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Some reflections on gender mainstreaming and intersectionality

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Introduction

Gender mainstreaming and intersectionality are both approaches to forwarding gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is the strategy used to implement gender and development thinking. It is defined here as:

the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is gender equality (ECOSOC 1997:2).

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) definition is used throughout the United Nations (UN) system and by its agencies, and is widely accepted by other multilateral and bilateral development organisations and NGOs. This definition is a compromise between a number of different perspectives and agendas. The result is inherent tensions and paradoxes that make gender mainstreaming simultaneously potentially transforming and potentially problematic. Nonetheless, mainstreaming remains widely accepted as the means to pursue gender equality. The first part of this paper is focused on gender mainstreaming.

Intersectionality is an approach to understanding the relationship between gender, race and other aspects of identity that are sources of systematic discrimination. The definition adopted here was:

An intersectional approach to analyzing the disempowerment of marginalized women attempts to capture the consequences of the interaction between two or more forms of subordination. It addresses the manner in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression and other discriminatory systems create inequalities that structure the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities, class and the like ... racially subordinated women are often positioned in the space where racism or xenophobia, class and gender meet. They are consequently subject to injury by the heavy flow of traffic travelling along all these roads. (United Nations 2001).

Intersectionality is an approach to understanding the differences among women and among men and the ways that these differences interact to exacerbate marginalisation. It

identifies subordination not solely as an issue of gender or race or class inequalities, but as a location where there are often simultaneous and compounding relationships of subordination. Intersectionality offers potential as a framework for contextual analysis that may improve development outcomes for women by ensuring that particular groups of women are not excluded in policy and practice. This is explored further in the second part of this paper.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming was adopted by the UN as the key methodology for achieving gender equality following the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995. This was endorsed by the Platform for Action (PFA) (United Nations 1995) and outlined as the approach that government, UN and other actors should take in the implementation of the PFA.

Gender mainstreaming is a political process that alters the balance of power; it is inherently 'complex and resistance will come in many forms' (Schalkwyk et al. 1996:5). Power is challenged not only because mainstreaming promotes women as decision makers, but also because it supports women's collective action in redefining development agendas. Thus, gender mainstreaming has the potential to be transformative in nature, changing the dominant paradigms in which we work.

Jahan (1995:13) categorises mainstreaming approaches as 'integrationist' and 'agenda-setting' or 'transformative'. The integrationist approach involves broadening the dominant paradigm to fit women 'in' without directly challenging power structures. The agenda-setting approach emphasises the transformative power of gender mainstreaming whereby women start to affect and alter the direction of the mainstream, rather than be submerged by or integrated into it. It is generally accepted that mainstreaming will only truly address the logic of inequality when it enables transformation of structures and relations (Beveridge and Nott 2002:300)

The essence of gender mainstreaming thus makes it a challenge to implement. The task is formidable not only because of the inherently political nature of its transformative potential, but because of the challenge of scale in terms of range and the nature of change required (Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2002).

Realising the potential of gender mainstreaming requires significant and systematic change. Experience to date suggests that the move from policy to practice has been challenging. Across the UN system and in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labor Organisation (ILO), the World Bank, government aid providers such as AusAID and NGOs, gender and development (GAD) policy and strategies have varied in their impact, but all have fallen short of the articulated goal of gender equality (see Riley 2003). In most cases, implementation has also fallen well short of declared policy.

Key issues that emerge from an overview of experience to date include:

- the common reality of partial implementation — making it difficult to determine definitively if the problem lies in gender mainstreaming as a strategy, or in the inadequacy of its implementation to date;
- the challenge of integrating mainstreaming into existing workloads, given its scope;
- the need for, and limits to, conceptual clarity;
- the need for further work on what constitutes good gender mainstreaming practice and good gender equity outcomes;
- the importance of appropriate and practical analytical frameworks and tools;
- the key role of training, at all levels, so people 'see' gender; and
- the importance of specific individual responsibility and accountability at all levels.

Jahan's early (1995) study on women in development (WID) and GAD policy implementation in the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UNDP and the World Bank identified a number of organisational-level weaknesses, including lack of accountability measures, lack of tracking of policy implementation and gaps between mandates and resources. Jahan stressed the importance of clear policy objectives to achieve outcomes. In a similar vein, AusAID's GAD Review found that confusion between WID and GAD methodologies affected the 'enabling GAD environment' (AusAID 2001).

