



**Submission from the UK GADN (Gender and Development Network)
to inform the DFID bilateral aid review**

The UK Gender & Development Network (GADN) is a diverse membership network made up of leading UK-based practitioners, consultants and academics working on gender, development and women's rights issues. The Network enables its members to share information and expertise, effectively lobby government and international bodies on gender and development issues and provide expert advice and comment on policies and projects. Our members work in partnership with development and advocacy organisations throughout the world. The UK GAD Network is currently hosted by the international development charity, One World Action.

1. Reflections on the bilateral aid review process

Although GADN welcomes the opportunity to feed in to the Bilateral Aid Review, the lack of a formal Terms of Reference for the consultation process, coupled with a relatively short consultation period, makes it difficult for NGOs and for partners on the ground to engage in a meaningful way. Additionally we would have welcomed to be consulted from the beginning of this process. We recommend that **future processes have a clearer framework** to which NGOs can make reference, **a more generous timescale** for responding, and that NGOs are part of the consultation process from the beginning, giving NGOs and local partners the tools and the time they need to work successfully in partnership with DFID.

We strongly welcome the requirement for DFID country offices to demonstrate how their work addresses Gender and the Role of Women. We know that directing funding towards women and girls is one of the most efficient ways of investing UK ODA. However, in addition to investing in women and girls to build their contribution to poverty reduction and economic growth, we urge DFID to recognise that **women and girls also have the right to benefit directly from aid funding** and to be equally recognised in all bilateral aid decisions. We recommend, therefore, that the requirement to demonstrate how DFID bilateral programmes address **Gender and the Role of Women (which includes women's and girls' rights), be thoroughly mainstreamed through each of the four pillars** that structure the Bilateral Aid Review (see section 2).

We recommend that a representative cross-section of women and men (from different social strata, regions, ages and ethnicities, as well as those with disabilities, with refugee status, who are HIV positive and any other groups who are typically marginalised), participate in identifying and prioritising problems and solutions for aid spending. We urge DFID to **consider the extent to which aid-funded solutions (such as investment in greater agricultural productivity) entail greater pressure on women and increase their time burden**. We recommend that measures

such as subsidised child care and public campaigns to encourage sharing of care responsibilities in the household are put in place to offset these potential impacts of aid.

We recognise the importance of focusing on development results to achieve effective aid allocation and use, but we call for greater attention to the development of indicators for measuring success. In particular, if meaningful, sustainable results are to be achieved with regard to gender equality and women's rights, it is vital to ensure that goals and outcomes that form the basis of log-frames are not only concerned with disaggregation and numbers of women participating in initiatives. **It is essential to see progress towards women's greater access to resources and rights as a *process* that cannot easily fit into a time-bound log-frame, and to consider how to measure qualitative and less tangible changes such as changes in attitudes and behaviour.** For example, including indicators to reflect an increase in the number of women in decision-making processes is not enough. It is vital to assess the extent to which they are actively engaging in these processes by using qualitative indicators (for example, mapping the amount of time women are speaking in meetings, the degree to which their recommendations are taken on board).

We recommend that a thorough gender analysis be conducted in the country in question and in local areas where poverty is most intense. This is essential to ensure that key issues relating to women and to unequal power relations are not confined to those that can be easily counted. It is vital also to consider issues around unequal status, unequal access to productive resources, health, social protection, education and credit. It is also crucial to ensure attention is paid to alleviating the multiple burden faced by many women, particularly in poor areas – which can constrain their ability to participate in and benefit directly from aid-funded projects, as well as reducing their well-being.

We understand the need for tighter accountability mechanisms around aid spending to achieve greater efficiency in a difficult economic climate. However, we call for caution around the way value for money is interpreted with regard to gender and the role of women across all four pillars. **It is vital to recognise that in the case of gender equality concrete outcomes may not be immediately visible and changes are more subtle.** Often investments will yield slow changes over time and it is difficult to predict what results will be, given they are grounded in social relations and the evidence behind them may not be sufficiently researched – i.e., may not take into account local context and culture. The aid review needs to consider ways in which the log-frame format can be adapted to take into account these factors.

2. Recommendations for gender mainstreaming across the four pillars for more effective results on gender and the role of women

1. Wealth creation

Women are often least able to tap into opportunities for wealth creation because of their limited access to productive resources such as land, property and credit. In many cases they are also restricted in terms of their capacity to engage in business or trade opportunities for a number of reasons, including cultural constraints on their public mobility, lack of access to

transport, lower literacy and numeracy levels, and established male-dominated business structures that exclude women. Aid planning aimed at increasing wealth at the local and personal level needs to take these factors into account.

It is also important to take into consideration the potential negative impacts of economic growth for gender equality at a national level. **A priority should be to ensure any investment of aid money into agriculture, manufacturing, trade or other businesses supports ethical, gender equitable working practices.** This means ensuring women are not subjected to discrimination or sexual harassment in the workplace and are not expected to work long hours in poor conditions; women are accorded rights under CEDAW and ILO frameworks that include rights to paid maternity leave, the right to equal pay and the right to join a union.

2. Climate change

Responses to climate change have tended to focus on technical solutions such as carbon capture and provision of new carbon neutral technologies. DFID is demonstrating an increasing emphasis on tackling the social dimensions of climate change, with particular attention to the ways in which it can exacerbate existing inequalities – for example by making it even more difficult for women to access productive land for farming. But application of this social lens at policy and operational levels is still far from adequate. Above all **it is crucial that aid allocated for climate change responses contributes to addressing gender inequalities rather than intensifying them** (for example, by distributing knowledge of new technologies to men only). It is also vital for women to be actively involved in framing problems related to climate change at the local level, and in contributing their knowledge for adaptation and mitigation strategies.

3. Direct Delivery of the MDGs

If the MDGs are to provide an effective lens for addressing gender inequalities in a sustainable way, it is essential that aid is not only allocated to funding the objectives of MDGs 3 and 5. Rather, **funds must be earmarked to support the achievement of gender equality goals that cross-cut all of the MDGs.** Without fully taking into account the gender dimensions of the remaining MDGs it is very unlikely that their objectives will be fully met or that responses funded by donor aid will meet the diverse needs of disadvantaged women, men and children.

4. Governance and security

While ensuring that women constitute at least 30% of all governance decision-making processes, including parliamentary representation is very important, aid needs to promote strategies that will support women's *active participation* - including in peace-building processes - by building their leadership capacities and helping to shift discriminatory thinking and behaviour from within governance. Country partners should be fully behind such strategies and tailoring them to their own specific context – rather than having quotas and other mechanisms imposed on them or deployed as a condition of aid.

DFID must ensure that adequate aid is distributed in support of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, in collaboration with country

partners – particularly those in conflict-affected areas. For long-term, sustainable peace-building processes it is essential to promote the active and equal inclusion of women in decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring in all areas of country economic, social and political development.

The issue of violence against women in the context of conflict needs to be urgently addressed and underpinned by a significantly greater aid commitment than is currently the case. Emergency funds are needed immediately in areas where conflict is ongoing, to provide medical responses and vital support for women who are victims of rape and other forms of abuse. Funds are also desperately needed to promote longer-term strategies of prevention, awareness-raising and law enforcement, especially in situations where violence against women has become a systematic and unquestioned weapon of war.