

**Evaluation of DFID  
Development Assistance:  
Gender Equality and Women's  
Empowerment**

**Phase II Thematic Evaluation:  
Voice and Accountability**

*Rachel Waterhouse and Sally Neville*

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### **Disclaimer**

The British Government's Department for International Development financed this work as part of the United Kingdom's aid programme. However, the views and recommendations contained in this report are those of the consultant, and DFID is not responsible for, or bound by the recommendations made.

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## Foreword

BY MARK LOWCOCK,  
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PERFORMANCE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING



DFID recognises gender equality and the empowerment of women as essential both for the elimination of world poverty and the upholding of human rights. Since 1985, we have worked to support this area, as laid out in our Strategy Paper<sup>1</sup>.

In 2005, the international community will consider progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Many of the hardest-to-reach MDGs are related to gender. Two examples are the goal to reduce deaths in pregnancy and childbirth, which are still unacceptably high, and the goal to increase girls' education, which has been shown to have many positive knock-on effects including on child health and on economic growth.

2005 also marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. World leaders will be meeting in March to consider progress towards the goals identified in Beijing.

As a contribution to this renewed effort, DFID is currently conducting an evaluation of its policies and practice on gender equality and women's empowerment. The evaluation will provide independent and systematic evidence of the effectiveness of DFID's contribution to international gender equality goals. It will draw lessons from experience to inform our future strategy.

This is one of a series of working papers produced in preparation for the main evaluation. These are rapid reviews and provide indicative evidence on eight thematic areas of DFID's work:

- Voice and Accountability;
- Maternal Mortality;
- Gender Violence;
- The Enabling Environment for Growth;
- Education;
- Conflict and Post Conflict Reconstruction;
- HIV and AIDS; and
- Migration.

Any feedback on this paper should be addressed to Jo Bosworth in Evaluation Department.

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<sup>1</sup> Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women. This is currently being reviewed and updated.



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## **Definitions of Key Terms**

### **Gender Equality**

Women having the same rights and opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere.

### **Women's Empowerment**

A process of transforming gender relations through groups or individuals developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.

### **Gender Mainstreaming**

A strategy to ensure that women's and men's concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislation, policies and programmes in any area and at all levels.

### **Twin Track Approach**

DFID's strategy combining focused actions aimed at women's empowerment and gender-aware actions in the mainstream of development work.

### **Evaporation**

When good policy intentions fail to be followed through in practice.

### **Invisibilization**

When monitoring and evaluation procedures fail to document what is occurring 'on the ground'.

### **Resistance**

When mechanisms are used to block gender mainstreaming based on 'political' opposition (itself embedded in unequal gender power relations) rather than on 'technocratic' procedural constraints.

Sources: Adapted from Reeves & Baden (2000); Moser et. al, (2004); DFID (2000); and Darbyshire (2002).

## Executive summary

### The challenge

S1 In the quest for pro-poor economic development and democratisation there is increasing international recognition that good governance, adequate policies and effective implementation depend both on the state and on citizens' active engagement and ability to demand transparency, accountability and responsiveness from Government. Throughout the world, however, women are less likely than men to participate in policy making or influence its implementation. Women face social, economic and institutional barriers to decision-making, from household and community up to national levels. Their voices are often marginalised and they have fewer channels for political representation (e.g. there are comparatively few women in parliament), for influencing policy or holding Government to account. This situation has highly negative implications for poverty reduction, respect for human rights and good governance.

### Focus of evaluation

S2 The concepts of voice and accountability are central to DFID's evolving approach to development policy. They link in to the core values of good governance, of ensuring that citizens have a voice in decisions made about their lives, and that states and other actors hear those voices and respond to them – that they are held accountable. This evaluation makes a preliminary assessment of DFID's work since 1995 on issues of gender, voice and accountability, highlight specific outcomes and raises questions around evidence for impact. It concludes with some suggested hypotheses and methods for a more systematic evaluation of this aspect of DFID's work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Approach and methodology

S3 The relationships between gender, voice and accountability are pervasive and could be said to relate to almost any aspect of DFID's work. To sharpen the focus of this evaluation, we identified five programmatic areas that are key to DFID's direct engagement with these issues:

- Citizens voice: support civil society organisations mechanisms for civil society dialogue with the state and other service providers;
- Political participation: support to women's participation in voting and parliamentary processes;
- National machineries: support to government institutions, through state institutions with a specific mandate for women's affairs or gender mainstreaming;
- Poverty Reduction Strategies: support to including women's voices, and gender mainstreaming in poverty reduction strategies;
- Gender Budgeting Initiatives.

S4 In each programmatic area, the evaluation sought to establish a broad overview of DFID's efforts and achievements, supplemented by more detailed examination of specific examples, selected to provide an understanding of approaches to gender in contrasting political and socio-cultural contexts and through different aid modalities.



## Key Findings

S5 There were a number of key findings, summarised below:

- DFID has contributed to a wide range of processes through which there is enormous potential to contribute to women's empowerment and gender equality. Achievements include DFID's contribution to opportunities for women to make their voices heard in government policy forums including locally and nationally elected bodies; increased capacity for gender analysis and gendered poverty analysis (e.g. through institutional support to Ministries of Gender, as well as Planning and Finance); increased capacity for gendered cost and budget analysis and formulation (for example through gender budgeting initiatives, as in Rwanda, India, Uganda); increased capacity for gender sensitive monitoring systems (both at project level and in national processes such as poverty monitoring systems) and establishing mechanisms to ensure that women's voices are heard and that governments in particular may be held accountable to gender equality goals.
- The trend away from local level project support to central and macro level interventions has increased the emphasis on an instrumentalist approach to gender mainstreaming (as a means to economic growth and poverty reduction) at the cost of a stronger focus on women's empowerment.
- In the scale up from local projects to budget support around national Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes, there is a tendency for gender to be seen as an additional issue which DFID is not always well placed to deal with. Arguments around lack of national ownership of the 'gender agenda' and the idea that DFID has 'no comparative advantage' are cited as a motive for ignoring gender concerns at a country programme level.
- Yet, intervention at macro level through PRS processes, budget support and public expenditure management reform, is an evolving process with enormous potential for ensuring national governments are held accountable for the gender equality goals they have subscribed to (for example the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), or regional agreements). DFID has in some cases played a pioneering role in taking up these opportunities.
- Much more could be done by sharing and learning from existing experiences and adopting a more coherent and high profile political stance on the importance of addressing gender issues in relation to voice and accountability.

## Key Recommendations

S6 A more systematic evaluation of DFID's gender equality work could set out to assess the following hypotheses:

- There are important lessons to be learnt from past experience of promoting women's voice and accountability to gender equality at a local level and through projects which can usefully inform strategies in other contexts and at macro level;
- DFID has made a significant contribution through research and support to practical interventions promoting concern with gender, voice and accountability in national policy making, planning and budgets which, in the long term, will contribute to gender equality and the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies.

S7 The evaluation should attempt to assess DFID's contribution to setting up mechanisms and systems to ensure that women's voices are systematically included in decision-making and that decision-takers are systematically held accountable to gender equality goals.

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 In the quest for pro-poor economic development and democratisation there is increasing international recognition that good governance, adequate policies and effective implementation depend both on the state and on citizens' active engagement and ability to demand transparency, accountability and responsiveness from Government.

1.2 Throughout the world, however, women are less likely than men to participate in policy making or influence its implementation. Women face social, economic and institutional barriers to decision-making, from household and community up to national levels. Their voices are often marginalised and they have fewer channels for political representation, for influencing policy or holding Government to account. This situation has highly negative implications for poverty reduction, respect for human rights and good governance.

1.3 The concepts of voice and accountability are central to DFID's evolving approach to development policy. They link in to the core values of good governance, of ensuring that citizens have a voice in decisions made about their lives and that states and other actors hear those voices and respond to them – in other words, that they are held accountable. Given DFID's commitment to promoting gender equality, this embraces the idea of ensuring that women's voices are heard and that States and other actors are held accountable to gender equality goals.

1.4 This paper makes a preliminary assessment of DFID's work since Beijing on the issues of 'Gender, Voice and Accountability'. It outlines a working definition of the concepts and methodology for this evaluation, briefly presents the policy context and looks in more detail at DFID's experience with these issues in the last 10 years. Drawing on data relating to the scope of DFID work in this area and on selected country examples, the paper highlights specific outcomes and raises questions around the evidence of impact. It points to achievements, lessons and challenges arising from existing experience. Methodological issues in assessing that experience are also discussed. This evaluation is not intended to be a comprehensive or definitive assessment of all DFID's work in this area. The report concludes by suggesting hypotheses and methods for a more systematic evaluation of DFID's gender work

## 2 Concepts and methodology

2.1 Within DFID, there does not appear to be a consistently shared definition of the concepts ‘voice’ and ‘accountability’ in relation to gender, nor of how they should be translated into policies and practices. For the purposes of this evaluation, we adopt a working definition of the concepts which focuses on their meaning in relation to gender.

