MAKING AID MORE EFFECTIVE THROUGH GENDER, RIGHTS AND INCLUSION: EVIDENCE FROM IMPLEMENTING THE PARIS DECLARATION

Additional Case Studies

Social Development Direct

workingtogether ltd

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Preface and Acknowledgements

This is a set of case studies undertaken as part of a study supported by the British, Dutch, Irish and Norwegian governments that aims to:

- Generate an evidence base on how human rights, gender and equity issues have been integrated into and benefit current approaches to aid effectiveness.
- Build support among Paris Declaration stakeholders.
- Provide practical recommendations for strengthening the focus on human rights, social exclusion and gender equality, and poverty outcomes, for the Third High Level Forum in Ghana (2008) and beyond.

A Synthesis Report has been prepared that draws on these studies and country case studies (Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Vietnam) to provide overall findings and recommendations.

The purpose of these case studies was to complement the country case studies and provide evidence from a wider range of examples of the interaction between the aid effectiveness agenda as it is being taken forward through the Paris Declaration, and efforts to address rights, gender and equity issues.

The studies were prepared by Clare Ferguson (OPM), Sarah Ladbury and Francis Watkins (SD Direct) with research support from Alice Kerr-Wilson, Sally Neville (SD Direct) and Janet Hayes (OPM). Thanks are due to the donor agency and other staff who provided information for the studies.

This study represents the views of the consultants alone and conclusions or comments should not be attributed to the governments and donor agencies involved in supporting the study.

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BOGs	Basic Operating Guidelines
BPEP	Basic Primary Education Programme
BPfA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CG	Consultative Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMDGs	Cambodian Millennium Development Goals
CNCW	Cambodian National Council for Women
CPC	Councils for Citizen Participation
CRC-OP-AC	Optional Protocol to Convention on the Rights of the Child (Armed Conflicts)
CRC-OP-SC	Optional Protocol to Convention on the Rights of the Child (Sale of Children)
CRD	Central Research Department
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DEIP	Dalit Empowerment and Inclusion Plan
DFID	Department for International Development
DKaR	Disability Knowledge and Research
DoE	Department of Education
DP	Development Partner
DPCG	Development Partners' Coordination Group
DPM	Development Partners' Meeting
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation

DSC	Decade Steering Committee
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EFA	Education For All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FEDO	Feminist Dalit Organisation
GMAG	Gender Mainstreaming Action Group
GMAP	Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan
GoN	Government of Nepal
GoT	Government of Tanzania
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
GSEA	Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
GU	Gender Unit
H-A-R	Harmonisation, Alignment and Results Action Plan
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
JAHSR	Joint Annual Health Sector Review
JAST	Tanzania Joint Assistance Strategy

JEEHS	Joint External Evaluation of the Health Sector
JFA	Joint Financing Arrangement
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
JMI	Joint Monitoring Indicator
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MIGEROF	Ministry for Gender and Women in Development
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHSW	Ministry of Heath and Social Welfare
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NEFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFDIN	National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PIP	Public Investment Programme
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDIF	Rights and Democracy and Inclusion Fund

RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADPD	Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities
SAFOD	Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
SC	Steering Committee
SDGD	SADC Declaration on Gender and Development
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SESP	Secondary Education Sector Programme
SIAG	Sector Inclusion Action Group
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIRF	Social Inclusion Research Fund
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
SRP	SAFOD Research Programme
SSCS	State Secretariat for the Civil Service
SSR	Secondary School Sector Reform
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TMIS	Training Management Information System
TRSE	Technical Review of School Education
TWG-G	Technical Working Group on Gender
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

1   Enhancing Gender Mainstreaming in Cambodia

Key messages

1. Long term donor support can bring about country level ownership of successful gender mainstreaming models.

2. Dynamic individuals and the relationships they build with key people can have a dramatic impact on moving rights and equity agendas forward.

3. It is important to remain realistic and accept that progress on rights and equities agendas are entirely dependent on what the local context and systems will allow.

Background

Gender relations in Cambodia are deeply influenced by culture and the legacy of conflict. Particular issues facing women are: unequal access to education, paid employment, land ownership and other property rights; high maternal mortality rates; domestic violence and lack of women's participation in political life and representation in decision-making. In recent years, gender equity and development has been recognised as a priority for action by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). At the international level, the government has endorsed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) and ratified the following: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts (CRC-OP-AC) and Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC-OP-SC). Cambodia has also used the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a framework to form the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs). These expand on the MDGs to include additional gender-responsive indicators and targets. These international commitments have fed down into key national policies and decisions, with gender equality components included in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP)[1]. This plan stipulates an overarching requirement that 'poverty reduction and gender concerns' be factored into all activities during 2006-2010. A whole section of Cambodia's Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) (2003-2007) is devoted to Gender Development and the MTEF is currently being used to feed into ministry budgets and action plans. The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), identified by the RGC as one of 6 priority ministries, has been given a mandate to promote gender mainstreaming in the other line ministries.

The RGC and its principle development partners confirmed their commitment to the Paris Declaration Principles in 2006 through the adoption of a Harmonisation, Alignment and Results Action Plan (H-A-R). This identifies priority actions for increasing aid effectiveness, joint monitoring indicators (JMIs) and targets which are reviewed in annual Consultative Group (CG) meetings. Although much of the gender mainstreaming work in Cambodia was initiated before the Paris Declaration, clear links can be drawn between the ongoing work and the principles in the declaration. The PD principle which is most applicable to the case of gender mainstreaming in

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[1] This plan combines the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS), the Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP), the Public Investment Programme (PIP) and the CMDGs

Cambodia is **ownership**, although other principles, notably **harmonisation** and **alignment** are also highly relevant to this case.

Ownership

The MoWA has been very active and made significant progress in developing gender mainstreaming, both at national policy level and in the other line ministries. The MoWA has been very successful in obtaining high level support and buy-in for gender mainstreaming, thus ensuring that gender appeared prominently in key policy documents such as the NSDP and the MTEF. Much of this success can be attributed to the work of the Minister of Women's Affairs, her high credibility with donors and politicians and her strong working relationship with key people in the Ministry of Finance. This support has provided the MoWA with a solid foundation for the extension of gender machinery into sector ministries. Influential organisations such as the Cambodian National Council for Women (CNCW)[2] and a Technical Working Group on Gender (TWG-G)[3] have been established. The creation of the TWG-G was in part a result of a World Bank staff member's perseverance in promoting donor harmonisation.

With the support of the TWG-G, Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups (GMAGs) have now been established in 23 out of 26 line ministries, in the Council of Ministers and the State Secretariat for the Civil Service (SSCS). The GMAGs have replaced the previous, less effective, system of gender focal points in ministries. GMAGs are chaired at Secretary of State level and include male and female officials from every department. They have a mandate to prepare Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans (GMAPs) which include targets and indicators for both policy and human resource management in the ministry. The GMAGs and GMAPs are intended to provide a mechanism for implementation and monitoring of gender equality policy commitments made by the government, and their role is now endorsed at senior government levels. To date, 11 ministries have completed their GMAPs, of which 3 are being implemented, and 7 are currently in progress.

What has happened as a result?

The GMAPs of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) are now in their second phase. One of the key contributory factors to this progress has been the extensive long-term donor support to these ministries for gender mainstreaming activities.[4] Individual relationships have also been important success factors. For example, the ADB social sector specialist established a good working relationship with the MAFF official responsible for managing the ADB loan and managed to get agreement that gender should be part of the loan programme. He was also instrumental in following up and ensuring that funds were made available to help MAFF to develop its GMAP.

The high profile of gender issues in key policy documents, and mechanisms like GMAGs and GMAPs which promote and support integration of gender equality concerns into mainstream policies and programmes, suggest a high level of ownership of gender mainstreaming. The Prime Minister is publicly very supportive of gender mainstreaming.

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[2] This brings together Secretaries of State from 12 line ministries and civil society representatives to coordinate and provide consultation to the government on gender issues

[3] One of 17 Technical Working Groups which were established as part of an overall effort to strengthen government ownership and leadership of the development agenda. The TWG-G is chaired by the Minister of Women's Affairs with JICA and UNDP as co-donor facilitators

[4] UNICEF has supported the MoEYS and The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and JICA have supported the MAFF.

Future action

Although impressive progress has been made in mainstreaming gender in Cambodia there is a lot more which could be done. It is important to remember that new approaches, such as gender mainstreaming models, need to work within existing systems and can only develop at a rate that the local context will allow. A recent review of seven GMAPs[5] found that they tend to focus on gender awareness training and elevating the role of women in government rather than mainstreaming gender in their sectoral programmes. A challenge, therefore, is to ensure that gender considerations are factored into programmes. Furthermore, despite strong commitment, there is generally a lack of capacity and understanding amongst ministry staff of how to mainstream gender. This capacity building need should be systematically addressed. Also, the GMAGs are generally not sufficiently connected with the main governmental planning processes to truly influence them. Gender budgeting, based on the GMAPs, is also not yet in place: this has been stalled by the MTEF not yet being finalised (as solid sectoral plans have not been established[6]. This means that the MTEF can not yet be used to feed into ministry budgets and action plans. Once gender budgeting processes and guidelines have been established, gender mainstreaming should become even more effective in Cambodia.

Notes

People interviewed
Cheryl Urashima, Gender Consultant, Cambodia

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Kovacevic, K, (2007), 'DFID Cambodia Gender Audit'

Royal Government of Cambodia (2005) – Achieving the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals – 2005 Update

The World Bank (2004) – Cambodia Gender Assessment

Royal Government of Cambodia (2003) – Cambodia Medium Term Expenditure Framework 2003-2007

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[5] 'Review and Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans (GMAPs) in Seven Line Ministries: recommendations for future implementation'

[6] These should be finalised in March 2008

2   Nepal Education for All SWAp

Key messages

1. Collection of disaggregated data on rights and equity is critical for managing for results and ensuring the achievement of the MDGs:

2. Disaggregated data collection requires an agreed set of social categories that it is feasible to monitor.

3. Monitoring systems need to be formally linked to policy and budget processes in order to strengthen impact on government action and development outcomes.