Some assessments see significant barriers to change as inherent in large organisations (Schalkwyk et al. 1996:33). Others see hierarchical organisational structures and workplace cultures as obstacles to policy implementation (see Longwe 1999; Goetz 1997; del Rosario 1995). But there are also a number of texts on 'how to' successfully gender mainstream organisational change (see Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999; Macdonald, Sprenger and Dubel 1997). Political will within organisations, as well as ability, affects the degree to which they assist in building the capacity of staff to implement a gender mainstreaming strategy.

The broader operating environment also influences organisational priorities. Donors often fund short-term development projects (for example, three years) with an emphasis on delivering concrete, measurable outcomes. Measurable change in terms of gender equity may take longer to manifest and outcomes are often less tangible and more difficult to quantify. Short-term, outcomes-driven development models can make mainstreaming gender less of a priority. Changes underway to lengthen time frames make possible the wider review of tools to better capture incremental change.

Deeper questions about the usefulness of mainstreaming as a strategy persist and influence commitment. Some feminist writers challenge the development mainstream per se and thus see gender mainstreaming as fundamentally flawed (see Porter and Judd 1999; Brownell 1999). Other recent critiques argue that GAD does not integrate 'other' voices into its theoretical framework, although some authors note that GAD does have the space and flexibility to include indigenous voices (Rathgeber 1995). Some point to the challenges of successfully involving men in GAD projects as indicative of the overall challenge of mainstreaming (Roche 1999; Chant and Gutmann 2000). Queries about the adequacy of tools and knowledge, or the value of 'good' gender mainstreaming rightly raise doubts and concerns, even among those who are very committed to gender equality. However, they also provide cover for limited commitment.

There is a paradox in the immense amount of information and training available for institutionalising gender mainstreaming, apparent institutional acceptance through policy directives, and the outcomes achieved. In-house multilateral, Northern NGO and national government audits and reviews all suggest policy outcomes are not as intended. The tendency to shelve difficult reports in turn limits their capacity to inform institutional change (Hunt 2000). Organisational learning is also mediated by the internal tendency towards caution when individuals and organisations worry that honest identification of areas for improvement will have negative ramifications. NGOs, commercial firms, bilateral and multilateral agencies continue to 'speak of gender mainstreaming', tick boxes and guess percentages of budgets allocated to women and men.

There is a spectrum of views on the experience with gender mainstreaming. At one end it can be argued that the challenges and learnings of recent years are an inevitable part of implementing a new strategy that is far-reaching in its vision and in the scale of change required. At the other end are arguments that gender mainstreaming is an inherently flawed approach to gender equity that threatens to 'disappear' women into the mainstream rather than empower them.

At the same time, as reviews confirm the challenge of implementing existing strategies, there are calls for gender

mainstreaming to extend its scope. Although gender and development is founded on a recognition of difference, gender analysis is, in the main, focused on differences *between* genders and does not sufficiently account for the differences *among* women. Some argue that this failure to distinguish gender from other aspects of identity such as class, religion, race, ethnicity, age, ability, caste, sexuality, and location slows the transformative potential of the mainstreaming approach (Kerr 2001). And it is problematic over the long term to pursue a strategy that locates the primary basis for poverty and exclusion in gender. Mainstreaming must eventually incorporate a broader agenda that accounts for other avenues that constitute and regulate difference (Beveridge and Nott 2002:311).

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that seeks to acknowledge the impact of multiple identities and discriminations on women's and men's experiences. Proponents argue that the differences among women as a class and men as a class are such that effectively pursuing gender equality necessitates development of more holistic models and analyses that integrate other dimensions of discrimination. This need not complicate the gender mainstreaming agenda, but, rather, make it more relevant and more inclusive of other factors that inform and mediate women's and men's experiences differently. But it does present the immediate challenge of how to learn from the experience of a decade of mainstreaming while engaging with intersectionality as an approach that may help overcome some of mainstreaming's weaknesses.

Critical to the development of ideas about intersectionality is Crenshaw's (1991) exploration of the race and gender dimensions of violence against women of colour, and argues that the experiences of women of colour are frequently the product of intersecting patterns of racism and sexism. Various other writers have explored the failings of gender analysis to comprehend racial and class divisions among women (Marchand and Parpart 1995; Mosse 1993).

