



Irish Aid

Government of Ireland

Rialtas na hÉireann

Gender Equality Policy

Review Report

Final

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**By: Sinéad Murray,
Aisling Swaine (consultant)
Áine Doody**

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Irish Aid Gender Equality Policy was published in 2004. It sets out a policy framework for Irish Aid's approach to gender equality and includes strategies and recommended areas of intervention to advance its implementation. The policy's goal is to **"support the achievement of gender equality as an essential component of sustainable human development."**¹ The objectives of the policy are to:

- Advance equal rights for women and men.
- Eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of and benefit from resources and services.
- Support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision making.

The policy sets out two strategic approaches for implementing the policy:

- Mainstreaming and
- Direct support to gender equality and women's empowerment programmes

Adopting this twin-track approach, the policy then outlines how these strategies might be applied in policy dialogue, general budget support, sector-wide approaches, area-based programmes, partnerships with civil society organisations, working with multilateral organisations, institutional development and capacity building for partners and within Irish Aid.

This report details the findings of an internal review which took place in 2010 to identify the key challenges and areas of progress in the implementation of the policy with a view to updating it. The review entailed an examination of documentation, consultations with staff and a small number of Civil Society Organisations, and a study of the external environment undertaken by the independent organisation, BRIDGE. Data from a review of Irish Aid's progress towards addressing gender equality undertaken in 2003 provided a baseline against which key areas of progress and continuing challenges were viewed.

2. A Changing Environment

From the outset, it was important for the review team to take cognisance of a number of key issues which have emerged, both internal and external to Irish Aid, since the publication of the Gender Equality Policy in 2004. These include the disproportionate impacts of climate change, increased food and fuel prices, and the global financial crisis on poor women and girls. In addition, there is increasing recognition of the severity of the problem of Gender Based Violence (GBV), particularly in conflict situations. Furthermore, recent reforms of aid delivery, most notably the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, have provided new opportunities and mechanisms to translate donor and government commitments on gender equality into improved practice. New policy commitments to gender equality are set out in the Irish Government's *White Paper on Irish Aid* (2006). These commitments are reinforced in Ireland's *National Women's Strategy* (2007-2015) and echoed by the Hunger Task Force report of 2008 in which explicit consideration is given to 'women and agriculture'.

All of these issues and developments have had and will continue to have implications for the implementation and achievement of the objectives of Irish Aid Gender Equality Policy.

3. Findings of the Review:

3.1 Notable Areas of Progress

Gender Mainstreaming: Progress in gender mainstreaming can be seen in strengthened gender analysis in Irish Aid's Country Strategy Papers, cross-sectoral ways of working at Embassy level and strengthened efforts to address mainstreaming with Civil Society and UN partners. Some examples of progress include:

- In Zambia, Irish Aid succeeded in getting cross-cutting issues, including gender equality, back on the education sector agenda.
- In Ethiopia, an Irish Aid supported programme to increase girls' access to education is also expected to positively influence the environment for girls by reducing sexual violence and harassment and promoting a 'girl-friendly' atmosphere.

¹ DCI (2004) Gender Equality Policy pg 7

- In Uganda, Irish Aid supported the Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development to mainstream gender and HIV/AIDS perspective in the draft land policy. The Ministry now have a draft policy that is gender responsive.
- Within the Mozambique education programme, Irish Aid supported the development of a study to assess the problem of GBV and a Ministry-approved strategy has now been developed in Niassa province.
- In Malawi, Irish Aid is playing a lead role in mainstreaming gender within the development of the sector wide approach for agriculture and the framework for the implementation of the Farm Input Subsidy Programme.

Policy Dialogue at International Level: Irish Aid has increased its engagement in international policy dialogue on gender equality. The HQ Gender Adviser is active in a number of multilateral fora in particular the OECD DAC Gendernet. Irish Aid was especially active on the DAC Gendernet in preparations for the High Level Forum, held in Ghana, Accra in 2008, the outcome of which had a strengthened focus on advancing gender equality. Irish Aid, through the Multilateral Section, has also played an instrumental role in influencing the establishment and structure of the new UN gender entity (See box 15 for more details). Progress in this regard demonstrates how strategic policy dialogue coordinated between the wider Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid can have an impact on advancing gender equality.

Increased Attention and Resources to the Issue of GBV: Irish Aid's membership of the Joint Consortium on GBV has been instrumental in prompting increased institutional attention to the issue of GBV. Funding to GBV increased to €4.7 million in 2008 and nearly all programme countries now address GBV as an integral component of their programme. Irish Aid's work on GBV recognises it as a manifestation of gender inequalities and this approach must be maintained to ensure that work on addressing structural and socio-cultural inequalities, women's rights and gender mainstreaming are not side-lined.

Strengthened approaches to internal gender mainstreaming in Programme Countries: Nearly all programme countries have staff members assigned to gender equality. Team-working as well as leadership, the strategic use of external expertise and strengthened MfDR have been key to progressing gender equality objectives. One of the key challenges for gender advisors has been to balance the direct management of programmes such as a GBV programme with providing support to gender mainstreaming across the programme.

Managing for Development Results (MfDR): The adoption of the 'MfDR' approach by Irish Aid has provided an opportunity for strengthening a focus on gender equality across the organisation. The Zambia programme, in particular, has developed a revised results framework for their country programme which has a strong focus on gender equality results. The Multilateral section plans to develop a results framework for its core funding to UN agencies and the inclusion of gender indicators will greatly improve Irish Aid's monitoring of these bodies. The development of a results framework for the Gender Equality Policy should help advance its implementation across the institution.

Coherence: There has been increased coherence on gender equality between Irish Aid and the wider DFA through units such as the Conflict Resolution Unit and the Human Rights Unit, including in the development of Ireland's National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The development of institutional positions on priority gender issues such as GBV would be a useful way of strengthening collaboration.

3.2 Continuing Challenges

Understanding Concepts and Approaches to Addressing Gender Inequality: Not all staff members across the organisation fully understand the concepts related to gender equality, empowerment or transformative approaches contained within the Gender Equality Policy and are unsure of how to apply them to their work. While the objectives of the policy remain valid, there has been a tendency to focus on meeting practical gender needs rather than more strategic gender needs. As many of Irish Aid's international CSO partners are engaged in service delivery, many of the projects being supported are addressing practical gender needs in the areas of health, education, access to food etc. Effective gender mainstreaming should ensure that projects/programme are also addressing more strategic gender needs by analysing, and where appropriate addressing unequal access to decision-making processes and resources which underpin inequity and disempowerment e.g. unequal access to land or discriminatory legislation.

Also, the 'twin-track' approach is not set out clearly enough within the policy and needs to be clearly elaborated through training/guidance for staff.

Country Strategy Paper (CSP) Development: In general, gender analysis in the CSPs is stronger now than in 2003 although there is a continuing lack of sex disaggregated data being used to inform analysis. The extent to which this gender analysis informs the development of the country programme varies from country to country. Overall the CSPs could be strengthened by highlighting the intersection of gender with other issues such as vulnerabilities and risk, or

with the other cross-cutting issues. Reporting on gender equality in annual reports remains weak and the ongoing work in Zambia on strengthening gender mainstreaming in reporting should provide useful learning in this regard.

Dialogue with Irish Civil Society organisations (CSOs)² on Gender Equality: CSO partners highlighted that any policy dialogue that has taken place with Irish Aid on gender equality has been “sporadic and ad hoc with little advance notice.” The only forum where dialogue on gender related issues regularly takes place is within the *Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence*. This forum may, to some degree, have occupied the space that could be available for dialogue on wider gender equality issues. CSOs noted that they are unaware of where, when and how Irish Aid engages in policy dialogue on gender equality at international level and would like more opportunity to comment on the development of national positions.

Institutional Capacity Development: The majority of staff at HQ and in the missions have not received any training on gender equality yet are expected to be competent in gender mainstreaming. The majority consulted were not familiar with the policy. There is a significant need for a longer-term incremental and differentiated approach to roll-out tailored training across the organisation which could form part of the development of an organisational training strategy.

Supporting partners capacity development: There is need to reflect on Irish Aid’s engagement and lessons learnt with respect to supporting national women’s machineries, including in post-conflict situations.

The Need for Support to Specialised Interventions: The ‘twin-track’ approach is not set out clearly enough within the policy and needs to be further elaborated. The South Africa programme provides a clear example of this twin-track approach where strong gender analysis resulted in a more holistic gender mainstreaming approach in relation to HIV and AIDS, while at the same time providing a clear rationale for implementing specific initiatives on gender equality and GBV.

Hunger Task Force: There is a need to ensure that the strong focus in the Hunger Task Force Report on the role of women in agriculture is consistently reflected in policy dialogue and programme implementation.

Monitoring expenditure on gender equality: Funding for gender equality and women’s empowerment is frequently underreported. There is limited understanding of how and when the cross-cutting codes should be used and no current capacity to implement the DAC gender equality policy marker (beyond the Financial Controller and the Gender Adviser). In the current budgetary context in particular, it will be important that Irish Aid can monitor expenditure on gender equality.

3.3 Summary of the Findings:

Below is a table comparing the key findings of this review with the main shortcomings found in the 2003 review of Irish Aid’s progress towards addressing gender equality. This table shows that there has been some important progress in particular aspects of both institutional and programmatic approaches to advancing gender equality.

Table 1 - Comparing Baseline from 2003 to 2009/2010	
2003 Review	2009-2010 Review
<p><i>Policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion about ‘gender’ as a concept. Guidelines for NGO cooperation only policy with gender included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion about concepts remains with some staff – particularly in relation to how to apply them to their work. Gender equality increasingly visible in policies, strategies and guidelines; for example CS and E&R section policy and guidelines; the UN Multilateral section agreements with UN agencies.
<p><i>Gender Mainstreaming:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender not mainstreamed well. Tendency for a ‘women as beneficiaries’ approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attention to ‘mainstreaming’; Embassies have piloted structures to advance mainstreaming; evidence of mainstreaming in implementation of CSPs. Stronger analysis evident but ‘Women as beneficiaries’ approach still used in some CSPs.
<p><i>Budget:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Women in Development’ (WID) budget line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved coding system in place; problems with applying codes and DAC gender equality policy marker Specific gender equality budget line now in place at HQ.

² A consultation was held with a number of CSOs involved in gender equality including Banulucht, Trocaire and Dochas.

<p><i>Gender Focal Points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focal Points at Embassies; Half-time Focal Point HQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender advisors/officers/focal points now in all Embassies. • Full time gender advisor at HQ.
<p><i>Sharing of Information:</i></p> <p>No 'knowledge management system' in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focus on knowledge management across Irish Aid. Intranet established with a gender equality page.
<p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific training on gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No training strategy in place. • Gender Mainstreaming training in 7 Embassies; One session at headquarters; • Funding to DTALK for training on gender mainstreaming and GBV.
<p><i>Multilateral/External Coordination on GE:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited involvement in multilateral fora. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ Gender Adviser participates actively in OECD/DAC Gendernet and is on its Bureau. Also inputs regularly to other multi-lateral fora
<p><i>Coherence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reference to links with wider DFA political work on gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased links with wider DFA departments and inputs by Irish Aid on gender equality to their work streams.

4. Conclusions

Effectiveness: Implementation of the Gender Equality Policy has been challenging. Overall, however, the evidence shows that significant progress has been made in a number of areas, even if the degree of progress has been very variable across Irish Aid. Many of those consulted stressed the importance of leadership to drive policy implementation, sufficient resources and a specific budget line that can be used for strategic aspects of policy implementation at both HQ and Embassy levels. Irish Aid's approach to gender equality must be transformative by addressing the underlying socio-cultural behavioural and attitudinal norms which uphold discrimination against women and perpetuate gender inequalities. Externally, the new ways of working in accordance with the Aid Effectiveness agenda provide key challenges and opportunities for implementing Irish Aid's commitments to gender equality.

Relevance: Internally, the Gender Equality Policy remains relevant to Irish Aid and is also clearly relevant to the wider DFA. The White Paper and the Hunger Task Force Report have been two key policy developments which need to be reflected in the implementation of the gender equality policy.

Sustainability: The appointment of gender advisers at Country Programme level and gender focal points as part of the Gender Network at HQ level indicate huge progress and are an essential means through which to institutionalise approaches to policy implementation. Structures and systems being put in place have also strengthened sustainability such as funding guidelines for NGOs. However, these developments will need to be maintained and staff members given the time, support and resources to fulfil the potential of these roles. Externally, the most challenging aspects of sustaining gender mainstreaming is the development of partner capacities. Support to National Women's Machineries requires further analysis and consideration on developing effective strategies for engagement and capacity building.

Impact: Reporting on gender equality is weak. There remains a shortcoming in terms of the availability of information on *impact*. Progress is being made - analysis is getting stronger, baselines are being put in place and further efforts to develop effective results frameworks that contain qualitative gender indicators will make a difference. The evolving MfDR approach is an opportunity to develop a results framework for the policy to measure and provide accountability for policy implementation.

5. Key Recommendations

Below are the key recommendations emerging from the review:

Advancing Implementation of the Gender Equality Policy

1. Maintain the conceptual basis of the Gender Equality Policy but update it to:
 - Reflect changes in the internal and external environment.
 - Become more Irish-Aid specific – include references to specific areas of Irish Aid's work.
 - Address some of the gaps identified through this review.
 - Set out clearly the twin-track approach and provide other relevant frameworks/tools for practical application of the policy by staff members.

Strengthening the results focus of Irish Aid's work on gender equality

2. To enable us to monitor Irish Aid's implementation of the Gender Equality policy, a 'results framework' should be developed which will link policy and practice – this framework could be used as the basis of an annual report for senior management on addressing gender equality in Irish Aid.

3. Gender equality must be more effectively mainstreamed across results frameworks. A more systematic approach to using gender analysis and sex disaggregated data should be incorporated into CSP development. The learning from the Zambia model should be shared more widely across Irish Aid.
4. Guidelines for all CSO funding schemes should be reviewed to ensure that they are coherent with our gender equality policy and strategy. These guidelines should provide guidance on strengthening gender equality results and on developing gender specific and gender disaggregated indicators in log frames.

Policy-engagement

5. In line with strategic priorities and areas of comparative advantage, Irish Aid should prioritise the following areas in its international level policy dialogue;
 - Gender Equality and Hunger.
 - Addressing Gender-based violence
 - Gender Equality and Aid Effectiveness.

Institutional positions on these 3 priority areas should be elaborated in a revised policy.

The gender equality network and the proposed annual reporting mechanism on gender equality should be used to ensure that international level dialogue is informed by field level priorities and evidence.

6. The opportunities reflected through the Hunger Task Force Report (2008) which has a strong focus on 'women in agriculture' must be prioritised:
 - In addition to supporting gender specific projects and programmes through the work of the Hunger Unit, it is also important to ensure that gender is mainstreamed across all Irish Aid responses to hunger. The mapping exercise currently being conducted could provide some important information on "entry points" for hunger and gender equality.
 - Research should be supported in order to better understand the links between hunger, agriculture production and gender inequality.
 - The Hunger Unit is organising training to develop staff capacity to understand the causes and consequences of hunger. This is an excellent opportunity to include a training module on mainstreaming gender in Irish Aid's responses to hunger.
7. Irish Aid should provide the UN Women with financial support consistent with the levels of support on gender equality provided heretofore through the various UN bodies and funds (including UNIFEM and UN-DAW). Engagement on policy should be consistent with priorities proposed in Recommendation 5.

