

**DFID Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP):
Third Progress Report (2009-10)**

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1. Executive summary

The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)¹ 2007-10² has shaped DFID's global leadership on women's empowerment and gender equality issues over the last three years. It has supported our increased programming to tackle gender inequality and support women's and girls' rights; helped us to support and encourage our partners (including the World Bank, the UN and national governments) to pay greater attention to women's empowerment; and secured a much improved international focus on the needs and priorities of women and girls in development.

This report is the third review of the GEAP's achievements. In 2009-10 we have sustained and built on earlier progress in strengthening our own, and the wider international community's, focus on women's empowerment and on developing measures to tackle entrenched inequalities. We have mainstreamed gender across our wider policy work, including on education, nutrition and health. Our programmes are showing real impact on the ground, including DFID's contribution to: increased political participation of women in Sierra Leone, Nepal and Afghanistan; significant increases in the number of girls attending school in Afghanistan and Bangladesh; new employment opportunities for women in Uganda and Nepal; and a new three-year innovative partnership with the Nike Foundation to promote the empowerment and participation of girls in poor countries.

Drawing on learning and evidence from the GEAP and building on DFID's new Business Plan priorities for 2011-2015, DFID has developed a new Strategic Vision for Girls and Women which will supersede the Gender Equality Action Plan. This Strategic Vision will enable us to accelerate our efforts and deliver more effectively on the Business Plan.

2. Introduction

The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) was launched in 2007 and reflected DFID's commitment to promoting gender equality and women's rights across our development assistance. The Plan set out a serious and concerted programme of strengthened mainstreaming of gender equality

¹ GEAP 2007-10 www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/diversity-gender-equality-plan-2007.pdf

² The GEAP originally covered the period 2007-10. In 2010, it was agreed to extend the GEAP to March 2011, when the new DFID Strategic Vision for Girls and Women would succeed the GEAP. A revised Action Plan was not agreed for the extended period to March 2011. This report therefore is the third and final GEAP

across our policies, programming, internal systems and resources. All parts of DFID were involved in this process, including top management. It represented a fresh and ambitious approach, setting a focused programme of work on: results; resources; partnerships; and building for the future.

The GEAP³ shaped DFID's global leadership on women's empowerment and gender equality issues over the period 2007-2010. It supported our increased programming to tackle gender inequality and support women's and girls' rights; helped us to support and encourage our partners (including the World Bank, the UN and national governments) to pay greater attention to women's empowerment; and secured a much improved international focus on the needs and priorities of women and girls in development.

Section 3 of this report examines progress with delivery against the GEAP commitments in its third and final year (building on previous annual reviews for 2007-8⁴ and 2008-9⁵). It details progress in delivering on the six success criteria identified in the 2008-09 GEAP progress report:

- increased participation by women in political life;
- better quality education for girls;
- increased participation by women in formal employment;
- improved access to reproductive health facilities;
- better measurement of our impact; and
- compliance with the Gender Duty and increasing staff fluency in gender equality.

In addition, it highlights re-energised efforts to tackle violence against women; DFID's continued leadership of work on gender across the international system; and the steps we have taken to continue to build a robust evidence base on women and development.

Section 4 of the report examines the lessons we have learned on gender mainstreaming over the GEAP's lifetime (since 2007).

A detailed update of progress against activities highlighted by the 2008-09 GEAP progress report is contained in a separate annex and is available on request.

report. It contains reporting on country progress during the period 2009-10.

3 GEAP 2007-10 www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/diversity-gender-equality-plan-2007.pdf

4 GEAP Progress Report 2007-8 www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/diversity-gen-eq-act-plan-prog-rep-1.pdf

5 GEAP Progress Report 2008-9 www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/...-gen-eq-act-plan-prog-rep-2.pdf

3. Delivering Results

a) Increased participation of women in **political life** at international, national and local levels

DFID is engaged in a range of activities to support women's engagement in politics and as political leaders. Work in this area includes training aspiring female candidates and women educators, delivering awareness-raising sessions; and working with partners to support political voice. We have mapped the extent of our work on women's political participation through a scoping study of the work of a dozen country offices and UK based teams to promote women's political participation in their programming.

