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**Gender Equality and the Implementation of the Paris
Declaration**

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GENDER EQUALITY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS DECLARATION¹

The *Paris Declaration* provides an action-oriented roadmap for aid reform built around five main principles. For these reforms to have the desired impact 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 of donor agencies, recipient governments and civil society in pursuit of gender equality, to the betterment of women and men, boys and girls. Partner countries and donor agencies are currently working on translation of principles to concrete action and this provides a significant opportunity to embed gender equality in the mechanisms and measures being developed.

The shift to more volumes of aid and more effective aid opens up new avenues for policy and political dialogue and action but also poses specific risks and challenges if gender equality is not centrally addressed in the evolving aid architecture and modalities. This paper offers suggestions for bilateral donor staff based in the field (and others) on practical measures that can be taken to ensure that gender equality is integrated into the interpretation and implementation of the Paris Declaration at country level and that the opportunities provided by the aid effectiveness agenda are utilised in pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment. The Paris Declaration is not a new or a stand-alone agenda, its principles are built on years of development experience on what does and does not work, and are not individually or collectively new. It is essentially linked to development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

KEY MESSAGES

- Addressing gender equality and women's empowerment is very challenging and can be highly threatening to governments (both recipients and donors). This influences the scope and scale of impact that can be achieved and indicates the need for building strong relationships, thorough analysis and coordinated action over a long time frame.
- Most donor and partner countries subscribe to the notion that gender equality is a fundamental human right. Additionally, there is growing empirical evidence of the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment for development effectiveness. The reforms underway to implement the partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration provide donors and partners with the opportunity to advance these issues in a holistic way as principles are translated into concrete actions.
- The Paris Declaration is an important initiative to reform aid practices and thus to achieve more effective development. However, to realise the ultimate development effectiveness aims of the Paris Declaration will require more than attention to aid efficiency measures. Without due consideration and appropriate concrete measures in design of new aid modalities and processes there is the risk that they may serve to reinforce rather than address existing gender inequalities. Integration of gender equality in reforms and engagement of staff with gender expertise will help to maximise opportunities – but more effort is needed to make appropriate linkages to the aid effectiveness reform agenda.
- Though the Paris Declaration was signed only in March 2005, its principles have been current in gender equality work over a longer time frame. We need to identify and learn from good practice, use

¹ Prepared for the DAC Network on Gender Equality by Cathy Gaynor

what we already know, implement these principles more systematically and provide the evidence necessary to influence ongoing reforms.

- There is need to manage and allocate resources for gender equality and women's empowerment more effectively and to strengthen relationships between the Ministry of Finance and line Ministries and local government, which have the potential to deliver for women (not just the women's ministries who are generally under-resourced). But this needs to be a joint approach with division of labour, according to comparative advantage.
- It is essential to build and support civil society – we need communities, NGOs and a women's movement which are able to hold governments (both donors and partners) to account.
- There is need too to build the capacity of donors to strengthen gender analysis and preparedness to address gender equality and women's empowerment in policy and political dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

The *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, agreed to in March 2005, establishes global commitments for donor and partner countries to support more effective aid in a context of significant scaling up of aid. The intention is to reform the delivery and management of aid in order to improve its effectiveness. The reforms are intended to '*increase the impact of aid ...in reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating achievement of the MDGs*'² The *Paris Declaration* (PD) has agreed a framework based on five principles, or partnership commitments, to ensure that aid flows actually benefit those it is meant to serve. It specifies indicators, time tables and targets for actions by donor and partner governments and has an evolving agenda for implementation and monitoring of progress, up to 2010. This includes a Third High Level Forum to take place in Ghana in late 2008. Participants include 35 donor countries and agencies, 26 multilateral agencies, 56 countries that receive aid and 14 civil society organisations.

To date, the focus of attention by donors and partners has chiefly been on aid and agency efficiency such as improving ownership by partner governments; increased efficiency of financial and administrative arrangements and harmonisation of donor procedures. The Declaration itself and the indicators for its monitoring focus on *mechanisms and processes* and do not include substantive issues such as development *content and outcomes*. All of this work is essential but on their own will not lead to the envisaged development effectiveness or sustainable benefits for poor women and men, unless issues of substance, such as gender equality, are addressed in tandem.

Gender equality has not been addressed explicitly to date in the evolving aid effectiveness agenda. Only paragraph 42 of the Paris Declaration indicates the need for harmonisation efforts on cross cutting issues such as gender equality. More attention is needed to the ends as well as the means of channelling aid if the aims of the Paris Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals, are to be realised. Such a focus on outcomes or 'a strong culture of results' is totally within the spirit of the Paris Declaration, and provides a platform for gender specialists and technical specialists in agencies to engage in the interpretation, implementation and monitoring of the Declaration's principals in country. A review of the partnership commitments shows that there are many opportunities as well as risks for advancing gender equality in their application.

² From the Paris Declaration <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>

KEY ISSUES

The Five Principles or Partnership Commitments

The agenda is about giving greater weight to what partners want and what they do. It requires moving away from individual donors selecting and implementing their own projects towards the riskier -but higher pay off - approach of improving how things are done in partner countries. This is not a purely technical issue and requires high levels of trust and significant change in practice from all parties. It implies that donors align with partner country policies and development agendas, use local systems and undertake more joint work. Partner countries have to strengthen policies, strategies and systems; be more serious about results and more accountable to citizens. The challenge is to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are placed firmly in this country-specific reform agenda, which also has far reaching implications for how donor agencies are organised and the competencies that they require. Informing this agenda are five overarching principles. These are briefly discussed here, including synergies with gender equality and women's empowerment.³ In practice these principles are not played out singly but interact with one another. Ownership and mutual accountability are the bedrock, with alignment and harmonisation linked to these, while managing for development results is the focus for all.