4. Donor initiated monitoring systems may provide a useful short-term means of producing disaggregated data but a unified government-led monitoring system is more likely to feed into policy processes.

Background to the education for all (EFA) SWAp

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has ratified CEDAW, ICERD, ICPPR and ICESCR. Educational rights embodied in international legislation are reflected in Nepal's 2007 Interim Constitution which states that each community shall have the right to basic education in their mother tongue. In addition, every citizen shall have the right to free education from the state up to secondary level. It further notes that 'the state shall pursue a policy of encouraging maximum participation of women in national development by making special provisions for their education', as well as for 'marginalised communities …including Madhesis, Dalits, by making reservation for a certain period of time with regard to education'.

As recently as the 1950s, Nepal had no schools and a systematic expansion of the school system did not begin in the mid 1980s. However, since then there has been sustained growth in the enrolment rate, which by 2007 stood at 89%. In terms of donor funding, Nepal is currently one of the 12 highest recipients of education aid. Donor funding for projects in education which began in the late 1980s became more coordinated in the early 1990s with the Basic Primary Education Programme (BPEP).

The Government of Nepal's (GoN) Education For All programme (EFA) began in 2004, and will continue until 2009. It focuses on primary education, and uses a SWAp modality to fund and manage around 25% of the programme. Denmark, Finland, Norway, DFID, the World Bank, ADB, and UNICEF support the EFA through a joint funding pool that provides sector budget support, earmarked to the overall EFA expenditure programme[7]. The EFA has six main programme components, which draw largely from the Dakar Framework of Action 2000. These components focus on education as a fundamental human right, with 'ensuring access and equity in primary

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[7] JICA, the Alliance of Save the Children and UNESCO support the EFA through parallel, but coordinated interventions.

education' as one its key objectives.[8] The six main programme components include expanding early childhood development; ensuring access for disadvantaged groups to free and compulsory education; meeting the learning needs of all; reducing adult illiteracy; eliminating gender disparities and improving all aspects of quality education.

The EFA SWAp embodies many of the Paris Declaration principles including harmonisation, alignment and managing for results. Development partners (DPs) harmonise around a joint financing arrangement (JFA), which commits pooling donors to 'alignment with the budgetary and accountability systems and legislation of Nepal', a joint core document, monitoring frameworks and reviews. The guiding principles of the EFA core document emphasize gender mainstreaming and social inclusion as primary approaches. To this end, the EFA programme has a scholarship programme covering direct costs of education and targeted at girls, dalits and disabled children. It also aims to increased recruitment of female teachers and those from marginalized groups; develop a more gender sensitive curriculum; and partnerships for social mobilisation and community awareness-raising.

Managing for results

Significant monitoring, evaluation and research activity has taken place as part of the SWAp. The DoE has a system of biannual Flash Reports that provide a cross section of data to reveal key trends. In addition to this, donors have their own Technical Reviews of School Education (TRSE)[9] that cover access and quality issues in the sector on an annual basis. DPs also provide support to strengthening the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the Training Management Information System (TMIS) in the Department of Education (DoE). Outside of the SWAp, Norway, the DoE conduct their own research projects and DPs also undertake separate monitoring activities to meet their own reporting needs.

Since the start of the SWAp, considerable improvements have been made in data collection, a significant achievement, considering the ongoing security situation in much of the country (Steel, 2007). There have been marked improvements in the disaggregation of data, particularly by gender. Recently the Flash Reports, which previously did not disaggregate to the level of the TRSEs, have picked up on other equity dimensions, particularly ethnicity, caste and disability. In the MoES/DoE, some officials have perceived a culture change in the attitude to research. They have noted that the reports are now more likely to be used, and fed into policy rather than simply read and then shelved. Significant progress in monitoring equity trends has allowed better understanding of a wide range of equity and inclusion challenges and improved generation and use of quality information to inform policy making (Steel, 2007).

Although there has been significant improvement in the collection and analysis of data in Flash reports, at the central level there is a lack of an agreed, usable single classification system for disaggregated data for variables other than gender (Acharya, 2007). There are concerns that once the TRSE comes to an end, there will not have been sufficient institutionalization of the new approaches. Sufficient capacity will also not have been developed to enable the ongoing commission, gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information to provide a good evidence base to feed into policy. Additionally, a lot of monitoring is expected to be conducted at the district and school level, and they may lack adequate financial and technical backup, particularly at the school level (Steel, 2007).

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8   The other two objectives of the EFA are: enhancing quality and relevance of primary education and improving efficiency and institutional capacity.

[9] The TRSE is an is an independent monitoring process established by DPs in 2005, when the King dismissed the government and relations between donors and the government became strained

Obstacles to equal access

In terms of results, there has been considerable progress in primary-level enrolment, largely attributed to the demand for education articulated by parents and communities and the need for the GoN and DPs to respond (Report on Joint Learning, November 2007). The Consolidated Flash Report 2003-6 shows that the enrolment rate for girls, Dalits and Janajatis has increased over the past few years. NER for girls increased from 75% in 2001 to 86% in 2006. The percentage of Dalits out of the total primary school enrolment rose from 15% in 2003 to 16.9% in 2006 and the percentage of Janjatis rose from 23.6% in 2004, to 36.4% in 2006. In the Flash report of May 2007, girls represented 48.9% of the total primary school enrolment, whilst Dalits represented 19.2% and Janajatis 40.9%. All of these are increases on the previous year. The total share for students with disabilities is about 1% in total enrolment, higher than their population share at the national level. However, barriers to equitable access still remain, demonstrated by the fact that 11% of children, the majority of them child labourers, remain out of school.

Currently there is very little discussion in donor working groups around addressing issues of exclusion (with the exception of gender inclusion) in the education sector, with only UNICEF specifically investigating this issue (conversation with Halima Begum). Some donors think that the SWAp as aid instruments are not designed well enough to specifically look at ways of targeting the most excluded groups and that it is not responsive enough to deal with equity issues. Government and development partners need to do more on implementing social inclusion strategies in the EFA programme. In 2010, the EFA will merge with the Secondary Education Sector Programme (SESP) and become the School Sector Reform programme (SSR). The SSR may present an opportunity to address some of the issues of exclusion highlighted in the recent UNICEF report on the Education SWAp. This recommends a more robust and comprehensive strategic framework for the whole sub-sector, with clear government leadership and a higher level of donor 'buy in' and coordination. In order for it to reach the 11% of children who remain outside the school system, it will need to have a coherent equity related policy framework with clearer mechanisms for mainstreaming gender and equity concerns across the board.

Notes
People interviewed
Tony Vaux, consultant, Review of Education for All Programme for International Alert
Juho Uusihakala, previously Counsellor, Embassy of Finland, Kathmandu
Halima Begum, Education Adviser, DFID Nepal

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3 Nepal- Social and Political Exclusion and Human Rights in the Poverty Reduction Strategy

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Key messages

1. Sound data and persuasive analysis are critical for building donor and government ownership of rights and equity agendas. Engaging national researchers and institutions can also help to build capacity and ownership.

2. In post-conflict contexts, co-ordinated donor support to civil society can help to build country ownership of government policies and enable broad-based, peaceful engagement in political processes.

3. Efforts to strengthen ownership and harmonization may, in some cases, serve to mask political tensions between different actors in government and civil society. Comprehensive analysis of political dynamics and the demands for political and other rights from civil society organisations is consequently critical.

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Background

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has ratified CEDAW, ICERD, ICPPR and ICESCR. When Nepal moved from an absolute to constitutional monarchy in 1990, its new constitution attempted to embody some of the principles of these treaties, by establishing a 'multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and democratic' state, with all citizens 'equal irrespective of religion, race, gender, caste, tribe or ideology'. A number of legislative ambiguities currently exist, such as Nepal being declared a Hindu kingdom and women denied rights to pass on citizenship to their children. Combined with a lack of implementation of existing de jure rights, this has meant that Nepal remains a highly unequal society. Social, political and economic power has been dominated by high-caste Hindu groups, particularly Brahmins, Chhetris and Newars. Women, Dalits (previous 'untouchable' castes), Janajatis (ethnic indigenous groups), Madheshis (plain dwellers of Terai), Muslims, children, older people and the disabled have been excluded (Watkins, 2007).

In the past ten years, two political movements have been able to gain popular support through drawing on long-standing grievances of excluded groups. In1996, the Maoists declared a 'People's War' and began a bid to replace the monarchy with a socialist republic. The Maoists recruited large numbers of women, impoverished Janajatis and people from lower castes, by promising them access to services and a voice in the future republic. In 2005, the king declared a state of emergency and assumed full executive powers to quash the Maoists. The conflict then began to focus around political rather than social and economic rights and exclusion (Vaux 2006). In April 2006, people took to the streets to demand a return to democracy which led to the king reinstating parliament and declaring Nepal a secular state. In April 2007, the Maoists joined the interim government and talks let up to the holding of elections in April 2008 election. However, the grievances of the Terai based Madheshis, made up of a mix of ethnic groups and castes, have not been championed by the Maoists or fully recognised by the government. While the Madheshis have better access to services relative to those living in hill areas, many have not been granted citizenship rights. They also continue to have less parliamentary representation per person in

comparison with hill and mountain districts (Watkins 2007). The Madheshi movement has mobilised around gaining Nepali status and citizenship and greater political representation. In 2007, the movement turned violent with clashes between the Madheshi groups and government forces, as well as between rival Madheshi factions.

Country ownership

The main driver of government ownership around social exclusion was the conflict. The Maoist insurgency meant that the government needed strategies that could engage different groups on a peaceful basis. Between 1980 and 2002, successive GoN Plans included attempts to identify excluded groups and allocate funds to them. However, these were welfare driven initiatives rather than systematic efforts to address discrimination.

