empowerment in the economic sectors, most importantly infrastructure, agriculture, private sector development and finance. A total of US\$24.5 million over four years has been earmarked for implementing the Plan, with half the funding from the World Bank and half from donor countries including Germany and Norway.

Bilateral donors are also “upping their game” to match their political commitments

6 Over the past two years many bilateral donor agencies have recognised that whilst they have been **saying** the right things about the importance of gender equality and women’s empowerment for development, the investments in closing the gender equality gap have not matched the political rhetoric. From these reflections a number of new approaches to gender equality work are emerging, with many donors recognising that over-reliance on gender mainstreaming as the sole strategy to achieve gender equality did not achieve the intended results. A much more nuanced mix of context-specific strategies and interventions is needed, coupled with long-term commitment from both donors and partners.

7 Members of the two Networks will wish to:

- identify opportunities to build on and exploit the renewed interest in gender equality and women’s empowerment
- explore opportunities for innovative partnerships in partner countries, and
- strategise on how bilateral donors can support multilateral partners to embed global political commitments in their practice.

Financing for Development – keeping the Monterrey promises

8 In the second half of 2008, the Government of Qatar will be hosting the Follow-up International Conference to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

9 At the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development (March 2002) and at subsequent global meetings, donors have made commitments to increase aid to USD 130 billion globally by 2010, which includes a doubling of aid to African countries. Preliminary figures indicate that in 2005 the 22 member countries of the OECD Development Assistance Committee provided USD 103.9 billion, down by 5.1% from the record high of 2005 when ODA from DAC member countries amounted to USD 106.8 billion.

10 The Monterrey Consensus made several references to the importance of gender equality to the achievement of developmental goals.

11 A series of High-level Meetings on financing for development are scheduled in the lead-up to the Doha meeting. One of these will be the 2008 Commission on the Status of Women (February/March 2008) which will focus on *Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women*.

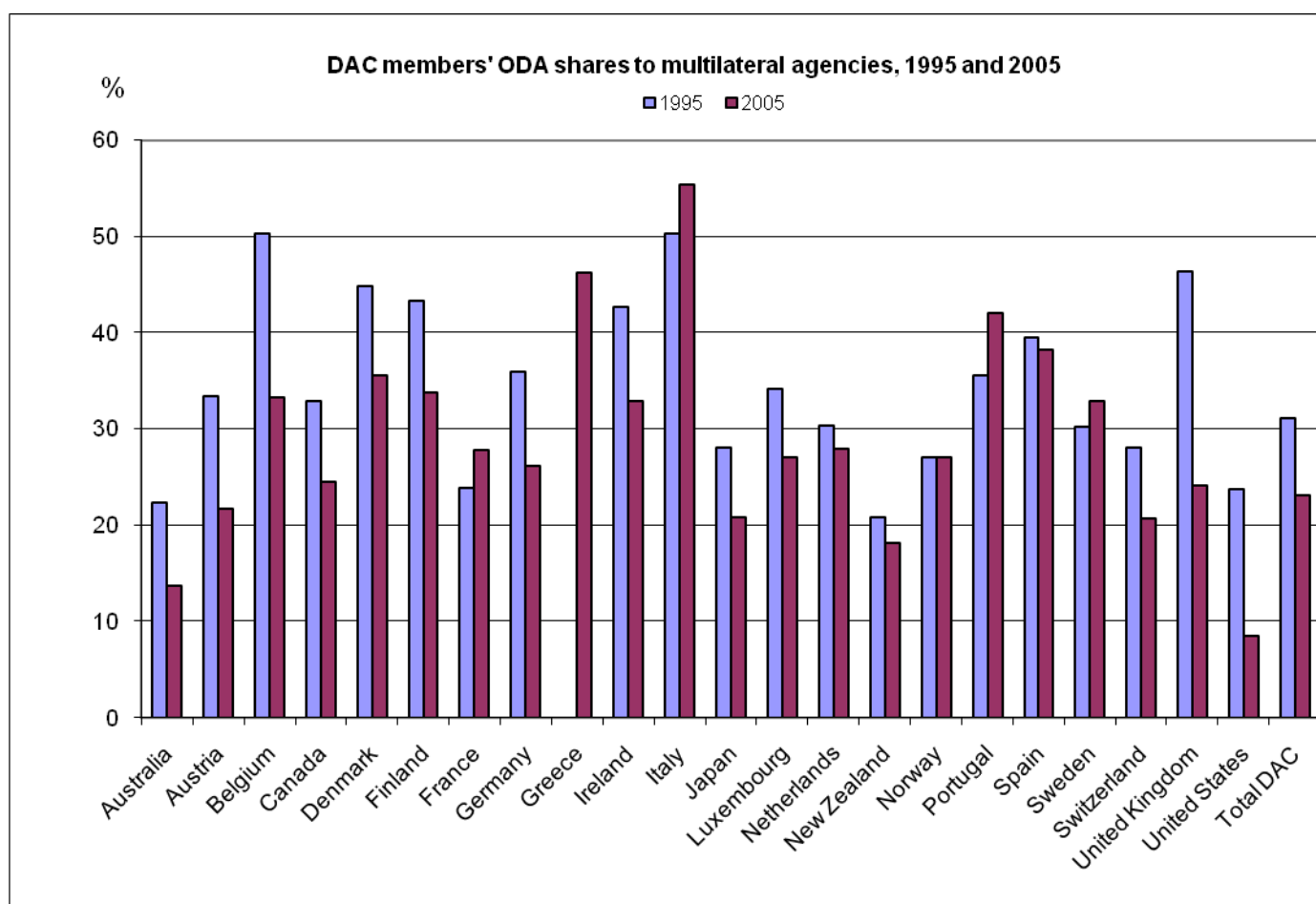
12 Members of the two Networks will be interested in:

- How far agencies have delivered on the gender equality dimensions of the Monterrey Consensus
- How much of the increased aid has been directed towards gender equality and women’s empowerment, and
- Identifying opportunities for securing an increased proportion of “scaled up aid” for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

About a quarter of aid goes to multilateral organisations

13 In 2006 DAC members allocated approximately 27% of their ODA to multilateral organisations – a total of approximately USD 28 billion. For 2005 DAC members allocated approximately 23% of their total ODA, with some countries providing as little as 8% and others as much as 55%.

14 At the same time donors also provide multilateral agencies with funding for specific projects or programmes. As this is shown as bilateral rather than multilateral aid in DAC statistics, multilateral agencies in fact disburse a higher share of total aid than the chart below suggests:



15 Although bilateral donors have for some years applied the DAC gender equality policy marker to identify aid which is *principally* or *significantly* focused on the achievement of gender equality, little is known about how much spending by multilaterals is focused on gender equality and women's empowerment. This could become increasingly important over the next few years when multilaterals are likely to benefit from donor efforts to deliver on their Monterrey commitments at the same time as donors are seeking to increase their investments in gender equality and women's empowerment.

- 16 Members of the two Networks will be interested in learning more about:
- How bilateral donors make their allocative decisions, in particular how they determine the balance between bilateral and multilateral funding
 - How much funding is directed towards gender equality and women's empowerment and how this is measured
 - How the multilateral funding agencies make their programming decisions, and
 - How much of their programming effort is focused on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Can rising aid be delivered more effectively for gender equality and women's empowerment?

17 The *Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness* (March 2005) recognises that "...aid effectiveness must increase significantly as well to support partner country efforts to strengthen governance and improve development performance." In September 2008 the Accra High Level Forum will review the implementation of the *Paris Declaration*.

18 There is an increasing understanding that for these reforms to have the desired developmental impact of reducing poverty and inequality, it is critical that gender equality and women's empowerment are adequately analysed and captured in the evolving new approaches to aid delivery and partnership. These reforms also provide an opportunity to improve on current practice in donor agencies, recipient governments and civil society in pursuit of gender equality. Partner countries and donor agencies are currently working on the translation of the principles and commitments into concrete action.

- 19 Members of the two Networks will want to:
- Explore opportunities for increased *harmonisation* and improved division of labour in partner countries
 - Strengthen our joint approaches to *managing for results* and *mutual accountability* in our relationships with partner countries and with each other.

Objectives

20 The workshop provides a framework for

- Developing strategies to increase multilateral investments focussed on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Identifying the respective comparative advantages of multilateral and bilateral donors
- Rethinking and reshaping the ways in which bilateral and multilateral donors work together to support partner country efforts
- Sharing experiences and innovations, and
- Exploring ways of working together on assessment frameworks to measure and evaluate the performance of multilateral agencies.

Intended outcomes

21 The intended workshop outcomes are:

- Improved division of labour in our respective efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment
- Improved collaboration and harmonisation in partner countries
- A continued increase in the proportion of aid directed towards the achievement of gender equality
- Improved measurement of the amount of aid focussed on gender equality, and
- Increased mutual accountability.

Possible elements of the agenda

22 The following elements could be considered for inclusion in the agenda:

Introductions to and overviews of

- donor progress on delivering on the Financing for Development commitments since the 2002 Monterrey conference
- bilateral donor funding focussed on gender equality and women's empowerment
- funding directed towards multilateral agencies
- what we know about the proportion of funding directed to gender equality and women's empowerment by the multilaterals, and
- progress on establishing a single UN gender equality entity.

Case studies, presentations, panels and discussions on emerging practice in

- bilateral donors' allocation mechanisms for multilateral funding
- multilateral programming, including the implementation of "delivering as one"
- the more effective division of labour in partner countries in harmonising and managing for results (ideally given jointly by multilateral, bilateral and partner country participants)
- mutual accountability, including frameworks for assessing multilateral performance – both at headquarters level and in partner countries, and

- bilateral donor engagement in the political and policy decision making of the multilateral donors.

Logistical and administrative arrangements

23 This workshop will be hosted by the DAC Network on Gender Equality or by one of its members on the Network's behalf. A small core group, representing the DAC Network and IANWGE, will be formed to design the agenda and the modus operandi for the workshop

24 A summary record will be prepared to reflect the key "lessons learned" and identify concrete follow-up strategies. The summary record, workshop papers and presentations will be made available through the respective Networks

Timing

25 A two day workshop is envisaged.

26 The date of the workshop will be jointly determined by the DAC Network on Gender Equality and IANWGE to fit with other international events and commitments, in particular the 2008 Commission on the Status of Women which has as its theme *financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women*. Possible dates are:

- 21-22 January 2008
- 28-29 January 2008

Participants

27 The participants of the joint workshop will include members of the IANWGE and the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality as well as other experts from bilateral and multilateral agencies.

11 September 2007