Given this, the growing number of development organisations adopting a rights-based approach to development over a gender mainstreaming approach could be perceived as a more holistic and promising approach. Kerr (2001) argues that it is within this context that an intersectional analysis of identities such as race and gender can inform human rights approaches, particularly given perceived tensions between respect for diversity and recognition of the universality of (women's) human rights.

Nevertheless, intersectionality is still primarily used to frame the experience of Black women in the global North. These limits were acknowledged by the editors of the 2002 *Feminist Economics* special issue on gender, colour, caste and class, whose

aim was 'to advance the limited, sometimes parochial, dialogue about the intersection of race and gender' (Brewer, Conrad and King 2002:9):

There is as yet limited discussion of intersectionality in terms of class/economic status and race and gender in the global South. If an intersectional approach is to be useful in the development field, it needs to be informed by the experiences and views of women in the South. We need to know how understanding the situation of an HIV-positive woman living in South Africa as an intersection between gender, race and HIV status would affect development work.

There has been some development of intersectionality thinking, models and implications through a series of recent international meetings. In the lead up to the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance (WCAR) in, Durban, South Africa, the UN Division on the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) held an Expert Group Meeting in Zagreb, Croatia, 2000. Its aim was to discuss how the gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination could be incorporated in the WCAR process.

Three expert papers were presented, including one by Crenshaw (2000), proposing an intersectional approach to gender and race discrimination. Building on her earlier work, Crenshaw argues that intersectional subordination is often invisible, with women who experience multiple forms of discrimination being inadequately addressed by either gender or race discrimination frameworks; the result is likely to be either over-inclusion or under-inclusion. Over-inclusion occurs when a problem is presented as gender subordination without consideration of the simultaneous racial or ethnic subordination (for example trafficking). Under-inclusion occurs when a subset of women experience a problem that is not seen as gendered, because is not the experience of women from the dominant group (for example sterilisation).

Crenshaw seeks to capture both *dynamic* and *structural* causes of multiple forms of subordination. To explain this, she uses the metaphor of roads and traffic. The roads are the axes of power/subordination (such as patriarchy, racial hierarchy and class system) that *structure* the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities and classes in the social/economic world. The traffic on these axes/roads is made up of the specific acts and policies that create burden, or the *dynamic* aspects of disempowerment. Marginalised women are located 'in the cross roads' where two or more axes intersect. Here they are subject to a heavy flow of 'traffic' from two directions, increasing the risk of 'accidents'.

The interaction between different aspects of identity can effectively disempower and silence. For example, the obligation

women have to their social or national group can be an obstacle to organising for material change in their lives. Indigenous women may feel constrained to speak out against violence perpetuated by Indigenous men because of concern about being interpreted as betraying the groups' interest (Crenshaw 2000:21). Such women are affected by the privileging of social, ethnic or national interests over their gender needs. Women who criticise practices deemed 'traditional' or 'cultural' can find themselves in a similar predicament. Practitioners, advocates and Western feminists who ignore such challenges and needs leave women of colour at the crossroads to dodge racism and sexism. One consequence can be race/nation resistance to feminism and feminist resistance to an anti-racism focus.

Ways forward?

There may well be benefits in developing a more comprehensive gender mainstreaming tool that not only accounts for the differential impact of policy and programs on women and men, but also accounts for other modes of subordination. This could result in a gender mainstreaming strategy that is more relevant and more contextual, more attuned to the reality 'on the ground,' and thus more transformative and more effective in achieving development goals.

At the same time, the experience of gender mainstreaming in the last decade suggests that efforts to expand ways of understanding and analysing are likely to be constrained in their impact if the barriers and challenges experienced to date are not addressed. We may well need a more comprehensive, holistic, integrated and responsive understanding of discrimination if efforts to improve gender equality are to be more effective. How might this be pursued in ways that also acknowledge and address the practical barriers and challenges experienced to date? Some questions emerging from issues outlined in this paper are listed below, to focus and encourage discussion about practical ways to improve gender equality.

Conceptual and policy issues

1. How effective has gender mainstreaming been as strategy to achieve gender equality in the Australian context?
2. At the level of policy, are there additional steps that would help in putting declared policies into practice? What is required for these to happen?
3. Does the tension between the potential of gender mainstreaming to transform power structures and ways of working, and to absorb and 'disappear' women's voices and interests need to be addressed for substantial progress to be made towards gender equality?