Resourcing

8. Maintain the current allocation of human resources to support implementation of the Gender Equality Policy both at HQ and programme country level. In addition, a JPI should be assigned to the gender portfolio.

The Gender Network has a key role to play in facilitating communication and strengthening accountability and coherence across Irish Aid and all Sections and Programme Countries should be represented, as well as other relevant parts of DFA.

9. The HQ gender budget line should be used to support research, learning, knowledge dissemination and capacity-building on gender equality.
10. The proposed annual report on gender equality should include an analysis of expenditure trends on gender equality, both funding to specific initiatives and gender mainstreaming.

Institutional Capacity Development and knowledge management

11. As part of the development of the Irish Aid training strategy, develop a strategic and clear programme of incremental and differentiated training on gender equality for staff across the organisation including, but not limited to, induction processes. Mainstreaming gender equality should be a component of all future training on MfDR.

There is a need for training on the implementation of the Irish Aid coding system to track expenditure on gender equality.

Capacity Development of Partners

12. Capacity Development is a key challenge. In order to support this process Irish Aid should develop a position paper to inform engagement with National Women's Machineryes, including in fragile states. This should include an

analysis of the role of UN Women and how Irish Aid can best support the capacity development of NWM's through its support to UN Women. Research conducted to inform the paper should include analysis of international trends alongside learning from Irish Aid's own support to these entities in Timor-Leste, Ethiopia, Tanzania and elsewhere.

Abbreviations Used Through the Report

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CCIs	Cross Cutting Issues
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPs	Country Programmes
CRU	Conflict Resolution Unit of Department of Foreign Affairs
CSF	Civil Society Fund – of CSS Irish Aid
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSPs	Country Strategy Papers
CSS	Civil Society Section (in Irish Aid headquarters)
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DJELR	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (of Irish Government, Dublin)
E&A	Evaluation and Audit Section, Irish Aid
E&R	Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
FHH	Female Headed Households
GEWE	Gender Equality Women's Empowerment
Gendernet	OECD/DAC Gender Network
HQ	Headquarters
HRU	Human Rights Unit of Department of Foreign Affairs
HSN	Human Security Network
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee (at the UN)
JCGBV	Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence
JLOS	Justice, Law and Order Sector
JPI	Junior Professional Intern
MAPS	Multi-Annual Programme Scheme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MfDR	Managing for Development Results
MTR	Mid-Term Review of CSPs
NWS	National Women's Strategy
NWM	National Women's Machineries
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
PAEG	Project Appraisal and Evaluation Group
PMUN	Permanent Mission to the United Nations
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SEPI	Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality
UNCSW	UN Commission on the Status of Women
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Fund for Population Activities
UNILO	UN International Labour Organisation
UNOCHA	UN Organisation for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
UNWFP	UN World Food Programme
WB	World Bank

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Irish Aid Gender Equality Policy was published in 2004. It sets out a policy framework for Irish Aid's approach to gender equality and includes strategies and recommended areas of intervention to advance its implementation. The policy goal is to "support the achievement of gender equality as an essential component of sustainable human development."³ The objectives of the policy are to:

- Advance equal rights for women and men;
- Eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of, and benefit from, resources and services;
- Support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision making.

The policy sets out two strategies for implementing the policy-mainstreaming and direct support to gender equality and women's empowerment programmes, then sets out in detail how the policy and strategy might be applied in policy dialogue, general budget support, sector-wide approaches, area-based programmes, partnerships with civil society organisations, working with multilateral organisations, institutional development and capacity building for partners and within Irish Aid. The 'Performance Management' section of the policy states that an "evaluation" of the policy will take place three years after adoption.⁴

Methodology of the Review

A review of Irish Aid's progress towards addressing gender equality was undertaken in 2003 and provides a baseline for assessing key areas of progress and continuing challenges at an institutional level. Box 1 outlines some of these.

Box 1: Overview of key issues identified in the 2003 review of Ireland Aid support to Gender Equality

The 2003 review documented Ireland Aid's successes and remaining challenges in implementing commitments on gender equality. The report highlighted the key gaps:

- *Policy Related:* Operational guidelines on gender not institutionalised; confusion about gender as a concept. 'Guidelines for NGO cooperation', the only policy document with gender as a requirement.
- *Gender Mainstreaming:* Gender not mainstreamed well, tendency for a 'women as beneficiaries' approach with support for individual women's programmes.
- *Budget:* 'Women in Development' (WID) budget line which supports projects and programmes that specifically target women.
- *Gender Focal Points:* Very weak system, focal points at Embassies and one half-time staff at HQ.
- *Sharing of Information:* No 'knowledge management system' in place, perceived obstacle to facilitating and progressing work on gender equality.
- *Training:* No specific training on gender equality in place for staff.
- *Multilateral/External Coordination on GE:* Limited involvement by HQ Gender Focal Point in DAC working group on gender or fora such as UNCSW.
- *Coherence:* No reference to links with wider DFA political work on gender equality.

The aim of this internal review has been to facilitate a process of reflection at HQ and field level to identify key areas of progress and challenges in the implementation of the policy goals, objectives and strategies with the aim of updating and strengthening the implementation of the current policy. The process entailed a review of the external environment, a documentation review, some limited external consultations and a series of interview with staff at field and HQ level. (See annex 1 for terms of reference).

3 DCI (2004) Gender Equality Policy pg 7

4 Development Cooperation Ireland (2004) Gender Equality Policy Pg. 29

A number of key issues have emerged in the external environment which have had, and will continue to have, implications for the implementation of Irish Aid gender equality objectives⁵.

Global challenges

Food and fuel price increases, the global financial crisis and the impacts of climate change have impacted disproportionately on poor women and girls. Women cannot easily adapt their livelihoods base to respond to environmental and financial stresses. Girls have been particularly affected and may be the first to be withdrawn from school in times of financial crisis. Social protection programmes have not always recognised intra-household inequalities and gender-based discrimination in the labour market. Women's unpaid work in the home continues to go unrecognised and undervalued.

Gender-based Violence

The severity of the problem of Gender Based Violence (GBV) is being increasingly recognised and donors are developing strategic multi-sectoral approaches to the issue. Attention to global security issues, particularly to prevalence of sexual violence in conflict, is also increasing, including through heightened calls for implementation of the women, peace and security agenda through UN Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889. GBV is also increasingly being recognised as impacting on progress in reaching the MDGs.⁶ There has also been a growing recognition of GBV as a key driver of the HIV pandemic.

Gender and Aid Effectiveness

Recent reforms of aid delivery, most notably the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) have provided new opportunities and mechanisms to translate donor and government commitments on gender equality into improved practice, results and impacts. Both provide frameworks for fostering gender equality as a priority development issue.⁷ It will also be important to engage with 'emerging' non-DAC donors like the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) on their commitment to, and potential role in, supporting gender equality.

The role of civil society in promoting gender equality

Civil Society is a critical arena for gender equality and has a central role to play in promoting respect for human rights and governance, including influencing government policies in favour of poor and marginalised men and women. Recent research carried out by AWID⁸ assessed current trends in funding to women's organisations and noted that, while the impact of the recent financial and economic crisis is evident in the decreasing level of ODA among donors, direct cuts in ODA for gender equality are not yet apparent. However, existing levels of ODA for gender equality are inadequate to reach the commitments made in Beijing and at the Millennium Summit ten years ago. While the creation and continuation of new mechanisms and special funds like the gender equality fund managed by UNIFEM have increased resources available for gender equality, their accessibility and conditions present challenges for many women's organisations. In particular, the large size of grants means they are limited to a small number of organisations with the capacity to access funding. Many of the multi-donor, post-conflict trust funds lack effective mechanisms for marking and tracking resources dedicated to support gender equality despite the mounting attention through the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Gender Equality and the MDGs

In preparation for the Higher Level Summit to review progress on implementing the MDGs, which will take place in September 2010, there has been a growing recognition of the centrality of addressing gender inequality in order to make progress across all of the MDGs. The report of the UN Secretary General on *Keeping the Promises – a forward looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the MDGs by 2015* asserts the importance of looking at of the MDGs through "a gender lens".

UN–Women

Negotiations during the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly (2009-2010) resulted in the adoption of a resolution 289⁹ on system-wide coherence to establish a new UN gender entity 'UN Women' in July 2010. In recognition of the universal nature of gender equality and women's empowerment, the new entity will consolidate the four existing gender entities UN Development Fund for Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary General on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and

5 See Bridge "Review of external environment" in appendix 6.

6 Keeping Gender on the Agenda – GBV, Poverty and Development- Joint Consortium on GBV Nov 2009

7 See DAC Guiding Principles for Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for more details.

8 AWID (2010) Trends in Bilateral and Multilateral Funding (2009-2010)

9 http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/251

Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. UN Women, to be based in New York and headed by an Under-Secretary-General, will have an anticipated annual budget of \$500 million, double the current combined resources of the four agencies it will comprise. The new entity will provide normative support to the UN's intergovernmental bodies, advance gender mainstreaming throughout the UN system and hold the system to account for commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. Among the goals of UN Women will be to assist Member States implement standards, provide technical and financial support to countries, and forge partnerships with civil society, in particular women's organizations.

Conclusions

- The external environment has changed considerably since the Gender Equality Policy was first published in 2004. These issues, in particular the current economic crisis and its impact on women and changes in aid architecture, including the new gender entity, must be reflected in Irish Aid's gender equality policy.

Since the gender equality policy was finalised there have been a number of internal developments and changes which have impacted both positively and negatively on the implementation of the policy.

A Changing Policy Environment

In the 'White Paper on Irish Aid', published in 2006, the government commits to specific actions to improve the position and status of women, including increasing funding to women's organisations as well as promoting women's economic empowerment and women's access to reproductive and other health services. The White Paper makes specific commitments to work against GBV and to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325). These commitments were reinforced when Minister of State Power accepted the MDG3 torch in June 2008 as part of the Danish MDG3 Torch campaign.¹⁰

Ireland's National Women's Strategy (2007-2015) (NWS), developed by the Department for Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR), and also reinforces the commitments outlined in the White Paper. A section on development cooperation in the NWS includes objectives on the achievement of the MDGs; the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in developing countries; effective responses to GBV in conflict, post-conflict and development environments; the implementation of UNSCR 1325; and the promotion of gender perspectives in the UN system. Irish Aid and the Human Rights Unit participate in a cross-departmental working group overseeing implementation of the strategy and reports on these objectives on an annual basis.

Within Irish Aid a range of new policies have been developed or updated including policies on local development, good governance, health, water and sanitation, civil society, environmental sustainability, education, HIV and the private sector. All of the policies make reference to the gender equality policy or state that gender equality is an important consideration in implementing the policy. However the analysis of key gender issues relevant to the policies varies, for example:

- The *Education Policy and Strategy* provides a gendered analysis of issues relating to education and makes linkages between girls' education and issues such as early marriage, the care crisis, HIV and fertility rates.¹¹ The issue of GBV is mainly highlighted in relation to conflict situations and emergencies, and is not highlighted as a barrier to girls' access to education.
- The *Private Sector Strategy* states that a key factor in building a vibrant private sector is "*the enhancement of women's market access and developing policies which consider access to labour, land, financial, goods and services markets from a gender perspective.*" The strategy commits to working to remove barriers to women's involvement in business and to ensuring that decisions on interventions are informed by the CCIs, but does not include any analysis of the factors underpinning women's economic disempowerment.
- Addressing gender equality is one of the key actions set out in the proposed new *HIV& AIDS Strategy* which aims "*to address the drivers of the epidemic and the underlying structural causes of HIV risk and vulnerability, and in particular stigma and discrimination and socio-economic and gender inequalities.*" Guidelines on promoting gender equitable HIV and AIDS responses have been produced. These guidelines (which are still in draft form) set out the key gender issues which need to be considered across the range of HIV interventions, including prevention, treatment and care. Irish Aid has made significant progress in strengthening its approach to HIV and Box 2 below sets out the key learning from this which may be relevant to advancing implementation of the Gender Equality policy.

Development of Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Irish Aid currently has no organisational protection policy or guidelines in place to address the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The 2009 Charities Act requires all registered charities develop protection measures and mechanisms¹². DFA has an obligation to ensure that protection measures are in place and ensure charities which it supports that are in compliance with the Act. In 2010, the SMG mandated DCD/Corporate Services to develop a policy on the protection of children and vulnerable adults with a comprehensive code of conduct. The development of this policy is directly linked to the protection provisions within Ireland's draft National Action Plan on implementing United

10 The Danish Government initiated the MDG 3 Torch Campaign in order to raise awareness of and commitment to the implementation of MDG 3 – in accepting the torch individuals and organisations commit to "doing something extra to advance gender equality"

12. Part 3 (Regulation of Charitable Organisations), Section 39 (Register of Charitable Organisations), Sub-Section (5) l) (l) specify the risk assessment procedures, safety checks and safeguards employed by the charitable organisation where its activities include working with vulnerable people (including the aged, children and young people, the sick, disabled and handicapped)

Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Immediate actions for Irish Aid will focus on requiring all Irish NGO partners to develop a protection policy within an agreed timeframe; include the need for child protection standards as part of the eligibility criteria for any new funding round; ensure that the issue of protection of child and vulnerable adults is integrated into a strengthened appraisal and monitoring system.

Box 2 - Learning from Irish Aid's Approaches to HIV and AIDS

The key factors identified in some of the success associated with Irish Aid's approaches to addressing HIV and AIDS were 1) Political attention and leadership from the Irish Taoiseach on the issue 2) a strong allocation of resources which followed this. The development of a clear policy and strategy strengthened this as CPs were requested to translate the policy to country-specific contexts. Adequate resources were allocated and HIV Advisers were appointed across the CPs, accompanied by capacity building initiatives such as training, seminars and a roll-out of the policy. The Cross-Divisional Committee on HIV at HQ was at Counsellor Level generating an awareness of HIV and commitment to the issue at a senior level across the organisation.

Irish Aid's Mainstreaming Strategy

The Mainstreaming Strategy was finalised in 2007. It focuses on the development of internal capacity to strengthen institutional mainstreaming of the four cross-cutting issues (CCIs) - environment, gender equality, governance and HIV&AIDS. The strategy has focused on four key results areas - increased capacity and knowledge of staff on mainstreaming; strengthened accountability structures and systems; decision-making in the organisation better informed by analysis of the priority issues; and the identification and implementation of mainstreaming activities across Irish Aid. A Mainstreaming Reference Group oversees implementation with cross divisional representation, a Senior Management Group member Chair and clear work plans based on the four key components of the mainstreaming strategy.

The Hunger Task Force

The Hunger Task Force report published in 2008 recommends that Irish Aid should promote the intensification of smallholder agriculture through programmes designed to maximise access by women and the ultra-poor to land and other critical inputs and services. It also recommends that Irish Aid supports the strengthening of farmer organisations, particularly those which actively target poorer farmers and women as members.