Ownership: *Partner countries take the lead in setting the development agenda.* This is the fundamental and most challenging commitment that requires a strong policy platform and operational development strategies as well as broad based ownership by society. For most countries this platform encompasses a poverty reduction strategy (PRS) and other national plans and sector programmes as well as global agreements, such as the MDGs. Gender equality approaches are closely aligned with the principle of ownership through their common concerns for ensuring that the interests and voices of all citizens are included in national development strategies.

Only twenty percent of countries included in the Baseline Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration were judged to have '*largely or substantially developed operational development strategies*'.⁴ Problems identified include the absence of mechanisms to ensure that prioritised activities get the necessary resources and implementation capacities that they need. Empirical evidence from analyses of PRS and sector plans indicate that this problem applies to their treatment of gender equality. Further work and sustained effort is needed to integrate gender equality into these development policies and strategies and to achieve the attention and resources required to make a reality of partner gender equality policies and commitments⁵.

Critical dimensions of ownership for gender equality and women's empowerment include:

- The processes which evolve the development framework, and the extent to which they are genuinely country-led, rather than donor and/or Ministry of Finance driven is critical and will have implications

³ For a more detailed analysis see annex 1 of paper 'Paris Declaration Commitments and Implications for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment' DCD/DC/GEN(2006)1

⁴ OECD (2007) 2006 Development Co-operation Report Chapter 3

⁵ See for example DAC Network on Gender Equality (April 2007) Guide for Non-Economists to Negotiate Poverty Reduction Strategies

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for attention to gender equality. Line ministries such as education, health, labour and enterprise, as well as women's ministries, play a critical role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment but are often not fully engaged in, or even informed about efforts to strengthen national development strategies. Likewise for local levels of government in decentralised systems. Efforts to inform and engage these wider constituents will support national ownership, and can simultaneously be used to ensure that women's views and priorities are included.

- Civil society actors, parliamentarians and the media are key to ensuring active citizen engagement in and ownership of the development agenda. There is need to disseminate information on the Paris Declaration and to develop capacity of these actors, including women's organisations to engage, to be strategic and to take advantage of space available to influence national development strategies.
- Donors need to pay more attention to how gender issues are treated in partner countries and to provide incentives to ensure integration and adequate resources within the national development policies and strategies. For example, greater attention could focus on gender equality in Joint PRS Reviews, sector reviews and in commentary on the quality of the PRS in Joint Staff Advisory Notes.⁶

Experience from Uganda indicates that it can take a long time (seven years) for a gender-sensitive national poverty strategy to emerge, even with a relatively strong women's movement and support from donors⁷. But it can be achieved through sustained and coordinated effort of sector ministries and civil society working in tandem with central agencies for finance and planning and with support from donors. Line ministries, women's ministries and civil society, including women's organisations, should be fully involved in development planning with access to resources and active in implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Donors can play a supportive role in this process, preferable through harmonised structures, such as a development partner group.

Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures. There are two main dimensions to this principle – (i) alignment with national development strategies (which needs to develop alongside country policy ownership); and (ii) working with national systems for implementation. Much of the progress on alignment is happening at sector level and involves new funding modalities and management arrangements. Alignment implies a commitment to strengthen and support key development capacities of developing country states, rather than create and/or work with parallel structures. This is based on recognition of how such capacities and institutions were undermined by aid procedures in past decades. This principle requires significant change in ways of working for donors and partners, and considerable trust in partner countries' policies and systems. It raises issues of national political power and of accountability of donor agencies to their own citizens. Not all donors feel able to 'caste in their lot' with country agendas and systems and, as a result, projects and parallel structures still survive in many countries.

Monitoring of the Paris Declaration has seven (of a total of 12) indicators that focus on the principle of alignment. Looking at just two of these in the report on Baseline Survey, we find that less than one quarter of countries have moderately strong public financial management (PFM) systems, regarded as fundamental for aligned aid; and according to donor responses 43 percent of technical cooperation qualified as country-led or co-ordinated, while countries took the view that no technical cooperation programmes were genuinely country-led in that year (2005). Clearly there is both room for improvement and for greater

⁶ These are produced by the World Bank and IMF to assess and advise on PRS

⁷ UNIFEM (March 2006) Promoting Gender Equality in New Aid Modalities and Partnerships: Discussion Paper

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understanding and communication. Change will be incremental and will require flexible support to negotiate political and institutional constraints and to build country capacity.

Critical dimensions of alignment for gender equality and women's empowerment are:

- the base on which donors align – it needs to include national and international commitments such as the MDGs, CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action and national gender policies, as well as other social policy goals. These can be powerful levers in political dialogue, in particular CEDAW, which requires countries to make quite specific actions and commitments when they decide to ratify this. Aligning explicitly with such commitments (to which donor countries have generally also signed up) would be a useful means to move from commitments to actions in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment;
- The nature and extent of dialogue related to policy around which to align. One impact of the aid effectiveness agenda has been the establishment of many fora for development partner dialogue. But critical questions relate to the extent of dialogue related to gender equality, in which fora it takes place, which parties are engaged in this and what impact it is having;
- The current thrust of alignment is significantly focused on public financial management (PFM) and public sector reform. These are key areas of focus also for advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment and we need to identify and take advantage of entry points in these common agendas. The budget is a powerful instrument and an area where considerable experience has been gained on gender responsive budgeting (GRB) and expenditure tracking. The challenge and the opportunity is to integrate GRB with the broader PFM reforms to create gender responsive public financial management systems⁸.
- Identifying entry points for developing capacity on gender analysis and planning in the capacity development reforms that are part of the aid effectiveness agenda. These reforms include but go beyond training and transfer of expertise to more fundamental system changes in institutions and procedures. It is important to incorporate gender equality in such changed competencies, institutions and procedures at both national and sub-national levels and to monitor the implications of these changes.