4. Is the primary objective of gender mainstreaming as it is currently practiced to make programming more successful or to increase gender equality? Can one be achieved without the other?
5. Does gender mainstreaming adequately account for diversity amongst women? In what ways, if any, would an intersectional approach be helpful in broadening the mainstreaming strategy?
6. What learnings from the experience of implementing gender mainstreaming need to inform development of frameworks that better account for the intersection between different sources of discrimination?
7. What might be fruitful ways to assist the development of intersectionality thinking in areas such as religion, HIV/AIDS status, ability, and sexual identity.

Practice and implementation issues

8. What are the roles of various actors in narrowing the gap between policy and implementation? Are there areas where collaboration between stakeholders would help?
9. To the extent that there are structural constraints within institutions implementing gender mainstreaming, what practical steps can be taken to address them?
10. What approaches have people found helpful in negotiating the mainstreaming of gender into programming with partner governments or counterpart organisations?
11. In your experience are gender-focused activities more susceptible to budgeting constraints? What are the implications of this in your experience? What other options are available to improve budget outcomes for women?
12. Can we, currently, adequately define and describe good (or promising) practice and approaches to gender and development?
13. How can promising practice best be identified, modelled, replicated and shared?
14. What is a good gender mainstreaming outcome? Are existing monitoring and measurement tools adequate? To what extent do they provide a basis for developing tools that capture the interaction of various forms of discrimination?
15. What (tools, information, approaches) would make a practical difference to the capacity of non-specialists (desk officers, project workers, contractors) to give effect to gender equality policies?

16. What are the practical challenges and possibilities for mainstreaming gender in areas such as country strategy documents, institutional strengthening programs, sector-wide programming, thematic programming, training, performance assessment and appraisal, tender assessment and contracting?
17. Financial audits are a mandatory requirement in many areas of development activity. What are the disadvantages, benefits, costs and practical challenges associated with introducing more specific, mandatory requirements regarding gender performance.

These are certainly not the only questions to be asked, but are offered as a way to start unpacking the challenges of gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality.

Note

This article is a condensed version of the background paper distributed prior to the International Women's Development Agency think tank, Brisbane, 3–4 July 2003. A full version of this paper was printed as part of the Melbourne University Private School of Development Studies Working Paper Series. The background paper did not purport to be a comprehensive overview of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality. Rather, it provided a brief background on these approaches, policy directions and, in the case of mainstreaming, experiences with implementation, to enable some shared knowledge of trends, issues and ideas, and provide a basis for wider discussion and collaboration. Two other documents were also suggested as useful background: UN 2001, *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview*, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, New York; and Marsha Darling, 2002, 'Human rights for all: Understanding and applying "intersectionality" to confront globalization', AWID Forum, 3–6 October 2002, Guadalajara, Mexico.

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IWDA Gender and Development Dialogue 3–4 July 2003: Summary report

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Context

Following the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, there was widespread commitment, among bilateral and multilateral agencies, non-government organisations and others, to gender and development at a policy level, and to gender mainstreaming as a strategy for pursuing gender equality. There was common agreement that gender in development mattered, and that integrating gender at all levels was central both to effective development work and to the realisation of women's rights.

Eight years on, there is an almost universal gap between policy and implementation. The promise of gender mainstreaming — to bring gender considerations from the margins to the centre — is not being realised.

Women continue to be under-represented in development activities, to obtain fewer benefits, and have more limited control over and access to resources. Some development activities actively disadvantage women. And we regularly see policies, programs and projects that are simply gender blind.

Development organisations are of a belief that gender matters and that gender equity in development is a priority objective and a marker of effective, quality work. But the gap between commitment and implementation is similarly virtually universal. There is a further apparent paradox between the immense amount of information and training available to support institutionalising of gender mainstreaming and the outcomes achieved.

Despite years of good policy development, and clear commitment to gender equality and to mainstreaming of gender in development, the experience of multilateral and bilateral agencies, commercial firms and non-government development organisations alike indicates that the translation of policy into outcomes remains challenging. Whether one comes from a public policy perspective, a strategic planning perspective or a gender activist perspective, this situation requires reflection and response.