Aid Effectiveness

Implementing commitments made in the Paris Declaration and the AAA is a key priority for Irish Aid. An action plan to implement these commitments has been developed which has a number of actions on advancing gender equality such as actively promoting the inclusion of cross-cutting issues in division of labour and consistently highlighting the importance of sex-disaggregated data. In our international policy dialogue Irish Aid prioritises mutual accountability and managing for development results.

Policy Coherence on gender equality across DFA

Currently there is no reference in the gender equality policy to inter-divisional or cross-departmental coherence on gender equality or links to Ireland's wider national position on gender equality.

Since 2004, there has since been an increased emphasis placed on policy coherence within Irish Aid, the wider Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and across government. There has been increased engagement and dialogue on gender equality, especially GBV, between Irish Aid and the Conflict Resolution Unit (CRU) and Human Rights Unit (HRU).

The CRU which was established in 2007 sits within the Political Division. Women, Peace and Security, and in particular, the development of a National Action Plan on implementing UNSCR 1325¹³, are priority issues within the Unit. A national action plan is currently being developed with engagement from across DFA.

The HRU deals with Ireland's foreign policy engagement on human rights. In relation to gender equality, the HRU coordinates Ireland's input to the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW); coordinates all inputs from DFA to the PMUN in New York regarding resolutions and national statements at the UN CSW, debates and resolutions on gender at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. HRU participates in the Universal Periodic Review process at the UN Human Rights Council, including tabling questions and recommendations on gender equality to other UN Member States; and selected GBV as its priority theme for Ireland's Chairmanship of the Human Security Network (HSN), which included organising a conference on UNSCR 1325 in Dublin in 2009.

The DAC Peer Review

¹³ UN Security Council Resolution 1325, passed by the UN Security Council in 2000. For a full text of the resolution, see www.un.org/Docs/scres/2000/sc2000.htm

The 2009 OECD/DAC Peer Review highlights that Irish Aid has been an active advocate for gender equality. Nonetheless the peer review team encouraged Irish Aid to continue to build internal capacity and strengthen efforts to document results and related statistical analyses.

The review also stated that: *“Irish Aid’s approach to mainstreaming its priority topics.....is a strong though evolving feature of the programme which already provides lessons that could be shared with other donors. Irish Aid is encouraged to improve reporting on mainstreaming and focus on measuring development impacts to enhance its own learning as well as that of other donors”*.¹⁴

Conclusions

- There have been a significant changes in the internal environment since 2004 which will need to be reflected in the Gender Equality policy, in particular the focus on combating hunger within the programme, an increased focus on implementing the aid effectiveness agenda, and increased engagement and policy coherence on gender equality across DFA.

¹⁴ DAC Peer Review 2008 pg 13

CHAPTER 4 – POLICY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section provides an overview of the goals, objectives and approaches that frame Irish Aid's policy approach to gender equality. It outlines how HQ and the CPs are making progress towards implementing the policy and presents examples of this work.

Conceptual basis of the Gender Equality Policy

A key objective of the current policy is to advance equal rights for women and men. This "rights-based approach" to gender equality is rooted in the International Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as other international conventions on civil, political, social and economic rights and those enshrined under International Humanitarian Law.

The policy also provides an overview of the 'Practical Vs Strategic Needs' framework.¹⁵ This framework offers a way to analyse gender equality to ensure that programmes respond to men and women's strategic as well as practical needs.¹⁶ Addressing women's practical needs, such as access to health services while critical may not address structural issues undermining equality and empowerment. A rights-based, more strategic approach, aims to change the structural inequalities that lead to women's subordinate position. Addressing more strategic gender needs around access to power and resources can be a natural progression from meeting practical gender needs such as addressing reproductive rights within a health programme or GBV in schools within an education programme.

The key strategy outlined to implement the policy is that 'twin-track approach', by now widely accepted as an effective way to address gender inequality. It entails 1) mainstreaming gender alongside 2) support to specialised interventions that promote GEWE. Policy dialogue both nationally and internationally has also emerged as a key strategy to advance Irish Aid's gender equality objectives.

Box 3 below provides an outline of Banúlacht's analysis of Irish Aid's approach to gender equality as outlined in the White Paper.

Box 3 - Gender and the White Paper on Irish Aid – is it transformative?¹⁷

This article examined the conceptualisation of gender equality in the White Paper (2006) and concluded that although commitment to gender mainstreaming as a strategic approach to gender equality is promising, within the White Paper *'references to gender equality are contradictory in their goal and lack the kind of critical framework if real change is to be effected'*. The promotion of gender equality is a 'guiding principle' for poverty reduction but there is a lack of consistent language on gender and it is isolated within specific sections on human rights and development; gender and development and looking to the future. These effectively link gender mainstreaming to specific measures for women's empowerment with a focus on GBV. Contradictions in how gender equality is framed across some chapters, and its omission across foreign and macroeconomic policy and governance, raise concerns about the translation of the Irish Aids principles on gender equality into transformative actions.

The Gender Equality Policy is commended for its institutional commitment to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. Rather than viewing inconsistencies in the White Paper as a retreat from the transformative vision outlined in the Gender Equality Policy, the paper argues these should be used as an opportunity to increase critical dialogue to promote this vision across Irish Aid. Difficulties in evaluating Irish Aid progress on gender in the absence of an action plan for the policy were highlighted. Banúlacht calls for the development of an action plan with time framed targets to advance policy implementation and provide a space for policy dialogue between Irish Aid, development NGO's and southern partners.

Policy Goal and Objectives

Objective 1 – To advance equal rights for men and women

Examples of programming which would contribute to this objective include programmes focusing on the promotion and protection of the human rights of girls and women in the law and actions of police, prosecutors, judges and courts; public awareness activities which aim to raise understanding and knowledge of women's and girl's human rights; and responding to gender-specific rights violations such as gender-based violence. The main contribution to this objective within Irish Aid would be in the area of gender-based violence in particular where we are supporting legislative reform such as in Sierra Leone and Uganda. Another example would be the support provided to Mama Cash, an

15 Development Cooperation Ireland (2004) Gender Equality Policy, Pg. 22.

16 The 'Practical' and 'Strategic' Needs framework provides a way to differentiate between those interventions that address immediate practical needs and those that facilitate the fundamental changes required to transform inequalities. Practical gender needs are short-term needs arising from men and women's daily roles and responsibilities, such as provision of maternal health care to women. Strategic gender needs relate to inequalities and require actions that aim to change gender relations in favour of equality, such as promoting women's economic empowerment and independence. Development Cooperation Ireland (2004) Gender Equality Policy, Pg. 22.

17 Gender and the White Paper on Irish Aid – is it transformative?, Trocaire Development Review; Banulucht; (2007, 65-77) Can be found at: <http://www.trocaire.org/resources/trdr-article/gender-and-white-paper-irish-aid>

international fund for women which supports human rights organisations in a number of countries run by and for women.

Objective 2 – To eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of, and benefit from, resources and services

Examples of programming which would contribute to this objective would be supporting women's access to basic services, and supporting increased access and control by women over productive assets such as land, capital/credit, technology, skills and increased access to decent work.

Irish Aid programmes are contributing to this objective in a number of ways. Gender equality is mainstreamed across Irish Aid's work in the social sectors thereby facilitating gender equitable access to health and education services. For example in Sierra Leone, a fragile state with the highest rate of maternal mortality in the world, Irish Aid is supporting the Government of Sierra Leone's plan to provide free health care services for pregnant and lactating women. In Zambia, Irish Aid is supporting the Ministry of Education to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its education policies and strategies.

There are fewer examples of how Irish Aid is contributing to more equitable access to resources in particular access to land. In Vietnam, Irish Aid has supported the reform of legislation on land rights to ensure deeds contain the names of both husband and wife. In Uganda, support has been provided to Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to mainstream gender across the land policy being developed, a technical advisor was funded to provide advice on mainstreaming gender and HIVAIDS into the draft land policy.

Objective 3 – To support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision making

Irish Aid supports a number of programmes aimed at building the capacity of women's organisations for advocacy and increasing representation of women in democratic processes.

Although a relatively new area for Irish Aid, there are a number of examples of support being provided to women's political participation often as part of broader governance programming. During the 2007 national elections in Timor Leste, Irish Aid worked with UNIFEM to promote women's participation. Women now hold 30% of the seats in the national parliament. In Uganda, support is provided to the Uganda Parliamentary Women's Association.

In the area of economic decision making, Irish Aid supports women's access to credit in a number of different programmes. The ILO's "Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality" (WEDGE) seeks to redress existing gender imbalances in enterprise development. Irish Aid supports the work of WEDGE in Cambodia, Laos, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zambia. In Timor-Leste, Irish Aid has partnered with Moris Rasik, a local NGO providing micro-credit to women.

Conclusions

- The objectives of the policy are still relevant, however the policy's generic nature and lack of a results framework has meant that it has not always been of practical help in programme implementation.
- Discussion on the conceptual framework of the policy revealed that the first objective, to "advance equal rights for women and men" was the most challenging to implement as staff do not necessarily conceptualise their work within a rights framework.
- There has been a stronger focus on promoting equitable access to services rather than resources, and in meeting more practical than strategic gender needs. Programmes addressing "hunger" provide significant potential for addressing access to resources. The growing centrality of governance within the programme provides opportunities to strengthen women's role in decision-making.

Key Recommendation 1

Maintain the conceptual basis of the Gender Equality Policy but update it to;

- Reflect changes in the internal and external environment;
- Become more Irish-Aid specific – include references to specific areas of Irish Aid's work;
- Address some of the gaps identified through this review, including gender policy priorities (see recommendation 3)
- Set out clearly the twin-track approach and provide other relevant frameworks/tools for practical application of the policy by staff members.

Key Recommendation 2

To enable us to monitor Irish Aid's implementation of the Gender Equality policy, a 'results framework' should be developed which will link policy and practice – this framework could be used as the basis of an annual report for senior management on addressing gender equality in Irish Aid.

CHAPTER 5 – POLICY DIALOGUE

Since the development of the Gender Equality Policy, Irish Aid has become increasingly active in arenas of policy dialogue. These engagements enable Irish Aid to advance its own policy agendas and ensure that Irish Aid can contribute to, and learn from, international and external work relating to gender equality.

The attention to particular gender issues in international fora is also helpful for gaining traction on these issues internally. Advances in the external arena in relation to particular issues can be used to advocate for similar issues internally. For example, the weight given to gender in the Aid Effectiveness agenda by the DAC and through the DAC Gendernet helped to heighten the issue internally and garner support for gender within Irish Aid's overall approach to the Aid Effectiveness agenda. Irish Aid's membership of the Joint Consortium has brought a focus to addressing GBV internally within the programme.

It was noted by all HQ Gender Advisers that policy dialogue is a time-consuming process and it can be difficult to gauge how to disseminate and make-available the outcomes and learning from these fora across the organisation without over-burdening staff with information. The Gender Network now offers a good forum to disseminate such information (see Chapter 10 for further details of Gender Network).

International Level Policy Dialogue

Irish Aid also participates in a number of multi-lateral fora on gender:

The OECD DAC Gender Net: Currently the HQ Gender Adviser is on the Gendernet Bureau. Membership also involves participation in sub-groups that advance specific areas of work. Within the DAC, Irish Aid has taken a lead role in advocating for the mainstreaming of gender equality in the Aid Effectiveness agenda. In collaboration with the DAC Gendernet and other donors, Irish Aid organised and hosted a number of key international conferences and funded pieces of research highlighting the importance of gender equality and other CCIs in the drafting of the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008.

The EC Gender Experts Group: The body meets twice a year with significant electronic communications in-between. The HQ Gender Advisor participates for Irish Aid. Over the last year a key focus of engagement has been the development of the EU Gender Action Plan.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women and other multi-lateral fora: As the primary multilateral forum on gender equality, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) meets on an annual basis at the UN in New York. The Multilateral section of Irish Aid leads Irish Aid's engagement as part of the Irish delegation to this meeting and the gender advisor has attended on a number of occasions. DFA also engage on gender equality issues through the EU working party on Human Rights (COHOM), United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Commission.

Emergency and Recovery Section: The section is planning to strengthen its engagement in 2010 with the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF). Promoting increased co-operation between INCAF and the DAC Gendernet will be an important programme of work for the Gendernet in 2011-2012.

National Level policy dialogue

Irish Aid is a founding member of the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence (JCGBV). The JCGBV has developed guidelines to support institutionalising responses to GBV and to support Ireland's role to implement UNSCR 1325". The Irish Aid HQ Gender Adviser, a staff member of both the CSS and the E&R section participate in the Steering Group and some of the working groups implementing the work of the JCGBV.

Irish Aid's membership of the JCGBV has brought significant attention institutionally to the issue of GBV, particularly at senior management levels where their participation is required in high-level public meetings. It allows Irish Aid to engage in a number of key strategies including partnership, institutional development and policy dialogue on GBV. Some CSOs communicated concerns that attention to GBV may be taking attention away from the broader gender equality agenda. While some of these concerns were recognised by members of the JCGBV, the current and former HQ Gender Advisers felt that a focus on GBV created more space for highlighting the relevance of gender issues to development. As one staff member stated, the focus on GBV served as a "hook to get people more engaged on gender equality and raised its profile within the organisation".

CSO partners highlight that any policy dialogue that has taken place with Irish Aid on gender equality has been "sporadic, and ad hoc with little advance notice". The CSOs also noted that they are unaware of where, when and how Irish Aid engages in policy dialogue on gender equality at international level. CSOs have encouraged Irish Aid to

make available and share any research and documentation of lessons learned on their work in relation to gender mainstreaming.

DFA engages with CSOs through the DFA Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Annual DFA Forum on human rights

Conclusions

- There are a broad range of partners both nationally and internationally with whom Irish Aid engages on policy dialogue.
- Strengthening Irish Aid’s policy engagement on gender equality internationally and to some extent nationally has been a key area of progress since the policy was finalised in particular on the issue of aid effectiveness and GBV. But there is a need to prioritise and focus our policy engagement.
- The Joint Consortium has been the key arena for policy dialogue on gender equality nationally but to some extent has “occupied the space” of a broader dialogue on gender equality with CSOs. The DFA Standing Committee on Human Rights and the annual meeting with NGOs could be used as a forum to engage more broadly with CSOs on gender equality.
- Engaging in policy dialogue is time consuming in particular if the learning from the dialogue is to be effectively shared. Effective knowledge management strategies are critical such as the use of the gender network and the intranet.

Key Recommendation 3

In line with strategic priorities and areas of comparative advantage, Irish Aid should prioritise the following areas in its international level policy dialogue;

1. Gender Equality and Hunger.
2. Addressing Gender-based violence
3. Gender Equality and Aid Effectiveness.

Institutional positions on these 3 priority areas should be elaborated.

The gender equality network and the proposed annual reporting mechanism on gender equality should be used to ensure that international level dialogue is informed by field level priorities and evidence.

CHAPTER 6 - IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY IN PROGRAMME COUNTRIES

This Section addresses 5 key elements of implementing the Gender Equality policy at programme country level – institutional capacity building, mainstreaming, support to specific gender equality initiatives, policy dialogue and co-ordination and monitoring mechanisms.