The programme of DFID/WB research on social exclusion provided the government with a framework it could use to address the concerns of different groups involved in the conflict. In 2002 a MoU was signed between DFID and the World Bank to fund a staff member to work on a jointly agreed programme looking at issues of social exclusion. The Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment was a key output of this work. Nepal's National Planning Commission (NPC), which was in charge of drafting the PRSP, joined DFID and World Bank discussions on social exclusion and decided to make social inclusion one of the key pillars of the 10th Plan/ PRSP (2003). The evidence-base subsequently produced by the DFID/WB research helped to convince members of the Government that social exclusion had to be addressed across all sectors.

Indigenous Nepalese groups have also kept up pressure on the GoN and donors on issues of gender, caste and ethnicity-based discrimination. Nepalese scholars and activists working on these issues formed an informal advisory group for the DFID/World Bank GSEA study. These included representatives from the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), Feminist Dalit Organisation (FEDO) and Dalit Empowerment and Inclusion Project (DEIP), amongst others.

As a result of the work of the GoN, civil society and donors, the 10th Plan, which involved a much more participatory process than previous plans (Unequal Citizens 2006), recognises that regional, gender, ethnic and caste-based inequalities are an 'underlying cause' of the conflict'. The plan proposes affirmative action to level the playing field. It goes further than previous plans in acknowledging that lack of voice, political representation and empowerment are as important dimensions of poverty as are economic and human development.

Harmonisation around social exclusion

The search for the causes of the conflict helped to strengthen donor harmonisation around social exclusion. During the Maoist insurgency, bilateral and multilateral donors met to discuss the conflict and strategies for its peaceful resolution. In 2003, 11 bilateral donors signed Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs)[10], which established a framework for joint acting within the conflict. Point 5 of the BOGs agreement focuses on social exclusion: 'We seek to ensure that our assistance tackles discrimination and social exclusion, most notably based on gender ethnicity, caste and religion'. Over 2006-7 the OECD-DAC Fragile States Group tested its principles for good engagement in fragile states in nine countries, including Nepal.

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10   BOGs was signed by CIDA, DANIDA, DFID, EC, Embassy of Finland, GTZ, JICA, NORAD, SDC, SNV and JICA in 2003 and Australia in 2007.

Whilst many donors[11] had long-standing programmes addressing discrimination against particular groups, prior to 2002 there was little systematic work being done on social exclusion. Donor strategy and conditionality was mainly linked to macro-economic and governance reforms (Brown and Stewart, 2006). Some donors still prefer to use a conventional poverty framework and have not accepted or internalised the need to address discrimination. After social inclusion was established as one of the four pillars of the PRSP, however, many donors began to align behind it and include social inclusion in their country assistance strategies.

The World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy 2004-7 acknowledges that 'there are significant ethnic and caste based disparities' and includes social inclusion and targeted programmes as one of the pillars of the CAS. The second of three pillars in ADB's Country Strategy and Program 2004-9 is 'supporting inclusive social and human development'. The overall purpose of DFID's Country Assistance Plan (CAP) 2004-8, is to reduce poverty and social exclusion. The Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Nepal identifies systematic exclusion in Nepal and has programmes which include livelihoods and inclusion as well as a harmonised bi-and multi-lateral framework. The Dutch SNV specialises in seven thematic areas, including social inclusion and gender equity.

There are a number of sector working groups in Nepal, made up of UN, I/NGO and donors, who meet to discuss particular issues. There are separate sector working groups on gender, human rights and social inclusion. The Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) meets once every two to three months to discuss social inclusion monitoring as well as influencing development agencies on diversity in recruitment policies.

Donors have established two funds to support Nepal based organisations' work on exclusion. The Social Inclusion Research Fund (SIRF)[12], was set up by the Norwegian government to fund Nepal based researchers and institutions to conduct research on social inclusion and nation building in Nepal. The fund is managed by the Dutch organisation SNV. [13]The Rights and Democracy and Inclusion Fund (RDIF), was established in 2006, by the UK, Swiss, Australian and Norwegian governments.[14] The RDIF aims to bring about a more sustainable system of democratic governance in Nepal characterised by more respect for rights, democratic norms, and the political inclusion of all major population groups. This fund supports Nepali civil society organisations, academic institutions and other organisations working legally in Nepal.

Future action

It is generally acknowledged that donor focus on the primary conflict has meant that the concerns of the Madheshi population have only belatedly been acknowledged. While the DFID/WB GSEA identified discriminated-against groups living in the Terai, the political agenda of the Madheshis was not picked up. Since 2005, the Madheshis have been increasingly acting as one, demanding citizenship and political representation[15]. Donors have begun to work with Madheshi NGOs and, since 2006, over a million citizenships have been issued. However, the Madheshis are now resorting to violent means. Their use of violence can be contrasted with the currently peaceful

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11 SIDA has had programmes in the poor, remote regions for many years (cite)

12   www.socialinclusion.org.np

13   This is the 'Social inclusion, democratic inclusion and the insurgency in Nepal' research programme managed by the Chr. Michelsen Institute

14   www.rdif.org.np

15 The Madheshi movement has been criticised as being a construct of an elite Madheshi group, which does not represent Dalits, who feel they have long been treated badly by the elite. There have also been internal clashes between rival factions within the movement.

methods of the Janajatis who have had donor support for building their lobbying and advocacy capacity. The contrast highlights the importance, as well as the difficulties, of comprehensive analysis of political rights and inclusion.

Notes

People interviewed
Alan Whaites, Senior Governance Adviser, DFID Nepal
Jasmine Rajbhandary, Social Development Adviser, DFID Nepal
Dr. Lynn Bennett, Social Scientist, World Bank Nepal
Magnus Hatlebekk, Senior Researcher, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway

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4 Rwanda Multi-Agency Gender Audit: Following the Government's Lead

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Key messages

1. Gender equality represents a point of common ground among development partners – with the Government of Rwanda taking the lead. The multi-agency gender audit has provided a practical focus for harmonisation efforts. Through on-going peer review, the audit has established innovative mechanisms to strengthen mutual accountability.

2. Donors and International NGOs have needed to 'raise their game' on gender in order to keep pace with the Rwandan government. The gender audit has provided an internal self-assessment tool to help organisations identify ways to improve.

3. The gender audit process has potentially sown the seeds for future harmonisation. In encouraging dialogue and peer support, the audit process has strengthened an atmosphere of openness and trust among staff from donor agencies - essential building blocks for future joint working and harmonisation.

Background

The genocide in 1994 claimed the lives of more than a million Rwandan people, and left many more displaced. Since then, Rwanda has made great strides in terms of increasing growth and reducing poverty. For the last five years, annual growth has averaged 5.2 percent, and poverty levels have declined from around 70 percent in 1994, to under 57 percent in 2006.

Since 2002, Rwanda has had a Poverty Reduction Strategy focused on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In September 2007, the Government approved a new Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), which has been widely praised for its inclusion of gender issues. A number of donors are active in Rwanda, and although a large proportion of their support is channelled through donor and civil society-led projects, roughly 65 percent of government spending is financed through donor support. The Rwandan Government plays an active role in leading the harmonisation process.

Thematic Cluster Committees were established for the preparation of the new EDPRS. Gender was a strong component of the Cross Cutting Thematic Cluster. This is one of the strongest committees, and is chaired by Rwanda's Ministry for Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROF).

Work to promote gender equality in Rwanda is set within an international human rights framework. Rwanda has signed a number of pieces of international legislation, including the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). At the national level, a number of policies are in place to promote gender equality, supported by a strong constitutional and legal framework.

Significant progress has been made against a number of MDG indicators. Rwanda has achieved gender parity in enrolment in primary and secondary education, and Rwanda's parliament currently

has the highest representation of women MPs in the world – almost 50 percent. However, a number of development challenges persist. 1,400 women still die in every 100,000 live births, gender-based violence remains high, and women and girls over the age of 15 are still disproportionately infected by HIV.

Outline of the audit process

In 2005, as a member of the Gender Cluster, DFID-Rwanda commissioned a small team of consultants to facilitate a multi-agency gender audit.[16] A further seven organisations agreed to participate in the first phases of the audit process, forming a Gender Audit Sub Committee including: SNV, UNDP, SIDA, Norwegian People's Aid, UNIFEM, Trocaire, and ActionAid. MIGEPROF chaired the Sub Committee, and maintained oversight of the audit process.

It was intended that the gender audit would identify a set of standards and monitoring processes that would enable the government of Rwanda to know clearly what to expect from development partners and how to hold them to account on their gender commitments. The starting point for the audit was the assumption that measures to tackle gender equality were not sufficiently prioritised and that government, donors and civil society all needed to do more to ensure gender issues were adequately addressed. The audit focused entirely on internal systems and capacity and, although facilitated by external consultants, was internally led by staff from each of the organisations. During the month-long process of collective self-analysis, reflection and planning, the 'internal auditors' met regularly to provide peer support through the sharing of ideas and experience. Following the audit process, each of the organisations produced an action plan based on an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses in addressing gender inequality issues.

Building on the audits of the first eight organisations, the process has now moved in to a new phase, bringing state institutions and local organisations on board. Some of the participating organisations have been keen to assess themselves against international human rights targets. The National Women's Council and the NGO Pro Femmes, for example, see themselves as advocates for CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action and have been keen to use international standards to assess their performance. Staff from SNV and SIDA were also keen to use these international frameworks, taking them as the basis for their governments' gender policies.

Results

Government has established a National Gender Cluster for implementation of the EDPRS. Sex-disaggregated data in the outcome monitoring framework of the EDPRS is being promoted. A report on the Rwanda Gender Audit is informing EDPRS implementation.

In DFIDR, a gender action plan has been drawn up to take forward recommendations of the audit. Actions taken or planned as a result of this include:

4. DFIDR is currently supporting the design of a gender component within the existing governance programme on enhancing responsiveness and accountability of key institutions as part of further strengthening GE in DFIDR supported programmes;
5. DFIDR is engaged with UNIFEM on their work to address gender-based violence and promoting GE will be a key priority in the development of a multi year programmatic support to the 1UN pilot in Rwanda;

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[16] The term "gender audit" is used to refer to a range of activities which examine organisational performance on the promotion of gender equality and women's rights.

6. A gender approach paper will be prepared in the first quarter of 2008 to inform the new CAP, scheduled for June this year.

