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DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

Working Party on Gender Equality

Reference Document

**REACHING THE GOALS IN THE S-21: GENDER EQUALITY AND
EDUCATION Volume I**

(Note submitted by Sweden)

This reference document was prepared by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), with Janne Lexow as Team Leader and Annelene Rør as Team Member. This is one of a series of three reference documents (Volume I - Education; Volume II - Health; Volume III - Environment), available in English only. It is submitted to the Working Party on Gender Equality for DERESTRICTION as a reference document of the Working Party at its 18th meeting on 8-9 February 1999. The Synthesis of the series is also available in French [DCD/DAC/WID(99)1].

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGCD	Administration Générale de la Coopération au Développement, Belgium
APPEP	Andra Pradesh Primary School Project, India
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BESIPI	The Ghana Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme, India
EFA	The World Declaration on Education for All
FAWE	The Forum for African Women Educationalists
FLS	Forward Looking Strategies (from the Third World Conference on Women, Nairobi, 1985)
GTZ	German Technical Co-operation
Logframe	Logical Framework Approach
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PfA	Platform for Action (from the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995)
Sida	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations' Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WID	Women in Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This study, commissioned by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) on behalf of the DAC Working Party on Gender Equality, illustrates how a selection of DAC Member organisations are promoting a gender equality perspective in the field of education. It identifies best practices, particularly in relation to practical methodologies and tools. It also highlights potentials and opportunities as well as gaps and constraints. This study (or inventory) is intended to support agencies' implementation of the education goals reaffirmed in the OECD DAC policy statement, *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation* (1996).

2. The study pulls out key findings and good practices from eight bilateral agencies and one multilateral agency (UNESCO). One in-country study of donors' efforts and co-ordination was carried out in Kenya. Findings from all ten sub-reports are discussed as they relate to the global framework of commitments to education, education policies within agencies, and project and programme strategies to address education, including an interesting presentation of a holistic programme approach. Discussions also address institutional capacity to promote gender equality. Examples of good practice are presented throughout the report and concrete factors that support gender equality perspectives are analysed.

3. The main good practice principles identified by this study are: a) adopt a holistic approach to education at the programme-sector level; b) simultaneously address quality of education and universal access to it.

Enabling factors

These principles are enabled by actions which:

- support multiple delivery systems;
- increase parental and community understanding of education, through participatory approaches;
- base initiatives on local circumstances and identified preferences, which are disaggregated by sex and social grouping;
- develop relevant curricula which meet students' gender-specific and other needs;
- improve the ability of teachers, and change criteria to increase the number of female teachers;
- make schools more accessible;
- lower costs to parents;
- establish equitable scholarship programmes, including for secondary and tertiary education;
- promote decentralisation in decision-making processes, administration and management of education programmes, and call for women's participation in them.

4. Several factors are identified that appear to facilitate the mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective in agency operations. Enabling factors that reinforce institutional capacity to effectively use gender analysis, including through incentives schemes, are identified as follows: ensuring a minimum number of available gender specialist staff with knowledge on education (at least until the competence of education staff is sufficiently built up); securing realistic accountability and monitoring mechanisms; encouraging education staff to use available tools and methodologies, such as education-specific gender analysis or the “Framework for Girls’ Education” (UNICEF, 1997).

5. The study notes that some gaps and constraints are common to many agencies. These relate to: a) formulating policies which are sufficiently focused on basic education and which apply a holistic approach to the entire education effort, as opposed to a project-by-project approach; b) ensuring that practice and performance follow decisions made at the policy level; c) listening to, and working in tandem with, partner country actors.

Generic lessons on mainstreaming gender equality

6. The approach towards increased partnership, which emphasises the partner country’s own responsibility, has been accompanied by a restructuring in many agencies. This reorganisation may provide incentives for further encouraging a partnership approach. At the same time, headquarters will have new roles and responsibilities, and a new relationship with both the field offices and the partner countries. As a result, institutionalising gender mainstreaming strategies must respond to changing management systems. Improving accountability for gender equality, including expenditures, remains a challenge.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

7. The OECD DAC *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation* (21st Century Strategy) was adopted at the 1996 High Level meeting. As part of an effort to facilitate implementation of the Strategy, and to strengthen its focus on gender equality, the DAC Working Party on Gender Equality agreed to carry out inventories on mainstreaming gender equality in some of the key areas identified by the Strategy: poverty, health, education and environmentally sustainable development.

8. Sweden undertook to work on the environment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and education. For each of these areas, an initial inventory was carried out through a questionnaire distributed in early 1997 by the Gender Equality Group of the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida). The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Danish International Development Assistance (Danida), the German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) responded to the initial inventory on education. After an analysis of responses to these brief questionnaires, teams were commissioned to continue work on the inventories for each area. Sida was responsible for selecting agencies to participate in the inventory. For the inventory on mainstreaming gender equality in education, eight bilateral and one multilateral agency volunteered to participate: the Administration Générale de la Coopération au Développement (AGCD), Belgium; AusAID; the Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom; the German Technical Co-operation (GTZ); the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD); the Development Co-operation Division within the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZODA); Sida (Sweden); and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, one in-country study of donor efforts and co-ordination was carried out in Kenya.

9. The agencies were divided between separate team members who had individual contracts with Sida. Karin Hyde was responsible for the in-country study during which the agency interviews were supplemented by interviews with officials from the Ministry of Education as well as from three NGOs implementing projects in Kenya. Juliet Hunt did the inventories on NZODA and AusAID, Nicola Swainson did the inventories on AGCD, GTZ and DFID, Nelly Stromquist did the inventories on UNICEF, Vibecke Kubberud and Annelene Rør did the inventories on NORAD and Sida. Janne Lexow was the team leader and responsible for the overall report.

10. The overall report is based on inputs from the sub-reports which in turn are based on inputs from the various agencies. Consequently, it was not possible to explore matters further or bring into the discussions issues that were not dealt with in the sub-reports. Examples of positive experiences are annexed to this main report.

2. Objective

11. According to the Terms of Reference for the Inventory, the objective is:

..to document the efforts made by bilateral development co-operation agencies to mainstream gender equality perspectives in their work on education – both policy development and dialogue as well as project and programme development. Best practices should be identified and illustrated, particularly in relation to practical methodologies and tools. Potentials/opportunities as well as constraints should be identified.

3. Methodology

12. The team met twice, once to agree on formats for sub-reports and questions to be considered during interviews, the second time for summing up the sub-reports and agreeing on the content and format for this overall report. According to the Terms of Reference, sub-reports are for internal use by participating agencies.

13. Staff at headquarters in the selected agencies were interviewed according to the format jointly agreed upon by the team. The interviews were carried out within a time-frame of only a few days, so that the outcome should be considered only as rapid institutional appraisals. The interviews were followed up by document studies and reviews, and occasionally telephone calls.

14. “Best practices” turned into positive examples or experiences during the course of the inventory, because these terms were more accurate and less ambitious to describe agencies’ projects and programmes and because some agencies did not feel comfortable with identifying best practices if these had not been evaluated for their broader effects and impacts.

15. The nature of this inventory – limited to agency headquarters’ visits – pre-empted the possibility of verification of processes and outcomes at the local level. On the other hand, the case study at the field level focusing on Kenya shows how projects and programmes are implemented in a partner country.

16. This overall report sums up trends rather than attempts to give a full account of agencies’ activities. The nature of this inventory ruled out the possibility for any reality check at project level. Thus, processes, design features and outcomes described in this report could not be validated. The projects identified by the agencies as positive experiences are described in appendices to this report.

II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK AND COMMITMENTS

1. Education for all

17. In The World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) which emerged from the Jomtien conference in 1990, both developing country governments and donor agencies committed themselves to the goal of ensuring basic education for all children by the year 2000. The concept of basic education included early childhood education, primary schooling, non-formal literacy programmes for youth and adults including vocational training.

The most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated.¹

18. The EFA goals were not only about expanding educational opportunities but also about improving educational quality and ensuring greater equity in the distribution of education resources. The Framework for Action calls for education programmes for women and girls. These programmes should be designed to eliminate the social and cultural barriers which have discouraged or even excluded women and girls from benefits of regular education programmes, as well as to promote equal opportunities in all aspects of their lives.²

2. Reviewing progress

19. The mid-term review conference of the EFA goals was held in Amman, Jordan in 1996, with support from the same agencies who supported the conference in Jomtien – UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP and the World Bank. Conference documents note that despite progress in some areas, the closing of the gender gap seems to be the area where the least progress has been made. The ratio of girls to boys enrolled, the relative rates of drop-out and of continuation to higher levels of education, all of which are generally to the disadvantage of girls, have remained little changed. The Amman review also noted that among the 885 million illiterates in the world, more than two-thirds are women.

3. The UN Conferences for Women

20. The UN Conferences for Women in Nairobi in 1985 and in Beijing in 1995, have been important for the identifications of strategies and policies to improve the condition of women in a wide range of social, political, economic and cultural dimensions. Both the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (FLS-1985) and the Platform for Action agreed upon in Beijing (PfA-1995) make recommendations regarding education which governments are committed to implementing.

¹ World Declaration on Education for All, Article 3, para 3.

² Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, Article 3.3e.

21. The FLS recommend a broad range of initiatives regarding education for women, such as increasing the number/skills of female teachers, removing sex stereotyping, instituting measures to increase girls' participation, and retention in school and vocational schooling for adults.

22. The PfA has a clear focus on gender equality and calls for the mainstreaming of gender issues as the main strategy.

Mainstreaming is the overall strategy adopted in Beijing to support the goal of gender equality. A mainstreaming strategy has two major aspects:

- *the integration of gender equality concerns into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programmes and projects;*
- *initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and participate in decision-making across all development issues.*

A mainstreaming strategy does not preclude initiatives specifically directed toward women. Similarly, initiatives targeted directly to men are necessary and complementary as long as they promote gender equality.”³

23. The Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 202, which specifically refers to education, strongly calls for governments' commitment:

“... Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively.

The Platform for Action calls for Strategic objectives to:

- Ensure equal access to education (Strategic objective B.1.)
- Eradicate illiteracy among women (Strategic objective B.2.)
- Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education (Strategic objective B.3.)
- Develop non-discriminatory education and training (Strategic objective B.4.)
- Allocate sufficient resources for, and monitor the implementation of, educational reforms (Strategic objective B.5.)
- Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women (Strategic objective B.6.)

24. The PfA education section also gives attention to issues such as information on sexual health and reproduction, violence against women and legal literacy. The importance of equal access to educational opportunities is explicit in the PfA which also gives attention to the needs of special sub-groups, such as adolescents and young mothers as well as the strategic objective to eradicate illiteracy among women. It calls for the elimination of gender stereotyping in the curriculum.

³ DAC Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation, OECD 1998, p.15.

4. OECD DAC *Shaping the 21st Century Strategy*

25. The OECD DAC *Shaping the 21st Century Strategy* (1966) builds further on the objectives set out at the Jomtien Conference, which were endorsed by the 1995 Copenhagen Summit on Social Development and also by the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. DAC Members committed themselves to substantial progress in social development, including primary education and gender equality. There should be universal primary education in all countries by 2015. The attainment of basic literacy and numeracy skills is highlighted as the most significant factor in reducing poverty. Progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women should be demonstrated by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005.

5. DAC *Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation*

26. The *DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation* (1998) state “*Education is critical to the ability to participate fully in social, economic and political life and to the development of society as a whole. The educational disparities between women and men and girls and boys are important development problems. Lower rates of literacy, school attendance and educational attainment among women place limits on individual women and constrain societal productivity and progress. DAC Members can support gender equality and women's empowerment in the education sector through, for example:*

- assisting governments to formulate and implement strategies to increase the participation of girls at primary and higher levels, and enabling governments to maintain investments in these areas in the context of economic reform and structural adjustment;
- supporting the development of curriculum and educational materials that promote positive attitudes about women, the human rights of women, and equal partnerships between women and men. Education is critical to the ability to participate fully in social, economic and political life and to the development of society as a whole. The educational disparities between women and men and boys and girls are important development problems. Lower rates of literacy, school attendance and educational attainment among women place limits on individual women and constrain societal productivity and progress.” (p.26)

III. EDUCATION POLICIES AT AGENCY LEVEL

27. The global commitments referred to above represent guiding and even binding principles for development agencies as well as governments. Education policies at agency level have all been more or less influenced by these principles.

1. Agency priorities in the education sector

28. Basic education has become a priority area for support to the education sector in all agencies, although this is not always reflected in education policies. Those who do have formal education policies such as AGCD, AusAID, DFID, GTZ, NORAD, Sida and UNICEF refer to the EFA goals and the need to support basic education. The focus on basic education does not mean that all agencies have shifted their entire focus to this level. Some agencies continue to prioritise higher level education while also including the basic level. AGCD, AusAID and NZODA are for instance balancing the former predominant support to tertiary education with the policy shift to basic education. For example, NZODA has a commitment to basic education in its key strategies, no explicit reference to basic education in its education policy, but has for some time supported institutional strengthening at primary and secondary levels.

29. Some agencies put more emphasis on some components of basic education than others. There is a tendency to focus on investments to strengthen the formal primary education sub-sector rather than the wider concept of basic education.

30. Literacy and non-formal training receive some donor attention, but can hardly be said to be prominent in agencies' policies on education. In agencies' gender policies, on the other hand, literacy and non-formal training receive greater attention. However, there appears to be scope for further linkage between the policies on gender and education. Whenever those non-formal and informal educational systems are created, it is also important to ensure that linkages are made to the formal system of education and employment opportunities.

31. Tertiary and higher secondary levels are given high priority in some agencies such as AGCD, AusAID, NORAD and NZODA. Policies on scholarships at these levels may incorporate references to the need for promoting female candidates. They are often accompanied by targets for female participation. NORAD for example has for years promoted a 50 per cent female share of the participants for Masters Programmes in Norway. Both AusAID and NZODA have also made significant progress towards achieving gender balance across all scholarship programmes.

2. Quality issues

32. The Jomtien conference has produced wide-ranging policy changes by drawing attention to quality in education and not merely access. Sida, which has been supporting the education sector for many years, has gone a long way to defining the concept of quality to relate to curriculum development, teacher training and provision of text-books, just to mention a few. In practice, most of the agencies have also focused on these aspects for some years, although some are still in the process of developing a new conceptual framework for defining quality in education. Pedagogical methods and girl-friendly classroom

interaction also need to be addressed. Most agencies are aware of this but, unfortunately, have relatively few examples of such activities in practice. However, it is generally accepted that quality is to be identified in conjunction with a set of factors related to content relevance, teacher training, and availability of teaching materials. School management and administration have also increasingly been highlighted as central elements in quality improvements by several agencies such as AusAID, DFID, GTZ and NZODA.

33. Despite the strong focus on quality improvements, references to gender issues in education policies are more often explicitly focused on increasing access and improving participation rates than on improving quality. An illustrative example is the *21st Century Strategy* itself which highlights the participation of girls and women in primary education as the overall objective for support to the sector. Quality in terms of producing girl-friendly schooling environments and gender-sensitive content and educational environments is usually unattended to.

3. Gender mainstreaming

34. The Beijing conference's adoption of gender mainstreaming as a strategy is increasingly mirrored in education sector policies. The concept is powerful but also seems to be problematic because the use of the concept is not always accompanied by clear definitions of what it means. There are many possible definitions of the mainstreaming concept. The mainstreaming strategy adopted by governments in Beijing emphasises strongly the inter-relationship between institutional components (the organisations, people making decisions, programming and planning) and peoples' rights to influence mainstreaming in their own countries. For a development co-operation agency, a mainstreaming strategy will be targeted both towards development co-operation programmes and development co-operation agencies themselves. The main goal of a mainstreaming strategy in this context is progress towards gender equality in developing countries, although it is realised that there are many factors outside the influence of development co-operation which will influence this.