Institutional Capacity Building

Structures and systems have been put in place to advance mainstreaming at Embassy level. Needs assessments were conducted in a number of programme countries, cross-sectional teams were set up, gender equality has been strengthened in results frameworks and job descriptions, training and capacity development plans have been put in place, external expertise has been sourced when needed and lessons have been learnt from other countries. Senior Management commitment was seen as critical. All advisors stressed the importance of putting in place structures and systems to facilitate cross-sectional working which can obviate the risk of gender equality being seen as an overly personality driven. Opinions differed as to the need to set priorities for specific areas where gender mainstreaming would be implemented or whether this risked limiting linkages and cross-sectional working. The approaches which Lesotho and Mozambique have taken are set out in Boxes 5 and 6 below

Box 4- An approach to Internal Mainstreaming in Lesotho.

The Lesotho Embassy felt they could not adequately address all four CCIs at once due to capacity constraints and initially prioritised HIV and AIDS and governance in the current CSP; with the intention of mainstreaming gender and environment as implementation of the CSP progressed. The Embassy team decided to initially focus on building the capacity of staff in gender mainstreaming and put in place a mainstreaming strategy which would refocus the CSP to address gender equality issues more explicitly. A Gender Focal Person was appointed and a small team was created to lead the capacity building process and refocusing of the programme. Technical support has been contracted through external consultants who support ongoing capacity building and preparations for the development of a strategy to mainstream gender into all programme sectors. The Embassy team is making a concerted effort to ensure that the outcome areas of the CSP have explicit gender equality objectives and indicators for monitoring progress in each sector. The South Africa Gender Adviser also visited Lesotho and provided support to the capacity building process and guides the process towards mainstreaming. The staff highlighted that mainstreaming is an *ongoing process* and not a concept that is only applied during the writing of the CSP. They noted clear leadership and a specific focus on advancing mainstreaming was necessary to make progress. Key to this was gathering sex disaggregated data and the use of external expertise to support the process.

Box 5 – ‘Rapid Group’ in Mozambique

Mozambique developed a ‘mainstreaming plan’ and set up an internal mainstreaming working group called the ‘Rapid Group’ and members are focal points for all four CCIs. The Rapid Group are responsible for facilitating mainstreaming throughout the programme and it is overseen by the HoD. Initially a separate mainstreaming plan was developed to advance learning on mainstreaming and this is now embedded in the annual business plans. Each pillar puts together an annual work plan and the RAPID group review progress for the pillar. Two CCIs have been chosen for particular focus (in line with mainstreaming strategy.)

With the exception of the Sierra Leone office (where there are only 2 staff), all of the Embassies have now allocated the time of at least one staff member to specifically support the gender equality portfolio. Roles vary from a fulltime Gender Adviser/Gender Officer position (South Africa and Timor-Leste), to half-time Gender Adviser positions (shared with another portfolio of work) (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia) to Gender Focal Points (Lesotho, Mozambique, Vietnam) with less strategic responsibility for technical support on gender equality. The Malawi country programme has a Vulnerability Advisor with special responsibility for gender mainstreaming across all sectors and direct engagement on key gender issues such as GBV. This compares very favourably with the 2003 review where an unstructured and informal system of Gender Focal Points had been appointed in Embassies. An example of the challenges of the gender equality advisor’s role in Tanzania is set out in Box 6 below.

Box 6 - The experience of Tanzania’s Gender and HIV and AIDS Adviser

In Tanzania, the Gender adviser is situated within the Social Development sector managing a small budget on GBV and working horizontally to provide technical support to the other sectors across the programme. The role also involves HIV mainstreaming but gender equality is the main focus. The programme structure can present challenges facilitating mainstreaming, particularly in sectors where she has little daily contact and extra effort is required to foster cross-sector working. It is easier to address gender in the social development sector where the advisor is based. Providing technical support works best when there is interest and flexibility from colleagues across other sectors. When this is not present, difficulties arise, particularly when there are last-minute

requests and little time to gather information relevant to each sector. Approximately 75% of the advisors time is allocated to gender mainstreaming across the programme.

Training and supporting gender advisors is critical to enable them to become confident and effective. Technical skills are required but communications and negotiation skills are also critical. The majority of country programmes (with the exception of Malawi, Sierra Leone and South Africa) have received training on 'Gender Mainstreaming'. The training was tailored to each country programme's CSP. (A full list of gender training across CPs can be found in Annex 11). Cross-learning has been facilitated by the participation of gender advisors in the training of other programme countries. For example, the Gender Adviser from Tanzania participated in the gender mainstreaming training in Uganda, and the Uganda and South Africa Gender Advisers participated in the Tanzania gender mainstreaming training.

Mainstreaming Gender Equality

The steps that have been taken to build institutional structures to advance mainstreaming within Embassies have resulted in some visible progress on mainstreaming through CPs as the following examples demonstrate:

- In Zambia, Irish Aid succeeded in getting cross-cutting issues, including gender equality, back on the education sector agenda.
- In Ethiopia, a specific programme of support to increase girls' access to education is also expected to positively influence the environment for girls by reducing sexual violence and harassment, and promoting a 'girl-friendly' atmosphere.
- In Uganda, Irish Aid supported the Ministry of Land to engender their land policy. The Ministry now have a draft policy that is gender responsive.
- Within the Mozambique education programme, Irish Aid supported the development of a study to assess the problem of GBV and a Ministry-approved strategy has now been developed in Niassa province.
- The Joint Resilience Unit in Malawi (Irish Aid, DFID, Norway, and USAID) is now instrumental in mainstreaming gender equality in the SWAP for agriculture, and also in developing new approaches to monitoring and impact assessment for the Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme, with a key focus on gender. This is complemented by advocating for protection mechanisms to become part of any distribution programme to protect against sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Gender Equality Policy recommends that, as part of the analysis undertaken to support gender mainstreaming, an "understanding of the policy environment" and the legislative and institutional context is required. The Lesotho, South Africa CSPs refer to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and/or the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in the CSPs. The South Africa (2008-2012) CSP mentions the governments' commitments under CEDAW and outlines the institutions that have been set up to support its implementation.

Strong analysis is the foundation of effective gender mainstreaming. Gender analysis of 'poverty' varies across the CSPs. The Zambia CSP underlines the complexity of poverty and, by highlighting the relationship of gender issues to poverty, presents a deep analysis of poverty itself.¹⁸ The Vietnam CSP presents an analysis of poverty that highlights that Female Headed Households (FHH) are poorer than others.^{19 20} The Ethiopia CSP however includes a text box titled "*Who are the poorest and most vulnerable?*"²¹ outlining the key factors that lead to entrenched poverty and highlights gender as one of these factors. This offers a good example of where gender and wider factors such as geographic location, disabilities and poverty intersect to bring together a deeper analysis of poverty.

There is inconsistent use of sex disaggregated data in the contextual analysis of the CSP documents reviewed. Even where some sex disaggregated data is used in the contextual analysis it evaporates later in the results frameworks. Many country programmes highlighted problems experienced with accessing reliable data. However, where it is available it should be used consistently in the design and monitoring of CSPs.

There is a tendency in some analysis to refer only to the situation of 'women' or 'girls' while failing to include the equivalent information for men/boys. As a result existing gender disparities cannot be identified and conclusions cannot be drawn. Gender analysis is not simply about presenting the situation of 'women' but rather about understanding the gender dynamics of what is happening in any given context. Women should not simply be represented as a 'vulnerable' group without an analysis of the power differentials underpinning this vulnerability.

An example of one programme country's approach to gender analysis in CSPs is set out in Box 7 below providing a good example of the use of detailed sex disaggregated statistics, a deeper analysis of these statistics and the gender equality implications in South Africa. This analysis helped to identify linkages across programme areas and in the case described below resulted in a more holistic and 'twin-track' approach being adopted i.e. gender mainstreaming

18 Zambia Country Strategy Paper (2007-2010), Pg. 14

19 Vietnam Country Strategy Paper (2007-2010), Pg. 9

20 Vietnam Country Strategy Paper (2007-2010), Pg. 14

21 Ethiopia Country Strategy Paper (2008 - 2012), Pg. 16

through the HIV&AIDs sector, while providing a clear rationale for implementing specific initiatives on gender equality and GBV.

Box 7- Using Gender Analysis to develop a twin-track approach in the South Africa Programme

The background analysis of the HIV and AIDS situation in South Africa includes data on prevalence rates for both men and women noting *“there are striking gender disparities in South Africa HIV and AIDS profiles, with females in younger age groups being four times more likely to be HIV infected than men.”* The gender disparities are clearly demonstrated with a comparison between the situation of men and women. These statistics are then followed by a deeper analysis of the factors which cause these discrepancies. Issues such as unequal power differentials in favour of men and wider social inequalities inform women’s increased risk to HIV are highlighted *“Women’s greater vulnerability to HIV is in part due to the gender roles that exist in South Africa.”* Importantly, the CSP does not just present statistics but offers a rationale to the causes of the gender disparities represented by the data that allows an identification of the problems which the programme should be responding to. The analysis then goes further to create a link between the issues of HIV, gender inequality and GBV and how this impacts women’s ability to negotiate safe sex. This provides the basis for a follow-on analytical section on the prevalence and impact of GBV in South African society. This joined-up analysis establishes clear linkages across all three issues, deepens understanding of the relevance of these to Irish Aid’s programming. Ultimately, it provides an analytical basis for the focus of the CSP on mainstreaming gender in sectors such as HIV and AIDS and the creation of a separate pillar addressing GBV.

The positioning of CCIs into a separate section within the CSP documents may have negative implications and can separate them from the core areas of the programme where they are most relevant. However, there may be a need for a separate section outlining institutional commitments and structures to implement mainstreaming and specific actions on CCIs. The strongest CSPs include both. A number of CPs are electing to address one CCI at a time. While an incremental approach is proposed in the Mainstreaming Strategy²² and may be necessary given limited resources it can have risks and implications in terms of limiting an understanding of the interlinkages between CCIs. For example, a singular focus on a particular CCI, such as environment, may lead to the exclusion of a gender analysis of environmental issues.

Another key question is whether to include a separate objective on gender equality or to completely ‘mainstream’ gender into programme documents. This will vary from country to country and depend on the keys issues emerging from the country context analysis but there may be a need for explicit objectives on gender equality. The Uganda CSP has a specific objective *“To promote gender equality, the empowerment of women and a reduction in gender based violence.”*²³. During consultations, the Uganda Gender Adviser highlighted that this distinct objective had been helpful as it obligated staff to interpret and address the relevance of that particular objective to each pillar of the CSP.

Malawi addresses gender mainstreaming and the mainstreaming of other CCIs through a ‘vulnerabilities approach’ which is described in Box 8 and shows the importance of an integrated and holistic approach to mainstreaming.

Box 8- Malawi: Advancing Mainstreaming Through a ‘Vulnerabilities’ Approach

The development of the new Irish Aid programme in Malawi adopted a *‘vulnerabilities’* approach to mainstreaming. The initial analysis, undertaken through a ‘poverty and vulnerabilities’ lens identified the gender equality issues to be addressed through the CSP. As part of the process of developing the CSP the country programme engaging in extensive analysis of gender issues, the gender policy framework and the national gender machinery, research was commissioned, literature reviews conducted and consultations with partners also took place as part of the process of developing a situation analysis of gender in Malawi. The findings from these processes were used to inform the development of the country strategy and to compliment the country strategic plan document itself. Some of the key issues that emerged through this process included the need to address gender inequalities in the agriculture sector where agriculture, where 80% of agricultural activities are carried out by women; socio-cultural inequalities, including discriminatory cultural traditions and practices, exclusion from decision making and control of assets, intra-household gender dynamics. Irish Aid conducted an analysis existing laws and policies relating to women including a review of land rights and tenure relating to customary law and practices as part of the agriculture programme. This revealed links between land grabbing and GBV and between gender inequalities, land ownership and tenure. The development of the programme focused on social protection. The Embassy invited HQ advisers for each of the CCIs to make a joint programme visit which enabled a technical focus on each CCI, bringing coherence and building on synergies between the CCIs. The Malawi team concluded that gender inequality is fundamental to every aspect of the programme and the vulnerabilities approach allowed it to be maintained in a central position across each of the 3 programme pillars. The Malawi programme also feels that the vulnerabilities approach has helped in terms of informing decision making about how to implement a twin track approach and to putting the gender equality policy into practice. While the CSP does not contain specific gender equality objective there are specific activities and indicators contained within the results and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. In order to ensure that gender equality issues are not diluted within the programme a series of gender monitoring and impact assessment tools are also under development.

Harmonisation is a key principal of the Paris Declaration. A priority in advancing gender equality through the CSP is harmonising with joint donor and government programme strategies such as NDPs, PRSPs, JAS or national action

22 Irish Aid Mainstreaming Strategy, Pg. 7.

23 Uganda Country Strategy Paper (2007 – 2009), Pg. 10.

plans. Irish Aid, in a number programme countries, engages in policy dialogue to support partner government to ensure that gender equality issues, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender indicators are reflected in national planning processes.

Support to Specific Initiatives on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

In line with the “twin-track” approach Irish Aid supports a range of specific interventions at programme country which contribute to the policy objective and complement gender mainstreaming across the programme, supporting research on gender equality, GBV programme and capacity building support to national women’s machineries are some examples.

Supporting research and data collection – Many country programmes have problems accessing quality research and data on gender equality issues. An increasing number of programme countries have taken very positive steps to support research projects on gender equality and local capacities to produce sex-disaggregated data (see Box 9)

Box 9- Irish Aid support to the development of sex-disaggregated and gender analytical data.

- **Ethiopia** – supported research on *Gender Equality and Social Protection* in response to the need to develop data on the key gender issues relevant to the safety nets programme.
- **Lesotho** – with partners in the justice sector, Irish Aid is funding a study on exploring the links between GBV and HIV which respond to local and regional needs for accurate information on this topic.
- **Tanzania and Timor-Leste** - as part of the Demographic and Health Survey planned in Tanzania and Timor-Leste, Irish Aid funded the addition of *investigation on domestic violence* as part of these surveys.
- **Uganda** – supported the development of two gender studies in the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development: 1) “*Effective Gender Mainstreaming: Modelling the Contributions of Reduced Gender inequality to GDP Growth Prospects in Uganda*”, May 2009; and 2) “*Effective Gender Mainstreaming: The Contribution of Reduced Gender Inequality to GDP Growth Prospects in Uganda – Women’s Voices*”, August 2009.
- **Zambia** - supported research on “*Situation analysis of women and children in relation to Poverty*” to inform the development of the PRSP.
- Malawi: supported Concern Universal to conduct research into the ‘Changing Nature of Poverty and New Vulnerabilities in Malawi’

See Annex 8 for full list of research on gender by Irish Aid

Responding to GBV – Since 2004 there has been increasing support to initiatives responding to GBV with the majority of programme countries now supporting GBV projects/programmes either mainstreamed into sectoral programmes or as stand-alone programmes. The South Africa programme has developed the first dedicated pillar to GBV in an Irish Aid programme; the details of this programme are described in Box 10 below.

Box 10- South Africa’s GBV Programme- lessons learnt to date.