2.2 In this context, ‘**voice**’ is taken to refer to the processes through which the specific needs and interests of diverse groups of women are represented in decision-making forums and contribute to shaping the development agenda. This includes representation and influence over the processes and mechanisms set up to hold Governments accountable to citizens. ‘Voices’ is used to emphasise the fact that ‘women’ is a highly heterogeneous category and that diverse groups of women have diverse interests.

2.3 ‘**Accountability**’ in this case refers to the processes through which Governments and other institutions are monitored and held to account for responding to women’s needs and interests, as much as to those of men, and for honouring their formal commitments to promoting gender equality. This is not limited to concern with specific and isolated commitments to gender equality, but implies a concern with ensuring that Government policies, plans and budgets overall contribute to – and do not undermine – gender equality. This links closely to the principle of gender mainstreaming.

2.4 Accountability can be thought of both as ‘horizontal’ – where internal accountability mechanisms exist within the institution (e.g. Government) – and ‘vertical’, where mechanisms exist for external actors (such as civil society) to hold others accountable (e.g. the state, the private sector).

2.5 The relationships between issues of gender, voice and accountability in development policy, planning and implementation are complex and pervasive and could be said to relate to almost any aspect of DFID’s work. To sharpen the focus of this evaluation, however, we identified five key areas of programme intervention related to these interlocking themes<sup>1</sup>, namely:

- **citizens’ voice**: support to promoting women’s rights and entitlements through support to civil society organisations and to developing mechanisms for civil society dialogue with the state and other service providers
- **political participation**: support to women’s participation in voting and parliamentary processes
- **national machineries**: support to gender mainstreaming in Government institutions through the intermediary of state institutions with a specific mandate for women’s affairs and, or gender mainstreaming
- **gender mainstreaming in poverty reduction strategies**: support to including women’s voice as well as gender analysis at the formulation, implementation and monitoring phases, as well as promoting the use of appropriate indicators to ensure accountability to gender equality goals
- support to **gender budgeting initiatives** (GBIs).

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<sup>1</sup> These areas were defined through using the ToRs for this study, preliminary discussions with London-based DFID staff and a literature review.

2.6 The evaluation focuses less on ‘inputs and outputs’ than on the process through which DFID has defined and sought to address issues around gender, voice and accountability, as well as on the available evidence of outcomes and impact.

2.7 In each programmatic area, the evaluation team sought to establish a broad overview of DFID’s efforts and achievements in operationalising its gender strategy. This is supplemented by a more detailed look at key specific examples, selected to provide an understanding of:

- approaches to addressing gender, voice and accountability in contrasting political and socio-cultural contexts
- how gender, voice and accountability have been addressed in the context of different aid modalities
- how effective different types of initiatives have been
- lessons that can be shared across different external and programmatic contexts.

2.8 Information was gathered through a search for key words on the PRISM data base detailing DFID projects and expenditure against Policy Information Marker System (PIMS) markers, through review of relevant literature (including log frames, project memorandums etc) and interviews with selected DFID staff at central and country programme level. Two more detailed country case studies<sup>2</sup> were conducted with the assistance of national consultants, drawing on documentary sources as well as interviews with DFID and key partner representatives.

2.9 A number of constraints were faced in gathering this information, including:

- Difficulty in extracting relevant information from the PRISM data base. The coding and marker system does not easily lend itself to tracing projects with an emphasis on ‘gender, voice and/or accountability’ nor to detecting cases where these issues are ignored. Tracing relevant information is time consuming and relies on being able to verify the significance of project codes and PIMS markers against more detailed project documents
- Weak institutional memory, making it difficult to gather information on projects or programmes that are over three to four years old.

2.10 Attempting to assess the outcomes and impact of DFID support to ‘voice and accountability’ around gender issues poses further methodological problems. Ultimately, the intended impact would be at the level of achieving gender equality in human development, socio-economic well being, peace and security. Whilst at project level it might be possible to draw some direct links – say between DFID support to women’s greater participation in local decision-making forums and increased service provision to women – it becomes increasingly more difficult, if not impossible, to draw causal links between DFID’s specific contribution and outcomes relating to macro level, multi-donor programmes implemented on a national scale, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes.

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<sup>2</sup> Evidence from the case studies of Bangladesh and Uganda is incorporated in the text and is also to be presented as separate Appendices.

2.11 The approach taken in this evaluation is to focus on looking at process rather than outputs. The evaluation team has considered the stated objectives, indicators, implementation process and monitoring systems used by DFID to pursue its gender strategy. In assessing impact, we ask whether or not DFID interventions have helped to establish mechanisms and systems for promoting women's voice and ensuring that states and other institutions are held accountable to gender equality goals.

### 3 Policy context

3.1 The British Government's international development policy is based on commitment to the International Development Targets<sup>3</sup> (IDTs), an internationally agreed set of development goals and time-bound targets whose aim is the eventual elimination of extreme poverty (DFID Target Strategy Paper (TSP) Rights 2000). These goals were reconfirmed at the UN Millennium summit in 2000, which established the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). International development institutions have recognised that good governance and improved service delivery are vital to achieving the MDGs.

3.2 According to the World Bank, good governance rests on the twin values of inclusiveness and accountability. In its 'World Development Report 2004', the World Bank argues that broad improvements to human welfare will not occur as long as key services fail poor people in terms of access, quantity and quality. The report concludes that the key to effective service delivery is involving poor people themselves in determining the services they receive and by monitoring and disciplining service providers. Two key factors identified are: increasing choice and participation of the poor in service delivery, and second, raising poor citizens' voice through the ballot box and making information more widely available so that they are better able to demand change. The report argues that donors have an important role to play in reinforcing accountability between citizens, service providers and policy makers.

3.3 DFID's approach to meeting the IDTs is stated in a series of TSPs (2000–1) and is set within a framework of promoting economic growth, equity and human security. The TSPs state that growth should be largely led by the private sector, but that good governance will be crucial to ensure that growth is equitable and pro-poor and takes place in a secure and conflict free environment. Yet, it is not only states and governments that should be responsible for these outcomes. The TSPs further state that the IDTs 'can only be achieved through the engagement of poor people in the development processes which affect their lives'. To promote this engagement, DFID lays claim to a 'rights based approach' which asserts that 'development means empowering people to take their own decisions'. Critically, this includes empowering poor people, especially marginalised and vulnerable groups.

3.4 This approach incorporates a key commitment to 'voice and accountability', with the general objective of enhancing the influence of citizens in public policy making and planning, and the responsiveness of service delivery, particularly to the poor (ToRs 2004). This commitment in turn is integrally linked with DFID's commitment to gender equality.

3.5 Gender equality has been defined as an international development goal, both as a human right and as a key factor contributing to the achievement of other development goals including poverty reduction and good governance. Commitment to this goal is supported by a range of international agreements, notably including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women<sup>4</sup> (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration<sup>5</sup> and the MDGs, all of which promote women/girls equal rights and participation

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<sup>3</sup> The IDTs were agreed at a series of UN conferences in the 1990s.

<sup>4</sup> Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, this is often considered to be an international Bill of Rights for Women

<sup>5</sup> Adopted in 1995, the Declaration reaffirmed international commitment to CEDAW and committed signatories to producing a Plan of Action for the advancement of women

in public life. CEDAW commits countries to uphold the political rights of women including the right to vote, to hold public office and to exercise public functions. The Beijing Declaration states that women's participation in all spheres of society, including decision-making and wielding power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. One of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action is inequality between men and women in holding power and decision-making at all levels.

3.6 The Millennium Declaration commits governments to promote more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens, as well as to gender equality and women's empowerment: the third MDG. Indicators for this goal include closing the gender gap in education, in non-agricultural wage employment and in political representation, measured by the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

3.7 DFID's Gender Strategy emphasizes the importance of promoting women's voice and ensuring that institutions are held accountable to gender equality goals. Thus, objective 4 of the strategy is: 'to promote the more equal participation of women in decision-making and leadership roles at all levels', whilst objective 6 is: 'to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women in governments and civil society' (DFID 2000). DFID's gender policy in relation to voice and accountability must be set in the broader context of international development and the UK Government's approach to development aid. DFID's commitment to gender equality is shared, in theory at least, by the large majority of Governments it works with. Most have signed up to the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, to CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and the MDGs.

3.8 This commitment is reinforced by the links between pursuing gender equality and poverty reduction. Poverty reduction is a key focus of the ITDs and of DFID assistance to developing countries, as well as being the first MDG. According to DFID strategy papers, poverty reduction will depend on improved diagnosis of the causes of poverty, linked to the development of nationally-led poverty reduction strategies (DFID 2000a). Developed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and employed since 1999 as a means to link debt relief with poverty reduction outcomes, national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes have now become a central tool for policy dialogue between developing country Governments with the IMF, WB and other major donors including DFID. The PRS process can be said to include: '... the discussion of policies, the drafting of the PRSP as well as ... post-PRSP activities, such as the planning and carrying out of monitoring' (Whitehead 2002).

3.9 Alongside development of these internationally sanctioned poverty reduction strategies, DFID has been moving away from project-oriented support as a principal aid modality, towards the funding of Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) programmes, Direct Budget Support (DBS) – centralised support to national budgets and block funding or pool funds for civil society organisations. In monitoring terms, this implies a shift away from localised project outcomes that are relatively easy to monitor, to broader national level impacts.