Sector wide approaches (SWAp) are a case in point where many donors have aligned their support. Evidence suggests that sustained and coordinated action is required to mainstream gender in health, education and agriculture SWAp. Even in these sectors where most progress has been achieved, too often, the focus is narrow and is not consistently followed through from analysis to action. Other sectors such as infrastructure have made little progress so far in including gender analysis or women-focused activities in their sector plans, strategies, benchmarks and review processes⁹. The Paris Declaration Baseline Survey (2006) highlights the emergence of SWAp-type arrangements in institutional areas such as 'Justice, Law and Order' and private sector development. These provide further opportunities to focus alignment on national and international gender equality commitments and to ensure the participation of local as well as central agencies and of civil society, including women's organisations, in SWAp processes. There is need to identify good practice from experience so far with mainstreaming gender in SWAp and apply this to newer, emerging SWAp.

⁸ For further guidance see DAC Network on Gender Equality (April 2007) Guide for Non-Economists to Negotiate Poverty Reduction Strategies

⁹ OECD-DAC (June 2002) Gender Equality in Sector Wide Approaches: A Reference Guide

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Harmonisation: *Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective.* The rationale for this is that joint donor actions and common procedures will reduce transaction costs and enhance the effectiveness of aid. The first step in this process is that donors act together. Implementation of this commitment is creating significant change in donor practices for planning, reporting, disbursement and auditing and in coordination of support provided through sector-wide approaches (SWAp) or through Joint Assistance Strategies (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia), with increasingly more funds channelled through programme-based approaches. At present there is much learning by doing, which means that there is potential to influence these new institutional arrangements as they are taking shape and being embedded. There is also need to monitor the effect of these changes on gender equality and women's empowerment measures and outcomes.

Harmonisation, especially division of labour and specialisation across and within sectors, is leading to changes in the institutions, incentives and policies of aid and of development and it is important that gender and other social policy cross cutting concerns are mainstreamed in any new programme mechanisms. The likelihood of this happening will depend on how strong the commitment to gender equality is from donors, how much consensus can be reached on this and the efforts taken to make this explicit and measurable in performance assessment frameworks related to programme budget support and other monitoring and review mechanisms. The Baseline Survey reports that up to 42 percent of all aid flows are provided in the context of programmes and that almost one third of donor missions were co-ordinated while approximately one half of country analytical work was undertaken jointly. This indicates considerable progress but also that there is room for improvement.

Critical dimensions of harmonisation for gender equality and women's empowerment are:

- How gender equality and women's empowerment are dealt with and how they fare under new arrangements such as Joint Assistance Strategies and General Budget Support. Division of labour is a new and still contested process and there is need to monitor carefully and build in adequate safeguards to ensure that these issues don't disappear in the increasingly sector-focused approach to division of labour and in the competencies and incentives prioritised by donor agencies. Gender analysis and mainstreaming capacity need to be core elements in assessment of donor's comparative advantage and complementarity and in donor human resource strategies to ensure that competency exists and is retained (See later sub-sections on JAS and GBS). The EU Code of Conduct suggests that *'in their selected sectors donors should mainstream cross cutting issues'*;
- Taking a lead in joint gender analytical work. This is something within the remit of gender equality advocates and an area where there is need to develop common procedures and approaches to support national gender equality constituents, both public and civil, to strengthen their capacity, strategy and actions. All too often such support is fragmented, with one donor agency picking up where another has moved on, or even competition between agencies for 'favoured' women's organisations. What is needed is an agreed agenda for action against a set of priorities.
- Adopting a joint approach to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are adequately captured in harmonised programmatic work such as in sectors and economic areas.

An example of joint analytical work is a gender audit recently undertaken in Rwanda involving eight organisations in the process (DFID, SIDA, UNDP, UNFPA, Action Aid, SNV, Trocaire and Norwegian People's Aid). Several more have indicated that they would like to participate in a further round of the audit at a future stage. This is a good example of donor and NGO harmonisation and has given rise to further suggestions for joint action. It has also highlighted the challenge faced by partners to increase the engagement of Government of Rwanda in taking forward the overall conclusions and recommendations of

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this audit and using them as a tool to establish benchmarks and to assess aid effectiveness. But it provides a common platform to move forward with this.

Managing for Results: *Managing resources and improving decision-making for results.* This is a critical principle to ensure that attention within the development agenda and in aid relationships is focused on end goals and outcomes rather than purely on the mechanics of aid delivery. This principle is both an important focus for the four other principles and underpins them. Most countries are still in the process of establishing the necessary results-oriented framework to assess progress against national development strategies and sector programmes. This focus on the extent to which inputs and activities are being translated into outputs and ultimately into outcomes and results is particularly important for those concerned with poverty and social policy outcomes, including gender equality.

The 2006 Baseline Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration indicates that just over one quarter of countries met the criteria for established performance assessment frameworks and that there is scope for improvement in collection, analysis and feedback into policy of sound data on development outputs, outcomes and impacts. Experience from work on gender equality can contribute to improvements, particularly the expertise available on the contribution of qualitative data and of sex-disaggregation to tracking and understanding development outcomes, and addressing the challenges of using data to influence policy decisions.