The South Africa programme developed the first dedicated pillar to GBV in an Irish Aid programme (CSP 2008 – 2012). The GBV pillar is set around the objective of “*contributing to the prevention of gender based violence and the reduction of its impact*” and aims to 1) Strengthen capacity of government and civil society to address GBV; 2) Increase awareness of rights and changing attitudes and practices that contribute to GBV; 3) Promote an improved coordinated response for a scaled up response to GBV. The programme supports the implementation of the governments’ ‘National Plan of Action on GBV’ and approaches that enhance a focus on gender equality and rights, link with HIV and AIDS and long term behavioural change, and promote enhanced coordination and responses to GBV at national and local levels. Support is given to civil society programmes providing legal aid and advocacy on GBV, an organisation that promotes women’s rights and a research centre to advance conceptual knowledge and debate on GBV in South Africa. Key to the programme was the recruitment of a full-time Gender adviser, and most importantly the team adopted a ‘gender equality’ approach to this pillar and the wider CSP. They have successfully evolved a ‘twin-track’ approach where internal mainstreaming on gender is supported and implemented across the CSP alongside the specific programme focus on supporting responses to GBV. The Gender adviser oversees the GBV pillar while also supporting gender mainstreaming within the other sectors. Given that it is a new area of programming for the CSP, an incremental approach was taken. Lessons learnt after one year implementation include 1) be less ambitious and start small assessing what Irish Aid’s added value could be; 2) find ways to address both protection and prevention of GBV; 3) be prepared to take risks given it is a new programme; 4) assess potential new partnerships based on capacity to absorb funding and implement quality programming; 5) develop case studies on what is being done and share these formally within the institution.

National Women’s Machineries - The establishment of ‘national women’s machineries’ (NWM) within governments was set out under the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) as a strategy to advance high-level commitment and support to gender equality. These NWMs were to be equipped with a mandate to mainstream gender across government with adequate resources to fulfil this mandate. In many contexts, these ministries have floundered due to lack of adequate funding, the allocation of unskilled staff and with little political support to effect change. In a number of instances, such as Tanzania, Irish Aid has withdrawn funding to the NWM citing weak capacities as rationale. In Ethiopia, Irish Aid supports capacity building of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and also directly supports the national Women’s Affairs Bureau at provincial level in Tigray region.

In line with fragile states principals Irish Aid in Sierra Leone and Timor Leste are focusing on state building and capacity development of government structures including in the areas of gender equality. Funding to the IRC in Sierra Leone entails a component which enables IRC to provide technical support to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs. A further example of Irish Aid's support to government structures addressing gender equality and the impact this had is set out in Box 11 below.

Box 11- Timor-Leste: Capacity Development of Partners on Gender Equality.

Irish Aid has funded capacity development of partners on gender equality from the outset of engagement in Timor Leste. One of the aims of the 'Rights, Equality and Justice' pillar in each CSP was to strengthen the capacity of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI). Through its relationship with SEPI, Irish Aid has supported the placement of Gender Advisers within SEPI itself and across four key government departments - health, education, justice and agricultural sectors (with plans for the inclusion of the Ministry of Defence). Within the Ministry of Agriculture, the adviser has set up a strategy for gender mainstreaming and works with gender focal points/working groups across the different departments. The gender focal point in one section, supported by the adviser garnered support to find out more about the needs of women, who are the main agriculturalists. As a result, a new programme to distribute hand-held tractors to women (instead of larger tractors under the existing programme) was established and receives director-level support in the ministry. Irish Aid has nurtured relationships with the Gender advisers and regularly meets with them. Advisors provide information on the latest developments and issues which Irish Aid then uses in its policy dialogue with government and development partners. Irish Aid also meets on a quarterly basis with SEPI and similarly uses these meetings to inform policy dialogue. In a context where technical capacity was lacking in the aftermath of a protracted conflict, the use of gender advisers was necessary but the Embassy acknowledge this may not be sustainable, is expensive and the turn-over of contracts is problematic. Approaches that engage more with the development of national capacity and the creation of a pool of national advisers will be considered in the new phase of supporting a second programme for Gender mainstreaming in line ministries within the next CSP. The addition of a Gender Adviser to the Irish Aid programme means more time can be devoted to developing relationships with SEPI in a strategic way and addressing capacity constraints in SEPI.

SEPI has evolved from the Gender Affairs Unit of the UN Transitional Administration to the Office for the Promotion of Equality to an Office of the Secretary for State with a stronger mandate and political weight. Irish Aid's continuous assistance to these entities, combined with vocal support and the inclusion of gender issues in policy dialogue, has contributed to their survival and credibility, and enabled them to develop. This is a long-term process and, as their capacity and needs change, it will be important for Irish Aid to remain consistent in providing appropriate and adequate funding, and political support.

Other examples of Irish Aid direct support to gender equality and women's empowerment programmes include supporting more gender sensitive media in Zambia, Timor Leste and Tanzania as well as support to CSOs and multi-laterals working on women's political participation and economic empowerment. (Further details are set out in Section 4.2 and country profiles in Annex 9).

Policy dialogue and co-ordination in Programme Countries

Often, capacity constraints within partner governments limit capacity and space for substantive policy dialogue. In Mozambique, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs is mandated to lead discussion on mainstreaming but due to capacity constraints this is not taking place and the Ministry of Planning and Development, with support from UNIFEM and UNFPA, are instead leading. In some countries the lead on gender is taken by the UN and by those agencies directly addressing women's issues such as UNIFEM and UNFPA.

The Zambia CSP contains specific commitments to policy dialogue and; in each programme pillar relating to education; governance, poverty alleviation and local governance, specific issues for policy dialogue, including on gender issues, are included. This strategic approach enables Irish Aid to set out its policy dialogue priorities rather than responding to issues in an adhoc way. Box 12 describes how the Uganda Programme has mainstreamed gender equality in its policy dialogue on education.

Box 12- Uganda: Mainstreaming gender equality through policy dialogue within the education sector, and Justice Law and Order Sector

As Chair of the Education Working Group in Uganda, Irish Aid used the opportunity to highlight the lack of a gender policy for the sector, the impact this has on resource allocation and its relationship to poor completion rates for girls. As a result of this, a policy and action plan was developed. Irish Aid also supported bursaries for girls to access secondary school and in 2008, focused on the quality of education services and, through this lens, raised the issue of GBV in schools. Irish Aid partnered with UNICEF to incorporate GBV in schools within the sector review and used data, including police statistics, to support advocacy resulting in the development of a Gender Equality policy for the education sector. Irish Aid used a range of tactics to advance their strategy including a combination of policy dialogue, advocacy, negotiation and influencing through attending meetings, national fora, and field trips. Irish Aid also used its position as Chair of the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) to advance gender issues by promoting the pending domestic relations bill and Domestic Violence Bill. These were the priority issues identified by the Irish Aid programme team. Following advocacy and support to CSOs, there has been significant progress in moving the bills forward which has been pending for ten years.

Irish Aid is emerging as a key lead donor on gender inequality in a number of programme countries. In an evaluation report produced by the European Commission in Timor-Leste, Irish Aid is cited as the only committed donor to gender equality.

Irish Aid has also been instrumental in the establishment of joint donor funds to support specific gender issues. In South Africa, the Embassy has led the establishment of a new joint funding mechanism on GBV. In Tanzania, the Embassy, as chair of a sub-group on GBV, led the development of, and oversees the running of, a joint basket fund on GBV. There are also plans to establish a basket fund to support the work of the Ministry of Gender and Development in Tanzania. In Ethiopia, there is a joint fund that supports implementation of the national action plan on gender equality. These funds create opportunities to promote joint ways of working and dialogue between donors and promoted harmonisation.

Irish Aid has supported the mainstreaming of gender equality in Sector Working Groups. For example in Tanzania, a Division of Labour exercise has led to Irish Aid becoming the Gender Focal Point for the Agriculture Sector. In 2008, Irish Aid funded the recruitment of a gender consultant to the agriculture sector mid-term review which resulted in the development of an indicator on gender equality for the sector. Irish Aid has since become chair of the Agriculture Sector group and has been identified as a lead on gender issues. Under Irish Aid's chair, a checklist on gender issues has been developed which district-level councils are now reporting against.

Also of note, is the leadership being shown by the two Ambassadors in Uganda and Tanzania. Through the Local Development Partners Group, which brings together Ambassadors on a quarterly basis in Uganda, the Irish Ambassador has developed a partnership with the Norwegians on GBV. Both Ambassadors engaged prominent people within the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOs) at a political level and garnered support for addressing GBV. In Tanzania, the Ambassador initiated the establishment of an informal group on gender equality involving women Heads of Mission/Agency. The Vision/Objectives statement for the group states that the group will *"support Tanzanian women and men to achieve gender equality ensuring that women's critical contribution to the development of Tanzania is recognised"* and will *"support at least one major gender equality goal per annum"*.²⁴

Monitoring gender equality in CSPs

Managing for results provides significant opportunities to more effectively contribute to the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy. It will however be important that strong analysis underpins CSPs and that gender indicators are explicitly included.

The 'evaporation' of gender issues from results frameworks is evident to some degree across many of the Irish Aid CSP documents. Where gender issues are excluded from analysis there is less likelihood that it will be addressed in later results frameworks. Conversely, in other CSPs, it is evident that even though there may *not* be strong analysis of gender equality issues, there may be inclusion of gender specific activities within the programme design, or included within a 'mainstreaming' section under programme implementation sections which may undermine the 'logic' of the CSP.

Results frameworks in many cases are based on national level indicators. Irish Aid-specific indicators and the quality of these in terms of gender sensitivity vary across the CSPs, and also across different pillars of CSPs, with gender indicators more evident in health and social sector programmes. Finding effective indicators to track progress on issues of voice and empowerment is particularly challenging. An example of how one country programme, Zambia, is working to strengthen gender equality results in its results framework and lessons learnt to date is presented in Box 13.

A review of CSP annual reports (and the most recent quarterly reports for Mozambique and Timor-Leste) reveals that there is inconsistent reporting on gender equality and in some cases no mention of gender at all in these reports. The reports focus more on the financing, funding disbursements, political and economic developments; rather than on the substantive aspects of the programme. This limits the space where gender equality can be addressed. This is an exception for the programmes that have stand-alone pillars on gender equality such as South Africa and Timor-Leste.

Box 13- Strengthening Gender Equality Results in Zambia

Irish Aid's strengthened institutional commitment to focusing on the achievement and demonstration of results under the Aid Effectiveness 'MfDR' framework was used to re-look at the Zambia CSP and strengthen the results frameworks from a gender perspective. To assist this process, since June 2009

24 Terms of Reference Informal Group of Friends of Gender Equality in the United Republic of Tanzania

- External support was used to provide training and ensure gender equality is embedded in business plan actions, results frameworks and individual role profiles.
- Needs assessments and consultations were carried out with the four pillar teams and refresher training on gender equality provided for all staff.
- Intensive engagement with the four pillar teams followed to strengthen gender equality results in the various results frameworks. The pillar teams also discussed how they might work together more effectively to enhance gender equality results.

A revised results framework was developed and is significantly stronger from a gender equality perspective. Gender equality is now central to the goals and objectives of the programme “*reduction of chronic poverty and gender inequality in Zambia*”. Baseline and problem statements include a stronger analysis on gender and all data is sex-disaggregated. A stronger focus on gender mainstreaming is evident at a sectoral level and an indicator for internal mainstreaming is included “*systematic and coherent approach to managing for gender equality results across Irish Aid programme (internally and externally)*”. This is an ongoing process and one of the next steps will be to ensure learning is documented and shared across Irish Aid.

Conclusions on implementing the policy in programme countries

- *Capacity Building* – Team-working, as well as leadership, the strategic use of external expertise, and the need for monitoring and review mechanisms are key to progressing gender equality objectives. Addressing gender equality is the responsibility of all staff, nonetheless appointing a specific person with technical know-how is needed to ensure attention is paid to gender equality. One of the key challenges for gender advisors has been to balance the direct management of programmes, such as a GBV programme, with providing support to gender mainstreaming across the programme.
- *Mainstreaming gender equality* - Gender analysis in CSPs is stronger now than in 2003. Gathering reliable and quality, quantitative and qualitative research and sex disaggregated data is key to developing a clear gender analysis of any issue. Ensuring that the implications of this analysis are reflected in programming is progressing and is linked directly to progress in implementing MfDR. Reporting on gender equality (both annual and quarterly) remains weak. (see Recommendation 4)
- *Supporting specific gender equality initiatives* - Irish Aid is supporting a range of projects and programmes directly supporting gender equality and women’s empowerment. Many of these are in addressing gender-based violence, but there is also work on political participation, support to research and data collection, and capacity-building. Experience of supporting National Women’s Machineries is varied.
- Policy dialogue, both with partner governments and other donors, is a key arena for advancing Irish Aid’s commitments to gender equality. Of particular note is the positive example of leadership from Heads of Mission in a number of embassies. Coherence between international and programme country level policy dialogue must be strengthened (see Recommendation 5)

Key Recommendation 4

Gender equality must be more effectively mainstreamed across results frameworks. A more systematic approach to using gender analysis and sex disaggregated should be incorporated into CSP development. The learning from the Zambia model should be shared more widely across Irish Aid.

Key Recommendation 5

Capacity Development is a key challenge. In order to support this process Irish Aid should develop a position paper to inform Irish Aid engagement with National Women’s Machineries, including in fragile states, that should include an analysis of the role of UN Women in this regard and how Irish Aid can best support the capacity development of NWM’s through its support to UN Women. Research conducted to inform the paper should include analysis of international trends alongside learning from Irish Aid’s own support to these entities in Timor-Leste, Ethiopia, Tanzania and elsewhere.

CHAPTER 7- IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY IN HEADQUARTERS

Partnerships with CSOs

Civil Society has a key role to play in advancing gender equality. Irish Aid's Civil Society Policy notes that *"development processes often marginalise different sections of society, such as poor men and women, minorities and the disables. Through civil society organisations, marginalised sections of society can be enabled to participate and contribute to the overall development of their community, region and country"*²⁵.

The Civil Society Section (CSS) oversees the Civil Society Fund, the Multi-Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS) and support to Misesan Cara.

Civil Society Section - partnerships with CSOs

In 2009 the CSS conducted a series of thematic reviews, one of which was on "Governance and human rights" with a sub-section on *"women's rights and GBV"*. The review noted that a small number of such projects were being supported by the CSS (a total of 12). The review of the Section's support to "livelihoods" noted a number of micro-finance projects which provide funding to 'vulnerable groups' - mainly women. Many of these projects contribute directly to the gender equality policy objectives, addressing both practical and strategic needs.

Civil Society Section funding guidelines for the CSF and MAPS funding schemes place gender equality as central objectives of the schemes and provide guidance on how gender equality can be mainstreamed across programme proposals. For example, one of the five policy level objectives of the MAPS scheme is to *"promote sustainable development processes which reduce poverty and promote justice and equality especially gender equality"*.²⁶ Gender mainstreaming is an important criteria for assessing applications to the MAPS scheme where mainstreaming is expected to be a core institutional competency. The Section's new funding strategy for human rights states that combating GBV is a key objective. Female human rights defenders are also a key target group.

CS Section's approach to M&E on gender equality aims to strengthen the results focus of partner's interventions. Measuring and demonstrating progress on equality and empowerment can be particularly challenging and longer timeframes are involved in order to achieve progress. For example, significant support has been given to MAPS partners to strengthen their results frameworks.