3.10 With the gradual evolution of PRSPs, the original emphasis on neo-liberal structural reform to the economy is being superseded by emerging concerns around voice and accountability. In the PRS formulation phase, for example, DFID and its key partners such as the World Bank have placed increasing emphasis on ensuring 'citizens' voice' through participatory poverty analysis (PPA) and policy development. Meanwhile, the agreement

to provide DBS is very often linked to Government performance in implementing the national PRS and has often also been linked to public sector reform and decentralisation programmes, intended to ensure that Governments become increasingly accountable to citizens at central and local levels.

3.11 DFID's evolving strategies for promoting gender equality, citizens' voice and State accountability must also be seen in a changing political context, characterised by increasing emphasis on a target based interpretation of reaching the MDGs and increasing concern with human security (Painter 2004). The trends described here present substantial risks as well as opportunities for institutionalising concern with women's empowerment and gender equality.



## **4 DFID's experience**

### **4.1 Scope of work on gender, voice and accountability**

4.1 To explore the scope of DFID work in promoting gender equality through voice and accountability, a keyword search was conducted on the PRISM data base (see 'Methodology'). The word search<sup>6</sup> identified 4,512 DFID initiatives which are likely to relate to voice and accountability<sup>7</sup>. Of these, 306 had a 'principal' gender marker and 863 had a 'significant' marker, indicating that these projects explicitly intend to contribute to gender equality. This translates to 7 per cent and 19 per cent of initiatives on voice and accountability. This means that 3,343 potentially relevant initiatives do not have a gender marker.

4.2 These figures have significant limitations. There is a risk that some pieces of work may have been counted more than once because they have more than one of keyword in their title. Meanwhile, despite having keywords in their title, some of these initiative may not be relevant to voice and accountability. Cross-checking data from PRISM with information gathered through project documents and interviews with DFID staff shows that gender-related initiatives often do not show up through PIMS markers. On the other hand, where there is a PIMS marker for gender, it is not always clear that DFID has made a significant contribution to promoting gender concerns in this project.

### **4.2 Citizens' voice**

4.3 Enabling 'women's voices' to be heard first requires an analysis of the barriers to women's participation in public and decision-making arenas. These include

- women's lack of time to get involved in public decision-making, due to the burden of household work and childcare
- social and cultural norms that restrict women's access to the public arena
- institutional biases which tend to exclude women.

4.4 DFID has supported a wide range of initiatives to address these barriers and promote women's voices in decision-making, through interventions at community up to national level.

### **4.3 From awareness raising to influence**

Often, the first step in building people's capacity to raise their voices is to help raise awareness of their rights and entitlements. This knowledge can give people the incentive to mobilise in defence of their rights. DFID experiences from Bangladesh and Malawi highlight some of the lessons learnt in this area.

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<sup>6</sup> The keywords used were: 'political', 'leadership', 'voter', 'election', 'candidate', 'civic', 'citizen', 'voice', 'awareness', 'ministry of gender', 'gender policy', 'poverty reduction', 'poverty assessment', 'budget support', 'public sector finance management'.

<sup>7</sup> They had one or more of the words in their full title

4.6 **In Bangladesh**<sup>8</sup> DFID has declared 'Women and Girls First' as the overall theme of its Country Assistance Plan 2004–6 (CAP). The programme objectives include promoting women's voice. Although women in Bangladesh have equal rights with men under the national constitution, in practice they face enormous barriers in exercising those rights. Formal laws are often inaccessible to poor people, and social and religious norms discriminate against women.

4.7 DFID Bangladesh is taking these issues on board. The DFID supported CARE 'Rural Livelihoods Programme', for instance, started by concentrating on technical training for poor farmers but has now shifted to a 'rights based approach'. This involves informing women and men about their legal rights and entitlements, including common property (*Khas*) land and government services like health care and agricultural extension. It also touches on legal issues such as dowry, divorce and women's rights under the family law. Reports suggest the programme is successful in raising awareness (DFID 2004b).

4.8 Awareness, however, has not always translated into action or into strategic interventions at policy level. As a counterpoint to bilateral aid, DFID through the organisations 'Blast' and 'Manusher Jonno (MJ)' has funded a wide range of civil society organisations (CSOs) focused on promoting poor people's and especially women's access to their rights. Yet, Blast and MJ feel they lack adequate mechanisms to channel lessons and concerns from project level into national level advocacy work<sup>9</sup>.

#### 4.9 *Dealing with resistance*

DFID Bangladesh is also supporting the CSOs Nijera Kori and Samata. These facilitate poor people's struggle around their land and water rights, through promoting members' participation in local government and dispute resolution bodies, through lobbying, advocacy and networking with lawyers associations, with the media and with influential people in local and national government. In a country where women are generally excluded from public decision-making, these organisations encourage women to participate in a collective struggle for community rights to land and water. Both have institutionalised women's participation through a structure of separate women's and men's groups at village level which are federated jointly at higher levels. This ensures that women and men have a chance to articulate their own concerns at a primary level before bringing these issues to a common forum.

#### 4.10 *Demand and supply*

**In Malawi**, DFID has sought to go beyond raising people's awareness of their rights to ensure they are able to enjoy them; by working both with service users and providers. The Ndizathuzomwe Radio for Development project<sup>10</sup> promoted direct links between radio stations and users, with the aim of increasing people's ability to demand better public services. As a result<sup>11</sup>, communities were more aware of their rights, poor service providers were exposed and services such as access to water points and community policing were said to improve. 'Most of the groups interviewed reported that É women had taken leadership roles in committees and in the wider community and their level of participation was very high'<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> For the full Bangladesh case study, please see appendix 3, available from DFID's Evaluation Department

<sup>9</sup> Interviews with staff: Bangladesh Case Study, with information compiled by Rownok Jahan, appendix 3, available from DFID's Evaluation Department

<sup>10</sup> Sept 1999- April 2002, £580,000

<sup>11</sup> Final project review, April 2002

<sup>12</sup> Final project review, April 2002. The report did not comment, however, on which factors had enabled women's participation.

4.11 Meanwhile the Shire Highlands Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, managed by Oxfam<sup>13</sup>, aims both to build poor people's awareness of and capacity to demand their rights, as well as responsible and accountable service provision. Intended outputs include improved participation of women in decision making. The Annual Report (2003–4) notes an increased number of women occupying leadership positions on Village Development Committees and that 305 women from 61 committees were trained in leadership, communication and assertiveness skills (Moser 2004). The Report notes that: 'Women in leadership positions has improved confidence among women... The attitude and perception of men towards women is also changing as they have seen that women too can lead and be better leaders than some men.'

### *Lessons*

4.12 Speaking out is risky: A Gender Review for DFID Bangladesh (2004) found the CARE Rural Livelihoods Programme had raised awareness of women's legal right; but there was no evidence as yet that women increasingly enjoyed these rights. Neither CARE, nor DFID in its support to CARE, had resolved the issue of 'how far to go' with this kind of initiative. Some argue that the role of external organisations should be limited to awareness-raising and that anything else is interference.

4.13 Comparative experience, however, demonstrates that when poor people struggle for their rights, this exposes them to considerable risk and danger. For instance, in defending their land rights Nijera Kori members and staff have been beaten, jailed and even killed. As disadvantaged members of society, women have been particularly vulnerable to violence including at the level of their own households. These factors suggest that encouraging people to raise their voices without ensuring supportive structures exist might, at best, be irresponsible.

4.14 Support is needed to translate awareness into strategic action: DFID programme evaluations suggest that awareness raising initiatives need to be valued, but they also need to be built upon. The Shire Highlands programme, for instance, illustrates the value in moving beyond measures to increase the number of women in decision-making institutions, to measures enabling women to actively participate (in this case, through specialised training).

4.15 Effective voice requires listening: Women's ability to exert influence depends not only on their own capacity to speak out, but also the capacity and willingness of decision-makers to listen and respond. As Anne Marie Goetz argues, meaningful accountability goes beyond participation; it must also include the right to a response. Recognising this, the success of the Shire Highlands programme lies partly in raising people's awareness of their rights, whilst also seeking to ensure that service providers recognise their responsibilities (Watkins and Piron, 2004).

4.16 Strategies are called for to deal with resistance: In many contexts, attempts to promote women's participation in public life are likely to encounter a backlash from entrenched interests. In Bangladesh, for instance, the women members of Samata and Nijera Kori have defended their land rights side by side with men; yet they still faced discrimination

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<sup>13</sup> This project received £1 million from DFID for 2002-4

and violence in their own homes. This led Samata to set up Women's Action Committees, specifically to address family-level issues of gender-based discrimination and violence. Samata reports suggest that these Committees have played a significant role in reducing the local incidence of discriminatory practices, such as dowry payments and early marriage, and in de-legitimising the practice of violence against women (DFID Bangladesh 2004).