Critical dimensions of managing for results for gender equality and women's empowerment are:

- Strengthening performance assessment frameworks to be more transparent and capable of measuring results related to gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Frameworks should include specific development outcomes related to national and international commitments to gender equality objectives (MDGs, CEDAW, BPA), and not just as part of sectoral outcomes;
- Support for the development and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and the use of gender-specific indicators in country statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Ensuring that longer-term results, such as those related to changes in gender inequality, don't get squeezed out in efforts to identify tangible results as quickly as possible
- Sharing and dissemination of information on gender equality outcomes in timely manner and appropriate formats (e.g. short high-quality policy and issues briefs) to influence policies and budgets
- Ensuring that gender equality is addressed in joint review processes when the status of implementation of the agreed Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) is assessed
- Using information on gender-relevant changes to indicators – both positive and negative - to support policy dialogue

Countries are at different stages in the extent to which they have developed results frameworks and integrated gender equality into these, as the following examples demonstrate:

Following concerted lobbying and perseverance, the Gender Macro Working Group in Tanzania, a cohesive multi-sectoral group with a high level of technical expertise and membership from government ministries, civil society and donor agencies, succeeded in including gender equality in the goals and interventions of its three clusters and sex disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators in the PRS2 (*The Mkukuta*) Monitoring Framework.

A case study on the Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC) in Vietnam found limited attention to gender equality objectives in the results requirements specified for the PRSC. The limited gender policy actions that were included in the PRSC have not been properly measured and there is a lack of rigorous assessment of their impact on women. However indicators for the PRSC have only recently been developed, suggesting that there is further room to influence these.

Mutual accountability: *Donors and partners are accountable for development results.* According to this principle, donors and governments are to be held accountable for development results. Accountability is about taking responsibility for one's commitments and accounting for them. It applies from donor to partner government and vice versa but it also applies from government to citizens. What is required to action these mutual obligations and, significantly, to strengthen national accountability mechanisms involving parliament, civil society, media and citizens is not yet well articulated in the Paris Declaration agenda. This is however familiar territory to advocates of gender equality who have experience in working towards strong citizen voice and demand for accountability; civil society engagement in challenging the state and monitoring its performance and accountability for international commitments to gender equality such as CEDAW and BPA as well as global agreements with a gender perspective, such as the MDGs.

The 2006 Baseline Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration does not shed much light on this commitment and there is scope for better definition of the indicator and for articulation of appropriate mechanisms for implementation. This is an area where gender equality experience can usefully be applied.

Critical dimensions of mutual accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment are:

- Strengthening the independent capacities of developing country partners and women's organisations to assess progress towards poverty, inclusion and social outcomes and to utilise gender analysis, gender auditing systems and gender responsive budgeting;
- Reporting to women on the status of women's rights and providing information on mechanisms for accessing and enforcing rights is essential in the notion of mutual accountability;
- Promotion of fora and national and decentralised consultative processes that are strongly accountable, inclusive and representative and do not reproduce the status quo;
- Use of broad-based participatory approaches in formulating and assessing progress in implementing national development strategies to promote new inclusive relationships and state-citizen accountability;
- Access to information on the aid reforms and development results in user-friendly and language specific formats is an essential element for parliamentarians, media, civil society and citizens, including women, in order to operationalise this commitment;
- Capacity building towards a strong voice for women's organisations in areas where they are currently weak e.g. fiscal, trade and financial policy arenas
- Improving donors' own accountability mechanisms related to gender equality commitments

Civil society organisations have a particularly important role to play in holding national governments and donor agencies to account for aid and development spending and outcomes – what is referred to in Chapter One of the OECD 2006 Development Co-operation Report as their 'challenge role' and where it is indicated that their role in domestic accountability needs to grow. This may be through a number of mechanisms such as monitoring of PRS or budget support related results frameworks; through expenditure tracking and gender audit systems and through advocacy work to represent diverse interests.

As an example of holding donors to account, in Tanzania an Independent Monitoring Group has been established by Development Assistance Committee donors that periodically assesses coordination and the donor relationship with government and recommends improvements. Adopting such fora and influencing them to include gender equality in their agenda would encourage donors to act more on their commitments

In Mexico and in India, citizen water management committees, with the active involvement of women, have helped to hold providers to account for service to users

KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN GETTING INVOLVED

Analysing the country context related to aid effectiveness

The stage and pace at which the *Declaration* commitments are being disseminated and implemented varies between regions and countries. Instituting the far reaching changes in systems, behaviour and levels of trust envisaged in the *Declaration* is a long term process and no-one should feel that they have come too late to the table. Initially, attention focused globally on negotiation and agreement of the principals, and engaged a small number of specialists – chiefly economists and administrators – within donor and recipient governments and, particularly, within the development banks such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Primarily working through OECD-DAC structures, an impressive agenda has been pushed through. Social policy and gender specialists in multilateral or bilateral agencies have not been significantly involved so far. But this is likely to – and needs to – change, as the baton is passed to countries for implementation. Therefore an initial analysis of the state of play is necessary to assess how far the partnership commitments are being implemented and what are the knowledge, interests and strategies of different stakeholders, in these reforms¹⁰. Critical questions are:

1. *How well are the partnership commitments – and their implications - known and understood by staff in bilateral agencies; in sector ministries and at sub-national levels (not only in central agencies of finance and planning); and across such groups as parliamentarians, non-governmental organisations, the media and women's groups¹¹?*

The partnership commitments cannot be realised without the active involvement of citizens and their representative groups but experience to date suggests that considerable mystique exists around the Declaration and aid effectiveness reforms and an awareness raising programme may be required to engage all of the actors identified above¹².

At a workshop on Advancing Gender Equality within a Joint Assistance Strategy, convened by Irish Aid in Tanzania in February 2006, parliamentarians as well as civil society actors, spoke passionately about the extent of their marginalisation from the JAS process and of the decisions being taken by a small cadre of

¹⁰ Broader country specific issues related to political, legal, historical, security and cultural settings are not dealt with here. This is not because they don't matter – they will play a huge part in determining scope for action, but because they apply to all aspects of development while here we are trying to focus on the country context with respect to state of play on aid effectiveness.