In 2009, the global proportion of parliamentary seats held by women reached a high of nearly 19%. Whilst this is to be celebrated, women remain significantly under-represented in political decision making at all levels worldwide. There is more to do to build on our 2009-10 successes:

- Women were nominated onto a district wide representational body for the first time in Helmand, **Afghanistan**. Participation in initial meetings was supported by the DFID-FCO-MoD Stabilisation Unit which also provided personnel support to the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) in implementing a 10-year National Action Plan for Women.
- DFID funded the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to help the Human Rights Commission in **Sierra Leone** to implement new national Gender Laws⁶. The case of a Sierra Leonean woman who contested and successfully overturned her barring from candidacy for the Paramount Chieftaincy election in Kailahun District (on the grounds she was a woman) in the High Court marks an important milestone in the fight for gender equity in the country.
- DFID **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** has supported decentralisation in two provinces and the new Local Development Committees (LDCs) thereby established have 25% female representation. DFID is planning further support for strengthening female representative capacity to effectively influence the local development planning process through training men and women LDC members on the collection of sex disaggregated data and on how to use it to inform local development plans.

⁶ There are three Gender Laws which cover domestic violence, registration of customary marriage and divorce, and devolution of estates.

- 17% of DFID funding for the **Tanzania** election programme has been targeted towards gender sensitive voter education and capacity building for aspiring female candidates.
- In **Nepal**, Elections to the Constituent Assembly were supported by DFID, achieving an increase from 6% - 33% of female MPs. 40 Nepalese women MPs have been trained in DFID supported programmes.
- In **Nigeria**, DFID is helping more women candidates to run for elections. For the first time, three women are standing for state governor. DFID will support women who want to get into politics by giving them the skills to write manifestos and plan effective campaigns.
- DFID has helped 80 million people in **Bangladesh** – half of them women – to obtain photo identity cards. These cards allow them to vote and help reduce the risk of electoral fraud.

b) Better quality learning and increased completion by girls of all levels of **education**

Educating girls is one of the best investments to reduce poverty. DFID's focus is on enabling girls and young women to complete primary and (lower) secondary schooling.

The gender gap in primary education is narrowing in many countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, gender parity has been reached or almost reached in 21 out of 34 countries with data (2010 Education For All Global Monitoring Report). An extra year in primary school boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20% and an extra year in secondary school by 15 to 25%. This helps to pull her family out of poverty, giving her children more opportunities.

Educated girls and women – particularly those who stay in school beyond primary school – have fewer children, less chance of early pregnancy and consequently better life chances. In Africa, children of mothers who have received five years of primary education are 40% more likely to live beyond the age of five. An education also provides more choice for young women. Girls who complete primary education are more than twice as likely to use condoms than those not completing primary education, while girls who finish secondary education are between four and seven times more likely to use a condom, and are less likely to be infected with HIV.

DFID's support to formal and non-formal education programmes across the world contributes

strongly to the on-going increase in the numbers of girls attending school:

- In **Afghanistan**, DFID helped the Government to get a further 200,000 girls in school, bringing the total figure now enrolled to 2.2 million.
- In 2009, the DFID-supported BRAC non-formal primary education project in **Bangladesh** enabled 986,000 students to attend primary schools. 313,000 students (65% of them girls) “graduated” after completing five years of primary education under this programme in 2009.
- In **Nepal**, DFID’s support to the Ministry of Education enabled 1,213,868 girls to receive scholarships in 2009/10.
- In **Somalia**, DFID supported BBC Radio Teacher, which reaches 4000 women – primarily providing functional literacy support, but also challenging perceptions of gender roles and highlighting barriers to girls’ education.
- The UK pushed for strong commitments to be made at the **UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit** in September 2010 to accelerate progress on providing quality education, especially for girls, including: removing barriers to education, such as tuition fees; ensuring separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls; addressing inequalities in school attendance; and focusing on good quality teaching and learning.
- In **Nigeria**, DFID’s £37.1m support for UNICEF’s Girls’ Education Project increased girls’ enrolment in six northern Nigerian States with the worst disparities between boys and girls’ enrolment in primary school. The first phase of the project helped increase girls’ enrolment by at least 15%. This model has now been replicated in other states.

c) Increased participation by women in **formal employment** on equal terms

Equality between men and women makes good economic sense and can significantly contribute to economic growth through increasing the stock of human capital, physical capital, market competitiveness and agricultural productivity. Economic empowerment of women can lead to more competitive and productive labour markets. In India GDP could rise by 8% if the female to male

ratio of workers went up by 10%⁷. In Sub Saharan Africa, household income could increase by 25% if women had more equal access to resources and agricultural land and agricultural outputs could increase by 6-20% if women's access to agricultural inputs was equal to men's⁸.