#### 4.4 Women's political participation

4.17 DFID's 2000 Target Strategy Paper, *Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women* notes that, '[w]omen are poorly represented at all levels of political life and decision making, leading to the widespread neglect of women's priorities at all levels by politicians and bureaucrats'. The TSP commits DFID to addressing this, including through striving to meet MDG3 and achieving its indicators, which include women's political participation.

4.18 Interviews with DFID staff, however, reveal that the focus for MDG3 tends to be on the target of gender parity in education, whilst other indicators are ignored. This review has not identified any examples of the MDG indicator applying any pressure on country offices to address women's political participation, nor any specific reference to this indicator in CAPs.

4.19 Nonetheless, promoting women's political participation falls within DFID's gender strategy<sup>14</sup>. This support tends to focus on three main areas: promoting women's right to vote, enabling women to stand for election, and supporting elected women to create an enabling environment for strategic work to transform gender relations and secure women's rights.

##### *Civic and voter education*

4.20 An initial step in encouraging women's political participation is to disseminate information on women's right to vote. Civic education and voter registration campaigns can help women to exercise their voting rights as well as helping them make informed choices.

4.21 In **Afghanistan** the DFID 'Drivers of Change' study<sup>15</sup> highlights the importance of public opinion in restricting women's political participation. The study found that people tended to think women were not sufficiently knowledgeable to participate in decision-making. DFID Afghanistan has supported a civic education project whose objectives included encouraging women's participation in the electoral process. The final report argues that outreach to women was maximised by encouraging male participants to speak to their female family members (Swisspeace 2004). Significantly, 137 out of 412 civic education trainers were women. The project eventually reached some 1,208,800 people nearly half of whom were women, thereby reaching some 50% more women than expected. The report claims there has been an increase in women's awareness of their rights as voters and congratulates women for 'showing the courage to stand in a "men's world"'.

<sup>14</sup> 2000 Target Strategy Paper, *Poverty Elimination and the Empowerment of Women*

<sup>15</sup> Drivers of Change studies aim, through social, political and economic analysis, to identify the levers and obstacles for country-specific pro-poor change.

#### 4.22 *Supporting women's ability to participate in political forums*

Beyond encouraging women to participate as voters, in **Kenya** DFID has supported women's representation in political institutions. This includes support to women candidates, political parties, and raising awareness amongst the electorate of women's capability as leaders. These last two points recognise the need to involve men as much as women in changing gender relations<sup>16</sup>.

4.23 The DFID Kenya Political Empowerment Project<sup>17</sup> (PEP) aims amongst other things to achieve 'a significant increase in women candidates in national and local elections'. One component of the PEP supported women candidates running for the 2002 elections. This included civic education in the constituencies women were running in and media support for women candidates, as well as capacity building for the individual candidate. Many of the female candidates who did win seats in the 2002 elections had participated in this programme. The final evaluation notes that women candidates felt better equipped to participate in the election after skills training. Meanwhile, public attitude surveys have shown a positive change in voter perceptions:

'the public desires quality leadership and it matters little that this is provided by male or female leaders'.

4.24 In **Pakistan**, DFID has sought to ensure that women's political participation is not a one-off event but becomes a sustainable norm. In the early 1990s, DFID supported women's organisations working at community level to build capacity, change attitudes and promote women's participation and leadership skills. This has helped women to challenge constraints to their participation in public life.

4.25 When the Government introduced a 33% quota of seats reserved for women in the 1999 local government elections<sup>18</sup>, DFID mobilised funds to support a nationwide network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to encourage and support women standing for election. This support built on the long-term work of NGOs in reaching women at local level and building their confidence and capacity to participate in public forums. Some 37,000 women were eventually elected. This success led the Government to establish quotas for women in provincial and national parliaments. However, women politicians did not appear overnight; their presence is seen as the result of at least ten years campaigning by women's groups and NGOs (Porter, 2005).

4.26 The presence of large numbers of women in elected bodies in Pakistan has helped to energise debate around women's rights. This experience helps demonstrate that a 'critical mass' of women can help to get rights issues onto the public agenda. DFID has actively facilitated links between elected women and women's organisations. Such supportive links have provided women politicians with information and legitimacy to help

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<sup>16</sup> In Pakistan, the DFID Gender Equality Project (GEP) aimed to address similar issues, ahead of the 2002 elections. This included support to a national campaign to raise public awareness on the importance of women's political participation.

<sup>17</sup> This project was allocated GBP 2.2 million for the first 3 years and 7.4 million for the second phase, to 2000-2008.

<sup>18</sup> In the first year of the Musharraf Government, 33 per cent of seats were reserved for women in the three tiers of local government. This resulted in 37,000 women being elected in the 1999 local elections. Later, 17 per cent of seats were reserved for women in the Provincial and National Assemblies.

them push for legal changes that favour women's rights. This suggests that promoting women's political participation can be a driver for wide-reaching social change.

### *Lessons*

4.27 Voter education does not ensure voting: Whilst DFID has contributed to women's increased awareness of their voting rights, there is not necessarily a strong link between voter education and voter turnout<sup>19</sup>. The time burdens they face, for instance through housework, food production and childcare, as well as restrictions to their mobility can hinder women's participation in elections. Long queues, the location of polling stations and physical intimidation can all prevent women from casting their vote. To turn education into action, these issues also need to be addressed.

4.28 Non-elite women may be marginalised: Evaluation of the DFID Kenya project notes that some women candidates felt the project was simply helping more powerful women to entrench themselves:

'[t]he sense that some already empowered women are the greatest beneficiaries of donor support for women's political empowerment has remained strong, and has discouraged some women from pursuing political careers'.

4.29 This suggests specific measures are needed to ensure that non-elite women are also enabled to participate. In Pakistan, projects under the Gender Equality Project (GEP) are vetted closely at design stage and monitored to ensure that they address the needs of poor and disadvantaged women. Importantly, an OVI in GEP's log frame is the 'percentage of NGO project participants who are low income women'. A deeper criticism of projects that promote women's participation in national and local elections is that these have simply encouraged women to join institutions that are inherently biased against women's interests.

### 4.30 Women's political participation can be a driver of change

The experience of interventions to promote women's voice suggests that once women are elected to positions of power, they can help open up space to address broader issues of women's rights. Facilitating dialogue and supportive links between women in power and women's organisations can enhance capacity on both sides to achieve policy and legal changes that promote gender equality.

## **4.5 Support to national machineries**

4.31 Gender inequality is perpetuated by the fact that women's voices have been so often excluded from policy-making and decision-taking arenas: not only at political level but also in the management of traditional and modern state institutions. Partly this results from discrimination against women; but it also results from deep-rooted social, cultural and institutional biases. Gender mainstreaming aims to address this problem

- by ensuring that women's voices are systematically included in policy, planning and implementation processes
- through transforming institutional norms and practices in order to promote gender equality.

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<sup>19</sup> This is demonstrated in the case of Kenya's 2002 election. Despite initiatives to promote civic education, voter turnout was much lower than in the previous two elections (EPPP Final Evaluation p17).

4.32 Following the launch of the UN Decade for Women in 1985, many governments committed themselves to gender equality through setting up a 'national machinery' to lead in promoting women's interests and gender mainstreaming. 'National machinery' refers to the government institutions (such as Ministries or National Departments) and institutional arrangements (such as networks of 'Gender Focal Points') with designated responsibility to lead on gender. This has been seen as a mechanism both for promoting women's voice within state institutions and for ensuring horizontal accountability<sup>20</sup> on gender issues.

#### 4.33 *Training and awareness raising*

In the mid 1990s, the Government of **Rwanda** (GoR) declared gender equality as essential to the achievement of its national goals and in particular to poverty reduction. A separate Ministry for Gender and Women's Development (MIGREPROFE) was formed in 1999, to 'ensure gender mainstreaming in all national policies and programmes'.

4.34 DFID has supported this aim, principally through funding for training and technical advice to MIGREPROFE. A Review of this support (2002) noted that MIGREPROFE had achieved

- greater awareness of gender issues within the GoR and some limited training of staff in Government institutions
- a framework for the collection of gender disaggregated data
- stronger links and collaboration between MIGREPROFE and the Ministry for Finance and Economic Planning
- steps taken towards a Gender Budgeting Initiative, intended to help mainstream gender in Ministry budgets and the PRSP.

4.35 The review concluded that: 'this project that has the potential to form innovative linkages between gender and poverty and to add value to the implementation of the GoR Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP)'. Nonetheless, it report found that the GMDP was 'over ambitious', under performing and did not have effective management capability.

#### 4.36 *Capacity building*

Similar problems to those in Rwanda – relating to a vast mandate but with few concrete objectives, lack of resources and resistance from much of the rest of Government – have plagued the 'national machinery' in other countries. In some cases, donors including DFID have withheld or withdrawn support. In other cases, however, they have redirected support towards institutional capacity building and strategic planning.