At the same time as reviews confirm the challenge of implementing existing strategies, there are calls for gender mainstreaming to extend its scope to integrate other aspects of discrimination such as race, religion, health status and ability.

There are also other trends influencing the context in which this work is done, including moves to a stronger thematic focus, and decentralisation of policy and management responsibilities. Do these trends offer new opportunities to improve gender outcomes or risk complicating an already challenging task?

Overview

On 3–4 July 2003, the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) convened a gender and development dialogue to take stock and explore ways to collaboratively move around or beyond challenges and barriers to promoting gender equality in development. The forum was held in collaboration with the World YWCA, with the support of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Queensland; Development Studies Network, Australian National University; International Development Support Services Pty Ltd (IDSS); ACIL Australia Pty Ltd; GRM International Pty Ltd; SAGRIC International Pty Ltd; OXFAM/Community Aid Abroad; World Vision Australia; and Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC); and assisted by IDP Education Australia Ltd and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

The gender and development dialogue brought together senior decision makers and specialists from different parts of the development sector, including NGOs, academics, commercial development firms, consultants with decades of collective experience in gender work, government representatives, and international and regional experts. The rationale was that by sharing challenges, ideas, learnings and approaches among players from different parts of the sector, spaces for change could be identified and practical ways to improve development experiences and outcomes could be found. The dialogue was structured to maximise opportunities for cross-stakeholder dialogue on gender issues, as a first step in an ongoing process to strengthen cooperation on gender between aid and development workers in different parts of the sector.

A background paper was prepared and distributed to participants prior to the forum (the full text can be accessed through the IWDA website at <http://www.iwda.org.au/features/gender_symposium/index.htm>). The paper provided an overview of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality to

enable some shared knowledge of trends, issues and ideas, and provide a basis for wider discussion and collaboration at the forum. The fact that the paper identified that challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming were virtually universal provided a safe and constructive space for a diverse group of stakeholders to openly discuss barriers, ideas and priorities — to look forward to practical solutions.

The forum focused on three themes:

- gender mainstreaming: taking stock;
- closing the gap between policy and outcomes: good practice in building equality; and
- intersectionality and gender: shaping the future.

These themes allowed participants to explore the central role of gender in development, moves to more holistic approaches to development, and the challenges experienced across the sector in implementing gender mainstreaming. The program did not presume what the issues were from any particular perspective, but sought to allow actors to say for themselves how things looked, thereby identifying spaces for change, opportunities to address barriers in practical ways that would fit their needs, and possibilities for collaboration.

What follows is the summary of the discussion, open sessions, working groups and feedback from participants during the forum in Brisbane, 3–4 July 2003.

Outcomes

IWDA deliberately left open the question of outcomes from the meeting, to maximise participants' ownership of proceedings and avoid absorbing too much time in negotiating agreed conclusions among a very diverse group. There were some very clear common concerns, themes and priorities, with general agreement from participants that the forum was timely and that bringing together players from different parts of the sector was particularly valuable given the limited opportunities for structured cross-stakeholder dialogue. There was also agreement that the status quo is not acceptable, and that participants would need to work individually and collectively in some new and different ways to make change happen in the current environment. Working together across organisational and sectoral boundaries was seen as essential, and there was a willingness among those present to be part of 'communities of interest' across organisational boundaries to take particular issues/work forward.

Other recurring themes included:

- Mainstreaming has value, but it has also been a problem in as much as it 'disappeared' women from the agenda. It has provided an opportunity for organisations to render staff and programs that focus specifically on women redundant due to

gender being 'mainstreamed'. Hence gender is everywhere but nowhere in organisations and programs.