35. Mainstreaming in education projects implies more than just ensuring equal numbers of women and men, girls and boys in the education system. It also involves policy changes and changes in institutions so that they support gender equality. Thus, mainstreaming will imply bringing new dimensions into the education system which will most likely require profound changes in education programme philosophies, management styles and operational strategies at field levels. Women will not disappear in a mainstreaming strategy. On the contrary, if it is well conceived and implemented, and if there is a clear differentiation between goals and means, then women's needs and interests remain at the forefront.⁴

36. However, the various sub-reports show that there is confusion among agency staff working within the field of education regarding the concept "mainstreaming". Some have interpreted the concept in a way that *de facto* means "gender-neutrality". This gender neutrality tends to make girls and women invisible in project documents and programming. Others seem to be of the opinion that women-specific initiatives do not fit into a mainstreaming strategy. It is, however, clear that the Beijing commitments are open for women-specific projects that emphasize women's empowerment and enable them to voice their own interests. The type of women-specific projects which would be inconsistent with a mainstreaming strategy are those which support isolated women's projects that are not part of a coherent strategy aimed at gender equality. In education and socio-cultural conditions, parents tend to value boys' schooling higher than girls'. In some societies, there will be a need to support separate and girl-specific components which, in the long run, might empower women so that they can eventually participate in society on a par with men. This is not opposed to the mainstreaming commitments adopted by governments in Beijing.

⁴ Woroniuk "Moving the Mainstream", 1996.

IV. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EDUCATION

37. Various development agencies make use of different strategies in their attempt to improve gender mainstreaming in education. Within the approach to education, the education of girls at primary level has received special attention. This is based on two convictions: (i) that access to quality education is a fundamental human right which has been disproportionately denied to girls, and (ii) that the education of girls results in development impacts which benefit society as a whole.

1. Project strategies

38. Most donors promote attention to gender issues in the education sector through projects and similar arrangements using either one, or a combination of, the following strategies.

a) *Making schools more accessible*

39. **Reducing the distance** to school will particularly encourage girls' enrolment. Girls' safety and social reputation are less at risk when schools are closer to communities. Schools must respond to cultural expectations. Governments and donor agencies are increasingly responding to this problem by contributing to the construction of so-called community schools and satellite schools in local communities. These schools are often constructed with the 6-10-year age group in mind.



In the Primary Community Schools Project supported by DFID in Malawi continuous community involvement, dialogue with partners and training workshops have all contributed to a change from the original project concept where gender issues were not central, to an implementation approach which takes gender into account in all the main project strategies from the selection of sites for the schools to classroom practices. In other words, gender was more fully integrated in the implementation process rather than at the design stage.

40. Often, in developing countries, parents may be more concerned about **separate facilities** and **closed latrines** than about desks and chairs. In some communities, especially in countries where segregation is pervasive, the only opportunity girls might have to attain an education is by attending an all-girls school.

b) *Improving the quality of teachers*

41. Teacher education is a concern for governments and donor agencies alike. Several agencies attempt to improve the quality of teaching staff through both establishing minimum quotas for female teachers and incorporation of gender awareness into the teacher training curriculum. In-service training of teachers seems to be a useful approach for many donors.



The AGCD supports a project to provide in-service training for teachers in pedagogical secondary schools in seven Provinces of North-Vietnam. The government and AGCD jointly agreed on the importance of upgrading teachers and targeting women from underprivileged ethnic minorities in the Northern Province. At least 80 % of the trainees will be women. Courses have been designed to make it easier for professional female teachers from remote northern provinces to participate in the Masters Programme. Courses will consist of three six month periods instead of the usual two years of full time study. Implementation is to be anchored in the local school structures.

42. Some programmes involve conducting teacher awareness workshops to sensitise school teachers to harmful classroom interaction for girls. Even though it is difficult to establish causality between female teachers and female enrolment, female teachers in the classroom are perceived to benefit girls' education in several ways. Because of the limited numbers of women who meet the standard teaching requirements, the supply of female teachers may increasingly require **enlarging the pool of women who are eligible to teach**. Active local recruitment programmes are essential, especially in rural areas. Bringing **training closer to the communities** often attracts women to the teaching profession. In addition, **incentive programmes** may be used to attract women who might not consider teaching because of cultural constraints on female mobility, lack of housing or family responsibilities. There are a number of project examples from agencies which use such strategies.

c) *Lowering the costs to parents*

43. In many societies, parents consider schooling to be less affordable for girls than for boys. The direct costs (e.g. for tuition and textbooks), hidden costs (e.g. for required uniforms and supplies) and opportunity costs (e.g. for girls' household tasks, sibling care and agriculture and marketing responsibilities) of educating girls are perceived as being greater than the benefits. Consequently, one approach needed to increase demand for girls' education is in essence an economic one.



One of the most effective methods of reducing the direct, hidden and opportunity costs is through stipends to female students. The NORAD funded Female Secondary School Education Stipend project in Bangladesh has undoubtedly contributed to progress that can be seen not only in girls' participation rates but also in the overall enrolment of boys. The project has contributed to increased awareness of the importance of schooling for all. By carefully analysing the effects of the stipend contribution, this project could provide evidence that women-specific intervention to alleviate some of the economic constraints that prevented families to send their daughters to school may also have positive effects on boys' enrolment. This has contributed greatly to the project's continuous expansion.

44. So far many of the projects and programmes to address these issues are still in a pilot stage, but the impact seems promising. Scholarship programmes cover a combination of certain costs, such as tuition, textbooks, uniforms and boarding facilities. Another efficient approach is to **provide textbooks, uniforms**, and other basic items required by the schools. In order to free girls from some of their household chores and make them able to attend school, there are some projects which offer **pre-school or day-care facilities**, but such projects are still not usually part of agencies' main strategies..

d) Developing relevant curricula

45. A curriculum that is relevant to girls' lives will attract and benefit them. That is, a curriculum that links education with agriculture and productive activities, addresses health and nutrition issues, employs the local language, seeks out the potential in the given setting and simultaneously eliminates gender stereotyping.



NZODA supports several projects in the Pacific region in Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Vanuatu and Samoa which involve the production of reading materials or curriculum review. In each of these projects, there are systems established to review how women and girls are portrayed, and to ensure balance in both text and illustration. In some cases, representatives from women's groups are included on curriculum and review committees.



The Sida funded programme in Bolivia has demonstrated positive strategies to effect profound changes in the curriculum. Textbooks and teaching materials have become culturally- and gender- sensitive. Care has been taken to show active boys and girls in similar situations in all books. All material and books are systematically scrutinised according to gender-sensitive criteria before distribution take place.

e) Increasing parental and community understanding through participatory approaches

46. In many communities, there is a need for **change of attitudes** towards girls' education. In such situations, harnessing the support of influential community members and religious leaders can encourage parents to send both boys and girls to school.



GTZ recognises the importance of flexible dialogue with local community and government partners in their implementation strategies. In GTZ funded projects in Ethiopia and Pakistan, it has been clear that gender had to be taken up as a local initiative rather than being imposed from the outside. The initial informal dialogue seems to have paved the way for more formal systems of incorporating aspects of gender planning into the school administration .



Participatory methods permeate all strategies in the Sida supported Lok Jumbish Primary Education Project in India. This project links educational activities to other aspects of society such as reproductive health, democracy and empowerment. From the very outset of the project, villagers have been actively involved in design and management of the project and undoubtedly many of the innovative strategies that have emerged from this involvement could not have been envisaged by external actors with little familiarity of the socio-cultural reality in Rajasthan.

47. Parents and communities' involvement in planning, management, decision-making and advocacy efforts have a positive effect on girls' education.

f) Promoting decentralisation in administration and management

48. While many donors are pursuing decentralised school administration for efficiency purposes rather than as a gender strategy, there is general recognition that this may have positive gender implications. The transfer of school management functions from the state/provincial level to the district and local levels through local management mechanisms such as **education or development committees** is usually accompanied by an attempt to promote a fair distribution of female and male membership in the

school committees, as is being done by Action Aid in Kenya and under a DFID-funded project. A fair female/male representation in parents/teacher associations is also emphasized in UNICEF programmes.

49. Development of rational decentralised planning and realistic budgets can be used to leverage an increased share of government spending to the education sector, and this may lead to a strengthened education system which will benefit all. Several donors incorporate gender training of partners at decentralised levels.

50. Donor programmes for strengthening school management levels are gaining in importance. Quotas for training of female head teachers or vice-head teachers can be used to enlarge the pool of women in leadership positions at schools. A DFID-funded project in Kenya, known as PRISM, has been training female deputy head teachers to expand the pool of women capable of taking on leadership positions.

g) Collection of gender disaggregated data

Gender analysis focuses on understanding and documenting the differences in gender roles, activities, needs, and opportunities in a given context. Gender analysis involves the disaggregation of qualitative and quantitative data by gender. Gender analysis does not treat women as a homogenous group but recognises that gender roles vary across culture, class, ethnicity etc.⁵

51. Most donors encourage governments to collect gender disaggregated statistical data. However, there are doubts about the reliability of the data base, which is often of low quality and which draws attention to some factors, primarily those concerning initial enrolment rates.



*From the outset, enough gender disaggregated data was collected in the **DFID** supported Andhra Pradesh Primary School Project (APPEP) in India in order to facilitate effective monitoring and evaluation. This project, which has focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning, and expanding access to disadvantaged groups to schooling, has relied heavily on the use of participatory methods. APPEP has been carefully monitored and has undergone frequent evaluations. APPEP has served as a model for other projects, notably the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), introduced by the government of India into a number of other states. Both DPEP and APPEP have integrated gender into all phases of planning and implementation. Participatory methods have been used by both projects at each stage and much emphasis has been placed on the strengthening of capacity at the local level.*

h) Monitoring progress at local levels

52. Despite the fact that this appears to be an area which receives too little attention, some agencies have developed indicators to **monitor progress at local levels** and incorporate these in agreements and contracts.



*Good reporting standards are characteristic for the Solomon Island Early Childhood Project funded by **NZODA**. This project aims at increasing the effectiveness of early childhood education*

⁵ Lexow, 1991: Evaluation of Women's Grants.

and the number of early childhood teachers. Community awareness of the importance of early childhood development has been enhanced through workshops. An incremental but consistent approach to raising gender issues has given positive results. The community and local Solomon Island trainers have felt comfortable with the way the project has raised gender equality within the context of their own culture. This has established a solid base for partnership, enabling gender equality to be seen as a professional issue in providing high quality education services.

i) Promoting advocacy and social mobilisation campaigns

53. Advocacy and social mobilisation to raise awareness among policymakers and leaders and to mobilise society as a whole are other strategies in use to promote gender mainstreaming in education.



The UNICEF region-wide African Girls Education Initiative strongly emphasises advocacy and social mobilisation. All communication channels and media are being used, but the strongest element is probably the direct communication which takes place between both the grassroots, the governments and the development agency. Partnership is a central element of all aspects of project design and implementation. Building on its many successful experiences to mobilise the local communities for the promotion of child welfare, UNICEF is, in many cases, a central focal point through which government strategies for basic education are linking up with the local communities and local NGOs. In the African Girls Education Initiative programme the feedback from the communities to the policy and decision-making levels is therefore facilitated and enhanced.

j) Designing systems that meet students' gender specific needs

54. Planners should prepare diagnostic studies to capture specific cultural and other issues constraining girls' and boys' educational activities and achievements, in order to design meaningful programmes. In general, the depth or level of gender analysis undertaken in most agencies is still inadequate. Flexible school schedules may be one way to make schools more accessible to girls with domestic responsibilities or allow boys with competing activities in the market place to attend regularly.

k) Supporting multiple delivery systems

55. It is clear that the formal sector alone will not be able to achieve the objective of providing universal basic education. Education for boys and girls, men and women has to be delivered through a variety of channels. **Non-formal** alternatives can in many circumstances provide a useful opportunity for education.

l) Support through multilateral organisations

56. There are several examples of bilateral donors working with multilateral agencies to promote the education of girls and women. The UNICEF programme "African Girls' Education Initiatives" is a case in point where NORAD is funding UNICEF to carry out the programme. Others, for example, DFID and NORAD, are supporting advocacy programmes such as "Meena" and "Sara"⁶. In India, AusAID is

⁶ Cartoon characters developed by UNICEF which promote education for girls.

supporting UNICEF's Primary Education Enhancement Project. This aims at female representation in Village Education Committees.

m) Supporting regional forums

57. Regional forums such as "The Forum for African Women Educationalists" (FAWE) are also strongly supported by several bilateral donors because of their potential to influence government structures and change national education systems. These programmes have in common that they are strategic interventions to empower women and girls, with a potential to feed into mainstream development in a longer-term perspective.

n) Donor co-ordination

58. Both policy dialogues and donor co-ordination have gained in intensity in countries with no co-ordinated sector investment programmes. There are signals, however, that policy dialogues between bilateral partners and governments may bring up gender issues in a superficial manner. Further, attempts to institutionalise donor co-ordination appear to be fragmented and relatively weak as far as gender and education are concerned. There can be a danger that those donor groups that take up gender issues may be represented by junior or mid-level officials with little influence on strategic donor positions vis-à-vis the government.

2. Programme strategies

a) Education reforms and sector-wide programming

59. A number of donors are in the process of considering support to broader sector-wide programmes in education and educational reforms.



The Ghana Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme (BESUPI) is a good example of DFID's sector support to basic education. In 1997 DFID started to provide budgetary support to basic education in Ghana in collaboration with other donors, notably the World Bank. The overall goal of the programme is to assist the MOE in its efforts to develop quality improvements in basic education. DFID has provided a gender consultant to help ministry personnel develop coherent gender inputs into basic education. BESUPI will integrate gender into every aspect of implementation with a focus on improving the access of girls, the poor and rural children to basic education. The programme has a number of gender-specific components including the provision of scholarships for girls from poor families and the introduction of gender content into the teacher training curriculum. In DFID's sector approach, gender goals are key factors in performance indicators, the achievement of which will trigger the release of funds.



*Sida's experience from the support to the **Education Reform in Bolivia** is a case in point. This sector-wide reform has the potential to create a policy environment more responsive to gender issues, although it has not been easy to implement the reform process according to intentions. Sida has worked actively to incorporate gender issues in all the activities in which the organisation has had some control such as ensuring adequate attention to gender issues in all terms of references for Sida teams. This multi-donor financed programme has also provided opportunities to link up with "like-minded" donors to push for special initiatives such as*

establishing a gender focal point to monitor progress within the government structure, just to mention only one example.

60. The essential requirements of an education sector development programme appear to be:

- a stable macro-economic policy framework and a national sector policy and strategy which identifies what the government is trying to achieve;
- a partnership, led by the government, which also includes groups from civil society, multilateral and bilateral donor agencies;
- established management arrangements which clearly put the government in the driving seat and where donors are not involved in planning and implementation of individual projects;
- sector support channelled through the government.

61. Programme support requires a new relationship between the government and donors which implies more emphasis on both policy dialogue and donor co-ordination than so far has been the case. Dialogues between governments and donors are held both on expenditure priorities and on progress in implementation plans.

62. Because of its comprehensiveness, sector-programme support offers new opportunities for mainstreaming gender issues through a holistic approach which has the potential to induce profound quality changes in the education system, such as improved national education capacity, curriculum revision, textbooks, teacher education and community involvement. In this context, it should be emphasized that national governments are usually interested in promoting gender issues in education, and do not need encouragement from donor agencies.

63. So far, sector-programmes are relatively new, and experiences of systematic gender mainstreaming strategies are few. The following general issues seem to be at stake:

- Ensuring that national policy is formulated with gender concerns clearly profiled.
- The context of the programme needs to be understood, based on a thorough social and gender analysis.
- The policy dialogue process should be informed by gender expertise. To this effect, both agency officers and personnel in partner countries must receive training on gender issues in national development.
- Partnerships need to be expanded to include women's organisations and individual women representing civil society.
- Both agency and national policies need to have clear strategies on how gender inequalities should be addressed.
- Adequate national capacity, procedures and systems need to be in place to promote gender-sensitive planning and implementation.
- Donors and governments need to bring gender issues into the agenda in an informed and systematic way.

b) Scholarship programmes and policy dialogue

64. Achieving gender balance in AusAID's and NZODA's tertiary scholarship programmes has been a major focus for dialogue with partner governments, with very positive results in increasing the proportion of female awardees. Many lessons have been learned during this process which are now being

applied to new programmes. The belief that there are not enough women candidates to undertake tertiary study has been shown to be a myth in many cases. Successful strategies include:

- setting clear targets for achieving gender equality, and negotiating with partners to achieve these in a reasonable time-frame within the context of a commitment to partnership;
- providing different types of training options, such as short-term and in-country training opportunities;
- reviewing and being flexible about the level of study required, the subject area of study, the level of English language proficiency required, the time made available within awards to develop language proficiency, and the upper age limit for candidates.