4.37 In **Malawi**, the Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services (MOGCWCS) has a mandate to

#### **Box 1: Rwanda Gender Mainstreaming Development Programme**

Objectives include:

- Key GoR policy processes including budget and PRS supported by gender analysis
- Gender training capacity developed and gender focal point strategy operating effectively
- Medium Term Planning Resource and Implementation Framework (MTPRIF) developed

Indicators:

- Gender equality issues addressed in sector programmes and the PRSP
- Gender related indicators incorporated in 60% of Ministry and identified institution plans
- MIGREPROFE valued for their contributions by other ministries

<sup>20</sup> This refers to accountability between departments of the same institution.

mainstream gender in all development policies and programmes including in the PRSP. In 2000 MOGCWCS launched a National Gender Policy (NGP). Alongside other donors, DFID Malawi has provided technical support to strengthen institutional capacity of the MOGCWCS through completing a revised National Gender Programme.

4.38 In her Gender Audit of the DFID Malawi Country Programme, however, Moser argues that:

‘the MOGCWCS is likely to face resistance in the implementation of the programme. Its position within government is structurally weak and its functions are not prioritised by government. Its mandate is too broadÉ exacerbated by lack of institutional capacity ... and a general confusion among its staff about the meaning of mainstreaming strategies’.

#### 4.39 *Strategic support*

In **Uganda**<sup>21</sup>, DFID has taken a different approach. Instead of funding the national machinery to take up a broad but vague role in mainstreaming gender throughout the Government, DFID has supported the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) on specific, strategic initiatives. These have included support to analysis of the links between gender inequality and poverty in Uganda, as well as support to assist the MGLSD in leading the Gender Task Group during revision of the Government’s Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The revised PEAP now addresses key gender issues, such as gender inequalities in land ownership.

#### *Lessons*

4.40 National machineries themselves need capacity building: Support to national machineries has sometimes involved unrealistic expectations and disappointing results. In practice, these institutions are often weak, under-resourced and marginalised within the Government. In Rwanda, for instance, MIGEPROFE faced internal capacity constraints as well as resistance from other Government institutions. This suggests that support should encompass capacity building including the development of clear objectives and strategic planning skills, as well as promoting a wider Government support base for women’s voice and accountability to gender goals.

#### 4.41 Training needs to be long-term, practical and consistent

In Rwanda, personnel trained outside the country later left the Ministry which continued with much the same capacity constraints as before. DFID experience elsewhere in East Africa suggests that gender training needs to be practical, long term and needs to involve the staff not only of national machineries but of their counterparts in the planning and budgeting departments of other ministries.

#### 4.42 National Machineries are more effective through broad alliances

Whilst gender ministries are often marginalised and under-funded, Ministries of Finance and Planning generally have most say over how Government allocates its resources. Building alliances to ensure that these Ministries are accountable is proving key to promoting gender equality goals.

<sup>21</sup> See Uganda case study with information compiled by Hope Kabuchu, appendix 2, available from DFID’s Evaluation Department



## 4.6 Gender mainstreaming in PRS processes

4.43 In recent years, major donors including DFID have increasingly focused development assistance to low income countries on support to Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes<sup>22</sup>. These are intended to be 'country led' and involve broad based consultation with local people, communities and organisations. In other words, national stakeholders should not only have a voice in PRS formulation, but Governments should be accountable to their own national constituency for its implementation.

4.44 Meanwhile, however, donors including DFID have increasingly moved away from funding isolated projects at sub-national or sector level, to providing direct budget support. Access to funds through this aid modality is generally linked to Government performance in implementing its poverty reduction strategy. This is measured against a matrix of poverty reduction indicators agreed between national governments and donors.

4.45 DFID and other major donors including the World Bank have recognised that poverty is experienced differently by women and men. Women are the majority of people living in poverty (DFID 2000c). Women are more vulnerable to poverty than men and in some countries there is evidence of a 'feminisation of poverty' alongside liberal economic reforms. The economic cost of gender bias and discrimination that prohibit women from equal access to economic resources and opportunities with men has been calculated broadly and in specific countries (e.g. World Bank 2001, Elson and Evers 1997; Elson and Gideon 1997; Blakden 2004). Women also face gender specific constraints to exiting poverty: 'women are more vulnerable to chronic poverty because of gender inequalities in the distribution of income, access to productive inputs, such as credit, command over property or control over earned income, as well as gender biases in labour markets' (Cagatay 2001, cited in Whitehead 2002).

4.46 These gender biases indicate that poverty reduction strategies will be more effective when they address the specific constraints that women face in access to and control over resources (economic, financial, social and political) (Whitehead 2002). Indeed, World Bank/IMF guidelines on PRSPs<sup>23</sup> describe gender equality as an essential element of poverty elimination and emphasise the need to consider gender issues in all aspects of PRSP formulation, implementation and monitoring (Derbyshire 2004).

### 4.47 *Gender and voice in PRS processes*

The first step in 'engendering' a PRS process is often seen as ensuring that women's voices are heard and are listened to, in the public consultations around designing a PRS. DFID experience shows that this has posed a considerable challenge across different socio-economic and cultural contexts. DFID and its partners are gradually finding more effective ways to address it.

4.48 During the preparation of **Bolivia's** first PRSP, DFID hosted workshops on gender mainstreaming in the PRS process for Government and civil society organisations. These

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<sup>22</sup> By 2004, some 40 countries had a PRS under implementation, a second generation PRS had begun to emerge in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Nicaragua, and Tanzania, whilst Uganda was developing its third strategy (Coyle 2004).

<sup>23</sup> The PRSP Source Book <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/chapters/gender/gender.htm>

workshops produced a document on gender issues and the Vice Minister for Women's Affairs presented this to the PRSP drafting committee. Apparently, however, the paper had little impact on the final PRSP document (Whitehead 2002). Interpretations of what went wrong include blaming 'gender power relations within government', lack of leadership from the Vice-Minister for Women's Affairs and that the PRSP focus on economic policy gave little scope for social analysis (Whitehead 2002).

4.49 Yet, PRS processes are new and evolving. DFID has been deeply engaged not only in implementation but in strategic thinking around the process. This includes gender analysis, such as Anne Whitehead's study of gender integration in PRSPs (2002), the Gender and Development Information Service (BRIDGE) report on Gender and Participation and individual country studies and appraisals (e.g. Moser 2004 on Malawi; Zuckerman 2001 on Rwanda).

4.50 This and other DFID-sponsored research suggests that, initially at least, the whole aspect of participation and consultation was poorly developed and rarely went beyond information sharing. Little attention was paid to the views of other stakeholders outside the specific government departments responsible for preparing the strategy (Zuckerman 2001; McGee with Norton 2002; Whitehead 2002).

4.51 The constraints on effective participation have been especially sharp in relation to women's voice. In **Malawi**, for instance, few women participated in formulation of the first PRS and no gender issues were raised. In **Tanzania**, women's research and advocacy groups with expertise in gender and macro-economic analysis failed to influence the first PRSP (Whitehead 2002).

4.52 Some DFID country programmes are now trying to tackle this problem through ensuring that women's voices are included right from the start of the PRS process. In the **DRC** and **Angola**, for example, DFID has backed efforts to ensure that citizens including the poor and specifically including women effectively participate in poverty analysis and policy formulation.

4.53 In the DRC, DFID has emphasised the need to ensure a participatory PRS process, initially through a Participatory Poverty Analysis (PPA). To support this, DFID provided a Consultant to the PRSP Unit of the Ministry of Planning to train its officials on participatory research, monitoring and evaluation<sup>24</sup>. This specifically aimed to include women's voice. Training of trainers for the PPA included gender training and involved 340 people at central level as well as some 57 NGOs involved in the PPA at local level. Field work for the PPA was launched in October 2004 and it is therefore too early to comment on impact. Nonetheless, preliminary evidence suggests that:

- PRA methods ensure a broad consultation, giving more scope to women's voices
- PRA skills including specific attention to gender issues have been widely disseminated and could influence participatory planning for years to come (Manoukian 2004; interviews with DFID staff 2004).

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<sup>24</sup> Indicators from the log frame for this project include: 'All relevant stakeholders, and especially representatives of poor and vulnerable women, men and children have engaged in a genuine dialogue on poverty with the state and have been able to contribute views on policy options, and their views have been taken into sufficient account in the full PRSP'

4.54 Doubts remain around the impact of including women's voices in PRS consultation. Support to PPAs and participatory PRS formulation assumes that this then informs national policy and spending priorities. It assumes that PRSP design takes account of consultation findings. Yet, DFID research has shown that this is often not the case. Even when women make their voices heard in the process, this may not translate into gender sensitive policy or spending allocations (Whitehead 2002).

4.55 In **Yemen**, DFID through support to Oxfam has sought to ensure that including women's voice is followed through into gender sensitive policy-making and planning. The Oxfam programme involves capacity building on gender analysis and gender sensitive planning and budgeting with Government and civil society organisations at all levels. The objectives include facilitating dialogue between Government institutions (especially the Women's Council and the PRS Unit in the Ministry of Finance) and between Government and civil society. According to Oxfam Yemen's internal assessment, achievements to date include increased gender awareness and capacity for gender analysis amongst government and non-government partners, including in the Ministry of Finance.

