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IWDA Symposium on the Harmonisation of Gender Indicators June 15-16, 2006 Canberra, Australia

Outcomes

The Symposium on the Harmonisation of Gender Indicators brought together 90 participants from diverse institutions including NGOs, government bodies, private consulting firms, academics and gender specialists to discuss Millennium Development Goal 3, “*To promote gender equity and empower women*”. Dialogue centred around the seven priority areas, 12 indicators and 3 sub-populations identified by the U.N. Millennium Project’s Task Force Report on Education and Gender Equality, which was co-chaired by Dr Geeta Rao Gupta. Dr Gupta was keynote speaker and facilitator of this Symposium.

Indicators for tracking progress on strategic priorities to promote gender equality and empower women, as proposed by the UN Millennium Taskforce on Gender Equality:

Education

- The ratio of female to male gross enrolment rates in primary, secondary, and tertiary education.
- The ratio of female to male completion rates in primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

- Proportion of contraceptive demand satisfied.
- Adolescent fertility rate.

Infrastructure

- Hours per day (or year) women and men spend fetching water and collecting fuel.

Property Rights

- Land ownership by male, female, or jointly held.
- Housing title, disaggregated by male, female, or jointly held.

Employment

- Share of women in employment, both wage and self-employment, by type.
- Gender gaps in earnings in wage and self-employment.

Participation in National Parliaments and Local Government Bodies

- Percentage of seats held by women in national parliament.

Crosscutting Themes

Three sub-populations of women the Taskforce recommends focusing on if poverty is to be reduced:

- Poor women in the poorest countries and in countries where poverty remains significant.
- Adolescents, who constitute two-thirds of the population in the poorest countries and the largest cohort of adolescents in the world’s history.
- Women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings.

The Symposium was hosted by International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), with advice and support from the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Gender Equity Working Group.

The purpose of the Symposium was to identify ways to fill the gap between gender policy commitments and actions taken, in view of the growing demand for accountability and results, and coinciding with the recent Australian White Paper that placed gender as an overarching principle, and recognized the need to operationalise a new gender policy.

The work of participants over the two-day Symposium resulted in a variety of insights regarding gender-specific indicators that act as accountability mechanisms, measuring the impact of gender mainstreaming. These include:

- Criteria for selecting indicators should be simple; few in number for each priority; policy relevant; comparable; affordable and appropriate to context.
- Indicators should be utilised at national, project and institutional levels.
- The process of collection and interpretation of data should always consider the question "to what end?", considering context and ensuring the process itself is not exploitative or puts women at risk.
- The need to move beyond sex-disaggregation to account for ethnicity, caste, age, disability, race, religion, sexual preference etc.
- Care should be taken in the interpretation and the storage of data.

Key Recommendations Resulting from the Symposium:

- 1) Form a working group to consider the recommendations and implement high priorities, with a subgroup to develop training modules. This could be formed from an extension of the ACFID Gender Equity Working Group to include wider sector members.
- 2) Recognise the value of mandates in ensuring gender is included, and explore ways of making performance on gender a milestone for payments in contracts.
- 3) Use the Gender Action Plan (GAP) framework, as outlined by the Asia Development Bank.*
- 4) Request ACFID monitor gender mainstreaming within its member organisations and prepare training modules on gender mainstreaming and working with gender indicators.
- 5) Aim for all organisations to conduct periodic gender audits and address the issues which emerge, including conducting additional training. Share resources, so smaller in-country NGOs also benefit from learnings.
- 6) Build the capacity of women in the Pacific and strengthen women's organisations working in gender indicators and statistics, such as the Pacific Women's Bureau.
- 7) Seek university linkage grants to explore issues relevant to taking work on indicators forward - eg methodologies for pooling data, research and review organisations and practices in terms of gender.
- 8) Seek agreement within the sector on issues of indicators including sex-disaggregated data by age.

* See Dr. Shireen Lateef's power point presentation from the Symposium, which can be found at www.iwda.org/resources.

Summary Report

Context for the symposium

- Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDG 3)
Success depends on the extent to which the priorities necessary to achieve this goal are implemented and the extent to which actions to meet the other MDGs address gender inequality.
- AusAID White Paper
 - Gender as an overarching principle
 - New Gender policy for Aus AID
- Opportunity has increased for sharing with the Development Sector at this time.