65. More work needs to be done on investigating and addressing gender bias in the fields of study and levels of study undertaken (from undergraduate to various postgraduate options). Data from both AusAID and NZODA studies indicate that women and men have approximately the same success rate in completion in their tertiary studies, with women performing slightly better on average.

66. Scholarships also represent a main part of NORAD's support to tertiary education. Gender balance is a high priority and the target is that 50 per cent of the awardees should be women. NORAD is also concerned with the content of the courses offered at Norwegian Universities. New courses have been developed to make them more relevant for both women and men, and all courses have been screened for their focus on gender.

V. INSTITUTIONALISING MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES IN DONOR AGENCIES

1. Decentralisation of educational administration and planning

67. Many of the nine agencies seem to have in common that they are relatively recently restructured or expected to be restructured in the near future. For some agencies, the headquarters' role in the various stages of the project cycle has changed (and not only for education programmes). The headquarters seem to play a greater role in overall policy formulation, strategic country planning, overall monitoring and a less direct involvement in the project cycle. The responsibility for educational administration and planning is usually recognised as the responsibility of the government in the partner country, but the extent to which the field missions interact in such areas varies according to agency policies on the degrees of involvement in design, planning, implementation and evaluation.

2. Gender specialist staff

68. All of the agencies (except DFID) have responded to the policy objectives of promoting gender equality concerns in the agency in general, by the appointment of either gender advisors or by establishing a focal point at headquarters level. DFID has established the position of Social Development Advisors who incorporate gender equality issues in their work.

69. Gender specialist staff play a vital advocacy or catalyst role for the whole organisation, but their functions vary amongst agencies in terms of the extent to which they can participate in decision-making in the agency and influence programme project design and delivery. Apparently, there are also few education specialists with special gender competence in field offices. Availability of staff who can professionally combine gender and education issues was an issue of concern in some agencies. Field staff with this competence are also important for feeding operational experience into policy formulation at the headquarters. However, agencies seem to vary considerably in their staffing policies at field level, and it is therefore not possible to generalise on the field-level positions in this manner.

3. Involvement of gender specialists in education

70. Regular education staff are seldom gender experts *per se*, but are either generalists or education specialists. The degree to which gender specialists are consulted during education programming varies:

- AGCD is undergoing a process of re-organisation. A Women's Unit located in the Evaluation and Policy Division was established as early as 1981. The unit is small and as of early 1998 it had only one professional staff member. The relationship between the WID Unit and other departments is reinforced by the gender network established by appointment of gender focal points in different regional desks. The challenge facing the AGCD is to institutionalise gender in the new administrative system. Further decentralisation of agency functions to the field offices could make the mainstreaming of gender more difficult to achieve. Project design is to be made at field office level and these geographical desk officers might not have sufficient expertise in education or gender.

- At the time of writing, AusAID is in the process of organisational restructuring which is designed to facilitate policy implementation. Policy staff and sectoral advisors have recently been brought together in one group. Under its former structure, education/training policy officers were located in the Social Sector and Gender Section with gender policy staff. The strong links at policy level between gender equality issues and education appear to have been facilitated by their location in the same section of the agency. Education advisors are tasked at the request of country programme managers.
- DFID has never had an institutionalised WID presence. The Social Development Department, now the Social Development Division, is responsible for ensuring the integration of gender in the agency. The number of Social Development Advisors (SDAs) has grown significantly from three in the late 1980s to five SDAs placed in London, seven in multilateral organisations, and 22 in the regional offices/Development Divisions. Following the re-organisation in 1996, the Social Development Division was given direct representation on the Project Evaluation Committee, the key high level decision-making body for development programmes and projects. This has strengthened the influence of the division, giving it greater leverage over decision-making in the agency. The role of DFID's SDAs is to ensure that gender and poverty issues are integrated into the design and implementation of projects and programmes. Regional offices usually have one or more SDAs in post whose task is to monitor gender and poverty across all the sectors, including education.
- In GTZ the gender officers work as a group – in the Strategic Corporate Development Unit – whose head has a direct link to the three directors of the GTZ. As part of the recent decentralisation strategy, the gender unit has been reduced in size and combined with poverty reduction. One of the two gender experts has overall thematic responsibility for gender issues and the gender network. Currently GTZ has six full-time professionals working on gender issues within the regional desks. These officials offer consultancy services in the area of gender as well as on other issues.
- In NORAD, the two gender advisors are placed in the Technical Department, the same department as the two-and-a-half education advisors. This location is seen as favourable to promoting close interaction with sectoral staff. As with the rest of the staff in this department, the gender advisors offer their services, upon request, to the operational parts of NORAD, the Regional Departments and the field missions. Their advice and comments are also used by the other sections of the Technical Departments, including education. In much strategic work, however, NORAD draws upon advice from external gender expertise (consultancy firms, universities or individuals).
- The small size of NZODA and its relatively flat management structure facilitates contact between cross-sectoral specialists at policy level and staff directly responsible for programme planning and management. The gender specialist performs multiple functions – policy development, training, appraisal and advice through the project cycle, monitoring of policy implementation and quality assurance. This has clearly facilitated a process which supports the linking of policy with project and programme outcomes.
- In promoting gender equality, operational responsibilities are decentralised in Sida to the respective divisions, departments and field offices, whereas overall policy issues are retained at the headquarters level by the gender specialists within the Secretariat for Policy and Organisational Learning. A network of gender resource persons has been established with representatives from all departments and divisions. These resource persons do not have responsibility for gender equality but should act like resources to the heads of departments and divisions who have formal responsibility. The amount of time the resource persons can spend on gender equality varies. The gender resource person at the education division formally

spends 30 per cent of his/her time on gender equality, but has support from the head of division to give more time to this.

- UNICEF's efforts to address education have been recent yet powerful. What began as a small "education cluster" about 10 years ago, is now the Education Unit. The Unit has crucial expertise in all aspects of education, including a gender specialist on education. The gender specialist offers commentary on national proposals and raises questions on what the countries may propose on education. Work on gender is promoted and monitored by the Gender Unit. The Unit has recently been brought together with three other units under a new structure called Gender and Program Partnership. UNICEF has established gender focal points at country levels.

4. Building competence

71. The level of competence on gender equality and education among staff varies between agencies. Some agencies have recruited education specialists whereas others have staffed their education division with generalists. Most agencies have attempted to increase staff's knowledge of gender issues through training. In many agencies, this may even be referred to as one of the most important agency strategies for incorporating gender in all sectoral activities.

72. The inventories revealed that the following key issues are of importance:

- There are different cultures of learning or training in organisations. Most gender training has been voluntary and not compulsory. (In some cases, for instance in DFID, there has been a relatively recent shift from compulsory to voluntary training.) Voluntary training might reduce the efficiency of mainstreaming strategies since those staff who are less gender-aware, and who probably need the training most, tend not to attend the sessions. However, even though training is not obligatory, those agencies which give comprehensive training sessions do not normally have difficulty in persuading people to attend.
- The general impression from a number of agencies is that training has been useful in terms of raising gender awareness among staff, but less useful for supplying staff with relevant gender-sensitive planning tools and concepts which are applicable and are meaningful to their daily tasks. Gender concepts may be well grasped by most participants in theoretical terms, but less well understood in terms of their practical implications.
- In some agencies, the responsibility for training of all types is decentralised. Sida's education division has to develop competence among its staff on gender equality by organising special seminars, training, etc. on gender equality. Some sessions have been held, and training around a recently developed gender handbook in education is to be organised.
- There appear to be few agencies that offer specific education-related gender training. This makes staff feel that they lack skills and tools because the introductory training is generic and is often focused on developing awareness and commitment rather than on specific guidelines.
- In some agencies, for example in GTZ, staff receive an orientation to gender equality issues as one component of an orientation course which is obligatory before departure to field offices but, generally speaking, training of staff in field mission offices appears to have been limited. Frequent staff turnover may also make continuous training at field level difficult.

- Building gender-sensitive capacity and competence in partner institutions seems to have gained in importance during the last few years. Agencies report successful efforts of such competence building, although this focus needs strengthening in some agencies. Institutional screening and appraisals of partner institutions with regard to their capacity to plan and implement gender-sensitive programming still seems to be weak.
- In the Kenya case study, DFID and UNICEF reported undertaking gender training for staff. UNICEF usually incorporates some gender training in all its training programmes. GTZ conducts gender training as part of the introduction training for new staff.

5. Accountability

73. Leadership commitment and signals have long been recognised as one of the most critical factors for success in promoting gender issues within agencies. This implies that :

- progress and results on gender issues must be demanded by senior/leadership levels;
- leadership must be supported with the information needed for taking the necessary decisions and allocating adequate resources to carry them out.

74. At policy levels, leadership in all agencies gives clear support to gender issues in education in general, and to girls' education in particular. The strongest support by the UN system is perhaps most visible in an October 1997 letter by the UN Secretary General to all heads of UN agencies which asked for "mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all policies and programs in the UN-system" and stated that "senior management will be fully accountable for the implementation of these agreed conclusions". It remains to be seen, however, how this will be followed up in practice.

75. The country study in Kenya also uncovered a high level of commitment on the side of the government with the establishment of a national task force on gender and education, a gender unit within the Ministry of Education and the appointment of a number of gender officers.

76. The various sub-reports on the bilateral agencies cannot show similarly strong formalised leadership positions. Demands for concrete progress and results appear to be relatively superficial or even weak in most agencies and seldom identify personal responsibilities such as the above letter indicates.

77. Systematic reporting and monitoring are other factors in institutional accountability. Access to information about policy outcomes and results and progress of education projects and programmes are usually quite scant and is reported to be one of the major weaknesses of the institutional mainstreaming strategies. The key concerns about monitoring gender equality in education may be summarised as follows:

- To the extent that gender equality is monitored, the information is usually limited to quantitative indicators which show gender participation rates and enrolment rates. The increasing efforts to incorporate gender issues into the Logical Framework Approach – a planning instrument used by some members - may often take this form.
- Monitoring of quality issues is often restricted to progress in quantitative achievements (number of schools, enrolment rates, etc.) and much less on gender appropriateness in curriculum, gender-sensitive contents in materials, teacher training or gender-sensitive leadership at schools and administrations.

- NZODA has a specific WID Action Plan against which all projects are monitored. There is evidence that this regular and rigorous monitoring, along with high-level leadership commitment, has assisted in producing significant progress in mainstreaming in education and other sectors. For example, ongoing projects have been redirected to consider gender issues, and the nature and type of projects included in the country programmes have been modified to accommodate gender equality concerns and commitments.
- The quality and content of baseline data on gender issues are usually weak and only a few agencies (DFID) can document that research is used as a strategy to promote gender considerations in education.
- The overall picture is that evaluations of effects, or impacts of education projects in general, and how various strategies manifest themselves by gender, seldom take place.
- Dissemination of reports that do exist could enhance institutional learning and also learning between agencies and partners. Partly as a result of decentralised agency structures, many agencies retain important documents at field level. Headquarters staff sometimes find it difficult to access these documents.
- Sida and NZODA carry out self-monitoring of their agencies' performance in gender mainstreaming. This makes them better equipped to find solutions to problems with operationalising mainstreaming and to identifying the barriers.

6. Tools and methodologies

78. Several tools for working on gender and education were found during the inventories, but it is important to underline that there is not one tool or method that can be applied everywhere in all projects/programmes and under all circumstances. Most of these tools are not specific guidelines or prescriptions of each and every step a programme officer must follow in this context. Rather, they serve as a framework for interpretation of the environment and context in which the agency works.

79. For DAC Members, it is an important principle that the projects/programmes/processes are owned by the partner. Not all donors are therefore equally involved in all steps of the planning and implementation of development co-operation initiatives. Donor involvement varies, from those who are not involved at all in planning and implementation of projects and who seldom offer any technical assistance during the implementing phase, to those donors who take a more active approach and do participate actively in all aspects of the project cycle and also usually require particular budget control arrangements or strengthening of national capacity. Tools and methodologies must be adapted to the principles of national ownership.

80. A demand for more specific guidance and more specific planning tools to support the mainstreaming efforts is reiterated in several of the agency sub-reports. In the education sector, needs have been identified for improved guidelines for collection and analysis of information to feed into the education programming and plans. Discussions in the agencies reveal that despite the fact that agency policies might call for the need to conduct gender analysis, there were few examples of how this has been followed up in practice.

81. A gender analysis in the education sector would begin from a consideration of the ways in which boys and girls, men and women, participate differently in the education system. This would entail

not only looking at enrolment at one specific time in the school system, but also completion issues, transfer rates to more advanced levels, various quality concerns, etc. Secondly, as part of a mainstreaming strategy, the gender analysis would seek to identify structure and processes – legislation, social and political institutions, cultural practices, learning and teaching institutions’ practices, etc. – that can act to perpetuate girls’ advantage. The purpose is to identify whether special steps are needed to enable women and girls to participate and benefit and which opportunities exist to reduce gender gaps. The outcome of this exercise would be education policies, programmes and projects which will serve both men and women and contribute to achieving more equal gender relations in the education sector at large.

82. Donors who operate within the education sector in Kenya, all reported that the government collects gender disaggregated statistics in connection with its education projects. These statistics are usually shared with the donors. However, the information generated is often too unreliable and/or old and can therefore not serve as a base for project formulation. It is important that project level statistics are complemented by a comprehensive national data base of educational statistics which are collected and analysed in a regular, timely manner.

83. In a programme context, a particularly relevant tool for work on gender and education is the “Framework for Girls’ Education” (UNICEF, 1997). This is a framework which has been developed to weave the different needs and responses of numerous partners into a single, coherent programme while maintaining the identity and integrity of individual country conditions, contexts and approaches. Consistent with the notion of a single programme, there are several items which will be common to each set of country activities funded under this programme. So far 52 countries are applying this framework.

84. A few agencies have worked out more specific guidelines or manuals for gender in the education sector. Sida has prepared a handbook on mainstreaming gender into education. The handbook is composed of three parts: a discussion of the linkages between gender equality and education; simple guidance for policy dialogue; and questions to be asked in key entry-points in Sida’s programming cycle – sector analysis, formulation/appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. The handbook is new, and a strategy for its use in competence development has yet to be developed. Efforts are being made to integrate the implementation of the action programmes for the major cross-cutting issues which programme officers have to work with – poverty, environment, human rights/democracy and gender equality. AusAID and the British Council have also produced guidelines.

85. Other donors have opted for an integrative approach, which integrates and links up gender issues to their regular tools and instruments. Some donors have tried to address gender equality issues in logical framework analyses, with varying degrees of success. However, there is a general concern that the “logframe” does not capture many of the essential issues related to quality and processes. Gender issues in education often relate to a more profound set of attitudinal elements and parents’ and communities’ understanding of their own gender bias. Such issues can be difficult to link into an input-output framework which the “logframe” is designed to capture. Designing qualitative indicators to measure changes in aspects of quality of education service delivery, such as gender-sensitive curricula, is a further challenge, as is incorporating consultative mechanisms for verifying indicators.

VI. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

1. Major policy trends

Although the Education for All conference in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, singled out basic education as the area of increased focus, several of the agencies involved in this study still focus mainly on tertiary education and scholarships. However, what is beyond doubt is that, with respect to formal policy statements within the donor community as a whole, basic education now has a much higher profile than during the 1980s. However, the volume of budgetary allocations devoted to addressing the critical area of gender and basic education is limited and not clearly monitored.