Despite advances in gender equality, there remains a major gender gap in terms of women's participation and remuneration in the labour market. Worldwide, women in non-agricultural employment, in both developed and developing countries, earn less than 78% of the wages given to men for the same work⁹.

In the final year of the GEAP, DFID supported women to enter and stay within formal employment through skills training, support to advocacy initiatives, as well as developing microfinance programmes and infrastructure projects.

- In **Uganda**, DFID approved a roads programme which will create 5,000 formal jobs for women. And in Northern Uganda almost 46,000 women gained improved access to financial services through DFID's SUSTAIN programme.
- In **Nepal**, around 100,000 jobs were created for women through DFID funded rural roads programmes and the Livelihoods and Forestry Programme.
- In **South Africa**, DFID's £100 million regional Trademark South Africa project has been approved, which will monitor its impact on women and small-scale, cross-border trade. There is a significant movement of people in the region through migration and trade. The interdependence that countries have on one another is evidenced by the level of small scale cross border trade, estimated at some borders to be as much as 50% of all trade.
- In **Bangladesh**, DFID's civil society challenge fund is helping some 2 million women enjoy affordable access to justice and health care services, and better security. Over 6,000 women in urban slums are earning their own income via small business grants. DFID has provided £16.5 million worth of assets (cattle, sheep, goat or poultry) to over 200,000 women through the Chars Livelihoods Programme.
- In **Iraq**, DFID has supported the ICRC to successfully push the Government to register

⁷ Esteve-Volart, B. 2004. 'Gender discrimination and growth: theory and evidence from India', Development Economics Discussion Paper No.42, STICERD, LSE: London.

⁸ World Bank 2005

⁹ Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap - World Economic Forum 2005

widows for state pensions. This is a real success for women, who head 1 in 10 households, 80% of whom are widows.

- We have also established a new £3 million programme on women and trade with the **International Trade Centre** to provide capacity building support for trade related institutions in developing countries on gender issues.

d) Women better able to control their own **reproductive health**

Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, to improve maternal health, is one of the most off-track MDGs. A central way in which DFID is putting women and girls at the heart of its development efforts is by empowering them to be able to choose whether, when and how often to have children and to take healthy action for themselves and their families.

Globally, 215 million women who want to delay or avoid a pregnancy are not using an effective method of family planning. Each year there are 75 million unintended pregnancies and an estimated 22 million unsafe abortions. Each year, more than one third of a million women and girls die in pregnancy or childbirth and some 50 million give birth without skilled care. For every woman who dies, up to 30 more suffer a debilitating illness or permanent disability, such as obstetric fistula. A newborn child's survival and health is intrinsically linked to their mothers' health and the chances of a newborn baby dying remain stubbornly high. A woman in the poorest 20% of households is more than five times less likely to give birth with a skilled attendant than one in the richest 20% and less likely to get good quality care. Those living in conflict affected areas are seeing some of the slowest progress.

In addition to supporting reproductive health service programmes in a number of countries, in 2009/10, DFID:

- Led the process to agree the **Global Consensus for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health**. The Consensus brought together national governments, the UN, bilaterals, and civil society and secured high level commitments for women and children at the UN General Assembly in September 2009 for £5.3 billion and the lifting of fees in 6 countries in order to save the lives of 10 million women and children.
- Pushed for strong commitments at the **UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit** in September 2010, resulting in commitments from a range of partners – including the private sector and foundations – that together will save the lives of 16 million women

and children by 2015. This includes the UK's pledge to double our efforts on maternal, newborn and child health which will: save the lives of at least 50,000 women in pregnancy and childbirth; save 250,000 newborn babies; and enable 10 million couples to access modern methods of family planning.