Window of opportunity

- To fill the gap between policy commitment and action
- To take advantage of the demand for accountability and results

Gender-specific indicators essential

- For making accountability mechanisms work to:
 - Examine outcomes and results and assess them relative to expectations (and/or baseline conditions)
 - Determine the causes for lack of success, learn from them and fix them
- For making gender mainstreaming work

Purpose of workshop

- To take advantage of current opportunities
- To build collaboration between stakeholders
- To identify indicators to measure progress
- To create strategic tools for action

Strategic priorities

- Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls while simultaneously meeting commitments to universal primary education
- Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Invest in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens
- Guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights
- Eliminate gender inequality in employment
- Increase women's share of seats in national parliaments and local government bodies
- Combat violence against girls and women

Priority populations

- Women living in poverty
- Adolescent girls
- Women in conflict and post-conflict settings

Criteria for selecting indicators

- Simplicity
- Few in number for each priority
- Policy relevance
- Comparability
- Affordability
- Appropriate to context

Indicator levels

- National
- Project
- Institutional

Workshop Insights

- Need for clarity of concept and goal to select appropriate indicator
- Importance of process in determining appropriate indicators - poor women at the centre
- Always asking - to what end?
- Care in interpretation of data
- Context is all
- Need to move beyond sex-disaggregation to account for ethnicity, caste, disability, race, religion, sexual preference etc
- Need for sensitivity in defining research focus and gathering data to ensure process itself is not exploitative or puts women at risk for introducing new gender practices
- Post-conflict provides a window of opportunity and risk
- Need to expand our interest in adolescents beyond sexual and reproductive health
- Indicators can be transformative – if done right, research itself can be empowering
- Developmental approach to this as everything else - work from where we are
- What happens to the data – how is it stored and how is it accessed

Ways Forward

- Form a working group to consider recommendations, prioritise and action high priorities
- Form subgroup to develop training modules so that pilot training can be held before 2007
- Seek AusAID funding for same
- Ensure training contextualised in real case studies of successful gender action plans and utilisation of indicators.
- Feed into YWCA Young women's conference in Melbourne in 2007.
- Design advocacy and media strategies around MDGs, highlighting positive results of having gender indicators built in to work
- Working group to include specific gender indicators in land mobilisation programs in the Pacific
- Develop indicators at a project level with partners in partner countries

- Explore ways of making performance on gender a milestone for payments in contracts
- Consider developing an industry award to demonstrate good outcomes in this area
- Circulate proceedings of symposium widely
- Share examples of Gender Action Plans (GAP) in practices and other case studies*
- Conduct a symposium on gender mainstreaming in institutions in a years' time to share progress, learnings in giving effect to these outcomes
- Recognise the value of mandates in ensuring gender is included
- Inclusion of gender performance requirements in individual jobs
- Requesting ACFID to monitor gender mainstreaming within its member organisations
- Requesting ACFID to prepare training modules on gender mainstreaming and working with gender indicators
- Aim - for all organisations to conduct periodic gender audits and address issues emerging including conducting additional training
- Facilitate collaboration with academic institutions re methodology and improvement of statistical skills within national statistical institutions
- Harmonise approaches to enable feeding up of project indicators into national indicators
- Share resources, so smaller in-country NGOs also benefit from learnings - so there is a chain of learning from CEOs to the field
- Collaborate and share with Pacific women, such as South Pacific Commission
- Work with the Office for Women's secretariats to hold Government accountable

* See Dr. Shireen Lateef's power point presentation from the Symposium, which can be found at www.iwda.org/resources.

Outcomes from Discussion Groups

Discuss was around indicators needed at national, project and institutional levels for each of the strategic priorities.

Education

Taskforce Indicators

- The ratio of female to male gross enrolment rates in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- The ratio of female to male completion rates in primary, secondary and tertiary education

Discussion of quality versus quantitative indicators

Quality Indicators

- Teacher registrations (sex disaggregated data)
- Ratio of teachers to students

Education at the Project Level

- A gender analysis is needed
- Needs to be questioned why are girls not going to school eg. Security issues, teacher quality, separate toilets, school fees, uniform, child labour, buildings, availability of classes / teachers

Critical that there is a quality focus at the project level

- Curriculum use and content
- Building quality
- Safety for girls and boys to attend school
- Shelter / boarding schools?
- Achievement and passing / course accreditation
- Representation

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Taskforce Indicators

- Proportion of contraceptive demand satisfied
- Adolescent fertility rate

Other indicators to consider

- Universal access to reproductive health services
- HIV prevalence in 15-24 year old pregnant women
- Condom use during high risk sex
- Percentage of the population aged 15-24 with comprehensive and correct knowledge of HIV
- Maternal Mortality Rate
- Proportion of births attended