Guidelines for reporting, monitoring and evaluation of both funding schemes have been developed. The CSF M&E guidelines state that *"the mainstreaming of the thematic priority issue in the project implementation should be reflected through the report including in the indicators and should not necessitate separate description. Specific activities relating to the CCIs should be described"*.²⁷ This is a very useful statement and should be reflected in other guidelines and application formats as it avoids the "ghettoisation" of gender equality and other CCIs, and also makes a distinction between gender mainstreaming and directly supporting gender equality and women's empowerment programmes.

Support has been available to partners to build internal capacities on mainstreaming, this is particularly evident in the MAPS scheme. One of the key process level objectives of MAPS II is to *"develop structures and processes that support and embed mainstreaming as an organisational strategy"*²⁸ Partners are encouraged to allocate 1% of the total MAPS budget to mainstreaming each of the CCIs which must be accompanied by an action plan to build capacity. No MAPS partners have submitted action plans. A draft report of the mid-term review of the MAPS scheme noted that this proposed allocation was not tracked or reported on by MAPS partners. Although annual reports and monitoring show some areas of progress, in particular in internal mainstreaming, in general strengthening M&E within MAPS partner agencies is in its early stages.

The CSS has commissioned one major external programme evaluation since the Gender Equality Policy was finalised in 2004 - an evaluation of MAPS 1. The ToR for this evaluation made no specific reference to evaluating approaches to gender equality, mainstreaming or the CCIs. The evaluation report has one generic section on *"Cross-cutting issues: mainstreaming"* which addresses approaches to gender equality, HIV and the environment.²⁹ Most significantly, the evaluation concluded that while there is some monitoring of women's participation in programmes, this was as far as it went and a more strategic approach to gender, or engaging with issues of power, was not generally part of the approach.

25 Irish Aid Civil Society Policy pg 1

26 MAPS guidelines pg 4

27 CSF M&E guidelines pg 6

28 MAPS guidelines pg 4

29 MAPS 1 evaluation pg 16

Emergency and Recovery Section - partnerships with CSOs

The Irish Aid Humanitarian Relief Policy states that Irish Aid will seek from its partner organisations a clearly articulated understanding of the gender-specific needs of men and women in emergency situations, and commits to mainstreaming gender in all humanitarian activities.

Much of the work of E&R is focused on meeting practical needs in emergencies such as access to food and health care. There is also a strong emphasis on the protection of vulnerable groups such as pregnant women. However, there are a number of examples of how projects and programmes address more strategic gender needs such as access to land or economic empowerment. The VFM review of Irish Aid's Tsunami response noted a number of projects supported which addressed more strategic issues such as the ILO Women's Livelihood Supported programme in Aceh or the funding provided to the International Development Law Organisation for a legal assistance initiative for Indonesia (Aceh) and Sri Lanka.

E&R Section supports the work of civil society organisations in responding to humanitarian emergencies through a number of different grant schemes: 1) The Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Fund (EHAF); 2) The Emergency Preparedness and Post-Emergency Recovery Fund (EPPR); and 3) The Rapid Response Initiative. The section has developed an engagement with a number of key partners through 'Humanitarian Partnership Plans' (HPP).

A commitment to mainstreaming gender is reflected, either implicitly or explicitly, in the guidelines and application forms developed for all E&R Schemes. For example the NGO application format for EHAF/EPPR funding has a specific section on addressing CCIs which requires applicants to *"describe how the project will harness capacities, and address the different needs/vulnerabilities of men and women"*.

A number of proposals and plans were viewed as part of the review process. Within these, particular categories of women (widows, pregnant and lactating women) were consistently highlighted as especially vulnerable during emergencies and therefore should be explicitly targeted. A number of applicants describe their commitment to combating GBV and, in particular, their active membership of the JC GBV. In general, there is a commitment to disaggregating data by sex, but this does not appear to be consistently applied across the proposals.

A key challenge is how to monitor and evaluate commitments made on gender equality. The main method used to monitor projects is through interim and final reporting processes. The format for these reports requires partners to report on "cross-cutting considerations" and there is therefore no explicit requirement to report on gender equality. One report from a key partner on a health and nutrition project in Ethiopia did not disaggregate any of the data by sex e.g. numbers of male and female beneficiaries, or numbers of male and female community volunteers. Terms of reference for field mission generally included reference to CCIs or mainstreaming, but not all were explicit on gender equality.

The development of Humanitarian Programme Plans (HPP) with a number of key partners and the Rapid Responses Initiative has been an opportunity to engage with partners at a more strategic level on issues of capacity. In 2007, the Section prioritised dialogue with HPP partners on gender equality policies and how these policies were being operationalised in humanitarian contexts. In general, grants awarded as part of the Rapid Response Initiative have related to logistics, co-ordination, and security; however one grant was awarded to the Irish Red Cross to build their capacity on responding to GBV in emergencies (see Box 14).

Box 14- Supporting capacity development within the Red Cross on responding to GBV

The objective of this funding is to enable the Irish Red Cross play a leading role in building the capacity of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on GBV. The Irish Red Cross has taken a lead within the Federation in mainstreaming a coherent and coordinated response to GBV throughout the Red Cross movement through the promotion of gender equality and gender sensitive programming. The Irish Red Cross, with Irish Aid, is a member of the JC-GBV. Responding to GBV is also a key cross cutting theme of the Irish Red Cross Strategic Plan 2007-2012. Recognising this comparative advantage, the IFRC requested the Irish Red Cross, on a pilot basis, to take on the leadership role in advancing awareness, understanding and capacity within the IFRC and across its 186 national society membership on gender and GBV. As part of the approach, the Irish Red Cross occupies a key Senior GBV specialist position at IFRC HQ level to complement and develop the Federation's existing technical capacity. The Irish Red Cross is also strengthening existing and new technical capacity on GBV both at its head office and in the field.

Development Education

The Development Education Strategy (2007-2011:8) makes reference to gender as a priority issue underlining Irish Aid's work and gender is also included to an extent under Objective 4 of the strategy *"Ensure that our development education initiatives raise public awareness and understanding of the underlying causes of global poverty and*

inequality". Funding guidelines for development education projects highlight gender as a key thematic area of focus to be addressed through support for development education partners. An internal midterm review of the Strategy is underway and relevant findings will be presented to the gender equality network

Between 2007 and 2009, two projects with specific gender equality and women's empowerment focus were funded – Banúlacht, which works with women's community based organisations and networks in Ireland; and Akidwa, the African Women's Network in Ireland. Approximately 43 out of 158 projects included gender as a cross-cutting theme.

The Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes (2007-2011) aims to promote cooperation between Irish institutions and those in countries supported by Irish Aid. The strategy highlights the importance of gender under Objective 2 *"To support the realisation of Irish Aid's policy objectives in the following areas ... [including] Gender equality"*.³⁰ Gender equality is a designated funding priority within the strategy. Seven of the eight projects funded under the programme from 2007/2008 onwards made commitments to gender mainstreaming across a range of education, environment, health, and HIV and AIDS areas. One of the seven projects, which focuses on research capacity building, has gender and ICT as key cross-cutting themes. However, a recent mid-term review of the programme found that there was a lack of evidence of progress on gender equality in project and programme reporting to date.

The Development Education Unit also manages the Fellowship Scheme. In 2010, 53% of candidates were female and a review of the programme in 2008 found that the proportion of women benefitting from the programme was relatively high by international standards.

Conclusion: Partnerships with CSOs

- Civil Society is a key arena for advancing the Gender Equality Policy.
- There have been significant advancements in Irish Aid approaches to gender equality in its funding and other guidelines. However there is a tendency to require applicants to address all of the CCIs together and/or to outline their approaches to mainstreaming as a broad strategy. This does not allow for any real understanding or analysis of gender inequality; nor for a clear distinction between mainstreaming and direct support to gender equality or women's empowerment programmes.
- Because many of Irish Aid's international CSO partners are engaged in service delivery, many of the projects being supported are addressing practical gender needs in the areas of health, education, access to food etc. Effective gender mainstreaming should ensure that projects/programmes are also addressing more strategic gender needs by analysing and, where appropriate, addressing unequal access to decision-making processes and resources which underpin inequity and disempowerment e.g. unequal access to land or discriminatory legislation.
- Supporting partners to strengthen the results focus of their work is a key challenge to advance implementation of the gender equality policy and strategy. Developing indicators which measure progress in addressing inequality and disempowerment is complex and there is a need for realism as to the timeframes involved.

Key Recommendation 6

Guidelines for all CSO funding scheme should be reviewed to ensure that they are coherent with our gender equality policy and strategy. These guidelines should provide guidance on strengthening gender equality results, and developing gender specific and gender disaggregated indicators in log frames.

Working with Multilaterals

A 'Strategic Framework for Engagement with UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies' was developed in January 2007 to guide Irish Aid's bilateral funding to UN agencies. The framework document states that Irish Aid *"will give particular emphasis to agencies who address issues of gender effectively."*³¹ Within the overview of UN partners provided as an annex to the framework, gender equality is only referred to in relation to UNFPA. Gender mainstreaming is not mentioned in relation to UNDP despite this agency's role in promoting gender mainstreaming within the UN system, particularly at country level.³²

30 Irish Aid (2007:15) Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes Strategy (2007-2011)

31 Irish Aid/ Oxford Policy Management (2007) Strategic Framework for Engagement with UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies, Pg. 12

32 Ibid Pg. 23

Irish Aid has developed multi-annual agreements with UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNAIDS. The multi-annual agreements all contain references to the role of these agencies in advancing Irish Aid's CCI's. Under these agreements, all the agencies are expected to develop gender policies. A review of some of these agreements reveals that there has been a tendency by Irish Aid towards emphasising gender equality more strongly in the agreements with those agencies that are typically associated with the issue such as UNFPA.

In terms of addressing gender equality, the engagement with UNFPA is particularly strategic as it facilitates Irish Aid support to an agency that works on some of the key causes of inequalities, as well as addressing specific issues such as GBV, maternal and reproductive health, and women's access to services.

Funding (although in smaller amounts) is also given to UNIFEM – the main UN agency addressing gender equality. Irish Aid gave significant inputs to an evaluation of the Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women which is managed by UNIFEM.

Irish Aid also contributes to funds that have been established to address specific gender issues such as the UN Trust Fund for Maternal Health and the Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Trust Fund. Funds from the HQ gender budget line contribute to The Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women managed by UNIFEM; UNDAW Women Watch Website and UNDAW – Follow-Up on the 2006 UN Secretary General's Report on Violence Against Women. See below

UNIFEM /UNDAW Funding by Irish Aid 2005-2010						
Year	Funding from Gender Budget Line to UNIFEM/	Funding to UNDAW from Gender budget line	Core Funding to UNIFEM	Funding to UNIFEM/Timor Leste	Funding from Stability Fund for 1325 Programme to UNIFEM	Total
2005	€690,000	-		-	-	€690,000
2006	€190,000	-	€790,000	-	-	€980,000
2007	€300,000	€250,000	€1,000,000	244,436	-	€1,794,436
2008	€300,000	€250,000	€600,000	€332,559	-	€1,482,559
2009	€400,000	€300,000	€300,000	€287,989	€150,000	€1,437,989

The section's interaction with the World Bank is managed through the Department of Finance and, while the WB has a gender policy in place, the section has little engagement with the WB on gender issues. The fact that gender equality is now a special theme for IDA 16 may be an opportunity to engage with the Department of Finance on our gender equality objectives.

Monitoring of the range of agreements with UN agencies is challenging. An internal assessment of these agreements highlighted that it is "difficult to point to what difference Ireland is making in its engagement with its UN partners as the objectives are so broad based".³³ Also, while partner agency may have gender policies in place, it is challenging to develop ways to measure whether these are being substantively implemented. Reporting comes through annual reports to which Irish Aid responds at annual board meetings. A joint donor mechanism to meet with agencies on an annual basis will soon replace this meeting and will offer Irish Aid the opportunity to have more of an impact by joining with larger donors.

The section also plans to develop a results framework for its core funding to UN agencies. Irish Aid's membership of MOPAN provides us with some opportunities to engage more strategically with multi-lateral partners on programme issues such as gender equality. Ireland is a member of MOPAN, a network of 16 like-minded donor countries with a common interest in assessing the organisational effectiveness of the major multi-lateral organisations they fund. Gender equality is assessed on the basis of whether country strategies include results on gender equality and whether the country programme has a significant programme focus on gender equality. As MOPAN is a very broad assessment process, detailed comments on agencies approaches to gender equality are not apparent with a few exceptions.

Policy dialogue plays a significant role in the section's work. Over the last year, the section has developed a more strategic approach by prioritising particular issues for policy dialogue. Gender equality has been selected as one of the priority areas and is included in the section's work plan with a specific focus on advancing the establishment of the new UN gender entity. The Section's approach to engaging with the new gender entity is set out in Box 15 below.

33An assessment of Ireland's Multi-Annual Framework Agreements with its main UN Agencies, Pg. 3

Box 15- Using Policy Dialogue to Successfully Influence Reform on Gender Equality at the UN

In 2007, Ireland co-chaired the UN System-Wide Coherence process and used this to exert influence during negotiations over the proposed reform of the UN gender architecture. The Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations (PMUN) and Irish Aid included reference to the gender entity within statements to political multilateral meetings and through opportunities such as board meetings with UN agencies. A critical moment in the process was the UN General Assembly meetings of 2009 where decisions on the entity were likely to be made.³⁴ The PMUN in New York demonstrated clear commitment to the issue and undertook strategic outreach work to influence Member States to positively engage in the process and Irish Aid played an instrumental role at these meetings. In order to complement the lobbying at UN level, the UN Multilateral section contacted eleven Irish Embassies located in countries which were stalling the process. Equipped with background information on each country's position and speaking points (provided by the section), Ambassadors met with their local counterparts to lobby for positive support to the negotiations.³⁵ A very effective lobbying campaign took place and its impact was acknowledged in further communications from the PMUN as being 'decisive' in advancing the agenda.³⁶ A resolution on System-Wide Coherence was passed by the UNGA detailing support for the gender entity, which was later followed by Resolution 63/311 to establish the new gender entity. The process demonstrates how strategic policy dialogue coordinated between the PMUN, Irish Aid HQ and CPs can advance gender equality. The section has selected the new gender entity as a priority issue for 2010 and plans to develop an internal position to enable response to drafts of the new entity's mandate, involvement in inter-governmental negotiations and possibly providing funding to the process. CSOs are interested in providing support to this and would provide a valuable contribution to this work and foster enhanced dialogue with these partners.

The Multilateral EU section coordinates and channels inputs from Irish Aid sections on specific policy issues to the EU. Over the last number of years, the EU has developed a number of guidelines on GBV and on UNSCR 1325. A specific action plan on gender equality is currently being developed. Inputs to all of these have been provided by Irish Aid.

There are many opportunities for mainstreaming gender into policy dialogue at EU through statements made by Irish Aid representatives and Council Conclusions resulting from various multilateral meetings. The Spanish presidency of January to June 2010 has taken gender equality as a priority issue and is focusing on the finalisation of the EU Action Plan on Gender Equality.