DFID achievements, which contributed to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity rates, include:

- Increases in births attended by midwives in **Cambodia**. DFID is the largest single contributor (£35 million over 5 years) to a seven donor World Bank trust fund which supports the Health Sector Support Programme - Phase 2. In 2009, 64% of births were attended by a trained midwife¹⁰, up from 58% in 2008. One of the actions which the fund supports, which seems to help account for this increase is the one off payment of \$15 to every expectant mother who has her baby in a public health facility, thus gaining access to trained midwives. In the first six months of 2009, this programme also funded the training of an additional 1,133 primary midwives and 887 secondary midwives.
- In **Ghana**, DFID successfully lobbied the government to remove user fees for pregnant women which led to a 50% increase in uptake of maternal health services. DFID has provided £6.76 million for the procurement of emergency obstetric equipment to support the free maternal health policy.
- In **Nepal**, DFID has been funding the Support to Safe Motherhood Programme since 2004. 121 facilities now provide 24- hour delivery services, 20 health facilities provide emergency obstetric care facilities and 6 facilities are providing comprehensive emergency obstetric care. In some facilities, service utilisation has increased by as much as 80%. In the past decade, the proportion of maternal deaths at home has decreased considerably, from 67% to 40%.
- In **Rwanda**, DFID's health sector budget support in 2009-10 helped increase the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel to 63%, up from 52% in 2008-9.
- In **Kenya**, DFID's HIV-AIDS Support and Health Support programme led to:
 - 245,869 women being reached with HIV risk reduction and advocacy messages. 99,348 girls reached through school outreaches;
 - 50,606 women trained in condom self efficacy, 11,682 female condoms distributed;

10 Cambodian Ministry of Health reporting on this output through their Health Indicator Statistics

- 16,128 women provided with HIV counselling and testing;
- 2,059 women trained in home-based and community-based care; 1,333 women trained to promote ART adherence.

e) Better **measurement** of the impact of our work on women and girls

DFID is committed to ensuring that all our programmes monitor and report the impact on women and girls so that we can be much clearer about the effect of our work on gender equality. In the last year:

- In the **Occupied Palestinian Territories** DFID has established with The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) that 20% of DFID's core contributions are conditional on reporting progress against a key gender indicator. UNRWA has trained 3000 people in gender analysis and detection of domestic violence.
- In **India**, DFID conducted a comprehensive baseline study for the Government's Mahila Samakhya programme, which will enable tracking of the programme's contribution to women's empowerment.
- In **Kosovo**, DFID is contributing to a project of support to the National Strategy for Statistics Development by increasing the management capacities of the Statistics Office of Kosovo (SOK). This will assist SOK to produce good gender disaggregated data on: birth numbers by sex; life expectancy; difference in illiteracy rates; women in the labour force and their status; and women's unemployment.
- In **China**, there is an explicit focus on gender in DFID China's new climate change adaptation project, with formal gender indicators built into the monitoring arrangements.
- In **Bangladesh**, with UK support, the Government has established a budget database that can tag government expenditures that have a gender focus. DFID has also contributed extensively to the drafting of the Bangladesh National Policy on Women's Advancement and Domestic Violence Bill.
- **Gender audits** have been conducted in several DFID offices, including Vietnam, Caribbean, Kenya- Somalia, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. In all South Asia programmes, there has been good progress on developing **sex-disaggregated data**. We

have contributed £50m to the Statistics for Results Facility, which significantly scaled up support to statistics - including sex disaggregation - in five pilot countries (Ghana, Rwanda, Nigeria, DRC and Afghanistan).

f) **Gender Duty** compliance and **Staff Fluency** in gender equality

DFID has maintained its investment in staff training on gender equality issues to increase staff understanding and capacity. The Senior Civil Servant gender bonus scheme, designed to incentivise senior staff to integrate gender into their work ended in 2010.