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights at Project Level

- In monitoring and evaluation gender should be specifically addressed in addition to objectives and outputs etc
- Regardless of project sexual and reproductive health rights should be considered and reflected distinctly in project design and monitoring and evaluation
- Indicators devised and analysed. Up and down logic models for example logframe – goal, purpose, objective, outputs and activities
- Project level indicators should be coherent and synthesised with national indicators

Additional Thoughts

- Need four measurable indicators for involving women in sexual and reproductive health and rights
- All will be filtered by reality

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights at National Level

- High risk sex definition – “outside primary relationship”
- Unmet need – generally understood but there are limitations in information collected, eg. married women
- Keep contraception prevalence rate and unmet need?
- Should HIV be changed to sexually transmitted infection (STI)?
- Sex Education - (does adolescent need to be redefined as 10-19 years old)
- There is a conflict in not altering the indicator but rather altering measurements and outcomes
- Maternal mortality rate maintained and skilled birth attendants maintained

Agreements

- Prevalence of condom use among men having sex outside of primary relationship

- Contraceptive demand satisfied
- Adolescent fertility rate (10-19 years)
- Maternal Mortality Rate measured
- Percentage of schools offering comprehensive sexual health education
- Proportion of 15-24 year olds with comprehensive and current knowledge of STI's
- HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights at Institutional Level

- Implementation issues (as per Gender Action Plans presentation). Structural base and associated training. Handover mechanisms required
- Intersection of gender into progress
- Gender Action Plans (GAP) / gender audit- Asian Development Bank guidance
- Positioning of gender (AusAID / White Paper)

Infrastructure

Taskforce Indicators

- Hours per day (or year) women and men spend fetching water and collecting fuel

Additions

- Need to add fetching and carrying produce as well as water and fuel.
- Time use detail needs to be collected by sex and age

Infrastructure at Project Level

Project level needs to include quantitative and qualitative data of time use by gender and age.

- Women participating in design, implementation and management of infrastructure projects
- Market access
- Spin offs
- Changes in time use

Property Rights

Taskforce Indicators

- Land ownership by male, female, or jointly held
- Housing title disaggregated by male, female or jointly held

Constraints / problems with the current indicators

- Customary rights not taken into account
- Need initial gender analysis, eg. GAP analysis, to ensure context is respected
- Achieving and maintaining subsistence is the first goal – involves recognising access rights as basic rights before economic developments
- Urban squatter populations not included – different from rural issues
- “Property rights” is not just land holdings – wealth can depend on ownership of customary objects

Important Indicators of women’s empowerment through property rights

- Education, awareness, advocacy groups on women’s property rights. Measured by education progress, number of organisations, legal literacy (whatever legal system operated including customary systems)

- Women's equal legal status with respect to recognition of property rights (in custom and formal systems as relevant)
- Post-conflict and post-disaster contexts provide important opportunities for promotion of gender-inclusive titles and for collection of data required for indicators
- Equal, effective and informed participation of women in decision making about property including in land commissions and other decision making bodies.

Employment

Taskforce Indicators

- Share of women in employment, both wage and self-employment, by type
- Gender gaps in earnings in wage and self-employment

Employment at the National Level

- Important to understand gaps in earnings
- Who has access to the labour market
- What is defined as employment activity – e.g. subsistence farming

Employment at the Project Level

- Contextualise the target group – vulnerable stratified
- Indicators linked to sound gender analysis
- Empowering indicators linked to employment – e.g. nutrition
- Most significant change – method of qualitative data gathering
- What choices are available to women – access and control required

Participation in National Parliaments and Local Government Bodies

Taskforce Indicators

- Percentage of seats held by women in national parliament
- Percentage of seats held by women in local government bodies

Discussion

- Need to measure political participation occurring at a grassroots level or in less formal ways
- Supplement with national indicators that measure the percentage of women in leadership positions in NGO's
- Project level indicators – measure the percentage of women involved in decision making associated with the project

Violence against Women

Taskforce Indicators

- Prevalence of domestic violence

Violence against Women at a National level

- National Level – need to expand to include all forms of violence against women (not just domestic violence)
- Measure if there is national legislation on domestic violence and sexual assault – operationalise
- Measure number of services for female victims and male perpetrators

Violence against Women at a Project Level

- Qualitative data on men's attitudes to violence against women
- Qualitative data on women's perception of safety, legal processes
- Reporting
- All services providers trained on gender-based violence (police, health etc)

If you are interested in becoming a part of this ongoing discussion or working group please contact Executive Director of IWDA, Dr Suzette Mitchell, on (613) 9650 5574 or smitchell@iwda.org.au