- It needs to be reminded that the most urgent priority stated in the World Declaration on Education for All is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated.
- In order to meet the specific goals of the DAC *Shaping the 21st Century Strategy* of universal primary education (UPE), reducing the gender gap in primary and secondary education and ensuring basic numeracy and literacy for all people, bilateral donors would need to mobilise considerable additional funding to the basic education sector. The translation of these policy objectives concerning basic education into funded projects and programmes in developing countries seems, however, to remain limited among the large majority of bilateral donors.
- The Education for All follow-up conference in Amman in 1996 stated that closing the gender gap was one of the areas with the least progress. The Fourth Conference on Women, in Beijing, in 1995, reinforced the need for mainstreaming gender issues, a strategy which was endorsed globally by all governments. At policy level, most bilateral agencies have adopted this strategy. There are few agencies which are not committed to mainstreaming, and very few who still work exclusively with WID.
- The concept of mainstreaming is powerful inasmuch as it calls for constant attention to gender in the design and implementation of projects. However, the term “mainstreaming” is often misinterpreted in a way which in practice has meant invisibility of both women and men in project documents and approaches. Many agencies are also pursuing strategies to advocate for girls’ education or induce strategic changes in the education system. It is quite clear that such efforts are compatible with, and also an essential part of, gender mainstreaming strategies.
- The approach towards increased partnership underlining the development partner country’s own responsibility to promote development has been accompanied by a restructuring of many agencies. During the last few years, many agencies have been through a decentralisation process which has transferred decision-making power from agency headquarters to in-country field offices. Decentralisation of agency operations enables greater flexibility and knowledge of the national context. At the same time, headquarters will be expected to assume new roles, new responsibilities and

a new relationship with both the field offices and the governments in partner countries. As a result, organisations are also facing new opportunities and new problems regarding institutionalising gender mainstreaming strategies. Ways to monitor, in financial accounting terms, the extent to which gender issues are mainstreamed remain a challenge.

2. Organisational issues

a) *Roles and responsibilities*

- Most education staff accept that the responsibility for mainstreaming gender issues in the education sector lies with themselves, and agree that at least in principle these issues should not be the roles of the gender specialists units/individuals. There is little information in the sub-reports, however, on how the education units/sections are held accountable for progress and achievements in their mainstreaming efforts or to whom they are held accountable.

b) *Leadership accountability*

- All agencies give support to gender issues in education, but leadership could contribute much more to agency accountability by demanding clearly operational mainstreaming plans from departments, divisions and field offices. The recent initiative by the UN to induce such accountability may also be taken as an example for following up by bilateral agencies.

c) *Gender focal points*

- Agencies have responded differently to the question of appointing special gender specialists and to the possible use of their expertise in education programmes. The gender specialists are often few in number and their direct involvement in sectoral matters tends to be part of their functions. To the extent that they are involved, it will often be in the form of offering comments or advice. Another important function is to influence agency policy.
- At operational levels, what seems to be at stake is the gender focal points' relative power to influence strategic decision-making regarding choice of projects and programmes, and to move the direction of the agencies into more gender-sensitive projects and programming.
- People with expertise in education and in gender are essential at all levels of programme and project planning and implementation. Gender equality must be accepted as a fundamental issue for national development, not just as an advocacy position. As such, it requires persons with in-depth knowledge about the range of gender issues pertinent to improving access to and quality of education services. The assumption that directives to address gender or the appointment of focal points is sufficient to ensure mainstreaming has not been demonstrated in practice.

d) *Gender training*

- There are varied experiences with those gender training courses that have been offered to increase staff capacity and competence on gender issues. Reports indicate that training has been more effective in changing general gender awareness levels, and less efficient in terms of supplying staff with practical planning tools and methods. There was no report on linking gender training directly to education, although this is probably a strategy which would be in some demand among staff.

- There is a need to distinguish between general gender training and specific education-related gender training. The lack of the latter can explain why staff feel they still lack skills and tools because the obligatory introductory training is generic in character and is often focused on developing awareness and commitment.
- The effectiveness of voluntary training can be questioned. There seems to be valid grounds for re-introducing some obligatory training, not least because many staff have already participated in gender training. Both the context in which development assistance operates and concrete development co-operation modalities have changed much during the last few years. There is a need to foster increased shared understanding of gender issues and strategies such as mainstreaming, and to develop shared expectations and requirements regarding how comprehensively gender in education issues should be addressed in project documents and at field level.
- Many agencies have now extended support for capacity building in terms of gender training to partners and partner institutions. This approach seems to be promising, but information on outcomes needs to be reviewed and shared.

e) Monitoring and evaluation

- The reporting, monitoring and evaluation systems of the various agencies are perhaps the areas most often highlighted as institutional barriers for real accountability. With little substantial information of what is going on in the field being disseminated, there is also little learning from experience.
- The focus of monitoring needs to be moved from policy to policy outcomes. Current methods of monitoring the impact and policy outcome of gender policies should be improved. Most agencies need an independent “reality check” in order to assess whether there is coherence between their policies and what is happening in the field.
- Project budgets might need to be redesigned so that line items identify financial inputs by type of gender intervention (e.g. providing more school places for girls, training/retraining teachers along gender-sensitive lines, developing new materials and revising existing textbooks along non-sexist lines).
- While the collection of basic gender disaggregated data is still weak in many cases and needs to be strengthened, there is also a need to focus on monitoring qualitative aspects of gender issues in education.

f) Tools and methods

- A specified gender mainstreaming action plan for education policies can be efficient if it is closely linked to the agency’s regular planning guidelines. Tools and guidelines must be coherent and integrated, as well as easily accessible.
- Linking the production/use of tools with in-house training initiatives may be one way forward to increase staff commitment to engage in and utilise the good tools which are already available.
- Despite agency systems of formal guidelines and procedures with regard to gender, positive gender outcomes still seem to depend on individual commitments. Team leaders and heads of divisions have been identified as key individuals. They play a central role in the operationalisation of gender objectives. Staff responsible for gender issues must be given the time to work with these issues.

VII. THE WAY FORWARD

1. **Reorienting the focus of basic education integrating vocational, technical and non-formal training**

- There is a need to expand significantly education provision for vocational, technical and non-formal education, and establishing links between formal education and non-formal education.
- Adult education programmes should be coupled with necessary support measures such as stipends.

2. **Higher and tertiary education**

- The low level of women's enrolment in tertiary education, and the resulting low employment in higher positions in society, is a concern. Introducing targets or quotas for female participation in scholarships is one way of increasing female enrolment, in addition to developing strategies to achieve these targets within a reasonable time-frame. However, attention should also be given to changing the profiles and content of university programmes offered to reflect interests of both men and women.

3. **Moving towards a holistic approach**

- There is a need to shift the paradigm from looking at only one or two factors, such as participation rates, to examining the gender implications of the education system as a whole. Project interventions should be based on related clusters of factors, and not on single factors. A wide range of interrelated factors such as teaching practices, school environment, curriculum and text-books, and why and how they are influential, need to be addressed simultaneously.

4. **Sector programmes**

- Education programmes often entail multi-donor involvement in the restructuring of national education sector policies, expenditures and institutions. Donors may be invited by the national government to support various combinations of programme assistance, technical co-operation and project activities.
- In this context an important donor responsibility is to ensure that education policies are formulated with gender concerns clearly profiled and that there is adequate national capacity, procedures and systems in place to promote gender-sensitive planning and implementation.
- The policy dialogue processes should be informed by gender expertise and such policy dialogues also offer opportunities to discuss constraints and factors that hamper gender equality in education. Donors need to be explicitly informed on how gender inequalities in the education system will be addressed and how policy outcomes will be measured.
- Support to education sector programmes has to be monitored through clear targets and goals for reduction of the gender gaps.

5. Participatory methods

- Agencies that use participatory methods in project implementation and evaluation claim that this technique has helped to raise the level of awareness of gender issues in education. Awareness of gender inequalities at local level makes it more likely to address gender issues properly. Although this approach is time-consuming, it is not necessarily an expensive process compared with other education sector inputs, and it seems to be helping to ensure long-term sustainability.

6. Baseline studies

- There is a need for providing a stronger contextual base prior to interventions. Thorough studies with gender-specific data must be carried out prior to the design of development co-operation programmes and projects. Agencies should invest more in research on specific local circumstances that cause gender inequalities, and devote more time to developing locally owned (and therefore more sustainable) strategies to address gender inequalities. These studies would benefit from qualitative analyses rather than merely presenting statistical distributions.

7. Monitoring

- Monitoring is essential in order to improve an agency's effort to mainstream gender in its activities.
- Appropriate gender-sensitive impact indicators need to be established, particularly qualitative indicators. To be useful, these indicators need to be education-specific.
- Evaluations on how policy is put into practice are vital and procedures to do so must be incorporated. Focus must also be directed towards improving monitoring systems. As with other areas, when it comes to gender mainstreaming in education co-operation, monitoring must take place at field level and the nature of monitoring has to change to include social and gender impacts as well as technical factors. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of evaluation must be used.
- In order to assess a project's impact on gender equality, gender disaggregated data are essential, both at student and teacher levels.

8. Organisational issues

- Agencies and partner institutions need to make education specialists aware and committed to gender issues to induce long-term and sustained changes. Education specialists must have basic analysis and dialogue skills and, if necessary, know where to go for professional support on gender equality. Efforts should be made to combine strategic gender issues and education through specially developed training programmes.

9. Access and quality

- Successful projects and programmes go beyond access issues and gender gaps in participation and address quality, content and women's empowerment at all levels.
- At present, focus on school access and emphasis on content and improvement of teaching practices are often perceived as mutually exclusive. Strategies to work on access are different from those needed to work on content, education systems and re-socialisation, but they are complementary. Efforts to improve access include separate classes for girls, schools closer to home, stipends, adequate and

secure dormitories and latrines, and more female teachers. Working on content requires accessing teacher training colleges, providing recurrent teacher training and improved supervision for teachers, focusing on curricula and materials and working with mass media, communities and parents to change values.

10. Initiatives based on local circumstances and preferences

- There is also a need for locally-based research and support to local women professionals and women's organisations. Partnership, according to the policy of most agencies and global binding agreements, includes more actors than donor agencies and government. Stakeholder participation may include students, teachers, communities, local governments and non-governmental organisations.
- Regarding gender concerns, it takes time to raise the level of awareness. Resources must be made available to increase this awareness, and to provide space for local advocates of gender equality to engage in programme and project planning and implementation processes.
- Efforts and strategies to increase and improve female education must have a basis in local studies of constraints to girls' and boys' education.

11. Donor co-ordination

- Donor co-ordination to promote gender mainstreaming in education needs to be strengthened both at policy level through multilateral policy fora and through increased participation in donor co-ordination at national level.
- Co-ordination and co-operation should be enhanced between government and all donor institutions, including NGOs in order to maximise efforts aimed at providing education on a larger scale.

12. Increasing knowledge and sharing of experiences

- Gender equality in education calls for ambitious changes in donor agency, government programme and project philosophy, management styles and work patterns at field level. Most of the positive experiences identified by agencies attempt to induce such changes and many donors need to rethink and go beyond traditional project support.
- Successful pilot projects must be expanded, moving sometimes into demonstration and institutionalisation status, and both successes and weaknesses need to be more widely shared and discussed within, and between, agencies and partners.

**APPENDIX
DONOR AGENCY/PROJECT INVENTORY ON MAINSTREAMING
GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION**

NEW ZEALAND - NZODA

The Solomon Islands Early Childhood Education Project

Project description

The project provides assistance with strengthening early childhood education in the Solomon Islands through increasing the effectiveness of early childhood education training and the numbers of early childhood teachers. Project implementation began in 1996, and over NZ\$ 250,000 have been expended to June 1997.⁷ The first year involved developing an in-service field-based training programme through developing curricula, resources and monitoring systems for early childhood teachers. One component is the development of a certificate level qualification for early childhood teachers at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). A key feature of the training is to promote a child-centred approach and a focus on encouragement of learning through play, in place of the traditional teacher/student model. Project management includes a Solomon Islands national co-ordinator, with provincial co-ordinators in each province (most of whom have been trained as primary school teachers) having the ability to provide training to local early childhood educators. The New Zealand Management Services Consultant (MSC) trains the trainers. Kindergartens in remote areas are constructed with bush materials by local communities.

How gender equality issues were addressed/mainstreamed

Most of the early childhood educators are women, and most have had little education, which restricts their entry into other forms of non-formal education. Training for early childhood teachers has deliberately been field-based, and can be conducted in either “tok pisin”, vernacular languages or English, to address the barriers women face in the formal education system. Assessment does not depend on written materials. After undertaking field-based training, participants will have an opportunity to sit for an English test before admission to a certificate level course in Early Childhood Education at SICHE. Of about 70 participants who first joined the field-based training, around 50 have completed it satisfactorily, and 39 of these have applied for the SICHE certificate course. The project has a number of awards dedicated for women to complete the SICHE certificate course. Through this range of inputs, the project provides a vehicle for women, who may not have completed secondary education, to enter formal tertiary education. (English language proficiency is a requirement for entry to the formal SICHE course). Currently, due to inequitable access of females to all levels of education, all but one of the provincial co-ordinators/trainers are female in a context where the majority of primary teachers are male. This means that the control and management of the project is by and large in the hands of women, who are also the key participants.

The project addresses gender sensitivity and gender equality issues in the field-based and SICHE formal curricula. According to New Zealand project managers, gender issues are initially raised, albeit briefly, in awareness workshops with community groups before early childhood services are provided to

⁷ New Zealand Official Development Assistance Programme Profiles 1997-98 op cit: 52.

local communities. The main focus of these workshops is to discuss early childhood education and what can be done for their children.

New Zealand consultants describe an incremental approach to raising gender equality issues with provincial co-ordinators who train the early childhood educators. During each training of trainers workshops, or during each visit by consultants, gender issues are raised. One consultant indicated that how they discuss gender issues now is different to when the project first began. For example, early in project implementation, the issue of whether girls can/should advance was raised. This was an issue that could not be resolved without reference to a higher authority, such as a male village chief. Now, it is accepted that both girls and boys need to advance to develop the full range of skills. It is also accepted now that both boys and girls may play with a range of toys, and strict gender stereotyping that apply to the adult world are not enforced in kindergartens. For example, boys may play at washing the dishes, and girls are allowed to play drums, although the latter was also the focus of some debate and initial discussion since the use of drums is traditionally a male domain.

In short, a key approach of the project is to ensure that the Solomon Island trainers feel comfortable to raise gender equality issues within the context of their own culture. Training of trainer sessions are very much based on discussion, enabling trainers to consider the nature of inclusion and exclusion in the context of a child-centred approach to education, how they might raise the issue of both girls' and boys' needs with communities and early childhood educators, and how they can feel comfortable doing this. Parents and communities may also be exposed to gender equality issues as they increasingly become involved in kindergartens. Consultants describe a process where parents (mainly mothers) initially just drop off their children at the kindergarten and leave, but over time become more involved in its activities, observing interaction and play and, in some cases, becoming involved in the development of educational resources, made again from local bush materials.

The project has good reporting standards regarding sex-disaggregated data, as well as the more qualitative aspects of addressing gender equality issues in this context. The consultants report that teachers are aware of the importance of being gender-inclusive in the kindergarten. Parents also receive feedback on their children from teachers, and consultants indicate that gender issues may also be raised in this context.

Gender issues are also covered in the formal curricula being developed for the certificate course in early childhood education at SICHE, which follows on from the field based modules. Most attention to gender sensitivity is in a module entitled "Working with Children", in the professional studies subject area.

Factors which have facilitated promotion of gender equality issues

According to the New Zealand consultants, the focus on increasing the professionalism of early childhood educators and their trainers is a key factor in the success of the project in addressing gender sensitivity and equality in curricula. This also applies to the certificate course within SICHE. New Zealand MSCs now have a long-standing relationship (over 6-7 years) with SICHE staff, due to an earlier project (the Primary Education project) where initial discussions also took place about gender issues in teacher training curricula. Over time, a degree of respect and trust has been developed so that addressing gender issues is not seen as a cultural imposition but as a professional issue in education. This results in an acceptance of the fact that there is a need to address gender inclusiveness in the context of the Solomon Islands culture and within their education system.

Consultants also noted the fact that their Terms of Reference and the project design, require them to address and report on gender issues. One lesson that has been learned and applied here is the need to dedicate scholarships for the formal certificate course to women, in order to ensure that they have an equal chance to compete. Another enabling factor has been the fact that New Zealand consultants have been able to establish a good working relationship with the Permanent Secretary for Education, and to develop an understanding of the issues at that level. One final factor noted by the consultants is the fact that the project is managed and controlled by women, in order who have vision, intelligence, skill and a commitment to teamwork. Consultants emphasize in their training of trainers that provincial co-ordinators should never feel as if they should have to compromise with chiefs or elders.