¹¹ Many civil society organisations have criticised the marginal role ascribed to them in the process of Paris Declaration development and implementation, as well as the treatment of substantive development issues in aid effectiveness reforms. See, for example, *'The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Donor Commitments and Civil Society Critiques'* A CCIC Backgrounder – May 2006 and INTRAC Newsletter No 33 May 2006 on *Aid Harmonisation: Challenges for Civil Society*, where fears are expressed that aid effectiveness reforms have conceptualised civil society as an instrument of the state

¹² See, for example, Beloe, T (November 2005) Moving towards local definitions of aid effectiveness: how is the OECD DAC Paris Declaration being interpreted in DFID South East Asia Partner Countries. A Draft report available on www.dfid.gov.uk

government officials and donors without any/adequate recourse to wider stakeholders, or dissemination of information.

- 2. Has the relevance of gender equality to realisation of the aid effectiveness agenda been explored (by sector and as a whole) and established within the country-based aid effectiveness reforms; and who are the key players in bringing such issues to the fore?*

There are bound to be tensions between those who adopt a primarily technocratic approach to interpreting and implementing the PD principles and those who take a broader outcome focused approach, incorporating social policy concerns such as gender equality, rights and inclusion. Gender specialists among donors, UN agencies and partners need to help make planners and decision-makers, in their own agencies and in government, more aware of the impacts of aid reforms on women and on closing gender equality gaps and of the value-added that such a dimension can bring to thinking about aid effectiveness. This will require coordination and concerted action – and needs to happen sooner rather than later by sector as well as for the whole development plan. Many alignment and harmonisation reforms are taking place at sector level. The longer that aid structures and reforms evolve without such analysis, the harder it will be to do a retro-fit. Some bilateral agencies will be better placed than others to influence this agenda. Such potential allies need to be identified and supported. Particularly important are dialogue related to division of labour between donor agencies, based on comparative advantage, moves towards Joint Assistance Strategies, development and monitoring of Performance Assessment Frameworks and of PRS plans and monitoring systems. A key area to focus on is how well gender equality and other social policy concerns are safeguarded and strengthened in the new alliances, structures and schedules determined through these processes.

At a workshop on ‘Development Effectiveness in Practice: Applying the Paris Declaration to advancing gender equality, environmental sustainability and human rights’ held in Dublin in April 2007, indicated that, to date, there had been little explicit attention to making appropriate connections between the aid effectiveness reforms and gender equality agendas in country and that there is need to approach this more systematically and to gather evidence on what works and what the risks and challenges are.

- 3. What effect is the transition from multiple project-based approaches to more harmonised programmatic approaches having on the political and policy space for addressing gender equality?*

There is need to monitor and gather evidence on whether harmonised approaches are positive, negative or neutral in terms of addressing gender inequalities. A paper for DFID noted that the evidence base for demonstrating the relative effectiveness and impact of different aid instruments on the lives of poor women and men is weak and indicated that there is need for more impact assessment; for greater dissemination of lessons; and for ensuring capacity and commitment to follow up.¹³ Information is critical to gaining attention and commitment, and there is need for more investigation and documentation of experience.

If it was difficult for donors to adequately address gender inequalities within projects that were relatively under their own control, it will be much harder to effectively mainstream in programmatic approaches involving many actors, unless consensus is reached on the importance of gender equality; space is created

¹³ Social Development Direct (March 2006) Aid Instruments, Social Exclusion and Gender

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at the right level for political and policy dialogue on gender inequality; safeguards are put in place within new structures and procedures; and on-going capacity issues are addressed. Evidence is needed on changes in all of these dimensions.

DFID has launched an evidence gathering project, which it is hoped will become a joint effort with other donors, to help identify good practice in addressing social policy issues, including gender equality, in the mainstream work of the Paris Declaration, and any costs arising from their non-inclusion in this agenda. The purpose is *'to generate an evidence base, provide practical recommendations and build support among Paris Declaration stakeholders for strengthening the focus on the cross-cutting issues of human rights, social exclusion and gender equality, and poverty outcomes, for the Third High Level Forum in Ghana (2008) and beyond'*. It is expected that this will produce 6 in-depth country case studies and 18 rapid assessments with a regional spread. Supporting this effort, or adding to this evidence base in other ways, would be a valuable way to promote gender equality within the Paris Declaration agenda. DFID CLEAR and Equity and Rights Team are leading on this.

4. *Are women, as well as men, benefiting from increased aid flows – or is this being monitored e.g. through gender sensitive expenditure tracking tools and gender budget analysis?*

While a doubling of international development assistance by 2010 is anticipated under the Paris Declaration, there is no certainty that women and men will equally access and benefit from such increases in aid. Some countries have introduced gender budget analysis tools which could help pick up on how gender-responsive aid effectiveness reforms are. If gender sensitive indicators are included in PRSP monitoring and in the performance assessment frameworks for General Budget Support, there may be scope to measure what is happening to aid flows from a gender perspective. But for most countries, there is likely to be considerable work to undertake in order to have such monitoring mechanisms in place. Even within donor agencies more work is needed to be able to report on the gender equality focus of development assistance.

The DAC Network on Gender Equality is continuing to refine and simplify the Gender Equality Policy Marker for reporting by donors to the DAC on annual aid expenditure. **PATTI & Co – a few lines on this here please.**

5. *Is there evidence of harmonisation and alignment amongst donor agencies towards the implementation of gender equality at national level?*

It is important for gender constituents to recognise the value of the partnership commitments and to demonstrate their application in approaches to their work. This is one way of getting the attention of the 'movers and shakers' in aid effectiveness reforms by engaging them in illustrations of gender equality and women's empowerment work through the lens that they understand i.e. effective alignment and harmonisation. Joint gender analytical work and joint country missions that integrate a gender perspective are within the spirit of the Paris Declaration. Taking this further to joint donor support for gender equality initiatives with government and with civil society should also be pursued.