Gender equality has provided an important area of common ground among development partners in Rwanda. With shared objectives on promoting gender equality outlined in each of the organisations' gender policies, as well as international legislation and the national policy framework, all partners have faced similar challenges in translating these commitments into practice. The audit has given those involved in the Gender Cluster a practical focus in order to sustain momentum. In-keeping with the new aid environment, participating organisations have been encouraged to view this collective examination of progress as a mutually supportive, rather than competitive process.

The Government of Rwanda has already made impressive progress in promoting equality between women and men. As such, donors and international NGOs have needed to improve their own efforts to support national processes. With a focus on assessing internal systems and procedures, the gender audit methodology was designed to highlight strengths and weaknesses within each organisation and to plan a way forward. The participatory action-planning component of the audit process has created an opportunity for ongoing benchmarking and peer review. A number of participating organisations have already flagged an interest in repeating the review process at regular intervals.

Notes

People interviewed
Caroline Pinder, Rwanda gender audit consultant
Study review team, DFID Rwanda: Geeta Unikrishnan, Duncan Overfield, Jiji Bhattarcharji

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Pinder, C, 2007, 'Summary of the Gender Audit Methodology and Framework for Analysis'

5   The 'Delivering as One UN' System in Rwanda

Key messages

1. Strong government ownership and coordination of development processes leads to more effective coordination between development partners.

2. Efforts at harmonisation lead to enhanced coordination between development partners leading to reduced duplication of effort and therefore saving valuable resources and increasing aid effectiveness.

3. It is possible to successfully develop programmes which are fully aligned with national priorities and development strategies.

Background

Rwanda has experienced a remarkable recovery since the 1994 genocide, which claimed the lives of more that a million Rwandans and devastated the country's human and physical capital, as well as its social and institutional fabric. Since the end of the war, growth rates have averaged 5.8% per annum and poverty rates have dropped from around 70% in 1994 to 56.9% in 2007.[17]

Rwanda now faces the challenge of making the transition from recovery and reconstruction based growth to a broader and more sustainable growth which will allow it to achieve its long-term development vision, called 'Vision 2020'. 'Vision 2020' sets out the government's ambition to become a middle-income country by 2020 and is aligned with the MDG framework. The medium-term strategy for achieving 'Vision 2020' is set out in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy[18] (EDPRS), 2008 – 2012. In this strategy, one of the four themes is social development and one of the seven priority areas is 'poverty and vulnerability reduction'. The government of Rwanda has also demonstrated its commitment to human rights by signing a number of pieces of international legislation, including the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

In January 2007, Rwanda was chosen as one of eight 'One UN' pilot countries for UN reform[19]. The reforms in the pilots has been established in response to the 2006 High Level Panel Report 'Delivering as One' which acknowledged the inadequacy of the current UN system to deliver on the high level commitments agreed upon in the Millennium Declaration and subsequent engagements. It also examined ways of creating a UN system better equipped to respond to the challenge of meeting the MDGs, by reducing its fragmentation, duplication, high overheads and lack of focus. The objective of the "One UN: Delivering as One - pilot is to *'improve the impact, coherence, efficiency and positioning of the UN system in Rwanda to enable it to better help Rwanda meet the MDGs and Vision 2020*[20]. All pilot countries have committed to establishing four 'ones' to which all

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[17] UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) 2008 – 2012 Rwanda

[18] Rwanda's equivalent of a PRSP

[19] The other pilot countries are: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Tanzania, Uruguay and Vietnam

[20] 'One UN 'Delivering as One' in Rwanda – concept paper', page 5

UN agencies will work: One Programme, One Budgetary Framework, One Leader and One Office. The UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights provide an overall framework for the UN system in Rwanda, which comprises ten in-country agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, UNFPA, FAO, UNHCR, WHO, UNAIDS, UNECA, UNIFEM), eight Non Resident Agencies (IFAD, ILO, UNEP, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ITC, OHCHR, ITU) and four agencies with in-country representation through UNDP (UNCDF, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNV). These agencies have all signed up to take part in the 'One UN' pilot. The UN country team (UNCT) also includes the World Bank and the IMF and MONUC and ICTR, but these are not part of the 'One UN' pilot.

Paris processes

Just before Rwanda was selected as one of the reform pilot countries, the UNCT had started developing its second United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008 – 2012. The UNDAF has therefore provided programmatic coherence for the 'One Programme' model in Rwanda. Although usual UN practice is to base UNDAFs on Common Country Assessments (CCAs), Rwanda's UNCT decided to base the second UNDAF on the government's EDPRS in order to enhance the **alignment** of its programme with national priorities. The EDPRS highlights gender, environment, social inclusion and HIV and AIDS as cross-cutting issues and these have also been integrated into the UNDAF. Gender and human rights task forces have now been established and one of their key roles is to check that Gender and human rights are actually being mainstreamed into UN programmes. Government representatives have also taken an active role in ensuring that UN activities are aligned with those of other development partners. Based on the Paris Declaration, the UNCT has also actively promoted the **alignment** and **harmonisation** process in Rwanda through its support to the cluster system, the Development Partners' Coordination Group (DPCG) and the annual Development Partners' Meeting (DPM).

The government of Rwanda has demonstrated strong **ownership** of the pilot. At the highest level and throughout the pilot process the government has *'provided guidance, shown ownership and exercised leadership'*[21]. This has helped to accelerate the pace of reform and inspired an ambitious vision for 'One UN'. Government representatives have attended consultation workshops and the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, James Musoni, took part in the signing ceremony of the 'One UN' concept paper. James Musoni also chairs the 'One UN' Steering Committee, which has been established to guide the implementation of 'One UN' in Rwanda. This committee includes 3 other government representatives, as well as representatives of the UN System in Rwanda, representatives of the development partners/ donor community[22] and the UN Resident Coordinator. This should therefore lead to greater **harmonisation** of aid and development in Rwanda. Through the 'One UN programme', the cooperation mechanisms which have been put into place should bring about harmonisation at the operational, programmatic and policy levels. There have already been noticeable changes in the way UN Agencies engage with each other as a result of working together on the 'One UN programme'. They are much more familiar with each others' activities and are actively reducing duplication of efforts through recognising each others' particular areas of expertise and added value. A communication strategy has been developed to ensure that the UN speaks with 'One Voice' on key policy issues. This should also contribute to increased harmonisation of development efforts during the implementation stage.

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[21] UN Reform in Rwanda: United in Diversity

[22] Current representatives are from the European Commission, the Netherlands and Sweden

What has happened as a result?

The planning stage of the "One UN: Delivering as One pilot in Rwanda has just been completed and 1st January 2008 marked the start of the implementation phase. The UNCT has managed to achieve a great deal in terms of planning the pilot in a short timescale. A recent stocktaking of the pilot stage[23] has identified one of its main achievements as being improved coherence, quality and cooperation in the UN's system wide planning[24]. It is hoped that this will strengthen the trust that its partners have in the UN system, will therefore lead to increased availability of resources and thus reduce interagency competition and strengthen their incentive to work within the common framework. An example of tangible achievement has been the signing of the Health Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) by government and development partners. This has been attributed to enhanced cooperation between agencies at the policy level, brought about by the pilot and the fact that negotiations for the SWAp's MoU were completed by Results Theme Group Co-chairs on behalf of the UNCT.

The UNCT has faced some challenges in developing the 'One UN' pilot. Firstly, despite a general recognition by UN agencies of the need for a more coordinated approach, many agencies have continued to focus on other, smaller projects. Peer review mechanisms and strict funding eligibility criteria have been introduced to safeguard against this issue. However, it is also recognised that there is a need to maintain a balance between programme coherence and respecting the diversity of the different UN agencies. Secondly, the pilot has inevitably created extra work for UN agencies yet there has been little allowance made for this by regional offices/ head office. In-country agencies have requested that their other reporting requirements be relaxed in view of their increased workload but have yet to receive a response from head office. Smaller UN agencies, such as UNIFEM, have been particularly affected by the increased workload as they have fewer resources to allocate to the pilot. Funding has proved to be a further challenge and poses a risk to the success of the programme. The estimated resources required to achieve 'One Programme' are 488 million USD (over a period of 5 years) of which the Resident Coordinator needs to mobilise 155 million USD on behalf of the UNCT. If these resources can not be mobilised, there is a risk that agencies may chose to source their own funding and therefore not work through the common framework. This would undermine the coherence of the UN system and the appeal of the 'One Programme'. It could also lead to donors losing faith in the common system and reverting to traditional funding mechanisms in order to regain direct control over their resources. However, the UNCT is positive that the necessary resources will be mobilised as there are currently high levels of donor interest and discussions taking place as to how much each donor may contribute.[25]

There have been several success factors in the 'One UN' pilot to date. Firstly, the government's involvement in and commitment to the 'One UN' pilot has been instrumental to its progress. The continuation of this commitment will be vital to its success during the implementation stage. Secondly, the UN Resident Coordinator has provided strong leadership and played a key personal role in making the pilot a success. The Resident Coordinator is also supported by a dedicated team.[26] There are currently discussions taking place as to how to ensure more sustainable funding for this team. The UN Resident Coordinator is due to leave this role imminently and his successor is currently being appointed. Although his departure will inevitably have some impact on the

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[23] Stocktaking Report by the One UN Steering Committee in Rwanda.

[24] As a result of the development of the UNDAF, the Common Operational Document and a common budget for 2008-2012.

[25] UNCT are currently in discussion with Norad, DFID, Sida, Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada.

[26] Comprising two Coordination Officers and a Communications Officer.

success of the programme, his team are confident that good, clear systems which have been put into place should minimise any negative impacts.

Now that the 'One UN' pilot has reached the implementation stage, the UNCT has decided that their main priority for 2008 will be to concentrate on some challenging operational issues they are facing, such as the implementation of the 'One Office' and the action plan on Common Services. This will lead to significant savings in UN overhead costs, resources which can then hopefully be used to fund UN programmes. A skill mapping exercise will also be undertaken to ensure that the UNCT has the necessary capacity to take the 'One Programme' agenda forward. The monitoring and evaluation system will be strengthened and the communication strategy will continue to be developed.