- Putting in place policies to mainstream gender doesn't necessarily lead to the commitment of senior management to make real change. Gender training tends to go to a converted audience rather than reaching those who really need it. Nothing will change unless those in power listen to the gender dialogue. The challenge remains to get men involved in the need for change, to be active partners and to acknowledge that gender equality is a basic human right. The intention of GAD is that women cannot achieve equality unless those who have power share/make space.
- Doing good gender work is a complex undertaking that requires high levels of knowledge and skill. But many of those who are required to take account of gender in policies and programs don't have gender analysis skills. We need to invest in more straightforward, useable, practical, context- and sector-specific resources for use in analysis.
- We need to invest in training. There is a sense in which decision makers in organisations feel that gender has been done — that people understand and have internalised its importance, so there is less need for specific in-depth training. Given the rate of staff turnover in organisations, and the lack of a comprehensive understanding of gender by most staff, this is a flawed assumption. There remains a need for a conscious investment to increase knowledge and training.
- There needs to be more and better documentation of approaches to gender analysis that work and a sharing of this between stakeholders. We need to find mechanisms that make this possible in a sector that is increasingly structured around competition among commercial and non-government organisations.
- Individual and organisational responsibility and accountability for gender strategies, implementation, reporting and outcomes needs to be formalised and obligatory, so that there is a clear and specific requirement to integrate gender, and a basis for individual and organisational accountability for achieving outcomes. Performance needs to be monitored at the agency level, not just the project or individual level and action taken where outcomes are consistently under-achieved.

There need to be direct costs to poor performance and incentives and rewards for good performance. If gender is a key requirement of effective development, it needs to be treated as such.

- Gender mainstreaming as currently practiced does not account for the diversity of women. So we need to ask fundamental questions about which women are being mainstreamed in development programs.
- While the term intersectionality is new and, for some, unhelpful, recognition of the need to address the multiple layers of discrimination that women experience is not new. The specifics of gender inequality cannot be understood without taking account of other aspects of discrimination that can compound women's situation, such as race, class, caste, ethnicity, marital status, sexuality, age and religion.
- Effectively addressing gender inequality requires a detailed assessment of the specifics of context. If all aspects that affect a woman's reality are to be appropriately considered, women must be enabled to tell their own stories so that their concerns and context can be understood from their perspective.
- We know what works in terms of involving women and beginning to address inequality. The challenge is getting support and resources to do things on a scale large enough to make a difference for a reasonable number of women and girls.

Priorities and recommendations

A range of priorities and recommendations emerged from four working groups in the final session of the forum. These groups advocated a need to:

1. increase clarity around language and concepts, to facilitate a common understanding of core concepts and clearer and more effective communication to different audiences;
2. increase targeted communication strategies and policy dialogue;
3. improve documentation and dissemination of policy, issues, case studies, learnings and good practices, including through collaboration among organisations. Tools for strengthening the way gender issues are addressed must meet the needs and realities of organisation;
4. learn from international benchmarking — lessons from developing countries;
5. commit to contractual/obligatory development of gender strategies, implementation and reporting in the sector, so that there is a formal requirement to

integrate gender, and a basis for individual and organisational accountability for achieving policy outcomes. Performance needs to be monitored at the agency level, not just the project level. If there are few direct costs to under-performance and limited direct incentives to excel, change will be slow;

6. introduce standards for gender knowledge in tender selection panels, include gender specific outcomes and indicators in logframes, and make gender equality results more explicit in contracting arrangements;
7. review of the impact of gender mainstreaming on organisation policy and practice, with a particular focus on capacity building;
8. look for opportunities to collaborate on resources and documentation, for example, the Global Development Network has a research competition for developing country researchers;
9. revive networking that links women and organisations internationally and develop inclusive forums for discussion on GAD, to foster a collaborative environment, for example, an online forum with participation across organisations;
10. provide feedback on this forum (and similar discussions) within our own organisations, to encourage dialogue on gender. Subject areas for feedback could include the potential of software to reach very poor, illiterate women (for example, Anne Walker's CD for use in Africa); HR processes; the need to change criteria and cultures biased against women's expertise and ways of working; and the need for gender equity to be addressed on panels (for example, to review tenders and provide technical advice);
11. be more inclusive of mechanisms to explore organisational trends (such as devolution) and an increased focus on themes and sectors (such as governance or HIV AIDS) and their impact on gender work;
12. provide adequate resourcing of gender work and competence within organisations is a priority, including in design, implementation, monitoring and review groups and technical advisory bodies. If it is hard for busy desk officers to access specialist knowledge, and there is limited time and accountability for integrating gender, it is no surprise that outcomes are patchy;
13. work strategically, to use the current focus on themes such as governance or capacity building as

a vehicle for promoting gender equality and demonstrating the value of taking gender seriously in development;

14. review gender issues and policies within the human resource areas of organisations. Most development organisations at senior levels remain very male dominated, and practices and policies are not supportive of women's contributions and values. There are still too few women on boards in the public and private sectors. There is a need to identify mechanisms and strategies to put a gender perspective back into high-level decision making, including increasing emphasis on leadership training;
15. exchange ideas and strategies to strengthen our own organisations;
16. lobby funding organisations (government, private and NGO) to review terms of reference and selection criteria for consultants, to eliminate criteria that exclude or work against women's experiences and expertise; and
17. address gender inequality — we need to develop a vision for a different future, with a focus on the value base of society, legal change, education, and media.