- **Staff training on gender equality and women's rights** was carried out in the Stabilisation Unit, United Nations and Commonwealth Department, International Director's Office, Afghanistan, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Moldova, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ghana, Kenya, Somalia, Zambia, the Caribbean, and Overseas Territories. Further training is planned in Central Asia, Cambodia and Burma.
- The Stabilisation Unit incorporated gender within induction training for all new personnel this year, adapting its **training course on UNSCR 1325 Women Peace and Security** to draw on practical examples from field experience. The Unit continues to work with the Military Stabilisation Support Group, by providing gender consultancy to support training for staff deploying to Afghanistan. By the end of 2009, the Stabilisation Unit had contributed to training of over 200 Ministry of Defence Personnel (since this initiative began in 2008).
- DFID has continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring **equal opportunities** for staff and investment in its women leaders. In the 2008-09 *Opportunity Now* benchmarking exercise, DFID was awarded GOLD standard. A Capability Review highlighted that DFID is considered by a range of peers to have an **exemplary Diversity Strategy**. DFID met the 2008 civil service wide target of 37% women in DFID's Senior Civil Service and the 2008 Equal Pay Audit showed there would be no significant differences in pay.
- The 2009-10 DFID Annual Diversity Report showed no statistically significant difference in **performance and promotability** ratings between males and females in the organisation. Slightly more females than males were assessed as 'Performing to a Very High Standard' and 'exceptionally suited' for promotion. Neither was there statistically significant difference

in gender for internal recruitment to specialist posts, on either level transfer or promotion. More males applied to join DFID but a greater proportion of female applicants were successful.

In 2009-10, DFID made progress in a number of other important areas which were not identified as success criteria by the last GEAP report. These are: tackling violence against women; DFID's continued leadership of work on gender across the international system; and the steps we have taken to continue to build a robust evidence base on women and development.

g) Tackling **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

VAWG prevents girls and women from benefiting fully from health, education and other services; increases the risk of maternal death, and vulnerability to HIV; and makes women more vulnerable to exploitation. VAWG is pervasive, between 40% and 60% of women surveyed in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Peru, Samoa, Thailand and Tanzania said that they had been physically and/or sexually abused by their intimate partners. In several African countries, the risk of HIV among women who have experienced gender based violence may be up to three times higher than those who have not.

Work needs to be carried out both at community level, in changing local customs and providing support to girls and women affected by violence, but also nationally in supporting the reform of laws and security and justice systems. Addressing violence against women and girls must also involve work with boys and men to change gender norms that condone and cause such violence.

DFID has taken a range of steps to raise awareness and tackle the issue of violence against women in 2009-10. Key country level work on tackling violence against women included:

- In **Ghana**, DFID funded research on domestic violence led to amendments to domestic violence legislation.
- In 2009, there was an increase of 15% of clients accessing services at three Rainbo Centres in **Sierra Leone**. DFID is funding the International Rescue Committee to set up Rainbo Centres which are safe, private and friendly places for victims of sexual assault.
- In **Nigeria**, DFID is providing technical assistance through its Coalitions for Change programme (C4C) to sponsor a bill on Violence Against Women in the National Assembly,

which contains a lot of clauses from CEDAW. Work is ongoing to harmonise different versions of simplified CEDAW documents from civil society organisations.

- In **Uganda**, following an advocacy and media campaign led by civil society with the support of donors including DFID, the government has passed two bills on domestic violence and banning Female Genital Mutilation-Cutting.
- In **Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Uganda, Rwanda and Timor Leste**, the first phase of the DFID funded UNIFEM programme *Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict* was completed and reviewed positively. The programme was particularly successful in forging relationships with new partners such as the male dominated security forces in Rwanda, setting up a specific police desk to deal with violence against women. It strongly supported UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (on women, peace and security) and gathered evidence from six country programmes which was used to advocate for UN SCR 1820 on sexual violence in conflict. Country-level pilot programming will now be focused in Haiti, Uganda, Liberia and Nepal. The pilots will be supported by regional and global policy development and advocacy, to support more effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325.
- In **Bangladesh**, DFID is supporting a £30 million Safety and Justice programme, which has a major focus on improving women's access to legal services and security. To raise awareness of violence against women, DFID invited members of the England cricket team to meet with female victims of acid attacks.
- In **Pakistan**, DFID supports a £3 million challenge fund for *Gender Justice and Protection*, managed by UNDP, which is the largest network of gender programmes committed to promoting gender justice in the country.

h) Leading the system: Influencing and partnership

We have continued to work with our bilateral and multilateral partners, and increasingly with the private sector, to promote gender equality and empowerment.