Notes

People interviewed
Frederik Matthys, Coordination Officer and reform focal point, Office of the Resident Coordinator, UN Rwanda

Documents reviewed
One UN 'Delivering as One' in Rwanda – concept paper. Prepared by the Office of the Resident Coordinator (UN Coordination Unit) (2007)

'One UN' – retreat in Akagera – Rwanda: final report (2007)

Stocktaking Report by the One UN Steering Committee in Rwanda (2007)

UNDAF 2008 – 2012 Rwanda (2007)

Unity in Diversity Newsletters: April to November 2007

6   SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

Key messages

1. Sustained dialogue over several years between civil society advocacy groups and government/s around an issue like gender equality is a perfect example of mutual accountability in action.

2. Real country ownership occurs when government and civil society work together to achieve rights and equity objectives, without donors 'taking over' the agenda or trying to influence it.

3. Legislation on gender equality by regional cooperation frameworks like SADC have the potential to impact on development outcomes across many countries (14 in this case) as they commit all member countries to adopt and implement agreements. The ability to work simultaneously at country and regional levels means that the impact of the legislation has a multiplier effect. Donors can help such regional initiatives by thinking regionally themselves, for example, by setting up funding mechanisms to support regional initiatives.

4. Through support to civil society around rights and equity issues, donors can help build the capacity of both civil society (directly, through funding) but also government (indirectly, through their involvement in the dialogue process).

5. A specifically designated Regional Gender Unit can advance women's rights and enhance regional ownership, particularly if it is required to engage both government and civil society.

Background to gender protocol

The development of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is a unique example of a regional initiative where civil society organisations (CSOs) are playing a leading role in strengthening regional commitments on gender equality and women's rights. Through flexible funding mechanisms donors have provided opportunities for CSOs to define their own strategies for attaining gender equality, based on their understanding of what needs to be done in individual countries and the region. By not intervening proactively - except through the provision of funding - donors have strengthened country ownership in the true sense (civil society + governments).

The run up to the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women provided an initial platform for gender advocacy CSOs in the SADC region to work together to achieve regional goals. Together they lobbied for the establishment of a SADC Gender Unit (GU), which was set up in 1996. Regional commitments to gender equality followed, with the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (SDGD) in 1997. A year later the Addendum to the Declaration on Violence Against Women and Children was finalised. However, whilst these were significant achievements, they recognised that urgent consideration should be given to the adoption of legally binding SADC instruments to close the gap between policy and implementation.

To take stock of the state of gender equality and women's rights in the region, CSOs, in particular gender and women's empowerment organisations, initiated a gender audit in 2005, partly supported by the SADC Parliamentary Forum. The audit looked at key regional and international

instruments, including the SDGD, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, CEDAW, Protocol of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in African and the Millennium Development Goals. It also examined how they had been implemented in the SADC countries. In particular, progress on gender was measured in terms of a number of measurable indicators. These included women's participation in decision-making bodies (including but not only parliament); access to education; participation in the economy; women's constitutional and legal rights; protection from gender violence; their realisation of sexual and reproductive rights; women's access to information, communication and the media; and institutional arrangements. Although there was evidence of some progress, the audit found there was a significant lack of gender equality in all of these areas. Women were poorly represented in decision-making bodies, poorly protected by legislation and HIV/AIDS and poverty was increasingly having a feminine face. To address these issues, the audit recommended that a legally binding protocol be developed in order to provide a more systematic way of domesticating and synthesising all regional gender commitments.

Development of the protocol and regional ownership

To manage the process of developing the Protocol, the SADC GU set up a Task Force, consisting of three representatives from the SADC Troika[27], two civil society representatives, with the SADC Gender Unit acting as Secretariat. The Task Force conducted a number of consultations on the Protocol with gender experts, senior government officials and CSOs throughout the SADC region, to allow a range of groups and individuals to provide input.

At the same time, CSOs working on gender equality set up the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance[28], to coordinate their responses to the Protocol. The Alliance was supported by Danida, Norwegian Church Aid, the Southern African Trust and the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA). Rather than imposing conditions on the Alliance, donors supported regional ownership, by acting in partnership with CSOs and supplying funding and technical advice when needed. Donors provided the Alliance with the opportunity to engage with wider sections of the women's movement, such as faith-based organisations, through other work they were involved in.

The draft Protocol produced in 2007 by the Task Force, with input from the Alliance, is one of the most specific and time bound pieces of legislation in the world for achieving gender equality. It is a comprehensive regional instrument which: (i) consolidates individual country commitments on gender equality; (ii) sets specific targets and timeframes[29] for achieving gender equality and equity in all areas, and; (iii) establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for measuring progress. In June 2007 the draft protocol was approved by gender ministers and vetted by justice ministers for legal compliance. However, prior to the Heads of State Summit in August 2007, substantial changes to the draft were made by senior technocrats. This meant that the version presented to the Heads of State showed numerous amendments which made them unwilling to sign. Instead they urged further consultations and for the draft Protocol to be deferred to the 2008 Summit. This

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[27] The SADC Troika is made up of Mauritius - the former chair of SADC, Botswana – the current chair, and Lesotho – the incoming chair

[28] The SADC Gender Protocol Alliance is co-ordinated by Genderlinks and includes the Botswana Congress of NGOs; Federation of African Media Women; Gender and Media Southern Africa Network; Justice and Peace (Lesotho); Malawi Council of Churches; Media Institute of Southern Africa; NGO Gender Coordination Network Malawi; SAFAIDS; Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Zambia; Women in Law and Development in Africa; Women in Law in Southern Africa ; Women, Land and Water Rights Southern Africa; Women in Politics Caucus Botswana; Women's Leadership Centre Namibia; Young Women's Christian Association Botswana; Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre.

[29] The draft Protocol has a number of strategic targets, many of which have to be achieved by 2010, and others by 2015.

was disappointing for the Alliance who felt unhappy that an instrument approved by gender ministers and vetted by justice ministers for legal compliance, could have been altered with in this way, and fail to be approved.

Future of protocol

The Alliance met in November to take a fresh look at the Protocol, to discuss whether there were issues they were prepared to compromise on, and to develop a new draft. In December 2007, Senior Officials responsible for gender and women's affairs together with civil society representatives from each of the SADC countries met to negotiate on the content and language of the new draft Protocol. Even though not all amendments proposed by the Alliance were agreed, the Alliance was encouraged by the willingness of Senior Officials to engage with all the issues and that officials agreed to stand by the draft agreed at the December meeting.

In terms of the Alliance's role in the future of the Protocol, members have realised that there is still a significant amount of lobbying to do and that getting the Protocol approved is more politically complicated than they initially thought. They intend to strengthen their regional and country approaches and to identify individuals and governments that will influence the content and processes towards adoption of the Protocol. The Alliance must continue to keep in close contact with the Task Force and Senior Gender Officials who will play a significant role in consultations towards the Summit in 2008. It must also continue to lobby ministers responsible for foreign affairs and justice, who play a significant role in the process of getting the Protocol signed. As well as lobbying governments, they also need to highlight awareness around the significance of the Protocol with grassroots organisations, in order to broaden its ownership. The Alliance believes that through the strong partnerships it has established with its donors, it will continue to be able to draw on their support. If they are able to successfully engage with government officials, CSOs, and donors at the regional and country level, they see a real possibility of the Protocol being signed in 2008.

Notes

People interviewed

Pam Mhlanga, Deputy Director, Genderlinks

Documents reviewed

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Genderlinks, 2007, 'SADC Gender Protocol, Civil Society Strategy and Planning Meeting, March 2007, Workshop Report'

Genderlinks, 2007, 'Post Heads of State summit analysis matrix'

Genderlinks 2007, 'Analysis of Protocol post-officials meeting December 2007'

SADC, 2007, 'SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: As amended by Senior officials responsible for gender and women's affairs in Livingstone, Zamiba, December 2007'

7 Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities: Regional Efforts to Strengthen National Ownership

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Key messages

1. Regional initiatives on cross cutting themes can strengthen *national* ownership. In establishing Decade Steering Committees on disability in a number of African countries, the Decade Secretariat has provided a unique space for discussion among a range of actors interested in tackling discrimination against disabled people.

2. Donors still face barriers in harmonising their support to civil society organisations. Although all donors involved in supporting the Secretariat are committed to the Paris Declaration principle of harmonisation it is not always easy to achieve this in practice. Procedures tend to be aligned with head office regulations, not the needs of clients.

3. Capacity development is critical for government and civil society representatives, especially in relation to disability. Capacity needs are on both sides. African Disabled People's Organisations lack the capacity to meet the needs and demands of their members. Their own disabilities mean they have often been excluded from opportunities to gain the experience and skills that are fundamental to the voluntary sector. Capacity development is also critical for governments, NGOs and other stakeholders who don't know how to design and implement disability policies and programmes. For Paris Declaration principles to address cross-cutting themes like disability effectively, capacity development must be a priority.

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Background

Following heavy lobbying by Disabled Peoples' Organisations (DPOs), the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities was proclaimed by the African Union for the period 1999 to 2009. With slow progress at the start, it is likely that the decade will be extended to cover another term from 2009 to 2019.

In April 2004 the Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (SADPD) was established to strengthen the capacity of governments, DPOs and development agencies to work in partnership to include disability issues in policies and development priorities. In addition to capacity building, the Secretariat is also directly involved in advocacy and lobbying, planning and coordination, and monitoring and reporting. This work is focused around a number of thematic programmes, including gender, youth, and HIV/AIDS.

At the national level, the Secretariat is working with national governments to establish Decade Steering Committees (DSCs). The mission of a Decade Steering Committee is to advocate for the

enhancement of the quality of life, full participation and empowerment of all categories of disability in all spheres of life. There were DSCs in just five countries in 2004, now they exist in 20 countries as the result of new SIDA funding.