The section manages Irish Aid's contributions to the European Development Fund (EDF). The section also handles Irish Aid's engagement with the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and the development of the Aid for Trade Strategy.

The section liaises with the HQ Gender Adviser (and others) to gain inputs on gender for these fora as they arise. There are a number of like-minded donors who engage effectively and consistently on gender equality and Ireland's position is generally consistent with theirs.

The Emergency and Recovery Section works in partnership with UNOCHA, UNWFP, UNIL0 and ECHO. Written agreements between the section and these UN agencies do not generally make any specific references to programme issues such as CCIs or mainstreaming and in general there is limited dialogue on policy or programming issues. One exception is the institutional strategy currently being negotiated between DFID, CIDA and Irish Aid with UNOCHA for the period 2010 to 2013. The strategy includes an objective to support UNOCHA to *"meet its policy objective regarding gender equality issues in humanitarian co-ordination, policy, advocacy and information management"*. Although still in its early stages, this initiative demonstrates how bi-laterals can work together to support the capacity development of multilaterals in relation to gender equality. The E&R section is also funding UNOCHA on the 'Gender Standby Capacity Project' which has created and trained a pool of gender advisers which are available to Humanitarian Coordinators' offices at short notice in the onset of sudden emergencies.

Conclusion: Multi-laterals

- Irish Aid has provided significant levels of support to gender equality in the UN system, both as core funding and support to various funds and initiatives.
- Progress has been made in mainstreaming gender issues in agreements and policy dialogue with a number of UN agencies.
- Priorities will need to be set for policy dialogue. Decisions will need to be taken on where, and in what fora, Irish Aid can most effectively contribute and add-value on gender equality. The new UN Gender Entity UN Women should provide opportunities for more focused dialogue on gender equality.
- MOPAN offers some opportunities to engage with UN agencies on issues of institutional reform on gender equality and other issues. However, it is important to note that MOPAN assesses organisational rather than development effectiveness and moving to a stronger results focus will be a key challenge.

34 Emails from PMUN to Irish Aid, September 2009

35 Emails from Irish Aid to Embassies 2nd September, 2009

36 Emails from PMUN to Irish Aid, 16th September 2009

Key Recommendation 7

Irish Aid should provide the UN Gender Entity with financial support consistent with the levels of support on gender equality provided heretofore through the various UN bodies and funds (including UNIFEM and UN-DAW). Engagement on policy should be consistent with priorities proposed in Key Recommendation 3.

Other programme engagements:

The Hunger Task Force Unit

In response to the Hunger Task Force report, a 'Hunger Unit' has been established in Irish Aid HQ. The unit has developed an action plan which sets out key policy messages on the linkages between hunger eradication and other areas such as agriculture, pro-poor growth and vulnerability. Although not explicitly mentioned in these key messages, there is scope to expand these to integrate gender equality. At the international level, Minister of State Power's speeches related to the HTF report have emphasised the role of women in agriculture, as managers of household food consumption, and has placed a focus on maternal and infant nutrition. He has advocated for effective financing mechanisms to directly support small holder agriculture and women farmers.

In 2009, over €6.715 million was allocated to multi-lateral, civil society partners and research institutes through grants from the Hunger Unit, some with a specific gender focus.

Global Forum on Agricultural Research to increase awareness and opportunity for women engaged in agricultural research and how this research impacts on the needs of rural women.

Millennium Development Centres provide scientific, technical and policy support to governments and other stakeholders to achieve the MDGs. They place primary emphasis on rural development in Africa focusing on nine thematic sectors, one of which is gender.

UNICEF Support for Maternal and Infant Nutrition (Tanzania) addresses key gaps in the national response to nutrition and builds the capacity within government to promote improved infant and young child feeding at national and district levels.

Concern/IFPRI Partnering for Adequate Maternal and Child Nutrition to prevent maternal/child under-nutrition by influencing nutrition, food and livelihood security policy.

CGCIAR research – an alliance of fifteen research centre which mobilise quality agricultural science for the benefit of the poor, some of which are directed at women.

The Unit is currently mapping Irish Aid programmes relevant to the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force report and a training programme on responding to hunger is being developed.

Conclusions: *Hunger Task Force*

There is a need to ensuring the effective mainstreaming of gender equality in Irish Aid responses to hunger.

Key Recommendation 8

The opportunities reflected through the Hunger Task Force Report (2008), which has a strong focus on 'women in agriculture', must be prioritised:

- In addition to supporting gender specific projects and programmes through the work of the Hunger Unit, it is also be important to ensure that gender is mainstreamed across all Irish Aid responses to hunger. The mapping exercise currently being conducted could provide some important information on "entry points" for hunger and gender equality.
- Research should be supported in order to better understand the links between hunger, agriculture production and gender inequality.
- The Hunger Unit is organising training to develop staff capacity to understand the causes and consequences of hunger. This is an excellent opportunity to include a training module on mainstreaming gender in Irish Aid's responses to hunger.

Public Information and Communications

The gender equality policy commits to ensuring that Irish Aid's communications emphasise gender equality as a core value of Irish Aid and that publications and information present positive images of women, their needs and their achievements.

The 2008 annual report has a strong gender focus, in particular in relation to programme countries. It contained a number of case studies demonstrating concrete examples of gender equality initiatives including micro-finance and farmers' cooperatives in Timor-Leste and Malawi as well as gender mainstreaming through social protection,

education and healthcare.

Case studies are an effective way of communicating the reality for many women and girls in developing countries and drawing attention to Irish Aid's work. Informal case study guidelines for missions were recently developed within the section that recommend using the *Dóchas Code on Positive Images and Messages* and highlight the importance of female participation and gender-balance in interviews.

One positive example is the case study below, profiling Irish Aid's work in Malawi and its focus on women as farmers and active participants in development. It recognises the important role that women like Rosemary play in agriculture in Malawi where women dominate the agricultural labour force and have primary responsibility for family food production. However they grow less cash crops, have limited access to improved inputs, and their decision making and rights to land are often compromised. The case study demonstrates how Irish Aid support to farmers cooperatives like NASFAM, that target both men and women, can be used to empower women and transform their roles in agriculture with immediate impact on household food security, nutrition and access to services like education.



Real Stories: Rosemary from Malawi

Rosemary is a member of NASFAM, a farmers' cooperative in Malawi that is offering a route out of poverty to its 100,000 members with the support of Irish Aid. In the nine years since she joined NASFAM, Rosemary has seen a substantial increase in her family's economic standing. "I have nine children ranging from 35 years to 18. There's no doubt that my younger ones had a better upbringing than the older ones because of our improved standard of living. We have more food on our plates and more money to spend on their education. My youngest is now finishing secondary school."

By banding together, NASFAM farmers are achieving better prices for their produce and benefiting from training and technical support which is helping them to increase crop quality and get higher yields. In 2008, Irish Aid provided NASFAM with €150,000 and supported the Malawian Government to distribute to seeds and fertilizer to over 1.5 million poor farmers.

(Accessed <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/article.asp?article=1473> on 13/07/10)

Another positive example can be seen in the promotional material prepared for the National Ploughing Championships in 2010 which state that women in Africa are responsible of 60% to 80% of food production but have limited access to and control over land and other necessary resources (see annex 12).

This following example taken from the Irish Aid website provides an example how gender equality could be more effectively mainstreamed in some of Irish Aid publications. Abdallah is the only person named in this photograph and referred to as 'a Tanzanian farmer' while his wife looks on. This is despite that fact that statistics show that 60 to 80% of agricultural work is done by women in African countries. While it notes Irish Aid's lead role in the agriculture sector in Tanzania an opportunity is lost by failing to also mention the work on gender equality and agriculture which Irish Aid have driven in Tanzania.

This is Abdallah Dege

Abdallah Dege is a Tanzanian farmer whose farm has been revolutionised by a farmer advisory service. Through practical demonstrations and guidance, the service has allowed farmers like Abdallah and his wife to increase productivity, ensuring he has enough money to feed his family and send his children to school.

'I sell a lot of my crops now and still manage to keep enough for my family to eat.'

Irish Aid is the lead donor to the Tanzanian Government's agricultural development strategy.

Irish Aid Department of Foreign Affairs An tSeirbhís Eorpach Leasúcháin
Everyday you are helping the world's poorest people.

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In 2006, Bridge conducted a gender review of the website and concluded there was little information on the gender equality work that Irish Aid is doing. It noted that information on gender is “ghettoised’ in the gender section rather than being reflected across all sectors and themes.³⁷ The website is currently being updated and this is an opportunity to review implementation of the recommendations set out in the BRIDGE review.

Conclusions: Public information and communications

- Although there are some excellent case studies both on the web and in reports, some, like the example referred to above, caution the need for gender sensitivity. There is a need to build awareness and capacity in this area (see key recommendation 7)
- The website is the primary means through which Irish Aid’s image and work is communicated to the general public, partners and a multitude of audiences. Effective mainstreaming gender across the site has the potential to maximise exposure to, and understanding of, the intersection of gender equality issues and development.

Evaluation and Audit Section (E&A)

In general, attention to gender equality in Irish Aid evaluations has been patchy. Evaluations of country programmes since 2004 make very little comment on gender equality or gender mainstreaming although there is evidence of improvement in recent years. The evaluations of the Timor-Leste country programme and the VFM review of Irish Aid’s Tsunami response were reviewed and details are contained in Box 16 below.

Box 16 – Evaluations of the Timor Leste CSP and Irish Aid’s Tsunami Response

The 2008 evaluation highlight that while there was evidence of deepening engagement on gender equality as a specific “pillar” within the programme, it has not been effectively mainstreamed across the other sector programmes and there is only modest evidence of a strategic approach to mainstreaming. The evaluation outlines the pros and cons of developing a specific pillar on gender equality versus mainstreaming. The description of the background context provided in an annex to the evaluation report makes no mention of gender issues or analysis.

The 2005 Value for Money Review of Irish Aid’s support to Tsunami affected countries found that the CCIs were relatively neglected and gender equality responses specifically were weak. It however noted that a number of projects supported by Irish Aid addressed strategic issues. An example is the ILO Women’s Livelihood Support programme in Aceh and funding provided to the International Development Law Organisation for a legal assistance initiative for Indonesia (Aceh) and Sri Lanka.

Conclusions: Evaluation and Audit

The publication of the gender equality policy has provided a framework for evaluating approaches to gender equality more effectively, however this has been limited by the relatively recent introduction of results frameworks at programme country level and the lack of a results frameworks for the Gender Equality Policy (see key recommendations 2 and 4)

CHAPTER 8- INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR IRISH AID

There has been significant progress since 2004 in strengthening internal institutional structures to support the implementation of the policy.

The Gender Adviser Position

The first ‘Gender Adviser’ position at Irish Aid HQ was appointed as a half-time position in 2003. The Gender Adviser role was made full-time for the first time in 2009.

The role is challenging with a range of competing demands. Gender Advisers support the mainstreaming of gender equality across planning and monitoring processes (including CSP development and mid-term reviews); engage with a range of external fora including the Joint Consortium on GBV and the DAC Gender net; provide technical inputs to statements made at the UN and EU through the UN and EU multilateral, as well as from the CRU and the HRU in the wider Department; provide policy advice and facilitate knowledge dissemination across Irish Aid on gender equality. A

37 Bridge (2006: 1) Gender Review

key role is to support the gender network in order to ensure that the responsibility for mainstreaming is spread across the organisation.

Strengthening Structures and Systems for more effective mainstreaming

The Mainstreaming Strategy commits to strengthening mechanisms to support mainstreaming. The role of the Mainstreaming Reference Group in implementing the strategy is outlined in Chapter 3.

As noted in Chapter 3, one of the key developments since the gender policy was launched has been the increasing focus on managing for development results. New institutional guidelines were produced in May 2008 - "*A results-based management approach to Country Strategy Papers*" which should support strengthened approaches to gender equality across CSPs. No explicit references or linkages are made to how CSPs support the implementation of the gender equality policy (and v.v), or any other Irish Aid policies. However gender equality issues are mainstreaming across sections on context analysis, a specific and detailed section on gender equality is included and the guidelines stress the importance of sex disaggregated and gender responsive indicators. The newly produced Guidelines for PAEG consultants are brief and general on issues of quality assurance stating "*gender equality, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDs and good governance should be addressed in the substance of the document*". The document refers people to the Mainstreaming Strategy, but not to the gender equality policy or other relevant CCI policies.

Attention to gender equality is less evident in institutional guidelines on monitoring mechanisms. The Guidelines for Annual Reporting are very brief and make no reference to specific reporting on gender equality or any other CCI. A sample ToR annexed to the MTR guidelines includes the question "*what is the overall picture about the mainstreaming? What strategic choices have been made? Is it clear what change/result is intended from mainstreaming of each issue and is this being tracked*". Again no clear references or linkages are made to the gender equality policy, or any other policy.

The Performance Management and Development System is becoming increasingly embedded within the management culture of DFA. Annual business plans and role profiles offer the opportunity to strengthen accountability for gender equality results.

The Gender Network

The Gender Equality Policy sets out that a 'Gender Team' will be established at HQ. A 'Gender Network' was established in 2008 and now has representation from all PCs and ten sections across HQ as well as the CRU and the HRU (the ToR can be seen in Annex 10). The network has played a key role in the review of the Gender Equality Policy.

Gender Advisers in CPs indicated that there had been improved contacts between their offices and HQ since 2007, particularly in 2008/2009 – which directly correlates with the increase in resources on gender equality at HQ. Gender Advisers all asserted the importance of engagement with HQ and across programme countries. The gender advisors meeting held in Nov 2008 was seen as a positive example of this increased engagement.

As a result of the Gender Network there has been increased engagement and lesson learning across countries. For example, a visit by the HQ Gender Consultant to Tanzania included the Gender Adviser from Uganda, which established relations between the two advisers (who had never met before) and enabled sharing and more efficient use of this technical resources across both programmes. The Gender Adviser in Uganda also participated in a visit to Malawi as part of a technical support visit on mainstreaming to the development of the Malawi programme. The Gender Adviser from South Africa visited the Lesotho programme to support the development of institutional approaches to mainstreaming.

Training and Knowledge Management

The majority of staff consulted for this review were not familiar with the gender equality policy. When the policy was launched in 2004, a series of briefing were held at HQ to introduce staff to the new policy but there has been a significant turnover of staff since then. A programme of training on mainstreaming all 4 of the CCIs was rolled out across programme countries following the approval of Mainstreaming Strategy in 2007. A one off generic training session on 'Gender Mainstreaming' was organised in 2008 by Corporate Services for HQ staff and was facilitated by an external facilitator. Participants found the training useful but very generic. Training on mainstreaming gender is provided to all staff of the *Emergency and Recovery Section* on an annual basis. A one day "Introduction to mainstreaming" workshop covering all 4 of the CCIs was held for staff of the Civil Society Section in 2007. (See annex 11 for more details of training conducted)

A 'Knowledge Management Strategy' is being developed and a cross-sectional knowledge management group is operational. As part of a strengthened approach to KM an organisational intranet is being established and the gender equality section of the intranet is now operational, enabling enhanced sharing of information across the organisation.

The Gender Budget Line

Funding for mainstreaming and gender equality initiatives is drawn from a broad range of budget lines across the organisation. A specific gender equality budget line was established in 2004 to support the implementation of the policy. The table below shows an overall increase since 2005 but a significant decline since 2009.