- DFID worked closely with EU partners to lobby for strong outcomes for women and girls at **the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit** in September 2010, resulting in strong outcomes on maternal and reproductive health and education (see above).
- Together with UK government and international partners, we lobbied for a **new single UN gender entity** to lead the international system on gender equality and the empowerment of women around the world. In September 2009, the UN General Assembly agreed unanimously to support the creation of a powerful new single UN agency. **UN Women** will bring together the four UN agencies¹¹ currently working on gender and women's rights, thus improving the UN's coordination on the issue, removing duplication and improving delivery on the ground. The UK is on the Executive Board of UN Women and will push hard for strong leadership, transparency and value for money from the agency. It is hoped that UN Women will provide renewed momentum to the international community's shared commitment to tackling gender inequality and empowering women and DFID looks forward to working closely with them.
- Helped ensure the **Accra agenda for action** reflected and responded to the links between gender, social exclusion and human rights;
- Engaged closely with the **World Bank** to improve its work on gender, leveraging much stronger institutional commitment on gender equality, including through the participation of senior DFID staff on the Bank's Advisory Council. At the IDA 15 Mid Term Review in November 2009, the Bank reported that there had been progress in implementing all six of the Bank's gender commitments¹². The target on mainstreaming gender in at least 50% of rural projects in the Africa Region by 2010, has been exceeded with 59% of the projects having met the target by mid-2009.
- We have successfully campaigned for the **World Development Report 2012** to specifically focus on gender equality and have commissioned research to inform the analysis, and are actively engaged in the WDR process.

¹¹ UNIFEM (United Nations Fund for Women); INSTRAW (Institute for Research and Training on the Advancement of Women); DAW (Division for the Advancement of Women); and OSAGI (Office for the Special Adviser on Gender).

¹² These include i) improvement in integration of gender into WB agriculture and rural development programmes in Africa; ii) credit for women entrepreneurs; iii) requirement for WB country directors to report on gender; iv) launch of a programme to increase adolescent girls' economic opportunities; v) launch of private sector leaders forum to support Gender Action Plan; vi) increase in gender commitments through IDA 16.

- A new and innovative partnership between DFID and **The Nike Foundation** established **The Girl Hub** in early 2010. The Girl Hub is a network of advisers and advocates working to change global systems so that they work for girls, while engaging girls in the process. The project aims to: connect a worldwide network of experts and advocates to large scale development programmes; elevate girls' needs and voices; and provide support and advice to decision makers and leaders to support more and better work on girls. This three year collaboration will promote the empowerment of adolescent girls and their participation in national domestic agendas, by establishing national hubs in four countries by 2013, starting with Rwanda,,Northern Nigeria and Ethiopia.
- We have provided technical and financial **support to multi-lateral and government partners** to develop strategic action plans on gender equality, including with the EU, Global Fund and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The DFID Africa GEAP (2009-12) sets out our commitments on working with Africa regional institutions, specialist agencies, bilateral agencies and civil society to promote the role and position of women in this region.
- In South Asia, we launched a £1 million **South Asia Gender Policy Fund**, to:
 - Support a UN Partners for Prevention regional programme to tackle violence against women focusing on boys and men.
 - Fund a DFID/ World Bank food security & nutrition initiative to influence policy change.
 - Identify how multi-laterals' projects could promote women's employment.
- In Africa, we launched a £800k **Gender and Social Policy Catalytic Fund** to build alliances between African gender advocates to develop ideas and programmes to fulfil the African Union Gender Protocol.

i) Building the **evidence** base on women and girls

We continue to build evidence on gender and on effective programming, to shape and inform the global policy debate around women's empowerment and gender equality.

- We have **commissioned studies** on: women and reproductive health; trade and political empowerment; women and girls' access to labour markets; food security; sanitation and hygiene; the impact of the economic downturn for women; and civil society organisations' contribution to the promotion of gender equality.
- We have commissioned **evidence** papers to examine the link between gender equality and the achievement of the MDGs to support our inputs into the UN MDG Summit and the development of DFID policy, including the successor to the GEAP – the Strategic Vision for Girls and Women.
- The Mid-term Review of the DFID **Research Programme Consortia** (RPC) *Pathways of Women's Empowerment* www.pathwaysofempowerment.org found that it has been highly successful in generating new knowledge, communications and narratives and is making strong advances towards enabling or facilitating the use of its outputs by policy actors, researchers and the public.