DSCs have the potential to be critical forums in these countries. They are the *only* places where people with disabilities meet with government and other development partners to discuss action on disability. They typically bring together representatives from government, DPOs, NGOs, UN Agencies (UNESCO, WHO and UNICEF), and the National AIDS Council, the media and employers and trade unions.

Amongst other tasks DSCs are responsible for (i) preparing a national disability action plan; (ii) engaging in the development of national policies and legislation; (iii) strengthening monitoring and evaluation processes; and (iv) strengthening media awareness. This is achieved through the work of a Management Committee that works to the DSC and has a full-time co-ordinator appointed by the Government.

Outline of donor support

SIDA was the first to support SADPD and, as well as providing core funding, also provide technical assistance to the Secretariat, including an operations manager and a communications specialist.

DANIDA then added its support, working through DSI (Danish Council of Organisations of Disabled People), to provide support for programming in five pilot countries, with a heavy focus on building DPO capacity. DANIDA are also about to support the Secretariat to assess the impact of disability legislation in a number of countries.

DFID is currently supporting the Secretariat to undertake a small research project focused on disabled people's access to health and education services in Mozambique, Rwanda and Cameroon. The aim is to generate reliable evidence, which can be used in the DSCs to inform future policy design and implementation. The Secretariat has also had a small grant from the Southern Africa Trust (also DFID funded) for work on disability and HIV/AIDS.

The first Annual Donor Meeting was attended by SIDA, DANIDA, DFID and two other interested donors: Italy and Finland; more recent discussions with GTZ have also taken place.[30]

The Secretariat currently provides just one report to SIDA and DANIDA, which has eased pressure on staff time. However, as more donors come on line, further harmonisation will become all the more important. The Secretariat views core support as a vital means of strengthening its capacity. In addition, it would welcome an agreement with donors to use single reporting procedures based on outcomes, as well as an agreement that funding can be used for regional work, rather than being tied to the country specified by the donor.

There remain practical constraints to realising this degree of donor harmonisation. Core funding is not always possible for donors; not all have a mechanism for funding regional organisations. The Secretariat has been told it should put in funding proposals to Embassies in individual countries; if successful the funds should then be used to support programme activities there. This prevents the Secretariat capitalising on its regional status and capabilities. (This is not to suggest that the Secretariat will not respond to donor funding requirements whatever they are, just that the opportunity costs of a non-harmonised approach are significant for a small organisation).

It would seem that although the Paris Declaration principles of harmonisation and alignment are agreed by all in principle there remain very real difficulties in operationalising them in practice.

Progress to date and the future

To-date the Secretariat has had a good response from governments in setting up the DSCs. However, so far they have concentrated efforts in countries where there is already a visible appetite among governments to address disabled people's rights. Their work is getting more challenging as they expand into new countries.

Main areas of progress are in (i) changing attitudes and raising awareness – the realisation that disability policy can be developed, can be implemented and it can make a difference; (ii) the development of national plans of action on disability. These are going well in those countries where there is a highly motivated and well-respected Co-ordinator who is also a good communicator. The Co-ordinator is appointed by Government and is critical - in countries where the Decade Steering Committees have achieved real progress it is often due to the energy and skills of these individuals. In countries where DSCs lack this sort of leadership, or where governments have shown less inclination to act (even when their rhetoric is supportive) progress has been much slower. So the picture is mixed.

Capacity development will continue to be a critical activity for the next phase of SADPD. African Disabled People's Organisations lack the capacity to meet the needs and demands of their members. Their own disabilities mean they have often been excluded from opportunities to gain the experience and skills that are fundamental to the voluntary sector. These include skills in advocacy and lobbying for inclusion, in implementing projects or in creating awareness around human rights violations that face people with disabilities. Of the several hundred DPOs in Africa the Secretariat estimates that few have the capacity to respond to the needs of their members. Unfortunately, governments, NGOs and other stakeholders also lack this capacity. They also don't know how to design and implement disability policies and programmes – so capacity deficits exist on both sides. Capacity development is therefore critical - to build up the skills of DPOs, as well as to raise awareness amongst a range of development partners in how to respond to disabled people's needs and concerns.

Capacity development is time and people intensive. It requires funding in amounts proportionate to what receiving organisations have the ability to absorb, use effectively and report on. It is more about flexibility and continuity than large amounts of funding. SADPD therefore need donors that will stay with them for the long haul and will harmonise – and align - around their needs, rather than those of their head office.

Notes

People interviewed
Arne Nylund, Operations Manager, the Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, Cape Town, South Africa

Documents consulted
SADPD Report on Training of Trainers programme, Phase 1, Cape Town, 2007

SADPD Narrative Status Report, July-September 2007

Other news and articles on the SADPD web-site www.africandecade.org/ the-secretariat/**sadpd**

8   The Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled: Strengthening the evidence base to inform advocacy for disabled peoples' rights

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Key messages

1. Real country ownership means putting policy commitments into practice. A number of governments have impressive policies committing them to tackling discrimination against disabled people - and have recently signed the new UN convention. However, few disabled people are able to fully realise their rights - there is a huge gap between policy and practice.

2. Civil Society Organisations need policy-relevant evidence to back up their arguments. There is still a very weak evidence base to fully illustrate the discrimination faced by disabled people. If disabled people are to have strong enough voices in dialogue with decision makers, they are going to need solid evidence upon which to develop clear policy messages. Such evidence is also essential in order to establish baselines from which results can be measured.

3. Building the research capacity of advocacy organisations that represent excluded groups is an important means of strengthening their ability to dialogue with policy makers on an informed basis. Disabled Peoples' Organisations are rarely able to access the funding which would allow them to design and lead research on disability themselves. The new aid environment often encourages donors to support large international NGOs, rather than smaller national and regional organisations. The SAFOD Research Programme enables an advocacy organisation to design research which will directly inform its dialogue with policy makers.

Background

The Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) is a non-governmental human rights organisation based in Zimbabwe. Founded in 1986, SAFOD is an umbrella organisation for national Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs0 within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

SAFOD is an organisation run by – and for - disabled people. As well as supporting and strengthening DPOs, SAFOD is also the regional representative to the worldwide movement of people with disabilities, Disabled Peoples' International (DPI). It also leads a number of thematic disability programmes, for example on children and youth, HIV and AIDS and disabled women's empowerment.

Through its own advocacy work, and that of its member organisations, SAFOD promotes the inclusion of disabled people's rights in government policies, plans and programmes. However, while many countries have impressive policy and legal frameworks on disabled people's rights, there remains little improvement in the quality of disabled people's lives. A lack of evidence of the institutional barriers which restrict disabled people's access to services and their rights severely hinders efforts to translate policy statements into practice. It not only weakens the force of

arguments used to increase political will, it also makes it difficult to target services, develop detailed plans and to monitor change.

In addition to existing national legislation, the recent UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities represents an important statement of a country's commitment to promoting disabled peoples' rights. The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2006, and aims to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy human rights on an equal basis with others. To date, over 120 governments have signed the convention, including a large number of low and middle income countries. For these, countries, the challenge now is to ensure this international commitment translates into improved outcomes for disabled people.

Outline of support

Since 2000, DFID's Central Research Department (CRD) has funded programmes of research on disability and development. Until 2005, the major component of this work was the Disability Knowledge and Research (DKaR) programme, led by the University of East Anglia. Following on from this, DFID is now providing support for a planned five-year disability research programme led by SAFOD.

Unlike many other research programmes on disability, The SAFOD Research Programme (SRP) is being designed and led by disabled people themselves. The SRP aims to generate new research on disability and development issues, initially centered on two themes: education, and HIV/AIDS. With a heavy focus on poverty, the first phase of work will start with a policy audit of a number of southern African countries, and will go on to produce policy-relevant research to directly inform DPO advocacy activities.

The research themes were identified through a lengthy process of consultation with SAFOD's DPO members. This has ensured that the research questions respond to real gaps in existing knowledge and evidence, and are directly relevant to the challenges faced by DPOs. In addition, a review of existing literature has helped to ensure that the research programme is building on current knowledge. Both existing and new research will be housed within a new Disability Resource Centre, accessible to a range of DPOs, researchers and politicians.

Future impact

Although still in its first year, the SAFOD Research Programme has the potential to significantly strengthening the voices of disabled people in policy process throughout the southern Africa region. The evidence generated by the SRP has been specifically designed to feed into – and strengthen – the ongoing work of DPOs to engage with decision makers in order to influence future policies and plans. This stronger evidence base on disability has the potential to improve both internal and external accountability. It enables those inside government ministries, as well as members of parliament and civil society organizations to hold their own governments to account for commitments made. The baselines set in the initial research will also enable progress to be effectively monitored.

DFID's support to the SRP has an explicit focus on strengthening the capacity of DPOs to design, undertake and – most importantly – use research on disability to inform their work. At the same time, the SRP's ongoing communications strategy encourages DPOs to develop stronger relationships with a range of advocates for disabled people's rights, including members of government, parliament, and broader civil society.

Document reviewed:
SAFOD, 2007, SAFOD Research Programme Planning and Conceptualisation Report

9   Tanzania: Joint External Evaluation of the Health Sector

Key messages

1. Sectoral partnerships can achieve success in terms of the Paris principles of ownership, harmonisation and alignment without taking into account rights and equity perspectives. However, partnerships which fail to address rights and equity are unlikely to achieve the MDGs.

2. Mainstreaming rights and equity issues into country-led plans requires donors to play a long-term, influencing role and to support capacity building in government and civil society. Donor failure to show consistent high-level commitment to rights and equity can lead to a situation in which there is a trade-off between country ownership and action on these issues.

3. Establishing a steering group to oversee management of an evaluation, which is chaired by and includes government officials, can increase greater country ownership over the evaluation, which means that recommendations are more likely to be included in country strategies and policies.

4. Where a country is performing badly in relation to some aspects of rights and equity, including these issues in the TORs for a joint evaluation can lead to new momentum and strategies for action.