Finally, New Zealand has undertaken dialogue on gender equality issues at a number of levels in the country. New Zealand, and more recently Australia, has also been prepared to address barriers to participation and access through the construction of dormitories. All these factors make a solid basis for partnership.⁸

Factors constraining gender mainstreaming

The Solomon Islands culture is male-dominated, with male chiefs and elders having considerable power. Notwithstanding this, there are also a number of different “sub-cultures”, and there can be no set “formula” for addressing gender issues. Trainers and consultants have found that men tend to be chairmen of the community committees set up to look after the kindergartens, and that this facilitates success in the communities by giving authority to the kindergarten.

AUSTRALIA - AusAID

Samoa Polytechnic Project

Project description

Phase I of this project began in November 1993 and was completed by the end of 1996. Phase II commenced in July 1997 and will continue for 3 years, with a total cost of \$1.66m. The objective of both phases is to strengthen the Polytechnic, and to produce more qualified graduates to meet industry needs. Assistance in Phase 1 focused on Business Studies and Building Practices courses, and on the provision of infrastructure. In Phase II, the establishment of a gender equity programme is one of 4 project components, along with components to enhance library services; mechanical engineering courses; and electro-technology courses.

How gender equality issues were addressed/mainstreamed

Phase I: Gender issues were not explicitly addressed in Phase I, although by providing assistance to strengthen the Diploma of Business course (which arose from a concern to strengthen tourism infrastructure), the project targeted both male and female students. A 1995 review of Phase I gives almost no attention to gender equality, except to note that upgrading the Business Studies course (formerly Secretarial Studies) resulted in a significant change in enrolment patterns, from almost 100 per cent female enrolment to 46 per cent male (full-time and part-time), with 55 per cent male enrolment in the full-time Business Studies course.

⁸ One outcome of New Zealand’s commitment to raise gender issues, and the solid basis of the partnership is the fact that gender issues have been debated in the Solomon Islands National Parliament.

Phase II: The Project Design Document (PDD) for Phase II notes that only 21 per cent of full-time students were female (76 out of 368), and all but 7 of these were enrolled in Business and Secretarial Studies. The gender equity component provides 80 female scholarships per year for non-traditional areas of study, in trades and technicians courses, and accompanying support to ensure retention of students. The PDD explicitly recognises that simply making scholarships available is unlikely to effect changes in enrolment and employment patterns. Consequently, the design provides for an awareness and promotion programme in schools and the community, support for gender equity initiatives within the Polytechnic (such as training and counselling activities to support gender equity and female students, and review of curriculum or curricula and teaching materials, the construction of ablution facilities for female students, and inputs from an Australian gender specialist. Duty statements for all Australian advisers working on the project (eg. advisers in the electrical, air-conditioning and refrigeration, fitting and machining and welding areas) explicitly require them to assist with implementation of the gender equity programme, rather than giving that responsibility solely to the gender adviser. Payment milestones for the Australian contractor specifically identify key outputs relating to the gender equity component.

Six months after commencement, the project has established an internal network of key Polytechnic staff responsible for the promotion and management of the scholarship programme, to consolidate ongoing commitment and ownership of the initiative. This internal network is in lieu of a local counterpart for the Australian gender specialist. An external network is also being established with the Department of Women's Affairs and community and church groups, to assist with the promotion of Polytechnic and female scholarships, and awareness-raising regarding female participation in non-traditional areas.

Although the PDD summarises workforce and industry demands, there is no sex disaggregated data on workforce participation rates, and industry needs. Nor is there any plan to mentor, support or track the progress of women graduates in the workforce, although the need to identify and consult with potential employers is noted.

Factors which have facilitated gender equality issues

The PDD for Phase II notes that there was strong in-country support from the Department of Women's Affairs for initiatives to encourage females into non-traditional areas. While there has been some initial resistance from key stakeholders regarding the provision of scholarships for women only, using the network approach described above appears to have helped to overcome this. Promotion of female scholarships has consciously been placed within a more general framework of promoting the Polytechnic, and trades/technicians careers needed for Samoan economic development, rather than promoting female scholarships in isolation. The PDD notes that a programme of assistance from the New Zealand Government, which runs concurrently with the Australian assistance programme, also has a gender equity component. This includes conducting workshops and the development of a strategic plan to increase the participation of women in all courses. Project staff indicate that there are significant moves towards joint implementation for the two projects in order to assist with co-ordinating project management and reporting inputs from the Polytechnic.

While Phase I of the project appears to have overlooked gender issues, Phase II has addressed them well. According to AusAID staff, key factors which may have facilitated gender perspectives being addressed in Phase II include: AusAID's Gender and Development policy and the fact that the design team for Phase II was female-dominated.

Factors constraining gender mainstreaming

Since the project is only 6 months into implementation, factors constraining gender mainstreaming are difficult to assess. One risk identified in the PDD is that there may not be sufficient applicants for scholarships. Project implementation staff plan to phase-in scholarships, if necessary, as promotion and community awareness work yields outcomes. A bridging programme may be developed, if necessary, to assist female applicants to meet enrolment requirements.

Sharing lessons learned

This project has an interesting combination of design features: a separate component dedicated to promoting gender equality; attention to gender equality in other components, with an explicit requirement for all advisers to address this issue; and co-operation with another donor to promote gender equality. It is not clear why this particular design was chosen, rather than one which integrates gender issues without the identification of a separate component. The gender equality strategies and outcomes of this project should be monitored to share lessons learned.

BELGIUM - AGCD

Secondary School Teacher Training Programme - Vietnam

A recent positive experience in relation to programme design is the case of the secondary teacher training programme in seven of the northern border provinces in Vietnam, which started in 1997. An AGCD education mission clearly identified poor education quality as a major problem in Vietnam. The government and the AGCD jointly agreed on the importance of upgrading teachers and targeting women from ethnic minorities in the northern provinces. Since the AGCD was keen to target under-qualified women teachers, the government suggested training primary and secondary teachers living in poor conditions in the seven northern border provinces. At least 80 per cent of the trainees will be women. The intention of the project is to assist women students already in teaching posts:

1. Five students per province will be selected for a Masters degree at Vietnam's National University in Hanoi. This will be preceded by a three-month preparatory course in Hanoi to upgrade their skills in order that they can pass the university entrance examination. To make it easier for professional teachers from remote northern provinces to participate in the Masters Programme, courses will consist of three six-month periods instead of the usual two years of full time study.
2. This group of 105 trainees known as the 'key target group' will enrol in an in-service teacher training course designed to improve the quality of teaching at primary and lower secondary schools. These trainees will be responsible for training teachers in the future. The in-service training will take place in each of the seven provinces.
3. Retraining sessions will be organised for the summer vacation for 500 trainees, which will be followed by a seven-day seminar on 'the art of teaching' where the target group teachers will assist the trainers.

All these types of training allow for a better balance between theoretical and practical training. Implementation is anchored to the local school structures in the Northern Provinces.

UNITED KINGDOM - DFID

The Andra Pradesh Primary Education Programme (APPEP)

The programme was originally initiated by the Government of India. APPEP started as a pilot scheme in 1983 and the second phase, which operated from 1989-1996 and cost around £35 million, is one of the largest education projects ever undertaken by DFID. Approximately half the funds in Phase 2 have been spent on the provision of physical resources (i.e. the building of schools and additional classrooms, equipping of teacher centres, provision of new teaching materials). The remaining funds supported a cascade programme of in-service training aimed at introducing 'active' primary teaching methods. Initially, the project operated only in Andra Pradesh but it now operates in West Bengal as well.

In 1993, the Government of India introduced a similar project on a much larger scale - the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). Phase 1 of DPEP was launched in 1994 in 42 educationally disadvantaged districts of seven states. DPEP built upon the experience of APPEP and there is cross fertilisation of ideas between the two projects. DPEP is a national programme whose aim it is to promote the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) by improving the quality of teaching and learning, increasing retention and expanding access to disadvantaged groups. It includes provision of flexible forms of non-formal education for working women and girls. Like APPEP, the target groups include women and 'tribals' and both projects stress the integration of gender concerns in all phases of planning and implementation. DFID is now funding DPEP in Andra Pradesh at a cost of £46 million as APPEP has reached the end of its life. A DPEP aide memoir in November 1996 noted evidence of women's commitment in DPEP states through their participation in parent/teacher and village education committees. DPEP operates from the bottom-up working up at the district level. Although APPEP also used participatory methods, it was initially more a of a 'top-down' programme.

The two projects are strongly based on capacity building within the communities. Indeed, the main reason why APPEP took so long to get off the ground was the extensive use of participatory methods from the outset. APPEP has already registered positive gender impacts; in APPEP schools, the enrolment of girls increased by 6.4 per cent between 1989 and 1993/94 (ODA Progress Report). The use of participatory methods and strong gender focus of both of these projects is vital to their progress, and the results of these exercises helped to strengthen the gender focus. APPEP was monitored twice yearly and a substantial amount of material was generated through evaluation surveys. All statistics on APPEP were gender disaggregated. Although the project was not specifically aimed at girls, in 1994-1995 a small 'social project' was developed in order to increase the enrolments of both girls and scheduled castes. Both APPEP and DPEP have emphasized capacity building at all levels and there has been a high degree of local ownership in both of these projects.

APPEP is in many ways an exceptional programme for ODA. It started at a time when neither primary education nor gender was firmly established in agency policy. Yet by selecting Andra Pradesh on the grounds of the low enrolment of females and scheduled castes, girls were to benefit by increasing their access to schooling. By building in frequent evaluation and monitoring exercises⁹ into APPEP from the outset, enough gender disaggregated data was generated to help assess the impact on girls. In January 1998 an evaluation of APPEP was underway although its findings are not yet available.

⁹ Conducted by local consultants.

Primary Community Schools Project (PCOSP)

DFID's activities in Malawi are managed by the British Development Division in Central Africa (BDDCA) which, in 1995, was relocated from Lilongwe to Harare. Currently, DFID is supporting three primary education projects: the primary community schools project (PCOSP), the primary schools support systems project and the supplementary readers project. The PCOSP, (at a total cost of over £20 million between 1993-2002) is one of DFID's largest education projects in Africa, and it has developed a strong gender component in the implementation phase. BDDCA has supported its interventions in Malawi with research and information, and the education and social development advisers have worked closely to develop gender inputs for education projects.

The main objective of PCOSP is to develop and disseminate cost-effective and replicable approaches for the delivery of primary education. A key objective is to develop effective learning strategies suited to the realities of rural and peri-urban Malawi by implementing a new style of MOE-community partnership in the development of 100 new community schools offering the first four years of primary education. The project aims to provide quality education for both boys and girls with emphasis on access, retention and achievement and pays particular attention to the factors which inhibit girls' participation in school. The schools will have the following special characteristics:

- ◆ Serve disadvantaged communities, particularly where distance to the nearest primary school is great.
- ◆ Operate up to standard 4 only, thus targeting very young children between 6 and 10 years old.
- ◆ Are an integral part of the national primary education system and follow the national curriculum.
- ◆ Serve as places for wider community activities.
- ◆ Involve the community in the design, development, management and maintenance of the school and in the provision of resources.
- ◆ Adopt child-centred and interactive approaches to classroom instruction.
- ◆ Involve the community in the selection of teachers from within their community.

Although not included in the original project design, gender has now been incorporated into all aspects of PCOSP. A gender strategy was developed following a training workshop on strategic gender planning, which addresses all issues of planning, implementation, outcome and impact. Seven gender principles have been developed which will be considered in relation to each of the seven main project strategies and activities from the selection of sites for schools to classroom practice. Some of the gender strategies to be employed are:

- ◆ Gender balance in the appointment of teachers, head-teachers and central project teams.
- ◆ Gender-sensitive teaching, learning materials and teaching methods.
- ◆ Equal participation of men and women in school establishments, particularly school committees.
- ◆ Equitable employment opportunities and remuneration in school construction activities for men and women.

Half of the teachers so far recruited for the project schools are women, five of the head-teachers recruited for the first 12 schools are women, and 40 per cent of the first group of community contractors trained as part of the construction component of the project are women. The project has trained both men and women for construction work and they are paid equal rates for the same work. School committees are being established with an emphasis on gender balance in membership, office holding and participation.

Gender sensitisation has been employed for the project team. After initial resistance on the part of some men, 'almost all' became convinced of the need to take gender issues seriously.¹⁰

The PCOSP has a strong element of community participation. The project has proposed innovative strategies to involve communities in a meaningful way in both the establishment and management of schools. Communities are also involved in the selection of teachers and head-teachers for schools. The project uses PRA techniques to mobilise communities. The PSCOP has adopted a comprehensive gender strategy that not only deals with issues relating to pupils, teachers and learning, but also covers all aspects and stages of project implementation including management and the construction of schools.

This project is a good example of close co-operation between the DFID education and social development advisers. Participatory methods have been extensively used but within the context of a strong awareness of gender inequalities. Through gender training of partners involved in implementation and backed up by gender research, BDDCA has developed a project that places gender at the forefront. However, the prioritisation of gender in the project has caused some conflict with local team members although these have been resolved through dialogue with partners.

Ghana Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme (BESIPI)

The BESIPI is a recent example of DFID's investment in sector support for basic education. DFID began to support BESIPI in collaboration with other donors (notably the World Bank) in 1997 as part of its strategy of budgetary support to basic education in Ghana. The overall goal of the programme is to help the MOE make a more effective contribution to the improvement of basic education.¹¹ In 1997, DFID employed a gender consultant for six months to help develop the capacity of the Basic Education Unit and the Girls' Education Unit and improve the overall coherence of gender inputs into education policies and programmes of the MOE. The main focus of BESIPI is on improving the access of girls, the poor and rural children to basic education, and its main gender components are as follows:

1. Scholarship schemes for girls in poor families.
2. Increased admission of women into teacher training.
3. Provision of accommodation facilities for women teachers posted to remote rural areas.
4. Introduction of gender content into teacher training curricula and school textbooks.
5. The provision of science, technology and maths education for girls.
6. Social mobilisation in communities to increase the participation of girls.
7. The promotion of local participation and a school-based community improvement programme.

BESIPI hopes to integrate gender issues into every aspect of implementation. The support for capacity building within the MOE in Ghana is essential in order to help ministry personnel develop gender interventions for BESIPI. This programme, although at an early stage, is a good example of gender-sensitive programme design. Gender appears in the logframe, and a consultant is helping the MOE with

¹⁰ Unfortunately, the local team leader was not convinced about the need to incorporate gender and he left the project.

¹¹ DFID logframe for BESIPI, pg. 1.

capacity building in the area of gender. In DFID's sector approach, gender goals will be central in the performance indicators, the achievement of which will trigger the release of funds.

GERMANY - GTZ

Due to the recent decentralisation of GTZ operations, it is difficult to access project documents and evaluations at its head office in Germany as these are now generally kept in regional offices. In Chad, the GTZ has supported the provision of kindergartens attached to schools in order to relieve girls of the burden of child care. Although this has only been in operation for one year, there has already been a noticeable increase in female enrolment. The GTZ is also negotiating with the government of Guinea with regard to developing a gender-oriented basic education project in Middle Guinea, and it has also invested in a large basic education project in Pakistan which has strong gender inputs.

Ethiopia: Educational Decentralisation

The issue of girls' education has been a central theme in discussions between the GTZ and its Ethiopian partners. Since 1995, GTZ has funded a project aimed at improving the quality and efficiency of formal primary education in three regions. In Ethiopia the project evolved from GTZ's interest in school rehabilitation and concern about high drop out rates and poor school attendance of both girls and boys. The project uses an integrated approach to curriculum and environmental education. The teacher training programme actively involves teacher trainers in the development of curriculum. While gender was mentioned in the project design, gender questions only came to the forefront through the use of participatory methods. Positive gains have already been observed in these three regions where a higher proportion of girls stay on in school than before.

Basic Education Project: Pakistan

The GTZ's Basic Education Project in Pakistan was started in 1981 in order to provide home-based literacy and basic arithmetic classes for women refugees from Afghanistan. Women teachers have been specially trained to teach part-time courses of three hours per day. New literacy materials have also been developed that are more relevant to women's lives. Although it might be seen as offering a second class education to females, the project considerably expanded educational opportunities for girls and women who are secluded for religious reasons. After the Soviet withdrawal, the refugees returned home to Afghanistan and GTZ now supports an NGO which has continued this literacy programme.