Gender Equality Budget Line

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (allocation)
€500,000	€500,000	€750,00	€1.08m	€1.3m	€800,000

In 2007, a three-year strategic approach to the budget was developed with the following objectives:

1. Strengthen gender equality knowledge and skills both inside and outside of Irish Aid through networking, research and information dissemination.
2. Enhance Irish and international efforts to address gender based violence through humanitarian and development assistance
3. Empower women by supporting indigenous women's rights organisations and movements to mobilise and advocate change for gender equality.

To date, the gender equality budget has been used to fund specific actions on gender equality, and specifically on GBV that otherwise may not 'fit' within wider institutional funding envelopes and also funds a number of research and knowledge dissemination projects and networks.

Monitoring Expenditure on Gender Equality

Monitoring expenditure on gender equality is important for accountability and transparency. Expenditure on specific gender equality projects and programmes has increased considerably since the development of the Gender Equality Policy in 2004. Using the DAC sector code for gender ('women's equality organisations' or 'women in development') to track this demonstrates consistent increases from 2004 until 2008 with a significant decline in funding from 2008.

Gender Equality Expenditure (using DAC Sector Codes)

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
€3.3	€1.6	€2.4	€3.4	€5.7	€7.3	€5.9

The Irish Aid Expenditure Tracking Analysis (2008) noted that the Sun System (Irish Aid's financial recording database) has the ability to track cross-cutting expenditure if the code is applied consistently; however this tends to be ad-hoc. An analysis of this code demonstrates that only 5.14% of overall aid was allocated to gender mainstreaming in 2008 while the actual figure is likely to be much higher.

The OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker assesses aid and determines if it has a gender equality focus. In reporting on the marker, donors indicate whether or not each activity targets gender equality as a "*principal objective*" or as a "*significant objective*" using the marker scoring system.³⁸ Irish Aid applied the marker for the first time in 2007 and 2008 and this demonstrated that approximately 35% of bilateral aid had gender equality either as a principal or significant objective. Although there are a number of difficulties relating to the quality and subjectivity of the marker, ownership, responsibility for applying it and an awareness of what is measured; it is a potentially a powerful tool to monitor expenditure on gender equality and to strengthen accountability for commitments made.

Inconsistencies in applying the various gender codes are visible across the division although the situation is improving. There is a lack of understanding on how and when cross-cutting codes are to be used. This leads to under-reporting, both within Irish Aid and to the DAC. A more consistent use of the coding system would allow Irish Aid to report accurately on gender and cross cutting issues and also analyse trends in funding for gender

One of the key problems is that many staff have not had any in-depth training on the coding system. Overall responsibility for applying these codes should be made at programme approval stages by programme managers who understand the policy implications of coding expenditure.

Irish Aid is in the process of reviewing the Accounting System and Coding Structure to upgrade the financial

³⁸ Principal means gender equality was an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental in its design. Significant means gender equality was an important, but secondary, objective of the activity. Not targeted means that the activity was screened for promoting gender equality, but was found to not be targeted to it.

management system and improve reporting and data. The planned consultancy will assess the current system, identify information gaps and recommend changes to the current coding system to maximise the analysis potential. The review offers an opportunity to adapt the coding structure to better meet the needs of Irish Aid and improve coding and tracking on spending on women’s empowerment and gender equality.

Conclusions: Institutional development and capacity building.

- There is broad agreement on the need for a full-time Gender Adviser at HQ level. The key challenge is to ‘prioritise’ and identify strategic priorities and entry points across the programme.
- The Gender Equality budget line is a small but strategically important, its current role in “filling gaps” in programme responses may not be the most strategic use of the budget line.
- Strengthened structures and systems to support the implementation of the policy are apparent. In particular, results based management presents many opportunities for a more structured approach to mainstreaming; however explicit linkages between implementation of policies and MfDR processes are not being made. Less progress is apparent in monitoring processes, including annual reports and MTRs. Processes of social change take time, including gender equality and women’s empowerment and this timeframe must be realistically reflected in results frameworks.
- The Gender Network has been a very positive development and a useful mechanism for sharing information and learning. CRU and HRU membership is an important mechanism for strengthening coherence across DFA. The gender network’s role in monitoring the implementation of the gender equality policy is less apparent.
- Training and capacity building of staff on gender equality is more evident at programme country level. In the absence of an institutional training strategy, the approach to training on gender equality at an institutional level has tended to be ad-hoc. Awareness of the policy amongst staff is very limited. The intranet has an important role to play as a tool to share learning on gender equality.
- Funding for gender equality and women’s empowerment is frequently underreported. There is limited understanding of how and when the cross-cutting codes should be used and no current capacity to implement the DAC gender equality policy marker (beyond the Financial Controller and the Gender Advisor). In the current budgetary context in particular, it will be important that Irish Aid can monitor expenditure on gender equality.

Key Recommendation 9

As part of the development of the Irish Aid training strategy, develop a strategic and clear programme of incremental and differentiated training on gender equality for staff across the organisation; including, but not limited to, induction processes. Mainstreaming gender equality should be a component of all future training on MfDR.

Key Recommendation 10

Maintain the current allocation of human resources to support implementation of the Gender Equality Policy both at HQ and programme country level. In addition, a JPI should be assigned to the gender portfolio.

The Gender Network has a key role to play in facilitating accountability and coherence across Irish Aid and all Sections should be represented as well as other relevant parts of DFA.

Key Recommendation 11

The proposed annual report on gender equality should include an analysis of expenditure trends on gender equality, both funding to specific initiatives and gender mainstreaming

Key Recommendation 12

The HQ gender budget line should be used to support research, learning, knowledge dissemination and capacity-building on gender equality.

CHAPTER 9 – CONCLUSIONS

Below is a table comparing the key findings of this review to the main gaps and challenges found in the 2003 review. The table demonstrates that there has been some important progress in particular aspects of both institutional and programmatic approaches to advancing gender equality.

Box 17 - Table Comparing Baseline from 2003 to 2009/2010

2003 Review	2009-2010 Review
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<p><i>Policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion about 'gender' as a concept. • Guidelines for NGO cooperation only policy with gender included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion about concepts remains with some staff – particularly in relation to how to apply them to their work. • Gender equality increasingly visible in policies, strategies and guidelines; for example CS and E&R section policy and guidelines; the UN Multilateral section agreements with UN agencies.
<p><i>Gender Mainstreaming:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender not mainstreamed well. • Tendency for a 'women as beneficiaries' approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened structures and systems to address mainstreaming. • Evidence of mainstreaming in implementation of CSPs. • Stronger analysis evident but 'Women as beneficiaries' approach still used in some CSPs.
<p><i>Budget:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Women in Development' (WID) budget line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coding system in place; some problems with applying codes and DAC gender equality policy marker. • Specific gender equality budget line now in place at HQ.
<p><i>Gender Focal Points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focal Points at Embassies; Half-time Focal Point HQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender advisers or staff with specific responsibility for gender mainstreaming now in most Embassies. • Full time gender advisor at HQ.
<p><i>Sharing of Information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 'knowledge management system' in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focus on knowledge management across Irish Aid. Intranet established with a gender equality page.
<p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific training on gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No training strategy in place. • Gender Mainstreaming training in 7 Embassies; One session at headquarters. • Funding to DTALK for training on gender mainstreaming and GBV.
<p><i>Multilateral/External Coordination on GE:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited involvement in multilateral fora. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ Gender Adviser participates actively in OECD/DAC Gendernet and is on its Bureau. Also inputs regularly to other multi-lateral fora.
<p><i>Coherence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reference to links with wider DFA political work on gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased links with wider DFA departments and inputs by Irish Aid on gender equality to their work streams.

The ToR for this review sets out a series of questions under the DAC evaluation framework. This conclusion provides analysis of lessons learned, key progress and challenges using these DAC evaluation criteria and the questions set out in the ToR.

Effectiveness

Progress Towards Achieving Goals and Objectives of the Gender Equality Policy: While significant progress has been made, the need for further understanding of the conceptual basis of the policy remains. The distinction between transforming gender inequalities and addressing women's needs is not always widely understood across the organisation. This has an impact on how, and to what extent, the policy's goals and objectives can be achieved. There has been a tendency to focus on meeting *practical* gender needs rather more *strategic* gender needs. Also, the 'twin-track' approach is not set out clearly enough within the policy and needs to be clearly elaborated on through training/guidance for staff.

Key achievements and constraints in implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy: Progress in gender mainstreaming can be seen in strengthened gender analysis in CSPs, cross-sectoral ways of working at Embassy level and strengthened efforts to address mainstreaming with CSO and UN partners. Yet the results of mainstreaming are not yet clear. A key challenge in going forward is to strengthen gender mainstreaming across all MfDR processes.

Key achievements/constraints in promoting women's empowerment and implementing specific gender equality projects: A lack of clarity on the distinction between mainstreaming and supporting gender specific and women's empowerment programmes is evident. Support for specific initiatives on gender equality need to be coherent with wider programming within CSPs.

Relevance

Internal and External Challenges to Implementation of the Policy: Internally, the Gender Equality Policy remains relevant to Irish Aid, is also clearly relevant to the wider DFA and there has been increased communications across the department in this respect. Externally, the new ways of working through the Aid Effectiveness agenda provide key challenges and opportunities for implementing Irish Aid's commitments to gender equality. The global financial crisis and its harsh impact on women and girls, and the re-allocation of budgets across Irish Aid, implies the need for

support to strategic and targeted interventions to ensure there is no roll-back on gains made towards addressing inequalities.

Gaps in the current policy: Irish Aid has responded to the increasing international focus on GBV by becoming a key donor on this issue. GBV has been correctly situated as a manifestation of gender inequalities and this approach must be maintained to ensure that work on addressing structural and socio-cultural inequalities, women's rights and gender mainstreaming are not side-lined. Links must also be made to other issues such as the White Paper, the Hunger Task Force, the aid effectiveness agenda and approaches to fragile states.

Sustainability

Ways of working and the institutionalisation of approaches to gender equality both internally and externally: Systems and structures have been put in place to ensure the sustainability of progress made. The appointment of gender advisers and advisers with responsibility for gender at CP level and gender focal points as part of the Gender Network at HQ level show progress and are an essential means through which to institutionalise approaches to policy implementation. However, these developments will need to be maintained and staff members given the time, support and resources to fulfil the potential of these roles. One of the greatest needs within the institution is capacity development of staff through a differentiated incremental approach to training on gender equality.

Externally, the most challenging aspects of advancing gender mainstreaming is working with partners and supporting their capacity development. Supporting to National Women's Machinerys as potentially a key means of promoting sustainable national approaches to addressing gender equality requires further analysis.

Impact

Systems in place to identify the impact of Irish Aid's work on gender equality: There remains a major gap in terms of availability of information on *impact*. Progress is being made - it would appear that analysis is getting stronger, baselines are being put in place and further efforts to develop effective results frameworks that contain qualitative gender indicators will make a difference. The evolving MfDR approach is an opportunity to develop a results framework for the policy to strengthen accountability for policy implementation.

CHAPTER 10 – RECOMMENDATIONS

Change doesn't happen on its own; it must be created and driven. Below are a set of recommendations to guide next steps on the implementation of Irish Aid's commitments to addressing gender inequalities as part of development cooperation and poverty eradication:

Advancing Implementation of the Gender Equality Policy

1. Maintain the conceptual basis of the Gender Equality Policy but update it to:
 - Reflect changes in the internal and external environment.
 - Become more Irish-Aid specific – include references to specific areas of Irish Aid's work.
 - Address some of the gaps identified through this review.

- Set out clearly the twin-track approach and provide other relevant frameworks/tools for practical application of the policy by staff members.

Strengthening the results focus of Irish Aid's work on gender equality

2. To enable us to monitor Irish Aid's implementation of the Gender Equality policy, a 'results framework' should be developed which will link policy and practice – this framework could be used as the basis of an annual report for senior management on addressing gender equality in Irish Aid.
3. Gender equality must be more effectively mainstreamed across results frameworks. A more systematic approach to using gender analysis and sex disaggregated should be incorporated into CSP development. The learning from the Zambia model should be shared more widely across Irish Aid.
4. Guidelines for all CSO funding scheme should be reviewed to ensure that they are coherent with our gender equality policy and strategy. These guidelines should provide guidance on strengthening gender equality results and on developing gender specific and gender disaggregated indicators in log frames.

Policy-engagement

5. In line with strategic priorities and areas of comparative advantage, Irish Aid should prioritise the following areas in its international level policy dialogue;
 - Gender Equality and Hunger.
 - Addressing Gender-based violence
 - Gender Equality and Aid Effectiveness.

Institutional positions on these 3 priority areas should be elaborated in a revised policy.

The gender equality network and the proposed annual reporting mechanism on gender equality should be used to ensure that international level dialogue is informed by field level priorities and evidence.

6. **The opportunities reflected through the Hunger Task Force Report (2008) which has a strong focus on 'women in agriculture' must be prioritised:**
 - In addition to supporting gender specific projects and programmes through the work of the Hunger Unit, it is also important to ensure that gender is mainstreamed across all Irish Aid responses to hunger. The mapping exercise currently being conducted could provide some important information on "entry points" for hunger and gender equality.
 - Research should be supported in order to better understand the links between hunger, agriculture production and gender inequality.
 - The Hunger Unit is organising training to develop staff capacity to understand the causes and consequences of hunger. This is an excellent opportunity to include a training module on mainstreaming gender in Irish Aid's responses to hunger.
7. Irish Aid should provide the UN Gender Entity with financial support consistent with the levels of support on gender equality provided heretofore through the various UN bodies and funds (including UNIFEM and UN-DAW). Engagement on policy should be consistent with priorities proposed in Recommendation 5.

Resourcing

8. Maintain the current allocation of human resources to support implementation of the Gender Equality Policy both at HQ and programme country level. In addition, a JPI should be assigned to the gender portfolio.

The Gender Network has a key role to play in facilitating communicating accountability and coherence across Irish Aid and all Sections and Programme Countries should be represented, as well as other relevant parts of DFA.

9. The HQ gender budget line should be used to support research, learning, knowledge dissemination and capacity-building on gender equality.
10. The proposed annual report on gender equality should include an analysis of expenditure trends on gender equality, both funding to specific initiatives and gender mainstreaming.

Institutional Capacity Development and knowledge management

11. As part of the development of the Irish Aid training strategy, develop a strategic and clear programme of incremental and differentiated training on gender equality for staff across the organisation including, but not limited to, induction processes. Mainstreaming gender equality should be a component of all future training on MfDR.

There is a need for training on the implementation of the Irish Aid's coding system to track expenditure on gender equality.

Capacity Development of Partners

12. Capacity Development is a key challenge. In order to support this process, Irish Aid should develop a position paper to inform Irish Aid engagement with National Women's Machinerys, including in fragile states, that should include an analysis of the role of UN Women in this regard and how Irish Aid can best support the capacity development of NWM's through its support to UN Women. Research conducted to inform the paper should include analysis of international trends alongside learning from Irish Aid's own support to these entities in Timor-Leste, Ethiopia, Tanzania and elsewhere.