Background to harmonisation in Tanzania

Tanzania has a well established harmonisation process, begun in the 1990s, with the Helleiner Report, which recommended a process to improve relations between the Government of Tanzania (GoT) and development partners (DPs). Since then, development assistance has focused on implementing the PRS. In 2006, a Joint Assistance Strategy (JAST) put the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness into practice, through an agreed framework between the GoT and its 40 DPs. The JAST was led from the start by the GoT, and applies to all ministries within the GoT, and to all DPs. The core principles of the JAST are to strengthen national ownership, align aid with GoT priorities, reduce transaction costs and strengthen GoT accountability to DPs, Tanzanian institutions and citizens.

There have also been efforts towards improving aid effectiveness in the health sector. During the 1990s, the health sector in Tanzania performed poorly. In order to rectify this, the GoT and DPs set up the first Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) in 1999 and agreed that support to the health sector should take place within the framework of a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp). The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and seven donors[31] initially developed the SWAp, and agreed on a common arrangement for planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting processes. They also established a health basket fund providing funding for the health sector recurrent and development basket at both central and district level. As of August 2007, donors contributing to the health basket fund were Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Switzerland, UNFPA,

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[31] Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, World Bank

UNICEF and the World Bank. The second Health Sector Strategic Plan, 2003-2008, identifies significant achievements between MoHSW and donor relations since 1999 as a result of SWAp initiatives.

Developing the joint external evaluation of the health sector (JEEHS)

DANIDA initially proposed the idea of a joint donor health sector evaluation in 2004, however, this met with resistance from donors and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) who believed that as there were already joint reviews, there was no need for a joint evaluation. A year later a joint evaluation was again proposed, leading to more interest from DPs. In 2006 the MoF and DPs agreed it was the appropriate time to conduct a joint evaluation, as recommendations from the evaluation would be able to feed into the third HSSP 2009-15.

Six donors[32] together with the GoT agreed to fund the Joint External Evaluation of the Health Sector (JEEHS), to look at progress in the health sector from the period 1999-2006. A steering committee (SC), with overall responsibility for joint management and decision-making was established. The SC included representatives from sector ministries and embassies and was chaired by the Principal Secretary from the MoF, helping to build country ownership of the evaluation. DANIDA, which took responsibility for administration of the evaluation, contracted an international health consultant to develop the TORs. To broaden country ownership, she conducted wide consultations with GoT officials, civil society, donors and the private sector to ascertain which issues stakeholders wanted to be included as part of the evaluation. Across the board, stakeholders asked for gender equality and maternal mortality issues to be evaluated. While donors had worked on gender issues in Tanzania, there was a lack of coordinated, high-level donor commitment to addressing gender inequalities. On the government side, gender policies were present in health sector documents, but there was a general understanding that these were not being sufficiently translated into implementation. Some stakeholders felt that the MoHSW had a tendency to assume that as they focused on maternal and child health, this automatically meant that their strategies were gender sensitive. It was also thought that there was a lack of gender analysis capacity at the ministry level. Although stakeholders realised that the evaluation findings on gender equality and maternal mortality were likely to be negative, they saw the JEEHS as an opportunity to highlight the issues and make specific maternal mortality and gender equity interventions more visible in the forthcoming HSSP.

As a result of the consultant's consultations and subsequent discussions by the SC, TORs were developed and a group of eight international health and evaluation consultants commissioned to carry out the evaluation. The JEEHS evaluated the entire health sector, looking at the role and contributions of all stakeholders, including the GoT, civil society organisations, private sector, communities and donors. It focused on four main components, including relevance of strategies, programmes, plans and external support to achieving the MDGs and PRS health sector targets; achievements under health sector plans; achievements in access to services; and harmonisation. The comprehensive approach used by the evaluation, and the focus on aid effectiveness, led the JEEHS consultants to describe it as 'historic …(probably) the first ever sector evaluation which is fully in line with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness' (Evaluation report).

Evaluation results

The JEEHS found that the health sector SWAp had been successful in terms of strengthening national ownership, securing higher levels of both domestic and external funds, and delivering real improvements in terms of infant and child mortality and drug availability at health facilities. It was

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[32] Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland

also shown to have allowed more harmonisation and alignment through developing structures for formal dialogue.

However, with regard to gender equality, issues around equity of access and maternal health, the evaluation was significantly less positive. The JEEHS found that there was no analysis of gender equity issues in almost all of the strategies, policies, plans, guidelines, reports and review documents from the evaluation. Gender issues did not feature in Joint Annual Health Sector Reviews (JAHSR) discussion forums. Maternal mortality rates were found to be alarmingly high, at a ratio of 578 per 100,000 (WHO), with no measurable progress in terms of reduction. HIV/ AIDS programmes, health sector plans and programmes were not clearly directed to achieving maternal mortality targets. The evaluation further found that improvements in health service provision were not shared equitably and that the sector had not responded to address sources of unequal access. Although equity issues were a regular subject in JAHSR, the level of attention given to the issue by the MoHSW appeared to be low. In its six key recommendations, the evaluation includes the need for effective action to reduce maternal mortality and improve health services for deliveries and that improving equity of access to health services should be cross-cutting theme of the third HSSP.

Towards HSSP3

The third HSSP is currently being prepared and undergoing consultation. The extent to which the JEEHS recommendations are included in HSSP 3 depends on the extent to which the GoT and in particular the MoHSW felt a degree of ownership of the evaluation process. Currently DPs feel that there is not enough gender analysis in HSSP drafts, so will lobby for more to be included. However, DPs also feel constrained by the need to maintain a supportive, rather than leadership role. As one donor stated, the principles of the Paris Declaration mean that sometimes compromise is necessary in order to maintain country ownership. In the meantime, to accelerate the improvement of maternal health, the GoT and partners from NGOs, research, health professionals, and UN communities launched the Tanzania Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health in April 2007. This is funded by basket funding and is receiving increasing attention from Development Partners.

Notes

People interviewed

Gerard Howe, Team Leader, Equity and Rights Team, DFID

Sanne Olsen, Counsellor for Health , DANIDA Tanzania

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Government of Tanzania, 2003, Second Health Sector Strategic Plan 2003-2008,

Ifakara Health Regional Development Centre, Tanzania and Equinet, 2007, 'Equity and Health in Tanzania: Translating national goals into district realities': Equinet Discussion Paper 54

Institute for Health Sector Development, 2003, Mapping of Health Sector Wide Approaches, SIDA

10 The 'Common Fund': Supporting Civil Society in Nicaragua

Key messages

1. Donors can effectively support and strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations if they are able to successfully harmonise their efforts.

2. The key to effective harmonisation is having clear policies and procedures for all stakeholders to adhere to and clear communication channels.

3. Changes in government can have a significant impact on ongoing work which aims to address rights and equity issues.

Background

In Nicaragua, the international community worked closely with the previous government to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and a National Development Strategy that are used to guide national development priorities and donor support to these priorities. Since the election of a new government in 2006, there has been considerable uncertainty about the implementation of the current PRS. However, the international community continues to coordinate its actions in terms of interventions in support of the PRS and a number of key donors[33] show a strong commitment to gender equality and human rights. Nicaragua ratified the Convention of Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and good progress has been made in carrying forward its commitments although there have been some recent setbacks[34]. Civil society organisations (CSOs) are particularly strong in Nicaragua and the large majority of them work to promote gender equality as there are high levels of discrimination against, and violence towards, women in Nicaraguan society[35].

It was within this context that the 'Common Fund in Support of Civil Society for Democratic Governance' was launched in February 2006. The 'Common Fund' is a multi-donor initiative with the following aims:

- to support Nicaraguan civil society to contribute to democratic governance (as a key factor for poverty reduction);
- to improve the coordination and effectiveness of international support to CSOs in Nicaragua; and

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[33] Particularly UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden

[34] Such as the recent decision of the National Assembly to penalize therapeutic abortion, which was previously legal according to the Penal Code of 1893.

[35] According to an investigation carried out on behalf of the Inter-American Development Bank, 70% of women in Chile and Nicaragua had experienced actual violence at some point in their lives, while 33% had experienced violence in the last year. As a result, violence against women and children in Nicaragua has become a public health problem.

- to support and build the capacity of CSOs in order to increase capacity for dialogue between CSOs and the government.

The Fund was established, and is funded, by the Danish Royal Embassy, the Netherlands Embassy, the Swiss Development Agency (COSUDE), DFID, the Norwegian Embassy, the Embassy of Luxembourg and the Finnish Embassy. It is managed by a Technical Secretariat composed of a consortium of international NGOs. It is lead by Oxfam UK and includes the Dutch Service for International Development (SNV), the Irish Catholic Agency (TROCAIRE) and Oxfam-Novib Holland. The Fund's main role is to allocate and channel funding (5.5 million USD for the period 2006 to 2008[36]) through a transparent tendering system which is open to all Nicaraguan CSOs. It also aims to build weaker CSOs' capacity, promote dialogue with public actors and provide CSOs with an arena for sharing experience and good practice and debating and coordinating their interventions.

There have so far been two annual 'calls for proposals' which have resulted in 57 projects throughout Nicaragua being funded, to a total value of 4.6 million USD. The main initiatives which the Fund will support are those which relate to subjects such as social auditing, accountability and control of corruption, public opinion creation, inclusive design and implementation of public policies, quality in the provision of public services, access to justice for excluded groups, enforcement of civil and political rights and the absence of violence. Participation and social and gender equality are considered as cross-cutting issues in all proposals and a proportion of the funds are allocated specifically to address these issues. For example the CSO Solidez, which works with disabled people, has received support from the Fund to work on proposals to present to local government to address the issues which their beneficiaries consider to be a priority.

Paris processes

The 'Common Fund' is a tangible example of the international community trying to promote greater **harmonisation** and **alignment** of international cooperation when working with civil society, in order to promote rights and equity objectives, particularly gender equality. The Fund provides a replicable model of collaborative working between donors themselves and between donors and CSOs. It is rare for a group of donors to work together and adhere to the same policies and procedures, with the shared goal of supporting civil society. Donors are not just contributing financial resources but are also providing information, knowledge and contacts and helping to strengthen the concept of cooperation between government, donors and civil society. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of mutual mistrust between the current government and civil society and the government has chosen to set up its own dialogue mechanisms with chosen (pro-government) civil society[37] organisations rather than use those which had been developed under the previous government. The current government will not stop the Fund from operating since it recognises the high levels of donor and international agency support the Fund receives. However, the government is reluctant to support any non-government established initiatives which are based on collaboration with civil society and therefore will not enter into dialogue with the technical secretariat. As a result, rather than trying to establish direct dialogue with the government, the secretariat is attempting to support local mechanisms for dialogue between CSOs and the government.