*4.56 Promoting accountability to gender equality goals through PRS processes*

The first generation PRSPs tended to follow a neo-liberal agenda focused on economic growth, but ignoring women's contribution to economic production through their unpaid labour in the so-called subsistence or care economy<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, they tended to sideline social aspects of well-being and development. This meant there was little analysis of the links between gender inequality and poverty, or attempts to address these.

4.57 Most developing country Governments that DFID works with are formally committed to promoting gender equality, through national laws and international agreements. In practice, however, a lack of adequate data and gender analytical skills has frequently meant that PRS design has not recognised the significance of links between gender inequalities and continued poverty.

4.58 In this context, some DFID Country Programmes have simply decided not to address gender issues in the PRS process: on the grounds that there is little local ownership of the gender agenda, that few entry points exist or that 'DFID has no comparative advantage' in taking them up. In **Mozambique**, for instance, the bulk of DFID assistance aims to support the 'Action Plan for Poverty Reduction (PARPA)' through direct budget support. Yet, DFID has taken a back seat on gender issues and a recent report on its experience with the PRS process makes not a single reference to gender (DFID Mozambique 2004)<sup>26</sup>.

4.59 Comparative experience from country programmes where DFID has been proactive in promoting gender mainstreaming in the PRS process, however, illustrates that gender equality can be a critical factor in poverty reduction and that DFID can play a critical role in promoting knowledge and skills to address this issue.

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<sup>25</sup> The care economy refers to reproductive labour in the form of child care, cooking, cleaning, caring for the elderly and infirm. This has also been called the subsistence economy which includes unpaid food production.

<sup>26</sup> Similarly, gender has not been a focus of engagement with the PRS process in **Tanzania** as DFID believes it has little comparative advantage on this issue. In **Jordan**, a middle income country with no PRS as such, DFID support to gender mainstreaming is limited to small-scale grants to the Jordan National Committee for Women even though this is seen to have little influence within the Government.

4.60 In **Uganda**, DFID has supported key strategic activities within a broader, national led strategy to ensure that Uganda's PEAP responds to women's voices as well as men's and can be used as a tool to ensure Government accountability to gender equality goals. The PEAP was first drafted in 1996 and revised in 2000, but these versions 'were largely silent on gender issues' (Van Diesen and Yates 2005). Since then, however, DFID funded research has contributed to a growing body of evidence highlighting the linkages between existing gender inequalities and continued poverty in Uganda. DFID has played a strategic role, for instance through funding the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process (UPPAP) and a desk review of gender and poverty linkages in Uganda.

4.61 In the second PEAP revision from 2003/4, key officials in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) took the lead on gender mainstreaming, mobilising colleagues in other ministries, from civil society and amongst donors to form a PEAP Gender Team (Van Diesen and Yates 2005). Again, DFID's role has been to provide strategic support, this time through

- active participation in the PEAP Gender Team
- funding analytical work on gender and poverty and the impact of gender inequalities on economic growth
- discussion with Government officials and other donors to include gender benchmarks in dialogue between the Government, the World Bank and other donors engaged in Direct Budget Support.

4.62 In addition, DFID brought in technical assistance to help with drafting Gender and Equity Budget Guidelines for the MFPED (see Gender Budget Initiatives, below), thus linking gender sensitivity in the policy development process directly with resource allocation.

### *Lessons*

4.63 Need to include women's voices at poverty analysis stage: The frustrating experience of trying to insert concern with gender equality at a later stage in PRS formulation (as in Bolivia and Tanzania) has highlighted the need to ensure that women's voices are heard at the poverty analysis stage, through participatory poverty analysis and broad and timely involvement of civil society.

4.64 Capacity building for gendered poverty analysis is key: Gender mainstreaming in the PRS process has been hampered by a lack of relevant and sex disaggregated statistics, whilst the evidence linking gender inequality and continued high levels of poverty and lost economic potential has not been exposed and there is strong resistance to gender mainstreaming. This illustrates the importance of investing in Government (and civil society) capacity to collect and analyse gender sensitive information and to establish the links between gender equality and poverty reduction in specific local contexts. This can help to ensure national ownership<sup>27</sup> of the 'gender agenda'.

4.65 Gender analysis should be institutionalised: Integrating gender indicators in performance assessment frameworks related to PRS support is a key way to ensure the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming.

4.66 Internal incentives are need to guide DFID's response: To some extent, DFID's lack of engagement with gender in some PRS processes could be seen as internal resistance linked to a lack of institutional guidance and incentives.

#### 4.7 Gender budgeting initiatives

4.67 DFID support to PRS processes and related tools for good governance such as Public Sector Reform and improved public sector financial management has opened the way to look more critically at Government budgets. National budgets determine who the State raises money from, how and where spending is allocated, and to whose benefit (Norton and Elson 2002; Budlender; 2002). According to Balmori (2003):

'The budget of any government is the technical instrument by which commitments should translate into monetary terms. It reflects a government's policy priorities.

While budgets have been instrumental in transmitting and reproducing gender biases, they also offer a possibility for transforming existing gender inequities'.

This type of critique has increasingly led to questioning and analysis of Government budgets, including from a gender perspective.

4.68 According to Derbyshire (2004), the term 'gender budget' is loosely used to refer to a range of ways of analysing government spending to uncover intended and unintended differential impacts on women and men/boys and girls, as well as to consider the extent to which spending meets the needs of females as well as males. This information is used for advocacy, planning and monitoring purposes to improve implementation of gender equality policy commitments.

4.69 Gender Budget Initiatives (GBIs) distinguish two stages of a long-term process: gender-sensitive budget analysis and the formulation of gender-sensitive budgets. The ultimate objective of GBIs should be the latter, i.e. to push for and support the achievement of a gender-sensitive allocation of resources (Balmori 2003).

#### 4.70 *Analysing the budget*

In **Orissa State, India**, in 2003 DFID supported a request from the Women's Studies Unit of Uktal University to sponsor a conference on gender budgets to prepare for a GBI in Orissa. The eventual goal would be allocation (or re-allocation) of resources to correct gender bias and ensure that women and men benefit equally from government spending. Initially, however, the main outcomes have been to:

- Raise awareness of the potential to use gender budgeting as a tool for equitable budget formulation
- Create alliances within Orissa for carrying forward this type of initiative.

4.71 Preliminary attempts to conduct a gendered budget analysis in Orissa met with some difficulties. According to DFID sources, this was largely due to lack of access to the relevant budgetary information and limited capacity of the lead organisation to conduct this specialised type of gender analysis.

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<sup>27</sup> New challenges and opportunities for ensuring accountability to gender goals are arising in the current context of efforts to build greater domestic accountability around the PRS process, by linking this more closely to existing planning processes and national democratic structures such as the parliament. Furthermore there is need to support civil society and media capacity to demand accountability from the Government (McArthur 2004)

4.72 Furthermore, the analysis carried out so far only looks at spending specifically allocated for women, not at the different impacts of spending on women and men. In her review of this initiative, Derbyshire argues:

‘... few gender budget initiatives have yet resulted in changes to government spending. It is probably more realistic to focus on broadening the constituency of support amongst individual government staff, legislators and the media’ (Derbyshire 2004).

#### 4.73 *Information and influence*

In their paper ‘What’s behind the budget? Politics, rights and accountability in the budget process’, commissioned by DFID (2002), Norton and Elson illustrate that public expenditure management is a political not a purely technical process. In this context, they identify access to information and influence as critical factors in successful GBIs. This concerns relations between different Government institutions as well as relations between the state and civil society. Norton and Elson argue that GBIs have been most successful when a wide range of stakeholders is involved.

4.74 In **Rwanda** from 2001 to 2004 DFID provided technical assistance to the Gender Ministry (MIGEPROFE) through a Gender Advisor, who took a lead in promoting the Rwanda GBI in close collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN). The Rwanda GBI focused on a gender analysis of expenditure in the recurrent budget and consisted of a series of workshops in 2002 for MINECOFIN staff and officials working on the budget in specific line ministries and provincial governments. According to workshop reports, participants resolved to ‘integrate gender issues in their budgets’ (Diop-Tine 2002). Reports on this process stress the success in achieving closer collaboration between the relatively weak Gender Ministry and the far more influential MINECOFIN as key for taking forward the GBI (Diop-Tine 2002; Budlender 2002).

4.75 These reports, however, do not provide indicators of outcomes or impact and there is no specific evidence presented to show whether or not the GBI has resulted in any reallocation of resources.

#### 4.76 *Gender responsive budget formulation*

Norton and Elson note that GBIs focused on expenditure analysis may have contributed substantially to raising gender awareness but have rarely resulted in an actual reallocation of resources. However, Derbyshire also suggests that: ‘budget analysis [can be] a way of strengthening the participation of various stakeholders in policy processes and of significantly deepening understanding of the important link between policy commitments and spending’.

4.77 With DFID support, a more mature GBI in **Uganda** is now trying to address this issue. Following the second PEAP revision, the PEAP Gender Team decided to continue its work through a focus on gender mainstreaming in PEAP implementation, including in the budget formulation process. At their request, DFID hired in technical assistance to help the Ministry of Finance in drafting Gender and Equity Budget Guidelines. These were approved by the Budget Director and circulated to all sectors ahead of preparations for the 2005/06 budget cycle. According to the DFID Uganda Social Development Team: ‘This is an important innovation.... By making the gender and equity guidelines an explicit part of the terms of reference of the sector working groups, gender budgeting is taken to the heart of the budget formulation process’ (Van Diesen and Yates 2005).