GTZ Education officials are increasingly aware of the importance of a 'flexible dialogue' in order to ensure that gender issues are taken up as local initiatives rather than as activities imposed from the outside and, in particular, that the results of participatory exercises have often helped to convince usually government officials of the importance of gender issues. While governments are supportive of promoting girls' education, there is still some reluctance to adopt gender-specific interventions.

Promoting Basic Education (PEB), Sofala, Mozambique

This project was conceived in the spirit of the 'Education for All' goals of the Jomtien Conference. It supports the general education policy of the Mozambique government which is to restore and develop primary education in the post-war period. During the pilot phase (1995-1998), PEB has operated exclusively in Sofala province, and in the next phase the project will expand into Inhambane province. GTZ financial commitments to the pilot phase amounted to DM 5.7 million, and the second

phase (1998-2001) will cost around DM 4.8 million.¹² The objective of the project is to improve basic education both in the school and the community in order to meet the needs of all children, particularly girls and those in difficult circumstances (i.e. war orphans). PEB's target groups are as follows:

- Educational administrators at province, school directorate and school levels.
- Basic education teachers in the formal sector.
- Professional educators for non-formal education.
- Parents and family members responsible for children's education.

The beneficiaries of the project include both children of school age (at school and out of school) and young adults without schooling. The basic components of the project are as follows:

1. In-service training of teachers

Support for programmes to complete the initial basic training:

- Distance education
- Intensive/accelerated courses

Development of a continuing education system for teachers.

2. Supervisory System

Diagnosis and support for the education system in all districts of the province.

3. Staff Capacity Building

Institutional development by means of evaluating the functioning of education departments and district education offices as a basis for capacity building of staff and improvement in work organisation.

4. Re-opening of Schools

Support provided for this process by means of surveys and mapping for the purposes of planning and drafting requests for finance.

5. Planning

Improvement in the methods of collection, treatment and analysis of data for the purpose of planning at school, district and province levels.

Gender is identified as a central 'purpose' in BEP's logframe. The gender focus has been developed in response to the low enrolment rates and high drop-out rates of girls in relation to boys in the first five years of primary schooling. A major focus of the project has been to increase the number of women teachers in rural areas of Sofala province. Initially, the BEP funded a small study on girls' enrolment in one small district. On the basis of their own rather descriptive and small-scale study, GTZ has decided to focus on training more women teachers to work in rural schools. A needs assessment for women teachers identified specific factors that would encourage them to work in remote rural schools. These include: transport, housing and equipment. GTZ uses advocacy and dialogue with the educational authorities in Sofala and encourages the school directorate to make accommodation available to female teachers. In return, GTZ has provided women teachers with material equipment such as mattresses.

¹² BEP Project document, 1997.

Training

Some pilot districts (3-5) focus on teacher training which involves the upgrading of all teachers to meet the overall goals of improving the quality of education. In order to improve classroom pedagogy, BEP organises teacher supervision.

Capacity Building

BEP has helped to start school committees by using participatory methods which have revealed parental attitudes to the education of girls. However, the main focus of BEP's capacity building activities is focused on improving school management. GTZ conducted an organisational analysis of school directorates and discovered that they are staffed by teachers with little or no administrative background or training. This was followed by an assessment of qualification needs, and a course was offered to school administrators in activity planning and monitoring. Although it is being considered for the second phase (1998-2001), no gender courses have yet been offered as part of this capacity building work. However, capacity building training would be more closely linked to project goals if a module on gender awareness and planning were to be incorporated into the course. Nonetheless, the overall gender orientation of BEP has 'rubbed off' on educational administrators. For example, the GTZ team leader of BEP held informal discussions with the Director of Education for Sofala province concerning gender issues. During BEP's pilot phase, the small proportion of women in the school directorate has risen.

Impact

While BEP has been subject to internal monitoring, the main evaluation will not take place until the end of the first phase, later in 1998. GTZ recognises that more extensive research is needed in order to understand the major constraints affecting girls' education. Results so far, however, indicate that the project has resulted in a significant increase in female enrolments in some pilot schools. The participatory exercises conducted with school committees revealed some important information concerning parents' attitudes to the education of girls which will be incorporated into the project's second phase. However, a systematic evaluation is needed to establish cause and effect.

The capacity building work being done at a number of different levels, including the educational administration and the community, has also been a positive feature of this project. However, the introduction of more formal systems for incorporating aspects of gender planning into the school administration would seem to be the next logical step. Donor co-ordination also needs to be strengthened as UNICEF is working along the same lines in the same province.

NORWAY - NORAD

Female Secondary Education Stipend Project (FESP), Bangladesh

NORAD's contribution: Phase I, 1993-1996: NOK 39.5 mill. Phase II, 1997-2000: NOK 100 mill. Implementing institution: Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, under the Ministry of Education. Other contributors: Government of Bangladesh, the World Bank/IDA and the Asian Development Bank. Responsible for follow-up: The Norwegian Embassy in Dakha.

Context

Against an overall literacy rate in Bangladesh at 24.8 per cent, the rate of female literacy stands at only 16 per cent. At secondary level of education, the enrolment rate for boys is 57.6 per cent, while the enrolment rate for girls is only 33.8 per cent. The drop-out rate is 57.6 per cent for boys and 65.9 per cent for girls. The rate of output (of school related things) for girls stands at only 34.1 per cent as against 42.4 per cent for boys. Causative factors to the apparent disparity in all these rates are related to poverty, non-conducive socio-cultural values and norms, and widespread parental illiteracy.

The Government of Bangladesh has placed the highest emphasis on education at all levels and, in particular, on disseminating education at the secondary level. The disparity in education rates for girls has been acknowledged, and a Female Education Stipend Project was introduced to raise the female education attainment level. In addition to the Government of Bangladesh, the World Bank/IDA and the Asian Development Bank as well as NORAD have financed stipends to girls in Bangladesh. In the first phase of the project, NORAD assistance known as FESP, covered 212 secondary schools located in 7 thanas (sub-districts). In addition to funding stipends, NORAD supports the implementation and management expenses related to the project. The stipend allocated money constitutes about 75 per cent of the total project fund. NORAD assistance will cover a total number of approximately 661 000 stipends including allowances for books, tuition and examination fees.

NORAD expanded its support to 25 thanas, including the seven originally supported. Bangladesh consists of 460 thanas, and the second phase embraces them all. The Government of Bangladesh finances 264 thanas, The World Bank/IDA 118, and The Asian Development Bank 53.

Goals

- To enlarge the number of educated women capable of participating in the economic and social development of Bangladesh.
- To improve the status of women in society and to reduce the existing disparity between men and women.
- To reduce population growth by motivating female students to refrain from marriage before the completion of Secondary School Certificate Examination, or the age of eighteen.

Purpose

- To increase girls' enrolment.
- To retain female students in secondary schools.

Strategies

Most of the stipend awardees are new entrants to grade VI who will be promoted to higher grades in successive years. Also, girls who have been studying in schools in higher grades since 1993 are included in the list of those eligible. Schools admit students at any time of the year. However, in order to obtain a stipend, students have to report by a certain date.

There is no means test in order to obtain a stipend. Every girl in secondary school gets a stipend if she has a primary school leaving certificate, attends a minimum of 75 per cent of school days in a month and registers for a stipend in time.

Under the NORAD-funded FESP, there are six NGOs at the operational and management levels located at the thana headquarters. The usual staffing pattern consists of one Director, one Office/Field Manager, one Accountant and one Female Advisor in addition to support staff. Field Officers visit all the project schools at least twice a month, check attendance in classrooms and Attendance Registers and update the list of eligible girls based on attendance/non-attendance. In the case of pupils found to be absent for the whole quarter, parents of the absentee girls are contacted to find out the reasons for absence from school. Thus, cases of drop-outs are followed up and cases of doubtful attendance checked on ground. Teachers admit over-recording girls' attendance in order to help them to continue drawing the stipend. Teachers have stated that girls in general have difficulties attending 75 per cent of the classes. Nevertheless, there is a growing rise in the number of girls completing secondary school education each year.

Achievements

Evidence indicates that the stipends have been effective in increasing the enrolment of girls at secondary level, and in retaining them in the system for the period of five years in substantial numbers. Stipends have also been effective in increasing the number of Secondary School Certificate graduates. As a result, institutions offering higher secondary education are finding larger numbers of female students for admission.

The rate of girls completing secondary school education has risen sharply, and drop-outs on account of failure in terminal examinations are not detected, neither are there repeaters in any grade. The imposed conditions of eligibility for drawing a stipend are reportedly the inherent forces working behind the pursuit of progress in education. Pressure from teachers, guardians and community elders are also reported. The stipends have also indirectly pushed up the rate of attendance among boys as a result of increased emphasis and focus on education.

Incidentally, stipend money has in general bolstered the rural economy. In addition to educational institutions, banks and participating NGOs are also indirect beneficiaries. An interesting side-effect of the stipends is that girls have their own bank accounts and are obliged to go to the bank to withdraw their money. This apparently gives them higher status as well as useful experience in bank transactions.

Constraints

The project is dependent on financial support from outside Bangladesh and will therefore not be characterised as a sustainable project. If the donors pull out, it is not likely that the Government of Bangladesh will be able to finance the stipends itself.

Another constraint has to do with the capacity of the educational system in Bangladesh. There is no-recruitment of teachers and lack of teacher training. There is a shortage of physical facilities such as classroom accommodation and teaching equipment and, therefore, any further increase in enrolment will put enormous pressure on quality. NORAD staff have expressed their concern about this.

According to a midterm report, there are reasons to believe that girls have been moved up to the next grade even though they do not qualify. In order to move up and receive stipend, students have to attain a certain level of knowledge. No assessment of what is going on at classroom level has been carried out.

Lessons learned

According to NORAD staff, the key to success in FESP was the local NGOs' close follow-up. NORAD has only allocated money; there has been no Norwegian expertise involved with the project. The concept was already tried out when NORAD started its support.

Another important aspect of FESP's success is the Government of Bangladesh's political will to increase female enrolment in secondary school. When NORAD supported the same concept in Pakistan, the outcome was not the same. This experience shows that the gender context varies from society to society even if conditions seem to be similar. A common blueprint for projects is seldom satisfactory.

Post-graduate programme in Women's Law, Zimbabwe

As mentioned earlier, one of NORAD's main strategies for development support besides promoting the mainstreaming of gender, is the promotion of local institutional development. This project is directed towards women and is concerned with women's legal and social status. It is both an education project as well as a project for institutional development.

Location: Zimbabwe (with network expanding to Southern and East Africa)

Budget: MNOK 7 (US\$ 1) 1993-1996

Partners: University of Zimbabwe, Department of Private Law, Women and Law in Southern African Research Project (WLSA), The Universities in the home countries of the M.Phil. students, University of Oslo, Department of Women's Law and University of Warwick, School of Law

Context and Background

The project consists of a one-year post-graduate Diploma course on Women's Law which focuses on developing and institutionalising the theoretical knowledge and methodology for the study of women and law in Eastern and Southern Africa. The Diploma consists of a three-month theory and methodology course including field work and training. The practical component involves fieldwork and a diploma dissertation. The project also aims at developing these skills at the more advanced level of an MPhil. or PhD.

The first Diploma Course on Women's Law was held at the Institute of Women's Law in Oslo in 1987, with 5 participants from Zambia, Tanzania, and Kenya. As a result of this experience, the Institute of Women's Law ran one diploma course a year in the period 1987-1989. The course was offered to female lawyers working at universities, in research and documentation centres or groups, in legal aid, legal advice and education programmes, as well as to those working in government and judicial service. Places were also made available to women working in NORAD's partner countries in eastern and southern Africa. The course provided general training in the analysis of law from women's perspectives.

In 1990 the Diploma course was transferred from the University of Oslo (UoO) to the University of Zimbabwe (UoZ). After completion of the 1990 Diploma course at the UoZ, the project was reviewed in 1991. This review focused on the value of the 1990 Diploma course as experienced by participants and institutions. On the basis of this review, a new phase of the programme, maintaining co-operation between UoZ, UoO and the School of Law at Warwick was initiated. In 1993 a new contract was signed between NORAD and the UoZ, and NORAD and UoO, for the period 1993-1996.

Objectives

The long-term development objective of the programme is to improve the situation of women in Eastern and Southern Africa, by enhancing their legal and social status. The programme objectives as stated in the contract for the period 1993-1996 and in project reviews are to:

- establish a Women's Law unit with adequate staff and facilities within the Department of Private Law at the UoZ;
- transfer entirely the administrative responsibility for the MPhil. programme to the UoZ by 1994, and integrate it into the regular university structure;
- devise and approve yearly study plans;
- develop teaching materials and make plans for the publication of textbooks, dissertations, theses and articles by all participants in the Diploma, MPhil. and PhD. programmes;
- conduct a minimum of one Diploma course (1994) with candidates drawn primarily from 9 countries in the region, including Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe;
- complete one MPhil. and possibly two PhD. projects to approve four to six new MPhil. candidates;
- build up a regional network of Women's Law lecturers and researchers;
- foster the establishment of Women's Law studies at other universities in the region;
- reduce professional and economic dependence on Norway and achieve the stated goal for 1994-1995, which was "to support Southern African initiatives to develop academic and research competency in the region which is independent of Norwegian direction and control".

The programme recognises that there is a growing awareness in the region of the need to re-address and analyse the issues of women's legal rights and needs in terms of new methodologies and perspectives. These adopt women's perspectives on their social and legal status as the starting point for analysis and research.

A core element of the programme involves empirical research. Such research is a crucial tool in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the many issues that effect women's law. The Law Reform and Development Commission in Zimbabwe have stressed the importance of having this type of research available to assist them in formulating policy for legal reform. The research not only has practical relevance but also forms part of developing academic competence in the methodology and discipline of Women's Law.

The programme has disseminated research results through seminars and workshops. Course participants have presented their research to a whole range of organisations. There are also plans to make all research results available in published form.

Results and achievements

One of the objectives given in the contract between NORAD and UoZ is that a Women's Law Unit adequately staffed and equipped should be established within the contract period. This objective has been achieved. A Women's Law Unit has been established and is staffed by a Course leader, an administrative assistant and a senior secretary. Accommodation has been provided for the programme within the Faculty of Law.

Another contract objective required that responsibility for the MPhil. programme should be fully transferred from the UoO to UoZ. This too has been achieved as the UoZ has taken control over the MPhil. programme in Women's Law which has been fully integrated into the regular university structure.

The programme has been cost-effective and kept well within the budget. However, one reason for this may be attributed to the failure to recruit more students and guest lecturers. As a result, funds were available to run an additional Diploma course in 1996.

The course is planned in an effective manner and makes good use of the limited time available for the various components that make up the programme. It integrates theory and practice in a meaningful way through the focus that is placed on issues that affect women in their everyday lives. Students begin a three-month course on theory and methodology involving two weeks of field-work in Zimbabwe. In the next phase, the students return to their home country to carry out empirical research for a nine-month period on women's experiences of law in daily life. It is clear that this approach works well from the large number of students who pass the Diploma at the end of the course.

A broad range of interdisciplinary publications dealing with gender and women's issues has been assembled in the women's law collection in the law library for teaching and research. A textbook on Women's Law Methodologies has been completed by the course leader and other lecturers from UoZ and UoO. It is now in the process of publication. Forty-two dissertations will be published in six volumes according to subject matter.

The course draws on seven guest lecturers from outside Zimbabwe. Five come from the region and two are from Norway. This number may be compared to the sixteen Zimbabwean guest lecturers who contribute to the course.

Participants

In 1994, the majority of participants had a legal background. Of those with no legal training, the majority had a social science background in sociology or social work. In 1996, the proportion of non-lawyers had increased. 38 of the 44 participants are now working in organisations or institutions where knowledge on women and law is of great value in their employment.

NORAD's role

What NORAD has done, besides providing the funding, is having this course exported from Norway to Zimbabwe, which has contributed to the strengthening of local institutions and the development of a local network of people working within the area of women's law, law reforms and other social issues concerning women's rights. This has also successfully spread to neighbouring countries.

Constraints

The project is not yet fully "sustainable" in the sense that the University of Zimbabwe has not yet taken full responsibility for financing staff's salaries.