In Bolivia, four donors now jointly support the Vice-Ministry of Gender Equality in promoting and implementing their own policy of inclusion (gender and generational), through a basket fund and six other donors are associated at a coordination level, under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice.

6. *What is happening to funding for NGOs and women's organisations under the aid effectiveness reforms?*

Concerns have been expressed by many NGOs and women's organisations that aid effectiveness reforms may lead to increased cooperation between governments and donors but may adversely affect donors' relations with CSOs. Few donors have explicit strategies for promoting CSO activities on gender equality or women's empowerment, but there is increasing recognition in the aid reform literature of the importance of the 'challenge function' of civil society organisations. There are opportunities here for agreeing joint donor strategies to support CSOs to carry out this challenge role, so critical for accountability as well as for ownership and results. The principles of harmonisation and alignment can usefully be brought to bear in support to civil society to hold governments to account on gender equality.

The Gender and Development Network in the UK has undertaken a study to look at the implications of donors' new aid modalities for civil society activities on gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights. Early indications from the as yet unpublished report, suggest that, contrary to fears, the aid effectiveness reforms have not led to overall reductions in levels of support to organisations working on gender issues. But the current pattern indicates that there is now less flexibility and more direction from donors on what they will support. ***We should be able to update this before finalisation of issues paper.***

Identifying strategy and entry points

Following analysis of the state of play on aid effectiveness reforms in a given country, the next step is to identify a strategy and suitable entry points to influence this agenda. Possible programmatic opportunities are described in the next section. Anticipation is an important tool for influencing. So while it is important to understand the current state of play it is crucial also to look ahead and be prepared to maximise opportunities. Be flexible too to take advantage of windows of opportunity. For many the primary focus will be the ongoing challenge of incorporating gender equality issues effectively in PRS and other national plans and associated budgets. This may be during annual PRS reviews, ongoing PRS monitoring, or possibly development of a new PRS. While progress is slow, there is evidence that second generation PRS sometimes are more gender responsive than first generation ones.

Strategic partnerships proved to be one of the most effective strategies for making sustained and productive progress on gender issues in Tanzania. The first PRS in Tanzania 'Mkukuta' was not gender responsive but starting with its review in 2004 and during development of the current Mkukuta in 2005, concerted effort by gender advocates bore fruit. The Gender Macro Working Group (GMWG) through strong lobbying created space for raising gender issues and opportunity to engage with government actors. A small group of donor partners committed to strengthening government capacity and provided joint programme support to the lead ministry.

Other potential strategies include:

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- Identifying influential allies within reform agendas in country – from within donor agencies, within government and civil society and arming these with as much evidence as possible to negotiate persuasively for a gender responsive perspective on reforms.
- Engage wider social support to influence these reforms – starting with raising awareness and dissemination of information; supporting stakeholders to create space and channels for dialogue; and strengthening capacity of key sector ministries, sub-national levels and women’s civil society groups to participate.
- Identifying and engaging with those who work at the international policy level on aid reform. This may mean starting with colleagues in your own agency headquarters and getting them on-side to influence the main players. For example the OECD-DAC Joint Venture for Managing Development Results is in the process of gathering tools, particularly with a view to creation of a country self-assessment tool. Working towards the inclusion of gender equality results and indicators in this tool could be a significant opportunity but one which would require cooperation between field and headquarters personnel.
- Alliances with others concerned about social policy issues and key development objectives such as human rights, environmental sustainability, social inclusion and combating HIV/AIDS. A concerted effort is more likely to be effective and it is best if gender equality advocates join up with other social policy advocates and agree a strategic and selective approach to influencing key stakeholders, rather than multiple ad hoc efforts which are difficult to sustain and not often effective.
- Synergies with parallel processes such as reform of the UN System and the EU Code of Conduct on Complementarity and Division of Labour in Development Policy. For example, the newly established ECOSOC high level Development Cooperation Forum will address aid effectiveness reforms and their deliberations need to be informed by gender analysis and, as far as possible, substantiated by evidence. The UN Common Country Assessment Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process promotes UN agencies working together in a harmonised and coordinated way.

The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the Paris Declaration and wants to see increased attention to development policy and not only aid efficiency in its implementation. Departments in the Ministry concerned with Human Rights, Environmental Sustainability and Social & Institutional Development (which includes gender equality) prepared a joint memorandum, prior to the Dublin workshop in April 2007, which was approved and signed by directors and sent to the Director General. This memorandum:

- outlines the links between aid effectiveness, the MDGs, cross cutting issues (CCI) and new aid architecture;
- contains a commitment to working towards inclusion of CCI on the agenda for the Third High Level Forum in Ghana in 2008;
- contains a commitment to work horizontally, rather than singly, towards implementing the guiding principles from the Dublin workshop;
- specifically targets certain Paris Declaration monitoring indicators for deepening and fine tuning with respect to attention paid to CCI i.e. indicators 1 (ownership), 4 (co-ordinating support to strengthen capacity), 10a (joint missions), 10b (joint country analytical work) and 12 (mutual accountability)

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING

The new aid modalities and processes provide both opportunities and challenges for addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment. The suggestions in the following table are intended to provide some key questions and practical guidance as pointers towards realising these opportunities in selected modalities and processes.