*Lessons*

4.78 DFID can play a key role to support capacity and networking: Gender budget analysis and gender sensitive budget formulation require adequate data and sophisticated skills. DFID has contributed to building skills in this area.

4.79 Successful GBIs depend on access to information and influence: As shown in India and Rwanda DFID and other donors are in a privileged position to be able to facilitate links between Government departments and between Government and civil society, helping to build alliances for successful GBIs.

4.80 Analysis is one step, the next is budget formulation: GBIs analysing Government expenditure to look at relative spending on and relative impacts of spending on women and men have been important in raising awareness of gender inequalities. The key to transforming this situation is ensuring that gender analysis informs the budget formulation phase.

## 5 Key outcomes

5.1 The limited scope of this thematic evaluation makes it difficult to draw general conclusions on the outcomes and impact of DFID support to women's voice and accountability to gender equality goals. Furthermore, the very nature of the issues – 'voice' and 'accountability' – makes it difficult to measure impact or attribute change specifically to DFID interventions.

5.2 Nevertheless, the experience reviewed here is evidence that DFID has contributed to a number of key strategic outcomes; although there have also been some unintended results as well as missed opportunities. This section proposes a schematic framework for assessing the value of DFID's contribution to gender equality through promoting voice and accountability and, drawing on the proposed indicators, points to some key outcomes of DFID support.

### 5.3 *Framework for Assessing Work on Gender, Voice and Accountability*

Given the qualitative nature and various levels of 'voice and accountability' initiatives, from project to multi-donor and macro level interventions, monitoring and evaluation frameworks focused on material inputs and outputs are inadequate to evaluate this type of work. Alternatively, emerging frameworks to assess the impact of advocacy work seem more appropriate. This report draws on work by the Institute of Development Research (USA) and by Kanji et al (2002) in developing a schematic framework for charting the impact of work in this field. The framework distinguishes between areas of impact; short term, process indicators and long term changes/ impact indicators. Suggested indicators for each area are presented in Box 2 Below.

### 5.4 *Hearing women's voices*

The evidence for this study illustrates that, specific DFID projects have made a significant contribution to increased awareness of women's rights and entitlements (e.g. rights to services in Malawi, voting rights in Pakistan).

5.5 Evidence is less substantial in relation to impact. However, even from the limited evidence base for this study there are examples of best practice, where information and awareness-raising has helped to lay the basis for social mobilisation and advocacy around women's rights. In Bangladesh, for example, DFID support to CSOs has helped to promote women's voice within a broader agenda of 'citizens' voice' and rights and has brought demonstrable gains to women at a local and sometimes even at the national level. Samata 'Women's Action Committees' have helped poor rural women to deal with family level issues of gender based discrimination and violence, whilst its national level advocacy work for women's right to land titles contributed to a change in legislation.



**Box 2 Framework for assessing work on gender, voice and accountability**

Dimension	Area of impact	Progress indicators	Impact indicators
Voice	<p>Women's increased participation in decision-making at all levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of women's rights and entitlements, including the right to vote</li> <li>• Women's increased participation in lobbying, media and advocacy activities</li> <li>• Formal structures for women's participation at local levels</li> <li>• Increased percentage of project participants are low income women</li> <li>• Women, especially poor women, have been able to effectively engage and contribute views on policy options and these are reflected in national policy including PRSPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased numbers of women in leadership roles in decision making structures at village, district and national levels</li> <li>• Increased percentage of women voters</li> <li>• Increased percentage of elected representatives are women (and increased representation from low income women)</li> <li>• Regular forums established for dialogue between elected women and women's organisations</li> <li>• Increased gender equality in access to services and resources</li> <li>• Policy statements, plans and resource allocations promote gender equality</li> </ul>
Policy and legislation	<p>Changes in policy and legislation which promote gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National gender policies developed</li> <li>• Institutional capacity of national machineries strengthened</li> <li>• Government departments regularly consult national gender machineries for policy and programme advice</li> <li>• Officials in PRS Units and Ministries of Planning and Finance participate in and disseminate gender training sessions</li> <li>• Increased participation of women in PRS units</li> <li>• Formal recognition of the gender gap in PRSPs</li> <li>• Establishment of gender teams as part of PRS teams</li> <li>• Gender expertise included in PRS sector and thematic teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in legislation providing equality of rights</li> <li>• Gender equality mainstreamed in key government policies</li> <li>• Gender equality issues included in sector programmes and in PRSPs</li> <li>• Gender related indicators incorporated in PRSPs and associated sectoral plans and policy monitoring frameworks</li> <li>• Increased gender equality in access to and control over resources (e.g. women's property rights protected)</li> </ul>
Accountable government	<p>Improved mechanisms to ensure that Government policies, activities and resource allocation equally benefit women and men</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of gender issues within key government institutions</li> <li>• Systems established to collect and analyse gender disaggregated data</li> <li>• Gender budgeting initiatives institutionalised</li> <li>• Participatory planning and policy monitoring mechanisms established which involve women and men equally, especially from poor and vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy statements, plans and resource allocations that promote gender equality</li> <li>• The gender gap in access to and control over services, resources and livelihood opportunities has narrowed</li> </ul>

5.6 There have also been some unintended impacts (e.g. in Pakistan, entrenching elite women's position of power in relation to other including low income women); whilst evidence on the scope of DFID's work around voice (see 4.1 above) suggests that there have been many missed opportunities to promote women's empowerment and gender equality. Given that development interventions are never 'gender neutral' – they either promote gender equality or perpetuate the status quo – this should be of serious concern.

### 5.7 *Policy and legislation*

The evidence cited here is by no means exhaustive, but serves to show that DFID's work on voice and accountability has made important contributions to promoting gender sensitive policy and legislation. Through support to national machineries, as well as Ministries of Finance and Planning, for instance, DFID has helped build individual awareness and institutional capacity to identify the problems linked to gender – such as the links between gender inequality and continuing high levels of poverty – as well as capacity for planning to address them. These achievements should be seen as vital steps in promoting accountability to gender equality goals.

5.8 Once again, however, there is evidence of many missed opportunities and relative lack of evidence as to how far DFID has followed through support to 'voice' with support to ensure that State and other institutions are held accountable for implementing gender sensitive policies.

### 5.9 *Accountable government*

The above review of DFID support to national machineries and gender mainstreaming in PRS processes suggests that mainstreaming can be used as a tool to ensure that Governments are accountable to their own commitments around gender equality. One problem with measuring effectiveness, however, is that 'mainstreaming' has often been treated as if it were an end in itself, rather than a means to an end (gender equality). Thus, programme indicators often stop at process level (e.g. how many people trained in 'gender'), without looking at impact (e.g. has the intervention narrowed the gender gap in access to and control over resources and services?).

5.10 DFID's experience with support to national machineries has been mixed and sometimes discouraging. Substantial investment in gender training and institutional capacity building has often failed to bring strategic gains in ensuring that Governments are held accountable for promoting gender equality.

5.11 Nonetheless, there have been significant gains. DFID support has contributed to increased gender awareness in government institutions and greater capacity for gender analysis and gender sensitive planning. There is growing recognition of the need to ensure that gender training is supported by longer term institutional change to redress the biases that exclude women and their interests from policy formulation and decision-making. Furthermore, there is wider acknowledgement that these changes cannot be achieved by one Ministry or government department in isolation: responsibility should be shared across state and non-state institutions.

5.12 As with questions of 'voice', however, there seem to be significant missed opportunities. Information on the scope of DFID work around 'accountability' highlights the

fact that little of this has paid significant attention to gender. There are other indications. The ODI/DFID PRSP Monitoring and Synthesis Project, for example, was established to provide DFID with information and advice to strengthen its engagement with PRS processes (Thin 2004). So far, however, it has paid only marginal attention to gender issues. A draft internal reflection paper on the PRS process also makes no specific reference to DFID's experience in addressing gender in PRS processes.

5.13 Questions around the impact of gender mainstreaming should be set within a broader policy context. Ongoing debate about improving the PRS process emphasises the need to promote national ownership – for instance, through greater involvement of parliament and civil society. In this context, there is an apparent tension between the wish to ensure that PRSs operate as a tool for internal accountability and the wish to promote specific policy goals, such as gender equality. This tension is often cited as a reason for 'not imposing the gender agenda'. Yet, as gender experts have long since revealed, addressing the gender dimensions of poverty is not an additional option but is integral to achieving poverty reduction.

5.14 Research and analysis funded by DFID has helped to bring these issues and challenges to the fore (e.g. Whitehead's analysis of gender in the PRS; BRIDGE study on Gender and Participation; Van Diesen and Yates on the experience in Uganda). The recent series of Drivers of Change studies provide an excellent opportunity to link gender and poverty analysis, as for example in the DFID Bangladesh Drivers of Change report 'Breaking new ground', which focuses on women's role in social and economic changes rapidly occurring in Bangladesh.