Participants' suggestions re IWDA roles on issues discussed

Feedback forms sought participants' views on the roles they see IWDA playing on the issues discussed at the GAD dialogue. The suggestions offered to IWDA, from the forms returned, are reproduced below, grouped roughly by theme. They provide a further indication of priorities and areas for development.

Research

- help link research partners from Australia with overseas;
- increase collaboration with many stakeholders that are working in developing countries;
- develop research papers/program using framework referred to by Beris Gwynne from FDC; and
- identify well-targeted research to take some of the issues forward.

Best practice

- promote 'best practice' — to stimulate/inspire others;
- develop and duplicate leadership training/mentoring programs;
- increase partnerships with other NGOs to undertake development projects; and

- develop forms and charts available to all stakeholders, for audits, evaluations, etc on the implementation of gender equity policies.

Advocacy

- IWDA could act as the secretariat for a resource group for lobbying efforts;
- develop a media press kit on gender equity policies; and
- work with ACFOA on lobbying donor agencies to review their processes to get gender back on the agenda.

Next steps: options and ideas

Some of the suggestions made at the forum can be set in train quite quickly, others will take discussion, development, strategising and advocacy. One specific, concrete outcome from the forum is a collaboration between IWDA and the Development Studies Network at the Australian National University, to produce this issue of *Development Bulletin*. The aim is take the issues discussed to a wider audience and set the scene for a conference in 2004/2005 that brings together analytical, policy and program developments to look at where we are with gender and development a decade on from Beijing, and explore the organisational and political dimensions of taking intersectionality and gender issues seriously in an increasingly complex and dynamic sector.

A number of donors expressed interest in exploring opportunities for collaboration such as joint capacity building/training for their own staff, consultants, contractors, NGOs, partners in the development and implementation of gender strategies, and in good gender practice. They would also explore jointly developing gender training and resources for particular sectors and themes, such as governance or sustainable livelihoods.

Other participants signalled their interest in being part of virtual working groups to share learnings and ideas and develop strategies for the better integration of gender in strategic areas such as governance, post-conflict rebuilding and HIV/AIDS.

Your feedback

IWDA will continue talking with participants and other organisations about ways to take forward the change possibilities identified during the two days of dialogue. We would appreciate feedback on the ideas below, and an indication of ways in which your organisation could be involved:

- establish and facilitate an email discussion group on key issues emerging from the forum;

- make papers/presentations from the GAD dialogue, and evolving discussion and proposals available via web;
- convene quarterly (or more frequent) informal lunch/discussion on gender and development issues — to network, exchange information and explore ideas;
- establish a working group of consultants — AusAID, commercial firms and NGOs to agree on practical steps to strengthen integration of gender into the tendering process (tenders, tender assessment, panels, consultant teams) and program delivery, and enhance accountability for gender outcomes;
- establish a virtual working group to develop/bring together strategies, resources, etc for promoting gender equality through programs focused on:
 - (a) governance
 - (b) capacity building of civil society
 - (c) post-conflict rebuilding
 - (d) HIV/AIDS
- organisations to undertake their own review of barriers and challenges in giving effect to gender and development policies and mainstreaming strategies, and identify practical steps to address these, with associated timeframes and indicators; and
- organisations to review existing accountability mechanisms (for achieving gender policies and outcomes) and identify ways that these could be strengthened to help organisations achieve their declared objectives.

We encourage the addition of other initiatives and suggestions, and honesty in terms of whether you think particular ideas are worth pursuing and what you see as the role of your organisation, for example, as a contributor of resources, as a facilitator, coordinator, host or participant. Please forward your views to Gender and Development Dialogue, PO Box 64, Flinders Lane, Victoria, 8009, or email with 'Gender and Development Dialogue' in the header to iwda@iwda.org.au.