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| Modalities and Processes | Key Questions | Possible Application |
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| <p><i>Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and other national development plans and strategies</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively has the PRS captured the gender dimensions of poverty and vulnerability? • Does the PRS incorporate gender equality commitments from, for example, CEDAW, BPA, MDGs and the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights? • How good is the poverty analysis in identifying linkages between gender and poverty? • Does analysis of gender and poverty carry through into priorities, objectives and plans? • Are PRS gender commitments linked to MTEF and budget processes? • Does the PRS support the National Policy and Action Plan on gender equality and women’s empowerment? • How inclusive and participatory are the processes for decision-making and development and monitoring of the PRS? • How are monitoring and evaluation of gender equality captured in the PRS? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Timely support to Pillar/Theme Working Groups to incorporate gender in development of PRS e.g. through support for analysis and for working groups and through capacity oriented technical assistance ➤ Inclusion of gender equality and requirement for gender expertise in terms of reference for Joint Reviews ➤ Support collection, dissemination and utilisation of sex-disaggregated and qualitative data to policy makers, those drafting the PRS document and those monitoring its implementation ➤ Strengthen line ministry capacity to effectively engage with ministries of finance and planning in support of gender equality ➤ Strengthen the capacity of civil society actors to effectively advocate for and monitor progress on gender equality outcomes ➤ Promote country-led and coordinated approaches to capacity development on gender equality, rather than ad hoc and isolated technical assistance ➤ Promote change to country ownership but don’t push so hard that it becomes counter productive ➤ <i>Cambodia has made considerable strides to include gender equality in implementation of its National Strategic Development Plan and provides a good example of efforts to ensure that aid dialogue mechanisms between government, donors and civil society are resourced to include discussion and accountability on gender equality. This process is led by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and supported by donors.</i> |
| <p><i>Sector Wide Approaches (SWAp)</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where and how does gender equality feature in the sector plan(s) and programmes? • Is there adequate analysis and understanding of gender relations and dynamics in the sector? • Does the sector plan take account of PRS and other national commitments to gender equality? • Is there capacity at national and sub- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Joint analysis on gender issues in sectors and gender analysis of budgets with dissemination of key messages to policy makers ➤ Adequate representation for women and men in sector consultation processes at national and sub-national levels ➤ Identification and dissemination of good practice within and between sectors ➤ Gender included in terms of reference for |

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| | <p>national levels to implement sector gender commitments?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the sectoral or technical working groups have access to the necessary gender equality expertise and resources? • Is gender captured in the sector results framework, including gender sensitive indicators? • Are the structures in place creating space for effective discussion on gender inequality in the sector? • Is there a gender equality strategy and a budget line for this in the sector, or how are gender equality interventions supported in the sector at national and sub-national levels? • What about sectors which don't have SWApS (especially the 'hard' economic and infrastructure sectors – do they address gender inequalities and what is being done about this? | <p>and reports on joint sector reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alignment with national policies and international commitments on gender equality in the sector ➤ Gender sensitive indicators in SWAp results frameworks and mechanisms to track expenditure, assess performance and demonstrate impact on gender equality in the sector ➤ Consider peer review of performance on gender commitments in country, and possible benchmarking ➤ <i>In Uganda, the Justice Law and Order Development Partner Group found that a joined-up and coordinated approach to encouraging mainstreaming, in a transparent manner, in partnership with Government, and dependant on existing sector financing (within the budget) and processes, was better than bilateral and ad hoc donor approaches</i> |
| <p>General Budget Support (GBS) also known as Direct Budget Support and Programme Budget Support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aid channelled through GBS assessed against PRS indicators and are these gender-sensitive (see also PRS above)? • Is space being created for gender equality in policy dialogue surrounding the use and allocation of GBS? • Are/how are donors held responsible for raising gender issues in policy dialogue related to GBS? • Are mechanisms in place to monitor how gender inequality impacts on achievement of development goals? • Are the interrelationships between the monetised economy, subsistence economy and unpaid economy and women's position in this taken into account in assessment of GBS? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inclusion of gender equality explicitly as a principle in Memoranda of Understanding between partners in GBS ➤ Creation of fora for dialogue and coordination on gender equality and making links across sectors and between gender working groups and thematic working groups in the economic as well as social sectors ➤ Inclusion of gender equality in PAF priorities and using gender sensitive indicators and data in joint reviews ➤ Through GBS, support long-term approaches to gender equality ➤ <i>In Zambia, gender is incorporated in the PAF and it has been agreed to undertake a gender audit every two years in priority sectors</i> |
| <p>Public Financial Management (PFM)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are gender advocates engaging with the current processes and investments in public financial management and to what effect? • Is there evidence of increased central and line ministry ownership of equitable and rights issues in their policies, sector plans and budgets as an outcome of efforts to improve public financial management? • Is there any change in budgetary allocations to gender equality as an outcome of improved PFM and/or gender responsive budget (GRB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build capacity of donor agency staff with responsibility for gender, central and line ministries, local government, parliamentarians and civil society groups to understand how PFM systems work, to address budgetary issues and to monitor resource allocations from a gender perspective; ➤ Include gender dimensions in the appraisal of government spending and taxation, the impact of public expenditure policies and budgetary strategies and in public expenditure reviews (PER) and tracking systems (PETS) |