5.15 To this extent, DFID is learning from past experience and contributes to wider learning and charting a way forward for promoting gender, voice and accountability through new aid modalities. When DFID has actively engaged with these issues, the evidence suggests it has made a strong contribution to ensuring accountability to gender equality goals. In Uganda, for instance, where DFID has actively support gender mainstreaming in the PRS, the current PEAP addresses key issues affecting women's lives and makes concrete proposals for policy interventions to address gender inequalities, such as legislation to protect women's land rights.

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## 6 Conclusions

6.1 In the 1990s DFID could note considerable success in promoting women's voice at a local and project level. This experience has brought out important lessons, for instance around the need to address resistance to women's voices and to the socio-economic and institutional changes necessary to promote gender equality. It signalled the need to invest, not only in building women's capacity to raise their voices, but also in building state capacity to listen and respond.

6.2 The challenge has been in scaling up from local level and narrowly targeted activities to wider interventions at a national and macro level. In some cases, DFID support has made a significant contribution in helping local civil society organisations build on mobilisation around women's rights at a grass-roots level, to conduct effective lobbying and advocacy work at national level and beyond.

6.3 To some extent, however, the shift to new aid modalities seems to have incurred a loss of lessons learned around gender, voice and accountability. Institutional memory within DFID appears to be weak and there are few opportunities for sharing experience across programmes.

6.4 The trend away from local level project support to central and macro level interventions has apparently increased the emphasis on an instrumentalist approach to gender mainstreaming, (promoting gender equality in order to promote economic growth) at the cost of a stronger focus on women's empowerment as a right.

6.5 Attempting to mainstream concern with – and ensure accountability to – gender equality at macro level is a highly complex process which brings in many unpredictable factors. The trend to engage at this level through multi-donor forums with a narrow focus on achieving targets (for example, the MDG targets) runs the risk of marginalising gender equality goals.

6.6 In the scale up from local projects to budget support around PRS processes, some people within DFID tend to see gender as an additional issue which they are not well placed to deal with. Arguments around lack of national ownership of the 'gender agenda' and the idea that DFID 'has no comparative advantage' are cited as a motive not to engage with gender concerns. Yet, as gender analysts have long since demonstrated, there are no gender neutral development programmes: only gender blind and gender sensitive ones. Failing to ensure that governments and other actors are accountable to gender equality goals is tantamount to perpetuating gender inequality. That is not only bad for human rights but also for poverty reduction.

6.7 On the other hand, macro level support – through PRS processes, budget support and public expenditure management reform – has enormous potential for ensuring that Governments can be held accountable to the gender equality goals which most of them have subscribed to (e.g. through international conventions such as CEDAW as well as regional agreements such as the SADC Heads of State Declaration on Gender Equality). This presents an ideal opportunity to incorporate gender equality indicators into national plans and budgets. In some cases, DFID is pioneering support to gender mainstreaming at

macro level through new aid modalities. This has tremendous potential to contribute to women's empowerment and gender equality both as a right and as a key factor in achieving poverty reduction and good governance.

**Box 3 Achievements**

DFID has contributed to

- opportunities for women to make their voices heard in government policy making forums
- increased capacity for gender analysis and gendered poverty analysis
- increased capacity for gendered costs and budget analysis and gender sensitive budgeting
- increased capacity for gender sensitive monitoring systems
- establishing of mechanisms to ensure that women's voices are heard and systems to promote accountability to gender equality goals.

6.8 DFID's contribution to promoting gender, voice and accountability at a macro level has best been possible in the context of direct budget support. Even without this kind of leverage, however, DFID can and has played a significant influencing role. DFID has added value on these issues through research and analysis, breaking new ground with evolving aid modalities and development processes. Partners say that often it is not just – or even principally – a question of contributing funds, but of seeing the opportunities, formulating the arguments, facilitation and advocacy.

6.9 Enormous challenges remain:

- institutionalising systems to gather and present clear data exposing the gender dimensions of poverty in the specific national and sub national context
- broader capacity building for gender analysis and gender sensitive policy making, including within Finance and Planning Ministries
- addressing resistance to change.

6.10 Potentially, much more could already be done by sharing and learning from existing experiences and adopting a more coherent and high profile political stance on the importance of addressing gender issues in relation to voice and accountability.

## **7 Hypotheses and recommendations for further evaluation**

7.1 This study has suggested a number of hypotheses which a more systematic evaluation of DFID's gender work could set out to assess, including:

- There are important lessons to be learnt from past experience of promoting women's voice and accountability to gender equality at a local level and through projects which can usefully inform strategies in other contexts and at a macro level
- DFID has made a significant contribution through research and support to practical interventions promoting concern with gender, voice and accountability in national policy making, planning and budgets which, in the long term, will contribute to gender equality and the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies.

7.2 Given the methodological and conceptual problems in establishing causal links between DFID policies and macro levels outcomes around gender, voice and accountability, the evaluation should focus on process. It should attempt to assess DFID's contribution to setting up mechanisms and systems to ensure that women's voices are systematically included in decision-making and that decision-takers are systematically held accountable to gender equality goals.

7.3 In designing the methodology for such an evaluation, the following factors should be taken into account:

- the PRISM data base can be used to get some idea of the scope of DFID's work on these issues, but the resulting data is likely to only partially reflect actual scope and relevance. Data should be cross-checked against project memorandums and reports
- to get the historical picture of DFID's work on these issues, even over last 10 years, the evaluation team will need time and scope to pursue a more detailed evidence base including reference to national sources outside DFID country offices, DFID archives, etc. Ideally, DFID should identify relevant sources of information including documents and resource persons
- indicators may be gender insensitive (even when the project itself is gender aware), or may be unrealistic or are not systematically monitored
- good impact indicators depend on good quality gender analysis and related objectives, yet this is often missing.

7.4 In order to assess the effectiveness of DFID support, the evaluation could adopt a framework similar to that presented in Box X, above. Progress against gender sensitive indicators should also be measured against the cost of lost opportunities when programmes and projects supported by DFID fail to address the gender specific constraints faced by women.



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## Abbreviations

ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRIDGE	Gender and Development Information Service, IDS
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHAD	Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPCS	Community-Based Policing and Community Safety Programme
CPPs	Conflict Prevention Pools
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee, OECD
DAC-GENDERNET	Development Assistance Committee – Gender and Development Network
DBS	Direct Budget Support
DDP	Directors Delivery Plan
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DV	Domestic Violence
EC	European Commission
EDP	External Development Partner
EE	Enabling Environment
EFA	Education for All
EMAD	Europe, Middle East and Americas Division
EmOC	Emergency Obstetric Care
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBIs	Gender Budget Initiatives
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GE	Gender Equality
GoB/ I / N / P / SA / U	Government of Bangladesh / India / Nicaragua / Nigeria / Pakistan / Peru / South Africa / Uganda
GTZ	German Aid Agency: Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HSR	Health Sector Reform
ICEE	Investment, Competition & Enabling Environment Team, DFID
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank and Fund

IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IDS	Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
IDT	International Development Targets
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ISP	Institutional Strategy Paper
JICA	Japan International Co-operation Agency
JRM	Joint Review Mission
KFOR	Kosovo Force
LMM	Lower Maternal Mortality
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
OPR	Output to Purpose Review
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PAD	Project Appraisal Document (World Bank)
PCN	Project Concept Note
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCRU	Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PfA	Platform for Action
PIMS	Policy Information Marker System
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PRISM	Performance Reporting Information System Management
PRS(P)	Poverty Reduction Strategy (Paper)
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PSD	Private Sector Development
RBA	Rights Based Approach
RCH	Reproductive and Child Health
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SAAW	Social Audit of Abuse against Women
SDA	Social Development Adviser or Service Delivery Agreement
SDD	Social Development Department
SED	Small Enterprise Development
SG	Secretary General, United Nations
SIDA	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise Development
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSAJ	Safety, Security and Access to Justice
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
ToRs	Terms of Reference
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TRCB	Trade Related Capacity Building
TSP	Target Strategy Paper
UAF	Urgent Action Fund
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMIK	United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organisation
WID	Women in Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

DFID, the Department for International Development: leading the British government's fight against world poverty.

One in five people in the world today, over 1 billion people, live in poverty on less than one dollar a day. In an increasingly interdependent world, many problems – like conflict, crime, pollution and diseases such as HIV and AIDS – are caused or made worse by poverty.

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DFID's work forms part of a global promise to

- halve the number of people living in extreme poverty and hunger
- ensure that all children receive primary education
- promote sexual equality and give women a stronger voice
- reduce child death rates
- improve the health of mothers
- combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- make sure the environment is protected
- build a global partnership for those working in development.

Together, these form the United Nations' eight 'Millennium Development Goals', with a 2015 deadline. Each of these Goals has its own, measurable, targets.

DFID works in partnership with governments, civil society, the private sector and others. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies and the European Commission.

DFID works directly in over 150 countries worldwide, with a budget of nearly £4 billion in 2004. Its headquarters are in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow.

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