Conclusions

The Diploma Course has had an impact on capacity building at a number of different levels. It has had an impact on individual participants as well as on the work which is carried out within institutions such as government agencies, universities, and NGOs. It has also contributed to the development of a regional network focused on gender issues and the relationship between women and law.

There is reason to believe that all these processes have created an awareness which is a necessary condition for the improvement of the legal and social status of women in Southern and East Africa. While it is conceded that the ultimate objective of equality between men and women will take a

long time, it should also be acknowledged that substantial progress has been made and that the Women's Law programme has made a major contribution to this progress.

SWEDEN - Sida

The following examples of positive experiences have recently been initiated and should be taken as an illustration of trends to ensure good foundations for gender-sensitive programming. Most likely it will take years before one can establish with any certainty whether the promising attempts will actually lead to the results anticipated at the beginning. Which factors that were the most important in determining a possible success have yet to be determined.

Five-year support to Education Reform in Bolivia 1995-99

Location: Bolivia

Budget: MSEK 75 and MSEK 3 to Monitoring Unit (Reporting)

Partners: The Ministry of Human Development has implementation responsibility under the auspices of the National Secretariat for Education (SNE). Swedish support is channelled through the World Bank.

Context

The Bolivian Government announced that it was willing to undergo a complete reform of its whole education system. This decision was taken due to the serious problems facing the sector. There is a high level of illiteracy, particularly among the rural female population, and an ethnic imbalance which manifests itself by a high drop-out rate and low attendance rate among the Indian population compared with the Spanish population. The female drop-out rate is higher than that for men, but the greatest diversity in the drop-out rate is seen between the city and the countryside. There is a dearth of teachers, especially in rural areas, and many teachers are poorly trained. All in all, the content of teaching reflects discriminatory practices and ideas that show little respect for ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity or gender awareness.

Bolivia has passed an Education Reform Law which gives priority to the education of children, bringing a radical change to the education system in Bolivia. The Act is also remarkable in its Article 8, paragraph 2, which states the aim of equality between the sexes and the need to stimulate participation of women in society. Further, gender issues and the situation of women, as well as women's rights, are mentioned several times throughout the Law Document, and are specifically emphasised in most of the Articles of the Law.

Moreover, a document concerning gender equality in education is elaborated within the newly initiated "Sub-Secretariat of Gender Issues" within the Ministry of Education. The document is of high professional quality and reveals a profound understanding of important gender issues, discussing possible reasons for gender disparities in Bolivia, referring to debates on biological versus social explanations to the disparities, as well as discussing gender discrimination on different levels within the school system and possible steps to be taken to overcome these problems.

Objectives

- To improve the quality and equity of primary education.
- To strengthen the SNE's ability to set policies and guidelines for the education sector.

- To strengthen the capacity of the public education system to deliver education services effectively and efficiently.

The strategy to reach the objectives is two-pronged: both institutional and pedagogical reforms will be pursued.

Achievements

- A Gender Unit has been established within the Social Sector Unit of the World Bank's Office in La Paz.
- Teachers have become accountable to communities, and increased parental control has a positive effect on girls' enrolment levels.
- The number of female teachers outnumbers that of men. Of a total of 80,793 teaching staff, 34,709 are men and 46,084 are women. Also, in managerial positions in school administrations, which employ a total of 8,879 people, 2,705 are men and 6,165 women. This is expected to have a positive impact by increasing enrolment rates as sexual harassment will be reduced, and by improving the perception of gender roles by both men and women. Women and men alike will see that women take an increased part in wage employment.
- Textbooks and teaching materials have become culturally and gender-sensitive. Care has been taken in textbooks to show boys and girls in similar situations. Gender-aware stories are written and distributed. High-quality material is part of all programmes. All books are systematically scrutinised according to gender-sensitive criteria before distribution take place.
- Instructions and books are written in Spanish and Indian dialects. The majority of women in rural areas have no knowledge of Spanish; therefore, this reform is expected to benefit women the most.
- Content has become more relevant to people's everyday situations. Curricula have become more flexible and gender-sensitive.
- Measures have been taken to place primary schools closer to communities, as long distances to school has tended to discourage girls' attendance.

Factors contributing to success

- Sida, together with other like-minded bilateral donors, has strongly influenced the World Bank and gender issues have regularly been put on the agenda.
- The planning process has been closely monitored.
- Gender awareness was emphasised in the terms of reference for all activities involving Swedish-supported personnel.
- Key decisions have been taken on the basis of informed knowledge of gender roles in Bolivia. Regional experts and social scientists have been involved in all stages of the planning phase.
- The programme has been based on a participatory approach in which men and women in communities as well as teachers, the church, parents and others have actively participated.
- Institutionalised routines to influence all strategic decisions have been introduced during the early stages of programme design.

- Professional gender experts have been employed at all levels. Key positions were occupied by gender-sensitive women, such as Task Manager for the World Bank, and in managerial positions for pedagogic, curricula and teacher training reforms.

Constraints

Both the mid-term review of Bolivia's Education Reform¹³, prepared by CIDE¹⁴ in November 1997, as well as the annual revision report "Ayuda Memoria" from November 17-26 1997¹⁵, show that in spite of significant progress and the continuing development and achievements of education reform, certain objectives have still not been met. However, the reform process is substantial, complex and wide-ranging, and it will take time before all the objectives are met. The constraints pointed out are the following:

- People with whom the team met, even those who were aware of the content of the Reform, did not have a clear idea of what it consisted of or of what tangible effects it might have.
- Despite repeated efforts on the part of the Bolivian population to make the reform process their own, this has not materialised.
- Teachers are essential participants in an education reform, yet they have not been successfully incorporated into Bolivia's Reform.
- The importance of gender equity is emphasized in the general statement about the Reform. Yet, in spite of this, it does not seem to have been given the importance it deserves. There appears to be a lack of awareness about gender issues on the part of a number of people associated with the Reform. Since enrolment ratios do not show dramatic differences between males and females, there is a tendency toward complacency. There are various ways in which the education reform interacts with gender: equal access to education; equal treatment by teachers; avoidance of stereotyped representations in the content of texts and teaching materials; an important but difficult-to-define area having to do with education's role in overcoming deep-seated cultural attitudes that relegate women to inferior status.
- Statistics on educational enrolment ratios show somewhat higher drop-outs for girls, especially at secondary level and especially in rural areas, but the differences are not dramatic.
- The CIDE team heard occasional statements that there are cultural biases against education for women, but this is a form of discrimination that is difficult to diagnose and deal with.
- One of the most important problems is that teachers (including female teachers) treat students unequally. The pedagogical specialist of the CIDE team observed teachers asking questions only to boys, and tending to exclude girls from mathematical discussions.

Despite these constraints, the CIDE team sum up their report with three general observations:

- (1) The Reform is a reality and there have been notable achievements in the last two years.
- (2) In comparison with reform efforts in other countries, Bolivia has accomplished a great deal.

¹³ *Mid-term Review of Bolivia's Education Reform: Draft Report to ASDI of a study performed by CIDE, Santiago, Chile, November 1997.*

¹⁴ CIDE - *Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Educación*, Centre for Education Investigation and Development.

¹⁵ *Ayuda Memoria: Mision de Revision Anual, Programa de Reforma Educativa. 17-26 November 1997.*

- (3) In spite of challenges and problems that must be overcome, the reform is gaining in popularity and support and having a positive impact on classrooms, schools and community organisations.

Sida's role

In the CIDE team's view, Sweden's presence serves as a kind of "conscience" for the Reform, especially in drawing attention to important objectives such as promoting gender equity and emphasizing intercultural/bilingual education. At times, Swedish influence has been crucial in resolving conflicts between different actors involved in the Reform.

Lok Jumbish, People's Movement for Education for All, Rajasthan, India

Sida's financial contribution: Phase I, April 1992 – June 1994: MSEK 21 and Phase II, 1 July 1995 – 30 June 1997: MSEK 100.

Partners: Government of India and Government of Rajasthan. The funding is at the ratio 3:2:1, with Sida contributing 50 per cent. There are no Swedish or other foreign personnel involved with the implementation of the project.

Context

Rajasthan is situated in the North-West of India. Its population is about 47 million and in terms of area it is the second largest state in the country. As far as education is concerned, Rajasthan is India's most backward state. It has a literacy rate of 39 per cent (55 for male and 20 for female). In rural Rajasthan, the scenario is even worse. Only half of primary school age children attend school, and 70 per cent of girls from 6-14 years do not attend. Among those who start school, half drop-out within the first four years. The problems in Rajasthan are of socio-cultural and socio-economic character. The old feudalism is still prevalent, and the system of *Purdah* is common in the rural areas. *Purdah* implies restrictions for women; they cannot be seen without veil or talk when there are foreign men present. Females are considered inferior to males, and their domestic work is considered of such importance that they are often denied education. The custom of child marriage persists in spite of laws which forbid them, and there are at least one million working children in Rajasthan. Accessibility in the area is difficult due to deserts and mountains. There is also the recurrent problem of droughts, which oblige large sections of people to migrate to areas where they can find water and pasture for their cattle. The education system does not function satisfactorily. The quality of education is poor and teachers are absent. This contributes to a negative attitude towards education.

The Lok Jumbish Project was jointly formulated by the Government of India (GoI) and the Government of Rajasthan (GoR) in the wake of the adoption of the National Policy on Education in 1986 by the country's Parliament. *Lok* is a Hindi word meaning people, *Jumbish* is an Urdu word meaning movement; combined they denote the idea of a people's movement, as well as movement for the people. Lok Jumbish is an education reform which has adopted comprehensive innovative measures in order to achieve the overall goal of universalisation of primary education. The project presupposes that creation of a people's movement will generate a stimulus for human development which, in turn, will contribute to a basic socio-economic transformation.

The management of Lok Jumbish is an autonomous and independent Registered Society (NGO) jointly established by GoI and GoR. As a Registered Society, Lok Jumbish follows a set of rules, regulations and by-laws which provide it with a functional framework. The management operates at all levels: state level, district level, block level, cluster level and village level. Staff are trained and they play a

key role in creating mobilisation, in school mapping, micro-planning, training of village education committees and women's groups, etc. in co-operation with a large number of local NGOs.

Lok Jumbish is concerned with teacher training, school building, curricula reform, development of text-books, school libraries as well as education programmes, both formal and informal.

Lok Jumbish goals

- Provide, as far as possible, all children up to the age of 14 with access to primary education through the school system, and part-time non-formal education where necessary.
- Ensure that all enrolled children attend school/non-formal education centres regularly and complete primary school.
- Ensure that the quality of education is improved and that all children achieve at least minimum levels of learning.
- Create the necessary structures, and set in motion processes which will empower women and make education an instrument of women's equality.
- Pursue the goal of equity in education, between boys and girls and between the socially and educationally disadvantaged sections, and the rest of society, and also to initiate measures for provision of basic education for handicapped children.
- Make necessary modifications in the content and process of education to better relate it to the environment, people's culture and their living and working conditions.
- Effectively involve people in the planning and management of education.

Strategies to promote gender equality

Gender equity in education is one of Lok Jumbish' goals. In order to achieve this in Rajasthan, special attention has to be given to females in the area. Lok Jumbish is a complex and pervading project and there is not *one* strategy to promote gender equity. However, changing traditional attitudes towards females seems to be vital. Lok Jumbish has given the highest priority to creating a new system of education and a new culture of management. People's participation is emphasized in order to identify and mend gender disparities. The core of Lok Jumbish is villages' voluntary involvement; activity will not be started unless a village has shown interest in the project.

From the very beginning of Lok Jumbish, women's development has not been envisaged as a separate programme component but as a strategy to inform all programmes and activities. In the initial stage, villagers are gathered to discuss why they should have a school in the village and why girls should go to school. These discussions are led by Lok Jumbish staff. A school mapping is carried out. A map of the village is drawn where children in each house are marked. Different marks are given to boys and girls, those who attend school and those who do not. Disabled children are also marked on the map. On the basis of this mapping, the educational situation of a village is analysed and plans made to make primary education accessible to all children. This approach creates an awareness about the importance of education and gender issues and produces more reliable statistics.

The next stage is to establish different school committees. School committees get involved with different parts of the implementation of the project like, for instance, putting pressure on parents who are

not sending their children to school, building and maintenance of schools, influencing local authorities to expand primary school up to 8th grade or to start evening classes.

Special women's groups are formed. Female as well as male participants often lack conviction about the role of women's groups in achieving Lok Jumbish' goals. Organisation of gender-sensitive training in Lok Jumbish has been a complex task since the participants and their families normally follow traditional norms of behaviour in their daily lives. However, thanks to some committed and competent people, change in participants' attitudes has been possible to bring about.

Lok Jumbish' activities to increase educational participation is closely linked to other aspects of society like reproductive health, democracy and empowerment. Women's forums have been established for women to discuss various development programmes. Camps have been set up to train women workers as Lok Jumbish activists.

Women Teacher's Forums have been created as a result of low participation of women teachers in training programmes. Motivational training is emphasized in Lok Jumbish' teacher training programmes. In-service training of teachers is viewed as a crucial factor in qualitative improvement of primary education. The content of teaching material is screened to eliminate gender bias.

Generally, the Lok Jumbish project seeks to expand the number of pupils in primary education in Rajasthan. Special innovations have been introduced to increase educational opportunities: informal education centres; day and evening classes; primary education camps for girls; low cost hostels; and women's Residential Institutes for Training and Education.

Even though some of these innovations also benefit boys, they are primarily geared towards increasing girls' education.

In addition, there is a programme for Minimal Levels of Learning (MLL) which is viewed as a vehicle to couple quality with equity. Improving children's achievement levels is a major thrust area and an indicator for the success of the project. The strategies adopted for systematic implementation of MLL consist of: a) Benchmark; b) Recurrent Competency-based Teacher Training; c) Development of Teaching-Learning Material; d) System of Learner Evaluation; e) Supervision and Monitoring; and f) Post-tests.

Achievements

In December 1997, 12 300 villages were involved with Lok Jumbish activity. These villages comprise 10 million people. 2 200 day and evening schools have been established. In the evening schools alone, the project embraces 44 300 pupils: 30 000 girls and 14 300 boys. Gender aspects are mainstreamed through every activity Lok Jumbish is involved in. Women have facilitated school mapping and related activities. 1056 women's groups have been established and the ratio of women members in other committees exceeds 1/3rd. In December 1996, 6 535 teachers were involved in the MLL programme and 2 465 schools were covered. A post-test for pupil achievement was organised in April-May 1996. The random sample for the tests consisted of 311 schools covering about 5 200 class I and 4 200 class II students. The overall result showed an annual increment of learner achievement in different blocks from 6 per cent to 10 per cent.

Constraints

Lok Jumbish has been successful but so far only a limited number of villages have joined in on a voluntary basis. It remains to be seen whether success will continue when the project further expands.

Sida staff pointed out that since there is a dynamic and open-minded person pulling the strings in Lok Jumbish at present, much of the visions and ambitions might be dependent on him. This could possibly affect the project for a period of time if there is a need for replacement.

Lessons learned

The Lok Jumbish project builds on socio-cultural reality in Rajasthan and uses it as entry points for the project. The project is a partnership between the Government of India, a large number of NGOs and the Government of Rajasthan. Education and research institutions are also involved. Sida was willing to accept the concept of revolving planning where solutions have evolved over time. The flexibility this allows seems to be a vital concept with the project, and Sida was willing to run the risk with this concept when no other donors did.

People's participation is crucial in order to bring about change, and Lok Jumbish' experimental approach and inventions are characterised by Sida staff as decisive. The project is one hundred per cent recipient-oriented. Sida has no staff present and evaluations are conducted by local consultants. However, Sida follows-up closely on monitoring and consultations.

Sida staff themselves use the Lok Jumbish project as a model when it comes to developing methods in other Sida poverty and gender equality activities.

Although the project is not gender-specific, gender balance is at the core of the project. Sida staff claimed that the strategies to promote gender equity in the Lok Jumbish project are transferable to other projects.