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| | <p>initiatives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there recognition of the synergies between PFM and GRB and real interplay between the people advancing budget related work from a gender equality perspective and those working on good economic governance in general, and transparent public financial management systems, in particular? • How do civil society actors engage in these PFM reform processes and how does this influence the pursuit of gender equality? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote the use of gender-sensitive Poverty and Social Impact Assessments of macro and structural reforms ➤ Highlight the importance of addressing gender in macroeconomics ➤ Build capacity for gender responsive budgeting within rather than separate from PFM reforms and capacity development programmes ➤ <i>The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, an NGO helped to achieve institutionalisation of a gender focus in the budget process through advocacy, capacity development and by influencing processes such as taxation policy and household labour survey to integrate time use.</i> |
| <p>Joint Assistance Strategies (JAS)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is responsibility for gender equality treated under division of labour – is it for example seen as a cross cutting theme or as a sector (or both) and what are the implications of the approach adopted? • Where and how does gender equality appear in the JAS document? • How has (or how will) capacity and policy dialogue on gender equality be sustained across all sectors and thematic areas under the JAS division of labour? • What has been the role of analytical work and policy dialogue on gender equality in influencing the JAS agenda (and beyond)? • Have there been any effective alliances between other cross cutting and social policy practitioners in JAS processes? • Is there a risk of JAS reducing attention to gender equality to the lowest common denominator as an outcome of harmonisation, rather than elevating it? • How has civil society engaged in JAS so far, has their challenge role been articulated clearly and how does this influence the pursuit of CCI? • Is JAS having any impact on the competencies sought by donor agencies and how does gender equality fare in this process? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitor what happens to gender equality under the division of labour as part of JAS, including cross country comparisons of experience. ➤ Development of adequate safeguards to ensure that JAS does not lead to marginalisation of gender equality and other social policy concerns and result in policy ‘evaporation’. ➤ Monitoring the extent to which development partner working groups as part of JAS are delivering value for money in terms of change relative to investment in key areas such as increasing attention to gender equality commitments. ➤ Capacity development within bilateral agencies with lead, active and delegated roles under JAS to ensure that commitments to gender equality are implemented and that challenges are identified and addressed ➤ <i>In Tanzania, guided by the JAS division of labour the Development Partner Gender Equality Working Group has developed a categorization matrix showing agency status (lead, active, delegate) with respect to gender equality promotion in Tanzania The group has also mapped out the various donors’ areas/sectors of engagement to establish where respective donors have comparative advantage in promoting GE. Progress with this and other mechanisms will need to be monitored.</i> ➤ <i>In Zambia, Gender Equality was not a ‘darling’ sector for donor agencies, raising concerns about commitment</i> |
| <p>Support to civil</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How harmonised is support to civil | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopt harmonised approaches to support |

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| <p><i>society organisations (CSO), including women's groups</i></p> | <p>society organisations working on gender?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are aid reforms and new structures creating more space for sustained CSO engagement, including on gender equality? • CSOs are not necessarily representative – how well are socially excluded groups, women and those who represent them supported to engage in national and sub-national development processes? • How are CSOs and women's groups having their capacities developed to participate in new aid processes? • Is there a clear articulation of the challenge role of CSOs or efforts in place to reach agreement on this? | <p>CSOs active on gender issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote harmonisation and coordination between CSOs and women's groups such as formation of alliances and umbrella organisations that utilise comparative advantage ➤ Encourage CSOs to be accountable and transparent in their own relationship with those they represent ➤ Build capacities of parliamentarians and civil society organisations to understand and work with the Paris agenda ➤ Support the development of an independent role for CSOs in holding government and donors to account on gender equality results ➤ <i>In Uganda, in the Justice Law and Order sector, NGOs have been supported by donors through a Legal Aid Basket Fund (LABF) and this has brought such NGOs together in a strategic forum to articulate issues and concerns and liaise with the Government side, who also sit on the advisory committee for the fund.</i> |
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Question: Would a summary of the entry points section from the earlier policy paper (2006) be useful in this document – This could be included here for each of the five principles with a programmatic focus. Or another option might be to cut back on the detail in the earlier section on the five principles and include a summary from the earlier paper there. Opinions welcome.

This sub-section remains unfinished – to be completed by mid July

Tools

Those who work on social policy issues, including gender equality, have a number of tools that have been developed to integrate gender into development policies and programmes. These can help to provide meaning to many of the Paris Declaration principles and to increase the likelihood that their implementation will bring positive benefits to men and women, especially the poor. These tools need to be better integrated and more widely used in the new modalities and processes emerging. The main ones are:

- Gender Analysis:
- Sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators
- Qualitative assessments
- Gender sensitive poverty and social impact analysis
- Gender sensitive budget analysis

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation (few bullets on each)

Monitoring development strategies and impact: There are many country mechanisms in place for monitoring development strategies and aid effectiveness reforms. Gender dimensions need to be integrated in these, gender advocates need to engage strategically with these processes and capacities of government

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agencies and civil society need to be strengthened to undertake this monitoring. Such processes include Country Monitoring and Accountability Systems; Joint Reviews related to PRS Monitoring to GBS and to sectors; and monitoring of commitments through, for example, MDG reports and the National Human Development Report.

Paris Declaration Monitoring: Though the 12 indicators are not particularly amenable to gender analysis, there are some opportunities. The Netherlands has identified in particular Indicators xxx as appropriate for incorporation of a gender dimension. Case studies from a South East Asia workshop in Bangkok in April 2007 suggest that the monitoring of the Paris Declaration can be strengthened through the use of qualitative assessment. It is worthwhile becoming familiar with the overall monitoring report/baseline and relevant country specific report(s) and development agency reports and using these to identify where opportunities lie for change. The baseline indicates

Paris Declaration Evaluation

High Level Forum in Ghana 2008 – participating in the review process

Next Steps

- Familiarisation with the Paris Declaration and the country and agency baseline monitoring survey reports
- Tooling specialists within bilateral agencies to understand and work with new aid modalities and to engage in the reform agenda
- Alliances with specialists in other social policy and cross cutting issue areas
- Strengthening gender constituents
- Anticipating and coordinating to capture entry points
- Monitoring experience of aid reforms from gender perspective and gathering evidence to influence this
- Maintaining links with the upstream agenda

FURTHER INFORMATION

To be developed, including sources of illustrations in text

References

UNIFEM (March 2006) Promoting Gender Equality in New Aid Modalities and Partnerships: Discussion Paper
EU Code of Conduct
CIDA (2005) Framework for Assessing Gender Equality Results
OECD-DAC papers, guidance and source books

Links

Gendernet
Dublin workshop website
Biennial Development Cooperation Forum
European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad)
African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (Afrodad)
UK Aid Network
Reality of Aid Network
Civil society advisory group