4. Successes and lessons learned on gender mainstreaming during 2007-10

This report illustrates DFID's continued progress in 2009-10 with raising our game on gender, building on earlier achievements in the lifetime of the GEAP. In 2010, we also commissioned an external Light Touch Review of the main successes and key lessons learned during the implementation of the GEAP. The main messages of the review are:

- Implementation of the GEAP can be judged as **highly successful** within the constraints of what can be achieved pragmatically through personal leadership, working within existing resources and corporate priorities that were not, in the main, focused on gender.
- **Leadership:** Leadership from the DFID Gender Champion at Director General level, and senior Gender Champions across the organisation, is seen as the single most important and catalytic factor of success. Senior leadership is supported by a network of more junior gender champions in all departments.
- **Rigorous reporting:** The GEAP's comprehensive action plan has been reported against annually for external scrutiny, with internal quarterly reporting to the Senior Gender Champion. This created a strong line of accountability from across departments to the top of the office. However, reporting was outside of the normal reporting process which placed a reporting burden on staff. DFID has since integrated gender into its strategic objectives,

which will help to streamline reporting on gender.

- **Hard incentives:** An incentive scheme for senior management galvanised action early on. Incentives were in the form of a gender bonus scheme designed to create a shift in attitudes and awareness (08-09 & 09-10). This was effective, but not seen as a long-term approach for sustaining senior commitment.
- **Creative communications:** The use of innovative approaches to communications has had a significant impact. For example, a creative poster campaign, use of films, forums and internal website communications were successful in raising the profile of gender work and reaching out broadly in the organisation.
- **Resources:** The GEAP was implemented within the framework of existing resources. Activities under the GEAP that required investment in overhead costs (specialist staff, training, corporate reporting systems) have struggled to gain traction.
- **Impact on partnerships:** Multilateral work has had some important successes, including work with the World Bank, International Financial Institutions, the EC and the UN. DFID's reputation with multilateral and bilateral stakeholders is largely positive, based on feedback.
- **Impact on programmes:** The clearest evidence of the GEAP's impact is in country programmes' shift to a more consistent and broad-based focus on gender equality, with particularly notable progress in Africa and South Asia PSA countries.
- **Impact on policy:** DFID has made attempts to integrate gender into key policies but this is more apparent in some policy areas than others. DFID should use more evidence to build the business case for supporting work on gender.

5. Conclusions and next steps

Work to enhance gender equality and women's rights involves changing attitudes and working across generations to achieve change. While much has been achieved during the three year period of the GEAP, continued efforts are needed to secure long-term change.

Supporting women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality remains a top priority for DFID:

we recognise that transforming the lives of girls and women is essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

DFID is therefore committed to putting girls and women at the centre of international development. This commitment is one of the six departmental priorities highlighted in the DFID Business Plan (2010-2015): to 'Lead international action to improve the lives of girls and women: Work to empower and educate girls, recognise the role of women in development and help to ensure that healthy mothers can raise strong children'.

In particular, we will be increasing our focus on improving the lives of adolescent girls. Through doing this we can make lasting change within societies, preventing the transmission of poverty from one generation to the next.

The Business Plan identifies four priority areas in which DFID will deliver results for girls and women from 2011-2015:

- Increase the number of girls completing primary and (lower) secondary education
- Promote economic empowerment of women and girls through jobs and access to financial services
- Pilot new approaches to eliminating violence against girls and women
- Improve maternal health and access to family planning

Building on these Business Plan priorities, and drawing on learning and evidence from the GEAP and from within the wider organisation, DFID has developed a new Strategic Vision for Girls and Women which is the successor to the Gender Equality Action Plan, and is operational from March 2011. The Strategic Vision will enable us to accelerate our efforts and deliver more effectively on the Business Plan. It sets out four pillars for greater and more effective action, with the aim that girls' and women's lives are significantly improved and sustainably transformed. We will work to:

- Delay first pregnancy and support safe childbirth;
- Get economic assets directly to girls and women;
- Get girls through secondary school;
- Prevent violence against girls and women.

We will continue to build on our successes in influencing, building partnerships, generating evidence of what works and developing effective programming to deliver real change in the lives of poor women and girls in the countries in which we work.