UNICEF

UNICEF is conducting several activities on girls' education which it considers exemplary. Salient among these innovations is the setting up of basic education programmes using community participation to provide the basic infrastructure (schools and teachers) while using the nationally prescribed curriculum. Such programmes give priority to out-of-school girls supporting them for the first three years of primary education with the objective of facilitating their entry into the formal education system. Such programmes exist in Uganda, Guinea, Zambia, and Egypt. UNICEF is also funding efforts to use indigenous languages (Guatemala), to use non-traditional pedagogical approaches (as in Escuela Nueva in Colombia) to provide teacher training sensitive to gender (Cape Vert), and to other monthly stipends to low-income families so that their children do not have to work and, thus, may attend school. Several of these programmes, although not gender-focused, are reportedly facilitating the enrolment, retention, and school attainment of children.

Limiting the review of exemplary projects to those which have considerable data, including evaluations to support the findings, two projects were identified. They were said to have similar characteristics. Gender was incorporated into the whole system through policy implementation; there was

school and gender sensitisation of the community; local women were recruited as teachers; and NGOs played a significant role in co-ordinating community efforts and supervising school functioning.

The Community School Project in Egypt

National Context

Egypt has enrolment rates of 98 per cent for boys and 85 per cent for girls. But in rural Egypt, less than 15 per cent of girls attend school. It is estimated that about 800,000 aged between 6-15 do not attend school. In addition, there is a deficit of some 6,000 primary school classrooms. Constraints to girls' education relate primarily to the high direct and indirect costs of girls' participation, and cultural factors, such as contact with male teachers and "excessive" distance to school.

Features of the Project

The project sought to address the problem of school access via the establishment of community schools, covering grades 1 to 6. These would be efforts by community self-help and NGO resources for providing and maintaining the physical structure of these schools. Selected as community school sites were rural hamlets at least 2 kms away from the nearest public school, having no less than 50 out-of-school children, and having a community willing to participate in school provision and management.

Under a co-operative agreement between the community and the Ministry of Education, mediated by an NGO, the community provides classrooms and furniture, and ensures that children attend classes. The government, in turn, remunerates teachers through "facilitators"; it provides books and educational materials free of charge, and trains the facilitators. The facilitators come from the local community and are usually unqualified teachers. The community's education committee makes management decisions concerning schools and nominates facilitators to be trained (Zaalouk, 1995). UNICEF provides training for facilitators and also supplies supplementary instructions, including picture cards, games and puzzles, and a classroom library.

The role of NGOs has been crucial to identifying participating communities and negotiating the terms of work with them. NGOs are responsible for project implementation and on-site-management. Their co-ordinating role with the community, parents, and school committees has been essential. Three Egyptian NGOs have been involved; they were well-established and self-sustaining institutions with previous experience in health and income-generation before joining the community school initiative.

In the community school, there are no school fees whatsoever, children do not wear uniforms, and school supplies are given free of charge. Classes are friendly, and learning approaches involve creativity, planning, problem solving, and active learning. Children engage in learning through arts, songs, and games. They are not given homework. While the community school has not been designed pedagogically for out-of-school girls, its reliance on discovery and joyful methods of learning (such as the joyful learning principle first developed in Bangladesh and India) are attractive to girls. The community school functions as a multigrade classroom.

Some "pockets of resistance" within certain communities were detected, as some people thought that educated wives would "give one a headache and ask too many questions." Hence, NGOs have been very careful in their selection of friendly sites. UNICEF's major role was to train the project team and facilitators, and implement the project through local NGOs in the two selected provinces. Training of

facilitators is continuous, beginning with 8-10 days' training in self-evaluation, communication skills, and child psychology, and followed by monthly, and sometimes weekly, training at local level.

Evidence of Success

Very positive results are claimed in terms of access, attendance, and performance. Before the community schools started in the selected villages, the participation of girls in government schools was 23 per cent of those enrolled (no year specified); by 1995, 57 per cent of the girls in the selected hamlets were enrolled in community schools (Hartwell, 1997, p.17). Initially, schools concentrated on the intake of older girls (or former drop-outs), but have since then been pressured into serving younger groups.

The community project claims high student attendance (between 85 and 94 per cent), while drop-out rates are low, at 4.5 per cent for the girls and slightly more for boys. In terms of achievement, students in community schools seem to perform well, as their performance in a 1995 examination indicated that all community children passed grade 3 while those in government schools achieved a 67 per cent pass rate. A more formal evaluation of the programme found that community students did not register many gains in their first grade but registered considerable gains in reading in grade 2; all students were found to have difficulties with subtraction, but when their general knowledge was tested, they performed moderately well (Hartwell, 1997). Other indicators such as neatness and creativity were found to be especially high among community school students. These evaluations did not disaggregate the results by gender.

Interviews with some 60 mothers in two hamlets found that almost all the mothers felt that the school had had a positive effect on their daughters' behaviour. A MOE field evaluation reported that children who attended community schools were found to meet high standards of "cleanliness, tidiness and manners" (Hartwell, 1997, p. 20).

Other impacts of the community schools is that many women (many of them mothers) are now involved in literacy classes at the hamlets with community schools and that these programmes have had a 88 per cent retention rate over a one-year period. A few hamlets have also developed income generating projects and, in one of these, 15 per cent of earnings go towards improvement and maintenance of the community school. Hamlets that tended to exclude women are now allowing them to participate in education committees or to become facilitators (Zaalouk, 1995).

School mobilisation has led to the establishment of education committees that have been active in obtaining materials for pit latrines, cement and other building materials for schools. For some communities, this has also led to demands for water pipes and electricity, and improved roads from the central village to the hamlets.

Community schools are said to have had an impact on policy dialogue as educational officials at the district, governorate, and national levels have been involved in planning, implementation, training, and evaluation of schools. Key resource persons from universities and research institutions (e.g. Azhar University, Assiut and Sohag Universities, the National Center for Educational Examination and Evaluation) who contributed to the project have become its advocates within their respective networks.

There were 38 community schools (serving 1,037 students, of whom 715 or 68 per cent were girls) by 1994, and 125 community schools by 1995 (Zaalouk, 1995; Allemano, 1995). By early 1998, the project was serving 100 villages, with a total enrolment of 3,000 children (of whom 2,000 are girls). According to Allemano (1995), community schools were serving only the first two grades as of 1995. It is not clear from reading the existing reports whether all six grades of primary level are now being served.

Sustainability

Per-student cost estimates vary a great deal, from \$75 (Hartwell, 1997) to \$122 (Allemano, 1995). Hartwell calculates base recurrent costs such as teacher salaries, instructional materials, maintenance, and administrative costs at \$75 per student. She estimates start-up costs to establish a community school (identification and survey of hamlets, orientation to community, recruitment and pre-service training of teachers and support staff and provision of school equipment) at \$4,000 per classroom site. Recurrent costs to do collaborative planning, field testing with communities to gain support for the project through consultation, advocacy, and networking, have not been estimated but most of these are said to occur in the first stage of the programme; they are expected to diminish when the programme goes to large scale. At present, recurrent costs of government are \$80, which is slightly higher than the projected base recurrent unit costs. Zaalouk's cost estimates (1995) are different from those of Hartwell. He considers that the average student cost in 1994, exclusive of development costs and transport, was \$86, a figure greater than the average government cost of \$60 per pupil for formal schooling. But, Zaalouk argues that since repetition rates are non-existent, community schools are cost-effective, even though their costs are higher than those for regular schools.

There are several lessons learned from the Egyptian project (Hartwell, 1997, p. 27):

- The community tends to be eager to send girls to school when obstacles of distance and fees are removed.
- Rural communities, though impoverished, can make contributions in terms of land and buildings.
- Child-centered instruction can be successfully implemented by unqualified teachers.
- It is possible to recruit capable young women with the equivalent of a secondary school diploma as facilitators.
- The community school is an effective entry point into broader community development activities.
- The management of schools through local NGOs is a key strategy, as they have to provide continued technical support, guidance, and training to community schools.

The Hartwell findings are similar to those detected in other cases of community schools in Balochistan (Stromquist and Murphy, 1995).

Challenges Ahead

The main issues concern the financial feasibility of the community school model and the role of NGOs as the schools are brought to large scale.

Community schools are seen as making a significant contribution to EFA. The demonstration of community schools in Egypt, however, only suggests one solution. Attending to 2,000 girls out of the estimated 800,000 girls out of school is not yet a solution. It has not yet moved to large scale. In 1993, the MOE announced the establishment of a "Girls' One Classroom School Initiative" based on the community school models. Reportedly, the government plans to establish 3000 such schools. Several donors have expressed interest in this move to larger scale, including CIDA (which has been funding the project since 1994); CIDA's support would increase the number of schools to 200 by 1998. The Egyptian government is also reported to be considering a loan from the World Bank to expand the programme. In 1997, the government doubled capital expenditures for classrooms for primary schools and seeks to involve self-help and NGO sources for providing services (Hartwell, 1997).

The challenge of moving to large scale is being addressed through a major field conference for top ministry and government officials, donors, NGOs, and university staff, study tours to the community

schools, and national forums. The ministry has established an Educational Innovations Committee, chaired by the minister. This committee is in charge of examining the possible collaboration between community multigrade schools and Girls' One-Classroom initiative. Costs may be a problem in the expansion, as training costs and NGO co-ordination costs are high. As the grades in community schools move up, there will be a need for more preparation on the part of the facilitators. Mainstreaming the community schools would mean that they would become a special kind of public school, funded in part by the government and thus conforming to MOE teacher qualifications and curriculum standards. These issues plus the question of autonomy at the local level following absorption by the MOE remain to be discussed.

Program for the Advancement of Girls' Education (PAGE), Zambia

National Context

Zambia is not only a poor country, but the poverty of families has been magnified by the fact that 37 per cent of all households are caring for at least one AIDS orphan, and 7 per cent of households are child-headed. The 1990 census found that 44 per cent of primary school-age (7-13) children are not in school, of whom half are girls. Statistics disaggregated by residence indicate that primary schools accommodate fewer than two-thirds of rural girls, fewer than 17 per cent are in junior secondary classes, and only 4 per cent in senior secondary schools. School-related payments prevent poorer children from attending. A number of payments such as examination fees, PTA-imposed fees, payments for school supplies, and "desk fees" constitute substantial expenditures for rural households.

The project's key premise was that the girls' self-image and self-esteem are low and that these feelings are related to the gender gap. Since two-thirds of women are either mothers or pregnant by age 19, the project concluded that early marriages also accounted for much of the low achievement and participation of girls. Since sexuality and sex education are largely absent from the school curricula and classroom discussion, it was thought that schools are not contributing to a reduction of those girls vulnerable to AIDS infection.

Features of the Project

PAGE has been operating in two of Zambia's nine provinces since 1996 under UNICEF and Government of Norway support, building upon efforts initiated since 1994 with CIDA support. The project has several objectives: to create and promote public awareness of the importance of girls' education and empowerment, within the framework of EFA, to support the MOE in monitoring and analysing data on girls' education; to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of classroom practices by providing learners (especially girls) with basic competencies; and to implement specific interventions that directly impact on access, retention, and achievement of girls in schools (GOZ/UNICEF, 1996).

The national education policy contains policies on the education of girls. These include the need to create more boarding places for girls, to create special bursary schemes for girls, and to readmit girls who are forced out of school due to pregnancy (GOZ/UNICEF, 1996), but these are not reflected in the project's objectives. PAGE sought to mobilise the community by promoting universal child education and parental support for girls in school. It also sought to provide teacher training with pedagogical skills in maths and science, and skills to motivate girl students particularly girls in grades 6 and 7, to increase the proportion of female teachers and school principals so that they constitute half the personnel in pilot schools, to offer single sex classes in maths and science in grades 4 to 7, and to mobilise the community by promoting universal child education and parental support for girls in school.

PAGE has a strong and innovative research component. It addressed the perceptions of 10 year-old girls regarding sexual harassment. In several teacher colleges, teachers and students using forms of action research looked at classroom dynamics in terms of the involvement of girls and boys in class discussions. The Zambia project has also developed an innovative course in teacher education on gender and social change. This course presents a thoughtful approach toward an understanding of gender awareness by teachers and provides them with concrete activities for practice at the classroom level (Mitchell, 1995). As part of the national advocacy campaign, 5,000 copies of the Zambia Declaration of Girl's Education were distributed to schools and other stockholders.

Evidence of Success

Details about the impact of the project are sketchy. A mid-term evaluation was planned for mid-1997, but the results were not yet available at UNICEF's headquarters. The present description of impact is based on a technical evaluation (GOZ/UNICEF, 1997). This report indicates that advocacy at national and regional levels during 1995-96 were effective in producing management and policy changes that increased the number of girls who reach grade 8. Thus, while in 1994, 41 per cent of those in the eighth grade were girls, the figure for 1996 was 47.4 per cent. Reportedly, the Ministry of Education, influenced by the results of the pilot project so far, has recommended that activities building leadership commitment to girls' education be undertaken in all nine provinces of Zambia.

Two positive aspects of the project to date are that (1) it is gender-specific when it looks at what happens to the children at the classroom level, and (2) it has been successful in involving highly motivated educational leaders and teachers in the process.

Sustainability

There are plans to expand PAGE to all schools in the two provinces by 1998, and to national scale by 2001. At this moment, there are no evaluations of either cost or the attainment of objectives. There is some data concerning girls' enrolment at the 8th grade, but the implementation and impact of other objectives such as increased student performance, more women teachers and principals, and greater gender awareness on the part of ministry personnel have not been assessed.

Lessons Learned

Only few lessons can be drawn at this point:

- Teacher training institutions have welcomed the possibility of receiving gender-sensitive training, and an informative experience has taken place.
- Community mobilisation efforts are successful in raising awareness of the importance of girls' education and in enrolling them in school.

Challenges Ahead

There seems to be some reluctance on the part of the government to deal with curricula issues, given the slow pace of change.

Project documents present interesting financial data. One of them shows a 1996 MOE budget, in which expenditures are identified according to activities by gender focus. This budget illustrates how small the allotments are which are designated to meet critical objectives. "Providing in-service training for teachers to upgrade pedagogical skills in mathematics and sciences and methods of motivating girl

students" received 7.9 per cent of the budget; "strengthening the skills component of curriculum, especially targeting girls" received no funds for lack of implementation; and "increasing the proportion of female head teachers, senior teachers, and education managers and supervisors" received 3.7 per cent of the budget (UNICEF, 1997d, pp. 5-6). Another document, which shows expenditures by type of component, indicates that the amount assigned to UNICEF project personnel is as high or higher than the expenditures allocated for "training and capacity building" and "social mobilisation/advocacy" (GOZ/UNICEF, 1996, p. 32). These expenditures highlight the need for greater understanding of expenditure allocations within project budgets, especially when mainstreaming of gender in education is sought.

Lessons from Project Performance

1. Many parents become involved in their daughters' education when education is free or low-cost. Parents welcome schooling that is close to home and the workplace, that has female teachers, and that offers sanitation facilities.
2. Community schools are feasible. Even impoverished communities can be mobilised for the education of their children, including girls. Their support ranges from providing the basic infrastructure (buildings, furniture, blackboard, teacher salaries) to monitoring of educational services provided by teachers (attendance, class preparation).
3. At present, implementation of school access and emphasis on content and improvement of teaching practices are often perceived as mutually exclusive. Strategies to work on access are different from those needed to work on content and resocialisation, but they are complementary. Efforts to improve access include separate classes for girls, schools closer to home, stipends, latrines, more female teachers. Working on content requires accessing teacher training colleges, providing recurrent gender training for teachers, and working on mass media and parents to change values. There is a need to sharpen content and teacher training strategies.
4. The participation with women NGOs is helpful to conceive more gender-sensitive projects. The dialogue with civil society should be expanded to include many more of the existing women NGOs and persons involved in the women's movement. Expanding the circle of interlocutors is mandated by international agreements and is an explicit part of UNICEF policy.
5. Despite the persistent finding that girls' participation in schooling is greatly affected by economic conditions, the overwhelming majority of projects do not offer direct subsidies to promote girls' enrolment and completion. Only indirect support (free uniforms, relaxation of policy regarding uniforms, free textbooks and school supplies, reduced or eliminated school fees) is provided. This may not be enough to break families' dependence on girls' labour. The fear that stipends create dependency is not supported by empirical data.
6. UNICEF is currently trying not to make a distinction between formal education and informal education in the provision of primary education. But the fact is that the formal (government-run) system is more socially prestigious and assures continuation in the primary cycle. The question of "quality" in community schooling will take more than constant advocacy for this alternative mode of delivery.