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[36] This is used to fund both small projects (lasting less than a year) of up to 10,000 USD and large projects of up to 50,000 USD per year up to 3 years.

[37] In the form of Councils for Citizen Participation (CPCs), established by government decree

What has happened as a result?

Whilst it is too soon to see or measure the actual impact on gender and exclusion which the Fund is having, the main achievement of the Fund to date is its capacity strengthening of CSOs[38]. The Fund is actively supporting two national CSO networks and two local CSO networks, as well as several individual CSOs, by providing them with workshops, exchange visits and opportunities to share best practice.

Several factors have contributed to the success to date of the Fund. The donors take an active role and interest in the progress of the Fund and the consortium of NGOs brings different strengths and expertise to the work of the Fund. The Fund has very clear, documented procedures and ways of working which means that all stakeholders know how to operate and what to expect. There are also good communication channels, such as regular meetings, between the consortium of NGOs, the technical secretariat and the donors. Rather than just waiting for direction from the donors, the technical secretariat takes the initiative to make suggestions to the donors about how the Fund could be improved or proposes potential solutions to problems faced by the Fund. Finally, the openness and transparency of the Fund's bidding processes have enabled the technical secretariat to establish a relationship of trust and respect with the CSOs with which they are working. CSOs which apply to the Fund generally accept the secretariat's choice of projects to fund once they are provided with clear rationale and also accept the technical recommendations made to them.

The main challenge currently faced by the Fund is the lack of capacity of the technical secretariat to meet all the demands of the programme, particularly as it grows. This issue is being discussed with the consortium. An external donor audit and evaluation of the programme is taking place, with a view to reviewing and redesigning it to be more effective in future. Lack of staff capacity is one of the areas which will be addressed. Another issue to be analysed in this review is the Fund's role in supporting dialogue between the government and CSOs[39]. This has been identified as a main priority for 2008 and 2009 as it is believed that the Fund has an important role to play in this area, to increase harmonisation between government, CSOs and donors.

Notes
People interviewed
Rafael Henriquez Garcia, Head of Oxfam UK in Nicaragua

Matilde Neret, Social Development Adviser, DFID Nicaragua

Documents reviewed
All documents on the Common Fund website: www.fondogobernabilidad.org.ni

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[38] Conversation with Rafael Henriquez Garcia, Head of Oxfam UK in Nicaragua

[39] Conversation with Rafael Henriquez Garcia, Head of Oxfam UK in Nicaragua

11 Zimbabwe: Gender Scoping Study

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Key messages

1. Gender and equity issues can provide an entry-point for co-ordination in a difficult political climate. Gender is an example of an issue that provided a catalyst for renewed donor co-ordination. However, political context cannot be ignored or avoided.

2. Donor co-ordination depends on human relations - technical instruments such as SWAps or the PRSP may provide a mechanism around which donors can co-ordinate - but the absence of these instruments does not preclude co-ordination (and their presence does not guarantee it)

3. Civil society capacity building in 'fragile states' is an essential long term strategy. However, donor definitions of what constitutes humanitarian aid and restrictions on multi-year funding in humanitarian crises can make this difficult.

4. Where donors are unable to support government ministries due to political constraints, UN agencies may be relatively well-placed to take on a coordinating role for addressing rights and equity issues. These agencies are able to play a non-political role and bring together donors, government and civil society.

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Background: Donor support to Zimbabwe

Since the 1990s, donor funding to Zimbabwe has significantly reduced due to growing international criticism of their human rights violations. None of the donors give directly to the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), but rather provide humanitarian aid, support to UN agencies and civil society organisations. Donors have different interpretations of humanitarian aid which can range from annual food aid (USAID) to multi-year inputs to address root causes of problems (DFID). Donors do however support GoZ activities through UN agencies where these are seen to be effective – for example supporting the National Strategy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). Donor coordination is very effective, and all donors are committed to Paris principles, but formal institutional channels, such as PRSP or SWAps do not exist in Zimbabwe. There is greater coordination in areas that are less politically contentious areas such as HIV/AIDS, orphans, gender and disability. Even these tend to become politicised as soon as donor engagement begins, and particularly so when decisions have to be made about engaging with the GoZ.

Coordination around gender

Zimbabwe has ratified CEDAW, CCPR, CERD, CRC, and ESCR. These have been followed up in national legislation by the National Gender Policy and other progressive policies like the Domestic Violence Act. The GoZ National Gender Policy was adopted in 2001. DFID regards the policy as adopted in 2001 as sound in substance but questions the implementation plan adopted in 2007, including whether the process by which it was developed was genuinely participatory. DFID and other donors are unable to support certain elements, such capacity building for gender champions in different ministries.

The UNIFEM office was established in Zimbabwe in 2006. Initially it was keen to understand what was going on in the gender sector in Zimbabwe. The key message was that women's

organisations were doing a lot of work, but there was a lack of coordination. This was making it difficult to gain a clear perspective of what different organisations were doing, and what levels of support were being provided. This lack of clarity makes it difficult for bilateral donors to identify gaps which might exist and the type of support needed. The Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development have a mandate to play a coordinating role, but concentrate more on running small scale projects. In the absence of strong national machinery, UNIFEM has taken on a coordinating role between GoZ, donors, and civil society.

DFID and UNIFEM saw the need for better coordination and held a meeting with 12 donors working on gender in October 2006. The meeting recommended that a good starting point would be to conduct gender scoping study. DFID prepared the TORs, which were agreed by the rest of the group, and a Steering Group (SG) was set up consisting of donors willing to fund and resource the study, namely DFID, SIDA, CIDA, EC and USAID. UNIFEM was not part of the SG for the study as one of the objectives of the study was to examine UNIFEM's capacity. UNIFEM only provided technical support.

The Gender Scoping Study found that there is no "gender sector" in Zimbabwe, although there is a women's movement. It found that there was limited coordination at all levels, and implementation of gender equality laws and policies has been hampered by inadequate and volatile funding and half-hearted commitments. The sector has experienced a steady decline even from traditional bilateral gender donors, affecting the quality and scale of gender programmes. The provision of donor funds to local civic organisations has gradually declined from around US$ 2.6 million to just over US$1million over the past three years. Most civil society work on gender is being conducted in the context of the National Gender Policy and has contributed positively to achieving the goals.

Lack of co-ordination on gender issues was probably a result of the humanitarian aid approach. Gender and equity issues tend to be dropped off the agenda and the short term year-on-year funding is not conducive to the type of sustained long-term engagement required on gender. Donors are highly co-ordinated in the traditional humanitarian areas, such as on food aid, HIV/AIDS and OVCs, but gender tends to be left off the agenda. Additionally, the capacity of women's civil society groups has decreased over time due to large numbers of people leaving Zimbabwe for better jobs in other countries.

The process of carrying out the study reinvigorated co-ordination around the issue. Before the study there wasn't much joint donor action on gender. The study highlighted the need for strategic action, and as a result, DFID and the EC are now supporting on-going work to establish a Strategic Plan for Gender. The Plan is a step towards greater effectiveness and delivery. The inception phase has begun and UNIFEM and the Women's Coalition have appointed a coordinator for the process. Preparations on the plan will take about 6 months. DFID is now funding a consultant to work through UNIFEM to carry out a participatory exercise to identify the key priorities that the programme should be addressing.

Other joint donor work

Apart from gender, there is evidence of ways in which work on other social issues have led to the development of more effective coordinating mechanisms and provided a 'soft' entry point for donor action. Donors are optimistic of the political conditions, and are preparing to re-engage with the GoZ. Donors have long expressed a desire for a more harmonized approach to strategic analysis. Zimbabwe Multi-Donor Trust Fund (Zim-MDTF) is being established and formalised to support analytical work in preparation for a future transition and recovery scenario. The Zim-MDTF will be administered by the World Bank and managed through a Policy Committee made up of the WB and Heads of Agencies. Under the Policy Committee, there would be Technical Review Groups focusing on critical areas, such economics, social protection, agriculture and infrastructure. Some

groups have already been established, such as the Social Protection Technical Review Group. Its members include EC, bilateral donors, and UN agencies and it is chaired by the World Bank. The group seeks to raise understanding on social protection as well as overseeing analytical work particularly focused on the role social protection can play in mitigating the worst effects of economic adjustment.

In the area of disability, DFID has been working proactively to engage with Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs). It recently commissioned a disability scoping study, which arose from the review of the Protracted Relief Programme. This showed that although civil society partners were using disability as a targeting criteria disabled people were not showing up as beneficiaries of the programmes. The study was carried out by disabled researchers to provide a summary analysis of the situation of disabled people in Zimbabwe and involved wide-scale consultation with DPOs and mainstream NGOs. Other donors (EC, USAID) have expressed an interested in conducting coordinated work on disability. Weak capacity amongst DPOs was identified as a critical constraint in taking forward work on disability. A rapid consultation and scoping exercise is currently being undertaken with DPOs and interested donors to assess strategic DPO capacity building needs and identify funding opportunities existing in current and planned donor programming.

Coordination under fragile conditions

Coordination in Zimbabwe requires a certain level of trust, as work is conducted in a difficult and complicated context. However, UNIFEM believes that partners have gone out of their way to be tolerant and to establish good working relations. This coordinated work on gender and other social issues is setting the essential groundwork for future concentrated engagements by donors in Zimbabwe.

Notes

People Interviewed

Philippa Thomas, DFID Social Development Adviser, Zimbabwe

Eunice Njovana, UNIFEM Zimbabwe

Documents Reviewed

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GoZ, 2004, National Plan of Action for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children

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Draft Terms of Reference, Social Protection Technical Review Group

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